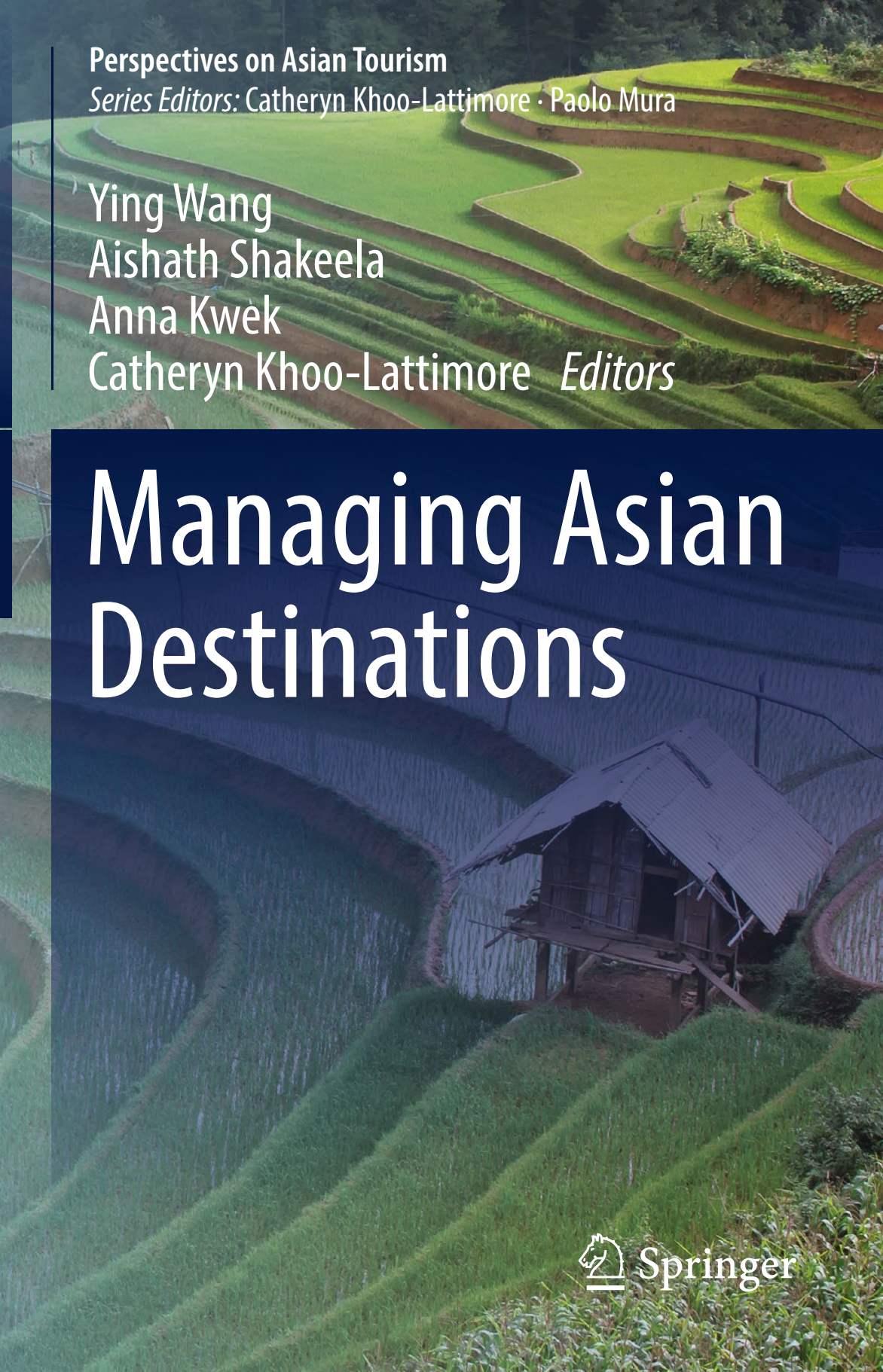
Perspectives on Asian Tourism
Series Editors: Catheryn Khoo-Lattimore · Paolo Mura
Ying Wang
Aishath Shakeela
Anna Kwek
Catheryn Khoo-Lattimore Editors
Managing Asian Destinations
Springer

Perspectives on Asian Tourism

While a conspicuous body of knowledge about tourism in Asia is emerging, Western academic ontologies and epistemologies still represent the dominant voice within tourism circles. This series provides a platform to support Asian scholarly production and reveals the different aspects of Asian tourism and its intricate economic and socio-cultural trends.

The books in this series are aimed to pave the way for a more integrated and multifaceted body of knowledge about Asian tourism. By doing so, they contribute to the idea that tourism, as both phenomenon and field of studies, should be more inclusive and disentangled from dominant (mainly Western) ways of knowing.

More specifically, the series will fill gaps in knowledge with regard to:

- the ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions behind Asian tourism research;
- specific segments of the Asian tourist population, such as Asian women, Asian backpackers, Asian young tourists, Asian gay tourists, etc;
- specific types of tourism in Asia, such as film-induced tourism, adventure tourism, beauty tourism, religious tourism, etc;
- Asian tourists' experiences, patterns of behaviour, and constraints to travel;
- Asian values that underpin operational, management, and marketing decisions in and/or on Asia (travel);
- external factors that add to the complexities of Asian tourism studies.

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Managing Asian Destinations

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Part I
Overview

Chapter 1
Asian Destinations: Perspectives on Planning, Management, and Marketing

Ying Wang, Aishath Shakeela, Anna Kwek, and Catheryn Khoo-Lattimore

Abstract Tourism in Asia has experienced healthy growth in the last few years and is projected to grow at a rate above the world's average. While there has been an increasing scholarly interest in Asian tourism activities and development, existing academic knowledge on managing Asian tourism destinations is highly fragmented. A cursory examination of literature suggests three main themes of destination literature: Planning, Management, and Marketing. Accordingly, we organized the chapters into these three core categories. For each of the three themes, we provide a brief evaluation of the current literature with a specific focus on Asian destinations and a summary of chapters addressing the theme. The chapter concludes with a call for further effort into several under-explored research areas.

Keywords Asian tourism · Planning · Management · Marketing · Tourism futures · Review

1.1 Introduction

As researchers with vested interest in Asian tourism, we have witnessed an increased emphasis on Asian destinations in academic research, keynote deliveries, conference tracks, and industry events. These are in line with the growth of Asian tourism destinations over the last 10 years. According to UNWTO, Asia and the Pacific as a whole, was the fastest-growing region for international tourist arrivals with a 9% increase in 2016 compared with 8% for Africa, 3% for Americas, and 2% for Europe. In 2017, travel and tourism's contribution to employment and GDP was the highest in Asia, compared to other parts of the world (World Travel and Tourism Council 2017). The Asian region includes some of the world's most important tourist source markets, including China. As the world's top spender in tourism since 2012, China recorded a 12% growth in expenditure in 2016 (UNWTO 2017). Asian

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destinations also receive more tourists from their neighboring Asian countries. Vietnam, for example, saw a staggering 64% increase in Chinese tourist arrivals in 2015 (Vietnam Tourism 2016). Destination infrastructure has supported this boom in tourism, with six out of the ten best airports in the world in 2017 being located in Asia (Skytrax 2017).

Tourism growth in Asia has resulted in many academic publications on Asian destinations. In general, tourism scholars recognize the philosophical difference between the East and the West and concur that it is not appropriate to assume homogeneity in cultural values and the consequent tourism practices across Asian markets and destinations. However, the speed at which academic articles publish alongside development of Asian tourism destinations also mean that existing academic knowledge on managing Asian tourism destinations is highly fragmented. Scholars have specifically called for additional contributions to both the theory and practice of tourism within the Asia-Pacific region (Tolkach et al. 2016).

This book is timely in that it allows us to take stock and evaluate destinations within Southeast Asia and the wider Asia-Pacific region. A cursory examination of the literature reveals that destination literature can be divided into three main categories: Planning, Management, and Marketing; and as such, we have organized this book under these three core categories. Given the evident recent growth of Asian tourism, it comes as no surprise that tourism development is a common theme across planning, management, and marketing. The chapter contributions highlight knowledge spectrum under these core themes on Asian tourism destinations.

1.2 Destination Planning

Destination planning is not a new concept and has been well-researched over time in various contexts. Destination planning refers to how a destination, be it a state, region, town, or city, is planned in relation to its tourism offering and what experiences, images, or emotions that the consumer recalls when thinking of that destination (Simeon 2006). Destination planning has been investigated in Asian settings; yet given the dramatic growth in Asian tourism industry over the last decade, academic research has not provided a comprehensive understanding of best practice destination planning strategies. Of the literature on destination planning in Asia, majority has focused on China and has also sporadically covered destinations like Thailand (Theerapappisit 2009; Chaisawat 2006) and Taiwan (Liu et al. 2016; Jang and Chen 2008). Within these regions, scholars have discussed planning issues related to sustainability (Catibog-Sinha and Wen 2008; Luo and Deng 2008), tourism development (Wang and Wall 2007; Dredge 2004; Lai et al. 2006), policy (Yang et al. 2008; Dredge 2004), tourist behavior (Chen et al. 2009), and local engagement and participation (Rasoolimanesh and Jafaar 2017; Lagarense and Walansendow 2015; Theerapappisit 2009; Lovelock 2003). Tourism development as such seems to be an integrated and integral part of tourism planning and has thus far been

researched most commonly in terms of the development of tourism policy for effective future planning.

Globally, government policy is considered a crucial factor for sustained development of tourism, and this holds true within Asian destinations. In fact, the need for solid tourism policies within the Asia Pacific is significant, as the tourism growth within the region calls for additional policies to support tourism development. Policy is considered a core aspect of tourism planning, and in instances where tourism policy is not effectively planned and enacted due to political instability (Issa and Altinay 2006) or failure from institutions responsible for tourism policy planning (Alipour and Kilic 2005), tourism sector cannot function at its true potential. Tourism policy planning is thus regarded as a necessity for the current and future success of tourism industries at a global level. Tourism policy and policy development are often put aside as recommendations both for future investigations to expand upon and for government and policy makers within the Asia-Pacific region to action upon. Given that policy making is primarily recognized as a responsibility for the government, the weak involvement of tourism stakeholders in policy decisions has impelled academics to call governments to actively engage relevant stakeholders in tourism decision-making processes.

Stakeholder participation is important not just for successful tourism policy but also for destination planning as a whole. Positive relationships with local communities of tourism destinations are important as participation and engagement from the local community can have significant impacts on the development of the tourism industry (Hampton 2005; Adeyinka-Ojo et al. 2014). As key stakeholders, local community members operate a majority of tourism businesses within the destination and are therefore key players in circulating tourist dollar and generating economic benefit for the region (Hampton 2005; Chaisawat 2006). Given their evident involvement in tourism operation, community members clearly possess a unique insight into tourist behaviors, attitudes, desires, and trends; and their subsequent perceptions on tourism products and services are critical in destination planning. In order to ensure stakeholder opinion is captured, communication as a tool for soliciting stakeholder opinions is recommended (Chaisawat 2006; Dredge 2004; Yang et al. 2008). Effectively linking resident opinion to strategic tourism planning will not only increase the potential of destination success but also ensure continued local community satisfaction and support for the tourism industry (Chaisawat 2006), which inevitably drives further development. Communication is an element present in most studies which include stakeholder attitude toward tourism development. In fact, local perceptions and involvement should essentially be required in all tourism destination planning as an insurance on the suitability of development plans. Stakeholder involvement has also been explored from a sustainability point of view, where residents' positive and negative perceptions, engagement, and support for sustainable tourism practices are shown to have a significant impact on sustainable tourism development (Rasoolimanesh and Jafaar 2017).

In addition, tourists as stakeholders themselves associate a sense of novelty, excitement, and other positive emotions with a destination. These positive emotions

are found to create higher tourist satisfactions and increase their overall outlook on tourism sustainability (Liu et al. 2016). The opinions, perceptions, and participation of both residents and tourists in tourism planning activities can have a positive impact on the success of a destination. Hence, it is important that academic focus expands to deliver strategies for effective stakeholder consultation and implementation of stakeholder recommendations by governing bodies.

Further exploration of literature on sustainable tourism indicates that tourism sustainability has been investigated from an economic, environmental, and/or social perspective. Within the literature of destination planning in the Asia-Pacific region, environmental sustainability was the most researched topic. Ecotourism, nature-based tourism, and green tourism have attracted increasing interest within destination planning literature over the last decade alongside consumer awareness of green practices, particularly within the hotel industry. Tourism within the Asian context is not different, and destination planning research has endeavored to assess ecotourism and nature tourism trends (Yang et al. 2008). Strategies for destination planning are emphasized as ways in which destination management organizations and tourism stakeholders should consider environmental impacts of tourism to ensure the longevity of destination success. While there is substantial literature about tourism sustainability within Asia, industry players do not seem to be sufficiently engaged in sustainable practices and initiatives (Tolkach et al. 2016). Given stakeholders' desire to be involved in tourism planning, it seems odd that they have a weak engagement with sustainable tourism practices. Overcoming obstacles to participation in sustainable practices is an area that requires further investigation.

Contributing to research on destination planning within an Asian context, Part I of this book contains four chapters on planning Asian destinations. Although commonality of planning exists between the four chapters, each chapter investigates destination planning with a unique lens. Chapter 2 presents tourism policy within the Philippines, providing an analytical view of political power and oppression which hinder implementation of policy. Chapter 3 further emphasizes the importance of stakeholder participation in destination planning, by utilizing a "circuit approach" to tourism planning within the Philippines. This chapter resolves that stakeholder involvement, both from local governments and from within the private sector, needs to be active within the region to effectively utilize tourism circuit planning. Sustainability was an evident theme within the literature yet still not widely explored within the Asian context, and Chaps. 4 and 5 contribute to this gap in knowledge by examining destination planning in relation to sustainable practices in Asia. More specifically, Chap. 4 investigates nature-based tourism and the balance of planning with sustainability in Hong Kong, an urban center, and Chap. 5 uses sustainability as a tool to assess the longevity of tourism development in the Maldives.

1.3 Destination Management

Destination management is an activity that is critical to a destination's success. While destination management is required in all stages of a destination's life cycle, it is particularly essential to preventing the destination going into decline (Kozak and Martin 2012). Literature on destination management is extensive. Albeit relatively limited when compared to that of its Western counterpart, within an Asian context, topics under this theme explore development, stakeholder perception, involvement, and sustainability – the same topics that were illustrated within destination planning literature. Relevant research in Asia is heavily concentrated on China, with articles contributing knowledge in the areas of stakeholder satisfaction (Vong et al. 2016), development (Dai et al. 2012), and tourist consumer behaviors (Kim et al. 2011). The second most researched location is Taiwan, with articles focusing on the development of destination image (Ku and Mak 2017; Lee 2014). Studies were also produced in Cambodia (Dwyer and Thomas 2012; Chen et al. 2008), Hong Kong (Huang and Hsu 2005; McKercher and Ho 2006), Korea (Lee and Weaver 2014; Kang et al. 2012), Mongolia (Yu and Goulden 2006), and Nepal (Musa et al. 2004). As mentioned, much like the literature on destination planning within Asia, tourism development was a recognizable theme within destination management research as well. Managing tourist destinations and their development is important, because without effective management and development of tourism experiences, a tourist destination will struggle to remain competitive throughout all stages of its life cycle (Kozak and Martin 2012). A destination can possess strong physical attributes and appear desirable to tourist markets, but if the tourist experience and experiential values of the destination fail to provide adequate value to tourists, its capability as a tourism destination is questionable. The management of and development for tourism destinations should consider tourist offerings in terms of their physical, cultural, and experiential values that can be created by tourism organizations to enhance the overall enjoyment of that destination (McKercher and Ho 2006).

Gaining a clear understanding of destination image from the perspective of tourists and residents is essential in ensuring success in tourism development in Asian destinations (Ku and Mak 2017). As such, within current research on destination management, stakeholder involvement and participation is again a common theme. Reasons why a tourist chooses to travel to a particular destination are identified as shopping, spending time with family and friends, or experiencing culture and alternative lifestyles, relaxation, or education purposes. The goal for destination managers and marketers is to identify or even create this need and work to mold a destination image that aligns with the desires and expectations of the tourists. In a study by Ku and Mak (2017), both Taiwanese residents and tourists, as stakeholders, expressed how important they felt it was for destination management organizations to consider motivations and opinions of tourists and residents before initiating

future tourism development, to ensure stakeholder satisfaction. Literature within destination management in Asia explains the increased likeliness of local community supporting the development of tourism, when residents within the community feel positively about their region and its brand (Vong et al. 2016).

Similar to the destination planning literature, sustainability was also a common thematic focus within the destination management literature in Asia. With ecotourism and nature-based tourism on the rise in the region, these tourism sectors were analyzed in terms of their experienced growth, the challenges that are faced, and their subsequent successes as these sectors continue to develop into the future. In an Asian context, consumer behaviors were investigated from a sustainability point of view. Literature revealed that tourists' positive emotions and attitudes toward destinations can have subsequent positive effects on their willingness to participate in environmentally responsible behaviors when visiting a destination (Cheng et al. 2013; Laroche et al. 2001; Zsóka et al. 2013; Cheng and Wu 2015 in Oviedo-García et al. 2017). In fact, tourists are far more likely to engage in sustainable tourism practices and environmentally conscious behaviors when they feel favorably about that particular destination (Cheng et al. 2013; Cheng and Wu 2015). As such, benefits of creating positive destination image for consumers extend beyond attracting visitation, to encouraging environmentally positive behaviors from tourists and a reduced environmental footprint, preserving the destination for future tourists.

The long-term competitiveness and sustainability of a destination is also reliant upon quality service and tourist experiences, a prominent topic in global tourism and similarly within research on Asian destinations. Effort was made to understand service quality and tourist satisfaction in medical tourism in Thailand (Abd Mutalib et al. 2017), quality of tour guiding in Hong Kong (Chan et al. 2015; Chen et al. 2016), endangered wildlife experience in Mainland China (Cong et al. 2014), and Chinese package tourists to Taiwan (Chang 2014), among others. Studies within the Asian context also discussed issues related to unethical practice of tourism businesses, primarily concerning Chinese tourism in places such as Mainland China (e.g., Kwek et al. 2014; Wang et al. 2016) and Hong Kong (Mak et al. 2011). As suggested, unethical practice is often associated with all-inclusive package tourism, the market share of which, according to Chen et al. (2016), is negatively associated with overall tourist satisfaction with Hong Kong based on data from 1993 to 2013.

Part II introduces four chapters that contribute additional knowledge to the management of Asian tourism destinations. Chapter 6 investigates the management of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Vietnam, with a focus on visitor perceptions. This chapter adds to the current literature on creating a strong value proposition for tourists to enhance future tourism development opportunities, as explored in the preceding literature review. Development is also the focus of Chap. 7, which takes a new approach to looking at cross-border tourism in Thailand by identifying the challenges the destination faces in its tourism development and key issues facing tourism planning. The developmental challenges hindering tourism development that are explored within the chapter include weak market attractiveness, lack of direction for planning activities, powerful opinion from vested parties, and complexities when dealing with stakeholders. The importance of stakeholders within tourism

management and development is again highlighted in Chap. 8 with an investigation of stakeholder involvement within community-based tourism in Cambodia. Chapter 8 also touches on sustainable tourism by analyzing the sustainability initiatives set in place for the long-term sustainability of community-based tourism in Cambodia. Chapter 9 adds new context to sustainability in destination management, by looking at the transformation of Manali, a rural farming settlement in the Indian Himalayas, into an urban destination and reporting on the environmental damages incurred due to a lack of sustainable tourism policy. Chapter 10 also discusses tourism policy and contributes to literature on sustainable tourism within the context of World Heritage sites, analyzing their rapid tourism growth within Southeast Asia and aligning the subsequent management and development with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Chapter 11 takes a different perspective to investigate the relationships among tourism, millennials, and the sharing economy by analyzing the project "Sharing City, Seoul," launched by the city to boost social innovation and promote local sharing entrepreneurship.

1.4 Destination Marketing

Part III explores destination marketing within Asia Pacific. Destination marketing techniques have expanded exponentially and so has tourism within Asia. Therefore it makes sense that academia has responded to this demand by beginning to produce topical research on destination marketing by Asian destinations. Destination marketing literature on a broad scale has expanded immensely over the past few years as destinations look for unique and innovative ways to market their destinations that allow them to differentiate from their competitors. Travelers are becoming smart consumers, actively gathering and disseminating information about tourist destinations. With the proliferation of social media comes increased transparency of destinations as users can post photos, opinions, and in-depth accounts of their tourism experiences (Wang 2016). Tourism marketers have been increasingly creating stronger presences on these online platforms and utilizing more organic marketing strategies by creating spaces where they can actively engage with consumers on a more personal level.

The geographical scope of destination marketing literature was broader than other categories of tourism research; and many studies did not focus on a specific country but on regions and cities within Asian countries (Pai et al. 2014; Horng and Tsai 2010; Mena et al. 2004). Some studies were conducted within a specific geographic region, and of these Korea was the most dominant (Lee et al. 2014; Han and Lee 2008; Chan 2007). Other Asian destinations include Macau (Park et al. 2015; Qiu et al. 2015; Choi et al. 2007), Malaysia (Tang 2011; Jaafar et al. 2012), Singapore (Wang et al. 2015; Tsai 2012), China (Hsu and Song 2012; Tse and Zhang 2013), Beijing (Han et al. 2017), Hong Kong (Okumus et al. 2007), India (Mishra and Bansal 2017), Japan (Lim et al. 2008), Taipei (Pan et al. 2014), Taiwan (Yan et al. 2007), and Thailand (McDowall and Wang 2009).

In line with research on destination planning and destination management, development is also a recurring theme within destination marketing literature. Research explores brand development and/or tourism product development (Lin and Zins 2016; Leung et al. 2015; Qiu et al. 2015; Pai et al. 2014; Semone and Kozak 2012; Tsai 2012; McDowall and Wang 2009; Lim et al. 2008; Han and Lee 2008; Chan 2007; Mena et al. 2004; Prideaux 1997) and links with tourism planning; and of these, brand development is the most common way that destination marketing research discusses development. Given the growth of Asian tourism over the last 10 years, it also makes sense that branding is an increasingly prominent topic within Asian destination marketing literature, as regions enjoying newly found tourism revenues need to work to establish themselves as tourism destination brands. Creating a positive destination image in the consumer's mind is a fundamental step in developing a tourism brand and stimulating tourism (Song et al. 2017a, b; Tsai 2012; Avraham and Ketter 2017); consequently consumer behaviors, preferences, and revisit intentions have attracted much research interest within current literature. It is important for tourism marketers and organizations to understand their market, so that they are better able to create a destination brand that aligns with the needs and desires of that market, encouraging visitation to the destination.

Social media has revolutionized the way that Asian destinations are being portrayed and perceived yet remains under researched in tourism (Shakeela and Weaver 2016). Destination marketing research has focused on online marketing via websites, blogs, microblogs, and social media platforms, which have become increasingly powerful in shaping traveler perceptions and attitudes. Destinations use these platforms and tools to create, manage, and communicate its brand image because they are easy to use and access and allow instant marketing content to be received by consumers (Wang 2016). Different from traditional marketing, the responsibility for branding content creation and communication is no longer solely on destination marketing organizations. Rather, this responsibility lies with stakeholders within the industry, including both tourism business operators and tourists (Choi et al. 2007; Morgan et al. 2003; Sartori et al. 2012). In fact, destination images projected online via private websites, blogs, and social media pages can have a significant impact in the overall branding of an Asian destination and the subsequent desire for visitation that it attracts (in this case, Macao) (Choi et al. 2007). Online media has increasingly allowed consumers to create both external and internal perceptions about a destination from the content that they view online (Pan et al. 2014; Leung et al. 2013; Sigala et al. 2012). The use of blogs, microblogs, and social media pages like Instagram and Facebook are on the rise and are now popular mediums for disseminating information about travel and sharing experiences (Tse and Zhang 2013; Roque and Raposo 2016; Leung et al. 2013; Sigala et al. 2012; Ayeh et al. 2013). These online sources where online users post reviews of their tourism experiences contribute to the design and creation of the destination image (Sigala et al. 2012). It is this transparency that is appreciated by other travelers and particularly by young tourists as this is how an increasing number of young travelers are receiving and gathering information in their everyday lives. John (2017) encourages tourism marketers to deepen their engagement with online media, particularly social media and

blog pages by responding to comments, reviews, and queries to improve interactive forms on communication with tourists and help establish a positive destination images among consumers.

Additional to the reporting of new marketing techniques by way of online resources, other exciting tourism trends were identified within tourism literature as the industry expands and allows for niche markets, encouraging product development within these unique sectors. Some of the most reported themes within the literature include the development of exhibition sector for gaming destinations (Qiu et al. 2015); film-induced tourism developments, specifically in South Korea (Han and Lee 2008; Chan 2007); the growth in domestic tourism (Mena et al. 2004); golf tourism emerging as a niche market (Song et al. 2017a, b); rise of music festivals (Han et al. 2017); food festivals (Adeyinka-Ojo and Khoo-Lattimore 2013); medical tourism (John 2017); the continued growth of ecotourism (Lee et al. 2014); long-stay relaxation holidays (Anantamongkolkul et al. 2017); the rise of small-medium budget hotels (Jaafar et al. 2012); and the expansion of heritage tourism (Yan et al. 2007).

Five chapters are presented in Part III on destination marketing within the Asia Pacific. Chapter 12 continues the discussion on destination development by introducing the concept of smart tourism development. This is a new contribution to literature as smart tourism is not prominent in current research. This chapter investigates the concept of smart tourism and its outcomes of increased efficiency enhance sustainability practices and improved tourist experiences. Continuing the discussion on destination marketing and current trends within tourism marketing is Chap. 13, where big data is introduced and assessed by media discourse. Chaps. 14, 15, and 16 are innovative and provide new knowledge in marketing destinations as they explore new tourism trends in niche areas. Chapter 14 focuses on river tourism in China identifying four main types: riverbank sightseeing, river boats, river drifting (piaoliu ziyou or ziyou piao), and whitewater rafting (yeshui piaoliu or baishui piaoliu). Utilizing multiple data collection methods, Chap. 15 investigates how young hosts view and welcome tourists in Lhasa, Tibet. Chapter 16 contributes to the conversation on young tourism by examining cultural heritage tourism from a youth perspective. The chapter highlights young travelers' desires to experience cultural tourism by visiting sites with abundant historical and cultural significance.

1.5 Conclusion

Unlike tourism in Europe, North America, Australia, and New Zealand, the Asian tourism boom is a relatively recent phenomenon. Many destinations in the region are still in the developing phase of their life cycle. Resembling what mature destinations experienced in their early days, many Asian destinations are enjoying the benefits of mass tourism, often in economic terms. As tourists become more experienced and destinations mature, a natural shift of focus would be from an approach characterized by spontaneous responses to tourism development and undifferentiated

tourism offerings to one that is associated with more professional planning, management, and marketing exercises, as well as personalized and individualist tourist products. Indeed, China, the largest tourist source market for many Asian destinations, has quickly evolved into a market much more sophisticated than only a few years ago. Well-established destinations such as Australia have responded with strategies targeting independent group tourists and niche markets within the Chinese market. While existing literature has started to explore niche tourist markets, future studies must continue research into new niche tourism markets in the Asian tourism context and into issues surrounding strategic planning and management of these new trends and market segments.

A better understanding of Asian tourists is required for the long-term sustainability of Asian and global tourism. As Pearce and Wu (Pearce and Wu 2016) describe in their book, *The World Meets Asian Tourists*, there is a lack of understanding and awareness of Asian tourists' customs, needs, and cultural practice; and "regrettably, the welcome given to the new Asian tourists was at best haphazard" (p. ix). Further, diversity within Asia is also evident with existing differences in ethnicity, religion, cultural, and historical background. Evidence of this includes Kwek and Lee (2008) who revealed cultural variance in the ethnic Chinese market, and similarly, one would expect a high level of variation in culture, region, and custom in India. However, so far, we have seen a lack of research on Asian tourists that refer to tourists' unique social, cultural, historical, and political background. More rigorous cross-cultural studies are therefore required to understand the root of heterogeneity in the Asian market. For instance, Confucius values shape Chinese (and possibly other East Asian travelers') view of family, friends, and gender role, which subsequently influence travel decision-making and preferences (Song et al. 2017a, b), while rootedness and community belongingness shape Maldivians' response and attitude toward international tourists (Shakeela and Weaver 2017). Given the popularity of short haul international travels within the region (e.g., between South Korea and Japan, China and Thailand, Taiwan and Hong Kong), such cross-cultural understanding would benefit Asian destinations.

We also call for further exploration into the technological space about issues such as social media marketing, mobile technologies, and smart tourism development. Asia represents a spectrum of technological readiness with countries/regions such as South Korea, Hong Kong, and Japan being ranked among the top ten countries in the Global Information and Communication Technology Development Index (ICT Development Index) at one end, and nations like Nepal, Bhutan, and Cambodia that are of low ICT development sitting at the other end (International Telecommunication Union 2016). This unequal development in ICT creates challenges for destination management, for instance, with regard to meeting tourists' ICT demand in low ICT development countries. Further, although review sites and social media platforms such as TripAdvisor, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter are dominant players in the West, Asian travelers have other/additional preferences such as WeChat and Weibo for Chinese, Kakaotalk for South Koreans, and Line for Japanese. Mining opinions on these sites will generate invaluable insights into these markets. Another avenue for future research relates to mobile technologies which

are powerful in shaping consumers' purchase behaviors in Asia. Mobile payments and digital wallets are becoming increasingly popular. The 2017 Singles' Day online sales event in China saw the sales volume totaling US$25.3 billion, with 90% of the transactions being processed via mobile (Toplin 2017). Asian tourism literature needs to timely reflect on the role of mobile technologies in travel decision-making and booking as well as in assisting destination experience. The latter is particularly relevant to smart destination development.

Current Asian tourism literature's geographical focus on China is justified by the country's status as the world's largest source market and one of the top tourist destinations (UNWTO 2017). That said, other Asian countries in the region differ substantially from China and popular destinations in the West and hence offer potential opportunities for theory development and contribution to knowledge. Two such examples are India and Indonesia, both representing a massive market for tourism destinations, nonetheless differing substantially in culture, history, religion, and political situation. However, a search of literature revealed disproportionally little interest in these two countries.

The final point of observation we would like to raise is the lack of studies on destination competitiveness, especially comparative analysis across Asian destinations. Aspects contributing to destination competitiveness such as destination image and service quality have been widely researched, but an underpinning of Asian hosts' cultural values and perception of other Asian tourists would offer more insightful and relevant implications for the planning, management, and marketing of Asian destinations. Research also highlights other relevant issues and crises in Asian destinations. For example, many developing nations in Asia have yet to implement policy on tourists' rights at destinations. While there have been studies, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, considering unethical business practice concerning Chinese tourism, effort is yet to extend to other Asian countries. It is also worth noting that previous studies took either a business management or a tourist experience angle in studying this phenomenon without examining the perspective of tourists' rights and the ethics of tourists.

With Asia and the Pacific projected to be the region to have the strongest growth in tourist arrivals by 2030 (UNWTO 2017), it is our hope that this book will contribute new knowledge on Asian tourism destinations by providing success stories, recommendations, and strategies for longevity into the future.

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Part II
Tourism Planning in Asian Destinations

Chapter 2
Power and Politics in Tourism Policy and Planning in the Philippines

Edieser D. Dela Santa

Abstract The objective of the chapter is to examine power and politics as factors that constrain tourism policy and planning in the country. It draws from emerging research and illustrative cases on the governance of Philippine tourism. The starting point of the analysis is the comparative performance of the tourism industry and the implementation of the Philippine Tourism Act of 2009. The stated goal of the Tourism Act is to make tourism an engine of economic growth and cultural affirmation. This is supposed to be achieved through a range of programs and projects including the design and implementation of a mandatory tourism accreditation system and the facilitation of tourism investments.

However, the implementation of these programs is not happening as envisioned. Indicators show that accreditation levels have remained below one-fourth of the total number of registered tourism businesses. In addition, after 6 years of inaction, the Bureau of Internal Revenue has only recently announced the rules granting fiscal incentives for tourism investments, thus wasting time and precious opportunities to develop tourism infrastructure.

This chapter examines some of the structural constraints, rooted in the country's history as a traditional society, that have hindered the implementation of the abovementioned policies and plans. Power and politics and how these are manifested in destabilizing ways, such as in regime changes, displays of impunity, and turfism, are the main foci. The chapter highlights observations that unless the oppressiveness of these factors is mitigated, the context of Philippine tourism policy and planning will remain very challenging.

Keywords Power and politics · Tourism policy · Tourism planning · Philippines

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2.1 Brief Background on the Performance of the Tourism Sector

In the Philippines, tourism is seen as an engine of growth and its performance validates this point. The size and significance of the local tourism industry have increased over time. For example, international inbound tourist arrivals reached 5.36 million in 2015, an all-time high. Domestic tourism is also strong with 54.6 million domestic travelers in 2014. This performance has translated into huge expenditures, with domestic tourism expenditure reaching Php 1.770 trillion in 2015. Consequently, the sector accounts for 8% of the economy, as measured by the share of tourism direct gross value added, and contributes 12.5% to total employment in the country (Perez 2015).

The performance of the sector is seen to be boosted by the implementation of the Tourism Act of 2009. The law stipulated an increase in the tourism budget as well as restructure of the offices and agencies attached to it. It set in place a sustainable tourism policy and planning framework which was supposed to be achieved through a range of programs and projects including the design and implementation of a mandatory tourism accreditation system and the facilitation of tourism investments, mainly via the provision of generous fiscal incentives including those that cover corporate social responsibilities and investments in tourism enterprise zones (TEZs).

However, the implementation of these programs has not happened as envisioned. Reports showed that accreditation levels have remained low at 22.5% of the total number of registered tourism businesses (Development Academy of the Philippines 2016). In addition, the Bureau of Internal Revenue waited for 6 years (until the end of 2016) before issuing the requisite revenue regulations that would have granted fiscal incentives to TEZ operators. Tourism authorities, thus, claimed that the industry had lost an estimated P232.33 billion in investments from 2013 to 2016, because investors could not access incentives promised to them by the Tourism Act of 2009 (Arnaldo 2016).

Hence, judged against policy goals, the local tourism sector has not performed as well as it should. In terms of regional competitiveness as of 2015, as analyzed by the World Economic Forum, the Philippine tourism sector is not considered a bright star. It was ranked 74 out of 141 countries, much lower than the rankings of its ASEAN neighbors. Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, and Vietnam also outperformed the Philippines in international tourist arrivals. From the above, it is clear that the local tourism sector has a lot of catching up to do.

This performance can be traced to constraints in national and local tourism policy and planning. A number of scholars have pointed out some of these. Rodolfo (2005) has argued that some elements of the formal institutional environment in the Philippines undermine the ability of firms to attract domestic and international visitors. Dela Santa (2013) identified as key determinants the lack of financial and human resources for tourism development, coordination issues, and low or poor understanding of tourism. Similarly, Henderson (2011) pointed out a combination of political instability, insurgency, civil unrest, corruption, red tape, inadequate

government planning and program implementation, and underdeveloped tourism-related infrastructure as key constraints. Maguigad (2013) highlighted the lack of environment planners and a national land use strategy to guide development, which in turn has created a testy relationship between national and local governments.

The chapter examines some of these structural constraints, rooted in the country's history as a traditional society, that have hindered the implementation of policies and plans. The discussion mainly focuses on power and politics and the various ways they are manifested including displays of impunity and government turfism. This chapter argues that unless the oppressiveness of these interrelated factors is mitigated, the context of Philippine tourism policy and planning will remain very challenging.

2.2 Power and Politics Underlying Many Constraints and Challenges

Social science scholars working in the Philippines have long commented on the importance of power and politics in everyday political and economic life. This is evident in perspectives used by academics such as patron-client (Kerkvliet 1995), predatory regime (Quimpo 2009), bossism (Sidel 1997), and elite democracy (Dressel 2011), all of which suggest inequality and huge control by a small group of people over the citizenry. Scholars particularly pay attention to kinship and how relations by individuals and families especially with the ruling elite allow them to achieve desired outcomes (Knudsen 2013). Methods used, according to David (2008), include the exploitation of customary values like "hiya" (shame/face) and "utang na loob" (debt of gratitude), paternalistic rule that combines benevolence with calibrated intimidation, the obsession with consensus, and disdain for free debate. Under these structures, the elite is able to wield extralegal (and illegal) influence on the political system that allows them to extract rent (Lange 2010).

The strength of power and politics can be seen in the tourism sector in many ways. The first is how power and politics affected policy organization and implementation due to regime changes that follow elections, a political exercise. Dela Santa (2015) noted how commonplace it was for new heads of the national tourism organization to replace an ongoing marketing program with a different one, notwithstanding the huge costs involved. Thus, Dela Santa observed that it was the "Best of the Islands" marketing campaign under the Ramos administration in 1992–1998, "Rediscovery Philippines" under the Estrada administration from 1998 to 2001, "Wow Philippines" under the Arroyo administration from 2001 to 2010, and "It's More Fun in the Philippines" under the current administration.

Another example is the super-region concept developed during the Arroyo administration. Maguigad (2013, p. 29) hailed the strategy as one that spatially integrates the geographic peculiarities of the various regions of the country and matches it with the known resource strengths of each one. Consistent with this, Central

Philippines was designated for major tourism land uses for its numerous islands. However, as Maguigad noted, this super-region concept was quietly ignored and confined to the archives when the Aquino administration came into power in 2010.

This flip-flopping happens because the executive system is very much affected by regime changes. When a new president is elected, he replaces officials at the top layer (level of secretary/minister), second layer (undersecretary), and third layer (assistant secretary) down to the fourth tier of bureau directors (Balisacan and Hill 2003). Local elections, which have a shorter cycle as they are held every 3 years, produce the same outcome in terms of leadership changes. Thus, planning offices have difficulty in maintaining their objectives and in keeping policies stable and coherent.

Secondly, power and politics are demonstrated through displays of impunity. This is most evident in the context of tourism planning and development in the country's island destinations. As the Philippines implements sustainable tourism as envisioned by the Tourism Act of 2009 and other issuances such as Executive Order 111 (National Ecotourism Policy), her efforts are challenged by wanton disregard of social, environmental, and land tenure laws by well-connected industry players. Sometimes, those who perpetrate the violations are officials of government themselves, whose interests converge with their own private motives. Trousdale in 1999, for example, stated how elected councilors from Boracay Island were slow to design and implement local legislations of national laws because some of them owned resorts that violate environmental regulations such as height restrictions and setback rules. In a much earlier period, Richter (1982) noted how prostitution associated with mass tourism grew during the Martial Law period in the 1970s and how some officials of the administration, who had large business interests in the industry, promoted the trade through the Ministry of Tourism via the production of posters with double entendre. Richter also pointed out how environmental abuse was committed in the name of tourism development and promotion by the creation of an artificial beach along Manila Bay for an international film festival.

Unfortunately, the passage of time and broader policy learning on tourism by Filipino policymakers (Dela Santa 2015) have not diminished impunity. Infrastructure continues to be built in violation of rules and regulations. In Boracay, resorts were recently found to be operating without permits or were directly dumping waste into the sea (Valencia and Villanueva 2015). A resort illegally constructed structures over rock formations (Burgos 2014) that defaced the forested area. A good number of resorts are observed to have operated on the basis of tax declarations on land they occupy, instead of a legitimate Torrens title to the land on which they built their properties (Maguigad et al. 2015). Other destinations have not escaped this sense of entitlement by the elite. In Palawan, Sunlight Eco Tourism Island Resort was found in possession of illegally cut wood, with local politicians allegedly involved in supplying the material (Anda 2015). In Bantayan Island, Cebu, some resorts were erected on no-build zones (Romanillos 2014).

This arrogance extends to obtaining accreditation from the Department of Tourism (DOT). Accreditation is a certification issued by the Department of Tourism to a tourism enterprise that officially recognizes it as having complied with the

minimum standards for the operation of tourism facilities and services. Section 39 of the Tourism Act of 2009 (Republic Act No. 9593) explains that the rationale for accreditation is to encourage global competitiveness, strengthen data collection, and facilitate the promotion of individual enterprises and the industry as a whole. The Tourism Act has made accreditation mandatory for primary tourism enterprises and voluntary for secondary businesses. In addition, prior accreditation by the Department of Tourism was required for the issuance of license or permits to operate primary tourism enterprises by local government units.

Yet, as discussed above, accreditation of tourism establishments has remained very low. Some of the reasons behind this low figure include restrictive requirements and the perceived technical deficiency of the Department of Tourism (Development Academy of the Philippines 2016). Nonetheless, these conditions should not deter tourism businesses from getting accredited by the national tourism organization. What keeps them from being certified is the certainty that they can operate even without it. This is because at the moment, there is little market, regulatory, or competitive pressure to obtain accreditation (Aberin and Usman 2014). In addition, quite a lot of local governments have chosen to loosen the process of obtaining business permits in order to be competitive. In the context of tourism, they do not require tourism businesses to be accredited by DOT before issuing business permits. This has emboldened many a tourism business, with many choosing not to bother with accreditation anymore particularly in the countryside. In addition, many tourism businesses have been observed to use their political influence to obtain outcomes favorable for their business interests such as converting agricultural lands into tourism zones (Dizon 2015).

One way to deal with the constraints posed by excessive use of power and politics particularly by the elite is to coordinate activities horizontally and vertically. The benefits of collaboration have been explained by scholars (e.g., Bramwell and Sharman 1999) to include avoidance of adversarial conflicts in the long term by sharing cost, building capacity, and providing legitimacy. However, in the case of tourism policy and planning in the Philippines, even coordination can be problematic for a number of reasons. First, local destinations have to prepare and coordinate many plans. Maguigad (2013) mentioned a range from comprehensive land use plans (CLUP) and comprehensive development plans (CDP) and provincial land use plan to regional physical framework plan, each one involving a number of policy actors from local councils to national government agencies. Moreover, these plans have to integrate recent policy concerns such as disaster risk reduction and management as well as climate change adaptation. Aside from these recurring plans, the Department of Tourism encourages local destinations to formulate tourism development plans. Serving as the umbrella plan of all these is the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan put together and coordinated by the National Economic Development Authority.

Nevertheless, as Maguigad emphasized, despite a number of plans that have to cohere with each other, a National Land Use Act is yet to be enacted by the Philippine Congress. This means that there is no underlying basic national framework that will govern how land and its resources, inextricably linked to tourism plans and

programs, will be utilized. Moreover, the broader planning system is noted to lack the necessary legal and administrative mechanisms to move in one direction. Thus, as has been discussed in several case studies of tourism resource use (e.g., de Leon and Kim 2017; Dizon 2015; Majanen 2007), goals and plans tend to conflict with each other.

Second, coordination is affected by the short electoral cycle and more broadly by power and politics. As noted above, changes in political leadership lead to the replacement of administration heads and frequently to a modification of plans. Since plans are mandated to have planning horizons of 6–10 years, coordination will simply suffer when new policy actors want to track a path different from that taken by his predecessors. Consequently, solutions to long-term problems like environmental degradation and land tenure in island destinations take an ad hoc nature, resulting in the persistence of problems and ultimately turning tourism landscapes into highly contested areas (Dizon 2015).

The situation is exacerbated when politics comes into play. As Lange (2010) describes in the local cases he investigated, newly elected political leaders may refuse to collaborate with the opposing camp up above or down below the hierarchy even if the law, such as the Local Government Code of 1991, prescribes that they work together. In lieu of other public officials, the private sector may be involved but their participation may be viewed with suspicion by other actors. Maguigad (2013) cites such as a situation in the formulation of the comprehensive land use plan for Boracay Island, where environmental groups were wary of the engagement with Trans-Aire, a subsidiary of San Miguel Corporation, one of the country's biggest conglomerates.

Third, government turfism gets in the way of coordinating plans and program. Coordination bodies may exist, but in the decentralized context of policymaking in the country, public authorities and local governments retain their autonomy and independence in decision making. Thus, an agency may perform or not perform an act because it conceives itself as the sole authority on the matter, sometimes without regard to any consequences.

Three well-documented cases illustrate this point. Two of the cases dealt with fiscal incentives and tax exemptions for tourism development. As a backgrounder, the Philippine Tourism Act of 2009 grants substantial incentives to investors who want to set up tourism zones, namely, an extendable 6-year income tax holiday; gross income taxation; 100% exemption from all taxes and customs duties on importations of capital equipment, transportation and spare parts, and goods and services; and social responsibility incentives of up to 50% of cost. These perks are more generous than those provided under other investment frameworks such as the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987 and Special Economic Zone Act of 1995. As Dela Santa and Saporsantos (2016) describe, these incentives were meant to correct the neglect that the tourism sector had suffered in the past in terms of resource allocation for development purposes.

However, the implementation of the fiscal incentives provision had been stymied by the refusal of the Department of Finance and the Bureau of Internal Revenue to cooperate fully with the tourism sector. These agencies had objected very strongly

to the enactment of the Tourism Act of 2009, even when it was being deliberated upon at the Philippine Congress because they did not want government revenues to be diminished (Dela Santa and Saporsantos 2016). They failed to stop the bill from becoming a law but continued to fight its execution for 6 years. They pointed out that the incentives benefit only a particular social class, namely, the rich (Domingo 2013). They also questioned the conceptual foundation of tourism, suggesting that it was prone to abuse (Development Academy of the Philippines 2016). Most important of all, the BIR refused to issue the revenue regulations that would rightly allow certified tourism enterprise zone operators to avail themselves of the fiscal incentives. The Department of Tourism and its attached agency, the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), were unable to do anything even if the Tourism Act of 2009 vested TIEZA with the authority to grant and administer the fiscal incentives and explicitly ordered other agencies to work with it directly or via the Tourism Coordinating Council. This is because the BIR itself is protected under the law to promulgate tax rules including detailed regulations for fiscal incentives. Exploiting this exclusive power thus allowed the public finance sector to constrain tourism development. As reported by TIEZA to the media, the tourism industry lost an estimated P232.33 billion in investments from 2013 to 2016, because investors could not get the incentives as promised to them by the Tourism Act of 2009 (Arnaldo 2016).

Related to the issue of fiscal incentives is the tax exemption of local gaming and leisure industries principally found at Entertainment City in Metro Manila. This complex was developed by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) in the last decade to kick-start investments in the field. According to newspaper accounts, while PAGCOR entered into contracts in 2009 to collect license fees from operators such as Bloomberry Resorts and Hotels and City of Dreams, in lieu of all taxes, the Bureau of Internal Revenue moved in 2013 to assess the investors with corporate income tax. This development led to cases being lodged at the Supreme Court, with the court ruling recently in favor of the investors (Business Mirror 2016). Clearly, these cases would not have happened had there been better coordination between investment promotion agencies and tax collecting authorities.

The third case of government turfism constraining coordination is shown by the process involved in getting approval for a comprehensive land use plan for the island destination of Boracay. As Maguigad et al. (2015) explained, the approval of the plan had not been carried out because of the conflict between the various levels of government (municipal, provincial, and national agencies). The conflict stems from differences in the interpretation of setback rules from the beach. On the one hand, according to Maguigad et al., the municipal government wants 25 + 5 m setback from the shoreline. On the other hand, the provincial and national government insist on the 40 m prescribed by the Water Code of the Philippines. As the difference has huge impacts for physical planning and demolition of illegal structures on the beach, each policy actor has not compromised. Task Force Bantay Boracay, a multi-sectoral, multi-agency, and multilevel group organized to discuss and coordinate action, has proven ineffective in bridging the gap. This is because

actors have chosen to maintain, as Maguigad et al. put it, a "respectful distance among various governance levels" (p. 170), and not infringe on the autonomy of the local government of Malay, which has jurisdiction over Boracay, to make the decision. In turn, the municipal government could not push higher government levels to accept its position as it also respects their authority to make their own decisions. Actors have not gone to court yet but the result is a stalemate.

These differences, conflict, and turfism, borne of entrenched values and practices, can turn coordination from consensus building to responding to the interest of actors. The situation is magnified in many other circumstances because governments, whether local or national, have always been organized along distinct sectoral lines (Habito 2009). Coordinative and consultative mechanisms seem to flounder in the face of challenges such as displays of power and politics.

It does not help that the existence of multiple plans, actors, and levels of governance implies that there are multiple windows to influence tourism policy and planning. While this is not by itself a constraint, what it suggests is that the rules of the game can be changed midstream, and influence can be exerted until the end by powerful actors. Further, this implies that decisions can be renegotiated and reversed, depending on who wins the "war of redistribution" or the granting of concessions to favored status (Almonte 1993, p. 109).

In sum, the exercise of power and politics has played a very significant and debilitating role in tourism policy and planning in the country. Even with increased democratization, learning, and vigilance, influential actors continue to have their way as seen in destabilizing regime changes following the election of new leaders, impunity, and turfism.

2.3 Explaining Power and Politics in Philippine Tourism Policy and Planning

What perpetuates this situation? That is, what makes power and politics, particularly its abuse by the elite to demand particularistic benefits for their businesses, so resilient as a rule of the game in tourism development and management? It is shown to be even more important than a superior idea or technical expertise in certain cases of policymaking (Dela Santa and Saporsantos 2016; Lange 2010). What can be done about it?

The answer is not so simple. In the first place, power and politics are basic and central in social situations. In terms of tourism policy and planning, Hall (1994, p. 52) emphasizes that power "governs the interaction of individuals, organizations and agencies influencing, or trying to influence, the formulation of tourism policy and the manner in which it is implemented." Bramwell and Meyer (2007) contend that it emerges from social relationships, mediated and realized in actor-specific practice. Crucially, power is performed and cannot simply be possessed, they highlight. That is, actors, whether at the personal, institutional, or network level,

struggle to impose their beliefs to control aspects of the policy and planning processes (Hall and Jenkins 1995). Thus, power is exercised, and as illustrated in cases above, some actors use it with impunity.

In the context of Philippine tourism development, a confluence of historical and analytical factors seems to have allowed some actors to exercise more power and use politics better than others. These include elite structures and weakness of the state. These are briefly discussed below.

With reference to elite structures and families that govern them, scholars have established that their power flows from having histories much longer than the development of the Philippine state (McCoy 2009; Simbulan 2005). Their interests therefore are much more entrenched, which has allowed them to greatly influence the formation and organization of the state (Anderson 1998). Collectively, elite families gained economic power during the Spanish colonization period and obtained political power during the American colonial era. World wars, martial law, and people power have sidelined some families, but by and large, their access to the corridors of power has not diminished over time. In fact, many families have been able to merge both political and economic power to sustain themselves (Coronel et al. 2007) by funding the electoral campaigns of politicians and by engaging in booty capitalism (Hutchcroft 1998). Resource dependence and monopoly thereof by one family is said to perpetuate monopolistic elite rule and predatory rent seeking (Lange 2010). As a result, it is argued that relative to the state, the traditional elite in the country has retained its power while everywhere else in the Asian region, it has weakened (Almonte 1993).

That the institutions of the state are weak and cannot pursue public policy independent of pressure groups (Tadem 2012) should be apparent from the many challenges to tourism policy and planning mentioned above. Historians have traced this weakness to governance practices during the Spanish colonial period, the elite nature of early democracy introduced by the Americans, as well as the historically minimal role of the state in the economy (Abinales and Amoroso 2005; Corpuz 1997; Anderson 1998). Within the tourism context, this weakness is reflected by the lack of capability of personnel, particularly at the local level, both in terms of quality and quantity, to perform tourism planning, development, and monitoring functions (Maguigad 2013; Rodolfo 2005). Nonetheless, the state remains important not just for wealth accumulation but also in providing leadership in pursuing long-standing problems such as poverty alleviation through innovative means such as tourism (Dela Santa 2015).

2.4 Moving Beyond Traditional Power and Politics

Given the above conditions, and noting the dynamics between the state and the elite, how can tourism policy and planning in the Philippines be undertaken? Certainly, this is a complex issue, and a full discussion is beyond the scope of this chapter.

However, a few notable mechanisms can be discussed, all within the scope of addressing failures in politics and governance at manageable levels.

An oft-repeated proposal is the empowerment of stakeholders and related practices. Tourism scholars have written about its importance in achieving more sustainable outcomes, for example, for local communities (e.g., Cole 2006; Sofield 2003; Scheyvens 2002). In this chapter, it is taken to mean in its motivational sense, a "mastery over one's affairs" (Rappaport 1987), that is, to "enable" the individual or institution rather than simply to delegate power to other stakeholders.

This is not to say that the Philippines has not been doing this. On the contrary, the Constitution and various laws including the Local Government Code of 1991 lay the basic framework for popular participation in governance. Government agencies have responded positively, and consequently many civil society organizations have played significant political roles and have become part of policymaking processes.

But it has also been noted that at the end of the process, the final outputs and results are left to formal and conventional institutional actors and methods (Magadia 2003). Thus, the call for empowerment suggests that efforts must be intensified to remove or alter conditions that foster powerlessness and to capacitate not only the people that populate the institutions of the state but also those of other actors including civil society organizations. The goal is to enhance feelings of self-efficacy, so that the empowered would initiate or persist along a path that reduces constraints in tourism policy and planning ultimately.

This is not an easy undertaking, as empowerment researchers and tourism policy and planning scholars have found out. A key challenge is that norms, ideologies, doctrines, and other stable system parameters (or broader context), in the language of policy change theories, may be so embedded that they constrain change and implementation of public policies. Montefrio (2014), for example, discusses how the Regalian Doctrine has been used to counter the rights of indigenous Filipinos over their ancestral domains, which are fertile grounds for tourism activities. How these challenges are managed are matters for researchers to take up fully in the future. What is clear is that unless the oppressiveness of power and politics is mitigated, the context of Philippine tourism policy and planning will remain very challenging.

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Chapter 3
Tourism Circuit Planning for Subnational Tourism Development in the Philippines

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Abstract The 2011–2016 Philippine National Tourism Development Plan is based on a destination development framework that identified 77 priority tourism destination areas (TDAs) in 21 regional clusters. The chapter provides an integrated case study of the tourism circuit planning approach adopted to operationalize the priority TDAs in 16 provinces, through a joint development program of the Philippine and Canadian governments. The project outcomes suggest that the destinations are becoming more competitive, as indicated by increasing employment, tourism-related investment, and visitor arrivals by program's end in 2016. Correspondence with provincial project officers suggests that the tourism circuit approach can spread the tourism benefits more widely. The approach also highlights the need for regional, multi-stakeholder solutions for tourism growth, competitiveness, and sustainability. Unstable local government tourism institutions were seen to constrain the continuity of tourism development efforts. The lack of reliable data also highlighted the need for subnational indicators of tourism sustainability and competitiveness. The circuit approach can be considered for subnational tourism planning where there are active stakeholder participation, strong public-private partnerships, and effective destination management leadership. Concrete results were demonstrated where both local government and private sector were actively engaged in the circuit development plans. At the same time, strong institutional and individual leadership sustained the local partnerships' energy and the momentum for change within the destination.

Keywords Destination planning · Tourism circuit

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3.1 Introduction

Planning for tourism development can take place at various levels. Some countries have national tourism development plans, and it is not unusual within the national structure to find similar plans being made for subnational regions, towns, cities, etc. Although various approaches have been developed in general planning (e.g., boosterism, integrated, interactive, collaborative, bottom-up, etc.), a review of tourism literature shows that not many authors have been concerned with tourism planning (Andriotis 2007). However, over the past decades, several authors have studied various aspects of tourism planning (e.g., Inskeep 1991; Gunn 1994; Timothy 1998, 1999).

Gunn (1979) was one of the first to define tourism planning as a tool for destination area development and to view it as a means for assessing the needs of a tourist-receiving destination. The focus of tourism planning is mainly to generate income and employment and ensure resource conservation and traveler satisfaction (Gunn 1994). Specifically, planning can guide under- or undeveloped destinations for further tourism development, while developed countries can use planning to revitalize their tourism industry and maintain its viability (Andriotis 2007). Spanoudis (1982) proposed that "tourism planning must always proceed within the framework of an overall plan for the development of an area's total resources; and local conditions and demands must be satisfied before any other considerations are met" (p.314).

This chapter aims to investigate the local economic development and tourist circuit approach conducted under the Local Governance Support Program for Local Economic Development (LGSP-LED), an 8-year cooperation program of the governments of the Philippines and Canada, aimed at strengthening the Philippine national policy environment for sustainable local economic development (LED) and improving local conditions for sustainable LED in specific areas of the country. Specifically, the chapter explores the main components of the tourist circuit planning approach, starting from the nature of tourist circuits and the ways that the approach was implemented and ending with the outputs (what appears on the ground) and the outcomes (measurement of planning impacts).

3.2 The Local Governance Support Program for Local Economic Development (LGSP-LED)

The Local Governance Support Program for Local Economic Development (LGSP-LED) was an 8-year cooperation program of the governments of the Philippines and Canada aimed at strengthening the Philippine national policy environment for sustainable local economic development (LED) and improving local conditions for sustainable LED in specific areas of the country.

Table 3.1 LGSP-LED destination areas, project coverage, and baseline tourism situation

Destination area	Municipalities in the project	Visitor arrivals at start (in '000s)	Tourism activities associated with destination
Allah Valley Landscape[a]	10	70.85	Lake Sebu; indigenous culture (T'boli)
Metro Naga[a]	16	445.16	Urban center; history, festivals
Metro Iloilo-Guimaras[a]	12	453.74	Urban center; history, festivals; beach coves
Northwest Leyte[a]	5	101.10	Island-hopping; lake
Panglao-Dauis-Baclayon[a]	3	539.75	Beach resorts (Panglao Island); Chocolate Hills
Legazpi-Donsol[b]	6	636.15	Mayon Volcano; whale shark interaction
Calamianes Islands[b]	4	91.58	Island-hopping; diving (reefs and wrecks)
Northern Panay[b]	11	1577.68	Beach resorts (Boracay Island)
Northern Iloilo[b]	6	48.87	Island-hopping
Metro Bacolod[b]	3	674.93	Urban center; culture, history, festivals
Negros Oriental[b]	5	414.07	University town; reef diving
Siquijor[b]	6	33.43	Beach coves; traditional culture
Northern Cebu[b]	7	128.36	Beach resorts (Bantayan Island); diving with thresher sharks
Samal Island[b]	1	187.97	Island-hopping; beach resorts (Samal Island)

[a]Batch 2 site; baseline year is 2011
[b]Batch 3 site; baseline year is 2013

From 2008 to 2016, LGSP-LED supported a total of 18 LED projects by participating local government units (LGUs) from various provinces of the country. Implemented in three waves or batches, each local project typically involved a cluster of contiguous cities and municipalities within a particular province, to test the idea that local economic development is regional in character (LGSP-LED 2011).

From 2009 to 2012, LGSP-LED's first batch of local projects focused on two economic sectors: agribusiness and tourism. However, in 2012, the National Department of Tourism (DOT) completed its 2011–2016 National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP) and launched a new marketing campaign called "It's More Fun in the Philippines." Taking this cue from the national government, all five of LGSP-LED's second batch of local partners are elected to focus on tourism. LGSP-LED subsequently decided to focus exclusively on local tourism development for its third and last wave of LED projects, which started in 2014. The last group comprised of nine additional project sites – all identified as priority destinations in the NTDP. By the end of the program in 2016, LGSP-LED had implemented tourism-based projects in a total of 14 destinations ranging from urban hubs known for their historic attractions and festivals to major beach resort destinations as well as smaller diving destinations. As shown in Table 3.1, some destinations

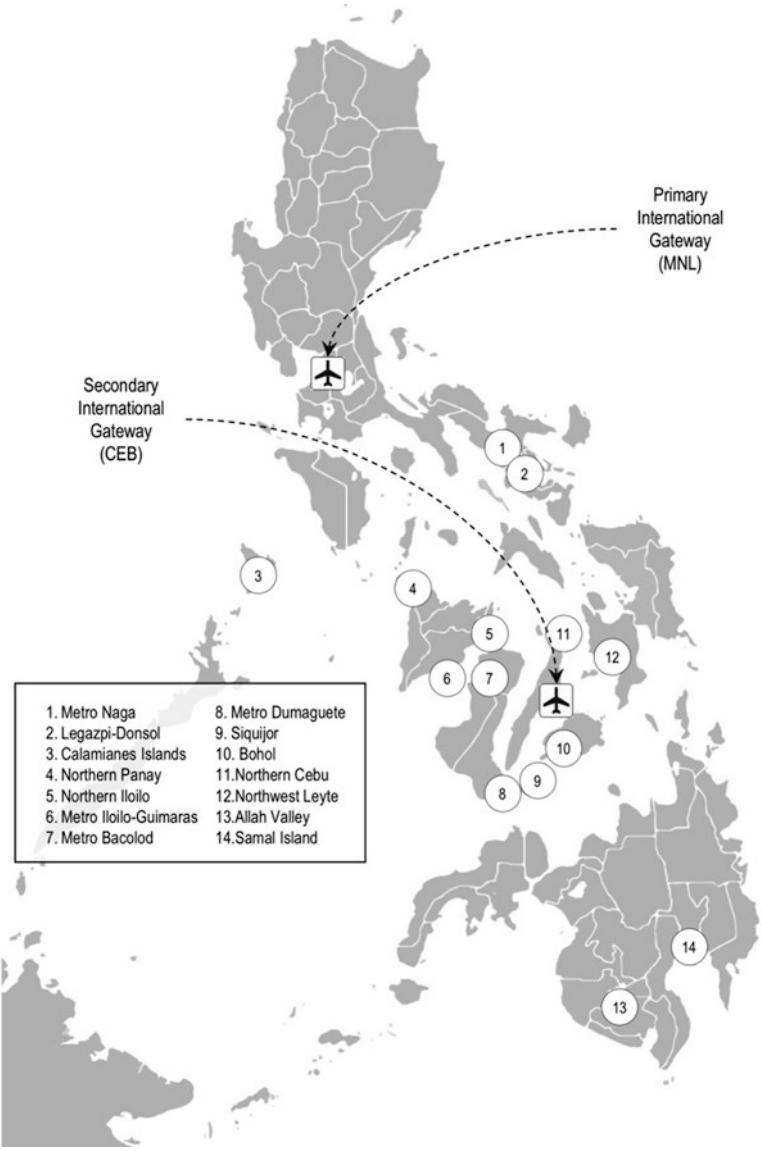

Fig. 3.1 The LGSP-LED local project sites/tourism development areas

were already receiving 500 thousand to a million visitor arrivals per year, while the less-developed destinations were averaging only 40–70 thousand annual arrivals when they started their projects.

Figure 3.1 shows the locations of the 14 destinations in relation to the Philippines' two main international gateways.

3.3 The Local Economic Development Approach

The program's approach to local economic development (LED) focused on establishing a process for promoting investments and generating employment through participatory strategic planning. LGSP-LED's framework drew from a wide range of approaches being advocated by various development agencies such as the UN-Habitat (2005), the World Bank (Swinburn et al. 2006), and the International Labour Organization (2007).

LED teams, composed of key local government officials and partners from local business chambers, analyzed their local economies' comparative advantages. Subsequent value chain studies allowed the stakeholders to identify the competitive advantages of the local tourism sector (destination). In turn, these were used to plan and implement specific LED strategies and action plans. A midterm program evaluation of LGSP-LED in 2011 noted that this classic approach could help build long-term capacities in LED and tourism planning. However, it was not likely to build much momentum for change without more tangible short-term successes for the LGUs, whose governors and mayors are pressured to show tangible results within relatively short 3-year election cycles. Thus, the midterm report argued for more action-oriented approaches that could rapidly generate investments and local jobs "without necessarily having all the plans or processes in place (LGSP-LED 2011)."

LGSP-LED and its partners needed to view the challenges of investment and employment from the perspective of the businesses who would generate these outcomes. To do this, the midterm evaluation report concluded that the program needed to lessen its focus on governance processes and for LGUs – used to doing things themselves – to move to more facilitative roles in support of private sector initiatives. This implied that LGSP-LED would move toward a tourism planning approach that could:

- Quickly identify critical short-term interventions as well as longer-term investments needed to build a more competitive local tourism sector.
- Provide market- and industry-oriented perspectives on the issues related to tourism sustainability and competitiveness.
- Lead to an integrated strategy and action plan that clearly defines roles and partnership areas among local government, private sector, and civil society.
- Allow the crosscutting themes of gender equality, environmental sustainability, and poverty reduction to be mainstreamed into the resulting strategies and action plans.

Internal discussions and analysis within LGSP-LED eventually led to the concept of the tourism economy as a destination unit or what the 2011–2016 National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP) called tourism development areas (TDAs).

The NTDP framework was built around tourism sites as the "specific places that contain natural, cultural, and built attractions which tourists come to see and experience through different activities (Philippine Department of Tourism 2012)." Two or more tourism sites located closely enough to be developed and marketed together

made up a tourism development area (TDA). Each TDA could be associated with a transportation gateway that served as the international air hub into the local region. The two or more TDAs linked with a specific gateway were then said to form a tourism destination cluster (TDC). All in all, the NTDP identified a total of 77 TDAs distributed among 20 destination clusters, with each cluster linked to at least 1 of 9 international gateways.

However, the NTDP did not provide details on how to realize the development opportunities for each local destination. Beyond identifying the major attractions and broad market opportunities for each TDA, the national plan did not offer much in terms of site-specific actions needed from the LGUs or their private sector partners. To "color" the NTDP's destination framework with a private sector lens (LGSP-LED 2011) as the midterm report had recommended, the program sought inspiration from other LED-oriented programs in Asia.

The SNV Netherlands Development Organisation had been implementing propoor sustainable tourism projects in Nepal, Bhutan, and Laos using a framework that seemed appropriate to what LGSP-LED was trying to do. Similar to the objectives of LGSP-LED, SNV adjusted its local development strategy by "(involving) the private sector more directly, recognising that government tourism departments were often not the primary agents for income generation (SNV 2012)." Its approach had combined public sector-oriented destination development and management components with industry-centered responsible business in tourism activities.

Two elements of SNV's private sector strategy directly corresponded to LGSP-LED's new interests: multi-stakeholder dialogue and planning, as well as value chain development (SNV 2012). However, given the short 2-year timelines of its projects, LGSP-LED could not invest as much time on full-blown technical studies and private sector organizing work. It needed quicker approaches that would provide LGUs a starting point to engage their private sector partners on destination development and management.

For these, LGSP-LED turned to look at the experiences of the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) SME Development for Sustainable Employment Program (SMEDSEP). With assistance from the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), SMEDSEP had developed tools for multi-sectoral participatory planning and rapid economic analysis of LGUs that LGSP-LED could adopt for its own clusters. They had also conducted tourism value chain analyses for several destinations (Boquiren, Idrovo, & Valdez, Boquiren et al. 2005; Hilz-ward 2007; Solis 2009) that subsequently became LGSP-LED's project sites as well. Perhaps most importantly, GIZ's experiences reinforced the importance of an action-oriented LED project that delivered "quick wins" to create momentum and build trust with the local stakeholders even as the LGU continued to work through the LED process (Antonio 2012).

3.4 The Tourism Circuit Approach

LGSP-LED's tourism planning approach adopted a three-faceted definition of destinations. First, it defined the area in terms of the supply of tourism assets, sites, gateways, and local transportation linkages found in it. The second perspective defined the destination as an industry, i.e., a value chain of tourism-related enterprises which existed on top of, and depended on, the area's physical resources and infrastructure. Finally, the LGSP-LED approach added a third lens – the tourist perspective. The destination could be described as a circuit built around the visitors' likely itinerary: from their entry through the gateway and their subsequent exploration of tourism sites and onto their ultimate departure from the destination.

The three-dimensional perspective allowed stakeholders to frame the destination planning problem in terms of the strengths and weaknesses of the tourism value chain as well as the specific sites within the destination. Integrating the value chain and tourism asset map as a circuit enabled local planners to envision how tourism demand might be distributed within the destination. Priorities for product development, investment promotion, marketing, and infrastructure development could be determined by knowing the sites likely to experience higher visitor demand. At the same time, different municipalities could appreciate that they could take on different roles within the overall destination. Some could succeed as host communities for overnight or day visitors. For others, their comparative advantages could be in supplying products and human resources to the tourism businesses in the area.

The approach first began to take shape among LGSP-LED's second batch of project sites before being adopted as a standard feature in its third and final set of local projects. The five-step action planning process is summarized in Fig. 3.2.

3.4.1 Stakeholder Mapping of the Tourism Circuit

The first step is based on the conception of the destination as composed of two kinds of tourism sites distributed around gateways. Attraction sites were considered to be those locations where visitors would experience the attractions or engage in the tourist activities that the destination was known for. A service center was an area with a concentration of accommodations, restaurants, and other services and facilities that tourists would need during their visit. Gateway cities tended to be service centers as well. Some attraction sites such as beach resort areas could also function as service centers, just as urban service centers might also be attraction sites for their urban heritage and entertainment.

Many of the municipalities already had tourism maps from previous planning exercises. They had already plotted the tourism sites within their destinations, as well as the transportation links connecting these sites to each other and to their gateways.

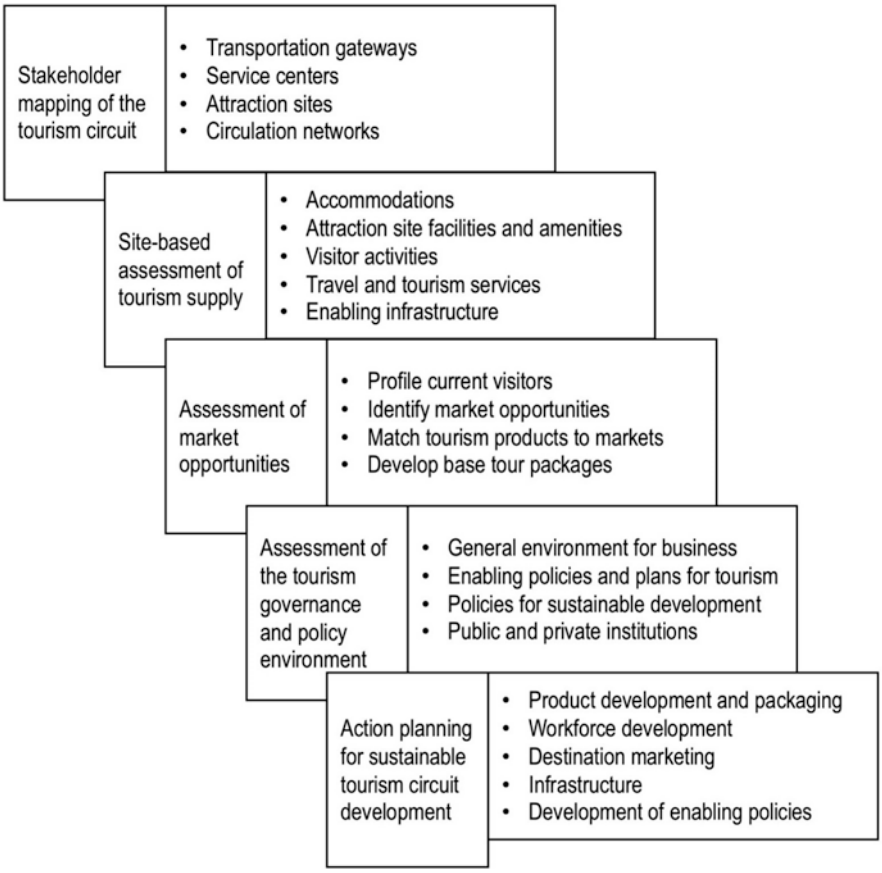

Fig. 3.2 The tourism circuit action planning process

However, in the LGSP-LED sites, "who" did the mapping was just as critical as "what" was being mapped. The mapping of the tourism circuit needed to be done from the perspective of the tourist's itinerary. It needed to be guided more by the private sector's observations and experiences in dealing with tourists, than by the local government agenda for where it wanted tourists to go.

Tourism frontline staff were specifically invited to work with LGU tourism officers in identifying where visitors went during their visits. As the people that visitors typically approach to arrange their local activities, front liners such as hotel concierges, cab drivers, tour operators, and guides would be in better positions to provide the answers to the critical questions. Which sites were more tourists go to? What attractions and activities were their guests asking about? What routes and schedules did these visitors follow when going on these tours? By identifying which attractions and activities were exhibiting stronger demand than others, the stakeholders could quickly agree on where their site development priorities needed to be.

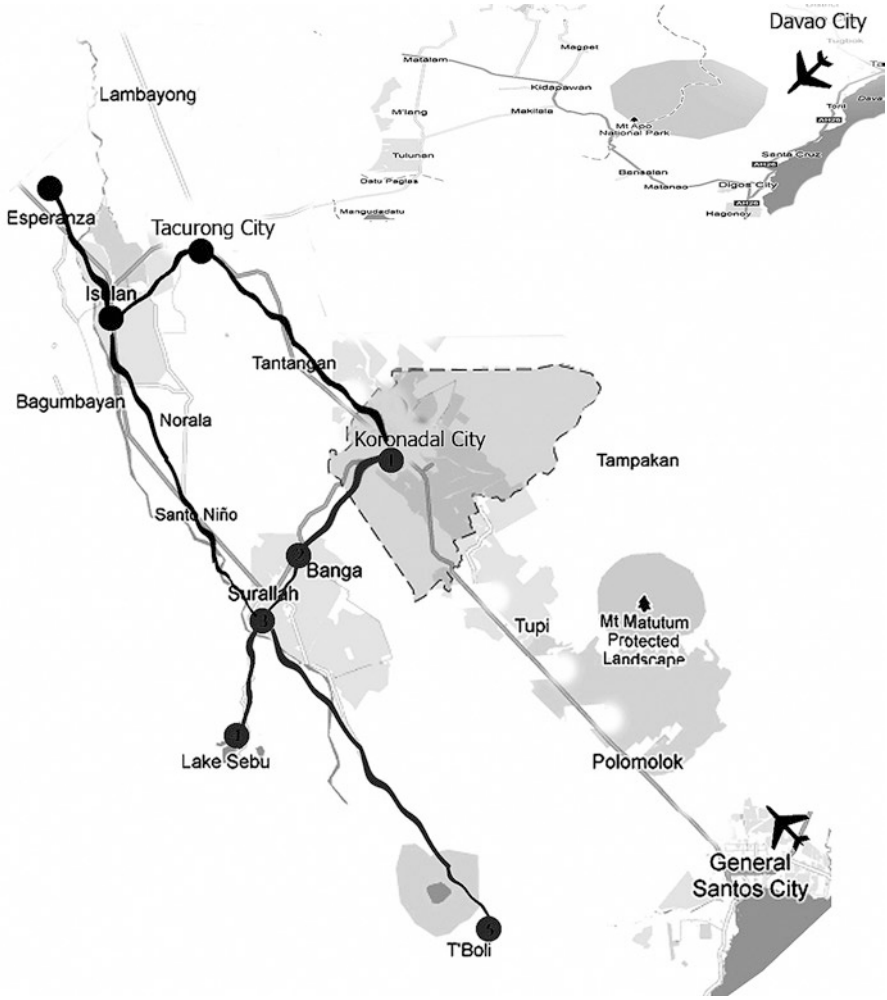

Fig. 3.3 Sample map: Allah Valley Landscape in South Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat

Figure 3.3 shows the Allah Valley Landscape as an example of a tourism circuit map. The LGSP-LED project site only involved ten municipalities in the two southern Philippine provinces of South Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat. However, from a tourism industry's perspective, the major tourism center for visitors to the Allah Valley was Koronadal City with General Santos City as the closest airport from which domestic and foreign visitors might reach the Valley. Neither city was officially part of the project cluster. However, neither city could be ignored as being part of the actual tourism circuit. The map also shows that not all the municipalities in the destination had what the stakeholders considered to be priority attraction sites.

3.4.2 Site-Based Assessment of Tourism Supply

Many stakeholders were already familiar with the popular four As of tourism (accessibility, accommodations, attractions, amenities) mnemonic device for describing the main components of a tourism destination. For LGSP-LED's tourism circuit planning exercise, the stakeholders analyzed the supply, quality, and general condition of their four As on two levels – first, at the tourism site level and then across the circuit or destination as a whole. Considering the short planning time frames, the site level assessments were limited only to the priority sites identified in the circuit mapping stage.

This step was a critical exercise to educate the local government stakeholders on the business side of tourism, which could be represented by the tourism value chain, in essence. It also highlighted the critical role of local and national governments in enabling tourism at the site and destination levels through infrastructure such as access roads, sewage and solid waste management systems, and power and water utilities.

3.4.3 Assessment of Market Opportunities

Local stakeholders described who their markets are and what their travel preferences might be using a simplified segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) exercise to:

1. Profile the current and potential visitor markets of the destination.
2. Define the destination's immediate and emerging target markets.
3. Develop tour itineraries to match the target market segments with the destination's existing and potential tour products.

Market segmentation involved a two-pronged approach similar to that of the national plan, which first described the source markets in terms of their places of origin. The stakeholders were then asked to consider the activities that their visitors could engage in, given the current and potential attractions of their destination. From these, they could identify the most promising activity-based segments in each of the key source markets.

The stakeholders then developed half-day to 2-day tours as basic destination products to match the interests of their target market segments. In some destinations, the engagement of hotels, transport providers, tour operators, and other service providers had the additional effect of rallying them around the tour packaging exercise as a tangible partnership-based activity for the industry as a whole. In Metro Naga, Camarines Sur, the activity directly facilitated the establishment of a tourism consortium – Naga Excursions – which has now become its de facto convention bureau responsible for bidding and seeking out meeting and convention hosting opportunities for the destination.

3.4.4 Assessment of the Tourism Governance and Policy Environment

As with the tourism supply analysis step, stakeholders assessed the tourism governance and policy conditions at the site and destination levels. This step of the circuit planning process was an attempt to describe the local government's role (Porter 1990) in challenging and enabling the local private sector to become a more competitive tourism industry. The assessment focused on four policy areas:

1. General business climate-enabling policies such as business registration, local investment incentives, etc.
2. Tourism-specific plans, policies, and programs
3. Policies for advancing sustainable development and inclusive growth
4. Public and private institutions for tourism and local economic development

3.4.5 Planning for Sustainable Tourism Circuit Development

The mapping and assessment exercises identified the competitive advantages and weaknesses of the destination. They also determined the opportunities for, and constraints to, the development of the tourism sites as well as the circuit as a whole. The stakeholders now needed to translate their understanding of the current situation into a plan of action.

As standard planning textbooks prescribe (e.g., Gunn and Var 2002; Inskeep 1991), stakeholders first need to agree on their goals before determining what activities they need to do. However, competitiveness and inclusive growth are outcomes that are not achieved overnight. Rather, a destination has to work incrementally toward the bigger goals by first achieving some smaller targets – outputs leading to outcomes in a logical chain of results. The tourism circuit plan thus becomes a sequence of related activities to match the stakeholders' desired results chain (Fig. 3.4).

The logic model (see Fig. 3.4) for drafting the tourism circuit development plans assumed that destination competitiveness was a necessary condition to the full achievement of their intermediate goal to increase investments and tourism employment. This theory of change was, in many ways, a localized adaptation of the World Economic Forum's (WEF) travel and tourism competitiveness index for countries (World Economic Forum 2015). However, where the WEF index had four pillars, LGSP-LED's model had three key concerns. Is the market for the destination growing? Is the necessary infrastructure already, or expected to soon be, in place? Is the local business and regulatory climate conducive to tourism-related investments? These three areas of destination competitiveness provided the rationale for what would become the five component activities of the tourism circuit development plans, as shown in the bottom row of Fig. 3.4.

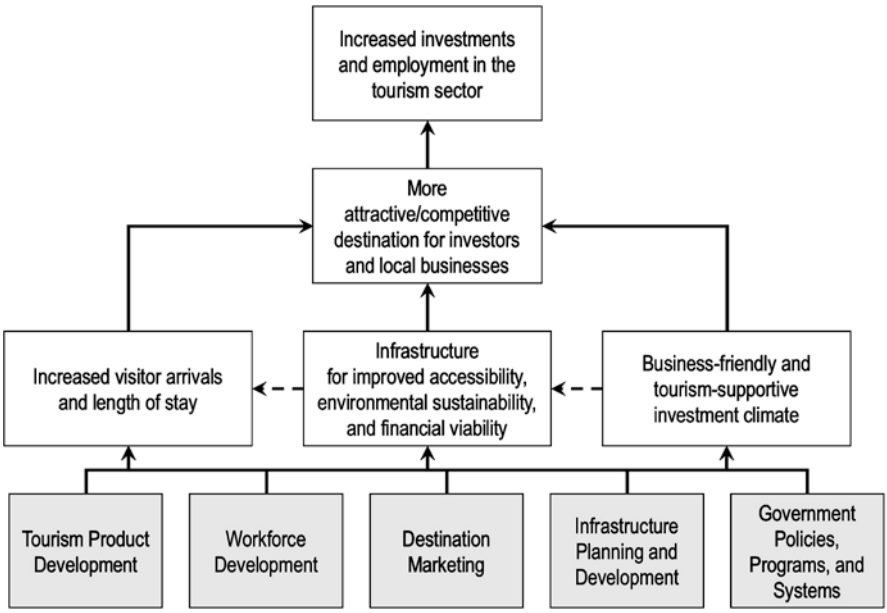

Fig. 3.4 The tourism circuit planning logic model

Tourism product development and workforce development are the central components of the plan. They correspond to the main contributions of the private sector to destination development. They also hint at the lead role of local businesses and investors in creating jobs and income by hiring and buying from residents.

Destination marketing is often a shared responsibility of the local government and the private sector. In most areas, provincial governments were more likely to have the resources as well as the inherent motivation to lead this effort. Destination marketing's role is to increase visitor arrivals for the destination as a whole. In turn, this increases demand for the products, services, and facilities of local establishments.

Finally, government continues to play an enabling role in destination development and industry growth through infrastructure development and enacting appropriate plans, policies, and programs to support the improved competitiveness of the local tourism sector.

3.5 Implementation and Feedback

3.5.1 Initial Results

The destinations themselves did not require very detailed tourism master plans. The stakeholders' immediate interest was to agree on the strategic directions for becoming more competitive destinations. From the perspective of establishing

Table 3.2 Examples of tourism circuit development outputs

Circuit Development component	Metro Naga (2012–2014)	Metro Dumaguete (2014–2016)
Product development	Four themed tour itineraries developed: pilgrimage, culture and heritage, Mt. Isarog ecotourism, coastal and marine	Three tour itineraries for Metro Dumaguete, Apo Island diving sub-circuit, and Tanjay-Manjuyod farm-to-coast sub-circuit
	Project proposals developed to promote investments to develop seven secondary attraction sites outside Naga City	Investment promotion for new accommodations and commercial/ retail development
Workforce development	370 workers trained on various skills including food sanitation and handling, tour guiding, emergency first response, etc.	144 workers trained
		Tourism workforce program designed for implementation in five LGUs after 2016
Destination marketing	New brand (Naga X) and tagline (where's your next eXcursion?)	New destination brand for Negros Oriental (this is how you want to live)
	Website (nagax.com) and social media channels launched	
	Mounted the first public-private sales missions for Metro Naga tourism sector	
Infrastructure	Proposal to national government for realignment of Naga Airport to allow entry of larger aircraft	Improvement of Dumaguete Seaport
	Lobby for government funds to improve last-mile road access to attraction sites	Repair and improvement of airport
		Facilitation of private investments in solar farms
Government policies	Municipal tourism development plans prepared for 13 of 16 LGUs in Metro Naga	Automated business permitting and licensing systems installed in three LGUs
	New tourism information and statistics system (including software, data collection protocols, and client services) developed for Naga City	Updated local ordinances related to local investment incentives and tourism code

"quick wins" and competitive momentum, they wanted to identify which priority activities they could quickly move on. Thus, they focused on drafting action plans to address the gaps in product development, workforce development, destination marketing, infrastructure, or local governance that were limiting the destinations' overall competitiveness.

Table 3.2 provides examples of quick-win outputs accomplished from the initial implementation of tourism circuit development action plans in two LGSP-LED sites.

By March 2016, the combined outputs from LGSP-LED-assisted activities in the 14 destination areas included:

- Forty-seven new base tour itineraries launched by local tour operators in 13 out of 14 TDAs
- Three thousand fifty-six individuals trained for new employment or skills enhancement of currently employed workers
- Eight new tourism brands for five destinations (Metro Naga, Northwest Leyte, Allah Valley, Metro Iloilo-Guimaras, Calamianes Islands) and three provinces (Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental, Siquijor).

The outcomes reported in LGSP-LED's end-of-program report suggested that the project sites were making notable progress as competitive tourism destinations (Canadian Urban Institute 2016). Aggregated data by the participating local government teams showed that:

- Annual visitor arrivals grew by 17.3% per year between 2011 and 2015 for the first group of five destinations and 13.6% from 2013 to 2015 for the last group of nine destinations.
- Total tourism-related investments by private groups in the 14 destination areas were estimated at PhP47.3 billion, roughly USD1.03 billion at the prevailing rate in March 2016. Around PhP12.7B (US$275.8 M) of these investments was for hotels and resorts, while PhP32.0B (US$646 M) was invested for energy generation projects.
- Public sector investments in tourism-related infrastructure from 2012 to 2016 was estimated at PhP17.8B (US$388.3 M), primarily for airport upgrading as well as construction of tourism roads to attraction sites.
- Accommodation establishments generated more than 27,000 new jobs across the 14 destinations – 16,677 from 2012 to 2016 for the first group and 10,421 from 2014 to 2016 for the 9 other sites. (Unfortunately, employment data is generally not collected or reported for other types of tourism-related establishments).

3.5.2 Continued Adoption of the Tourism Circuit Development Approach

One of the major themes of LGSP-LED's midterm program assessment dealt with the sustainability of the projects initiated in the various destinations. What would happen to the circuits once the funding stopped? The early indications are that the local partners have continued to implement the tourism circuit development plans – even extending the approach to other tourism destinations in their province.

Since the completion of its LGSP-LED projects in 2014, Metro Naga has now added more coastal attraction sites as well as culinary and adventure tourism activities to its first set of Naga Excursion tour packages. In Northwest Leyte,

new lake- and cave-based ecotourism and adventure tours are now being marketed in addition to their initial island-hopping, marine tourism portfolio.

Correspondence with project officers from the last batch of LGSP-LED TDAs confirms that Aklan, Albay, Iloilo, Negros Occidental, Sorsogon, and Palawan have begun, or are planning, to apply the tourism circuit approach to other destination clusters in their respective provinces. In Sorsogon, the provincial government is expanding their side of the Legazpi-Donsol circuit. Castilla and Sorsogon City have now been linked to the original towns of Donsol and Pilar as a single tourism corridor. According to the Sorsogon provincial tourism officer, the stakeholders are careful "to develop tourism projects that would be harmonious with each site, no competition or duplication of products."

3.5.3 Perceived Advantages and Difficulties of the Tourism Circuit Approach

For some, the value of the tourism circuit approach is in its potential to spread the benefits of tourism to more areas and beneficiaries. Cristine Mansinares, provincial tourism officer for Negros Occidental, notes that the circuit approach in their Metro Bacolod TDA had the potential to make tourism more inclusive by "spreading the tourism receipts to possible communities along the route leading to major destinations (Mansinares 2016)." For Maribel Buñi, at the provincial tourism office of Palawan, the advantage for the Calamianes Islands was simple, "More sites benefit. Not just the main tourism center" (M. Buñi, personal communication, 09 December 2016). In northern Panay, more than 90% of visitor arrivals to the province of Aklan are concentrated on the island resort destination of Boracay. Thus, Aklan is planning additionally to promote other attractions in mainland Aklan, while still making use of the circuits identified in their LGSP-LED project.

From an operational perspective, the advantage of the tourism circuit approach stems from its potential to facilitate a multidimensional convergence of interests: among cities and municipalities in the destination, between towns in the circuit and their provincial government, and among local government, private sector, and community-based stakeholders. Similarly, the circuit enabled national government agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGO), and other external partners to harmonize their programs to support the local development efforts across the different destinations. This convergence of tourism development efforts was most notably demonstrated in the areas of product development, destination marketing, as well as regional planning.

One common observation from the different sites was that the tourism circuit approach allowed the LGUs to pool their resources while also engaging the private sector more closely in the development and marketing of the destination. Product development was also facilitated "because we could more easily connect the activities from one LGU to another (Mansinares 2016)."

The tourism circuit also provided the LGUs with an opportunity to share and compare local plans, maps, and data with each other as well as their counterparts in the provincial and national governments. These aided the integration of the local plans for shared concerns such as the identification of environmental risks and hazards from tourism development. In addition, the tourism circuit allowed LGUs in a circuit to develop a stronger regional lobby for national government support to critical projects such as airport modernization and construction of tourism roads.

Effective tourism circuit planning and development depend, of course, on the capabilities of the public and private sector actors involved. In this regard, the instability of local government tourism institutions was a common lament across the sites. Tourism and local economic development are relatively new functions for many LGUs in the Philippines. Thus, many still do not have permanent, full-time staff for their tourism offices. Ad interim appointments for local tourism officers – linked to the 3-year terms of their appointing mayors – are common. The rapid turnover of staff resulting from these temporary arrangements was seen as a major constraint on the continuity and sustainability of local tourism development efforts.

Another important challenge to effective tourism planning and implementation was the general lack of timely and reliable tourism data. This problem was largely related to the limited capabilities and resources of LGU tourism and planning personnel. However, the local government weaknesses also appeared to have been exacerbated by a corresponding lack of appreciation for such data from their private sector partners. As more stakeholders come around to the idea of sustainable and competitive destinations, the importance of measuring and analyzing the indicators of tourism sustainability and competitiveness will continue to grow.

3.6 Lessons Learned

LGSP-LED's experiences suggest that the tourism circuit framework can be an effective tool for action planning at the destination level – particularly, where local leadership cycles are relatively short. For stakeholders, the tourism circuit offers a platform where national and local government, private business, and community residents can jointly address their overlapping concerns for their destination.

Drawn from the perspective of visitor markets rather than arbitrary administrative arrangements, the circuit also provides a rationale for inter-municipal cooperation within a destination by showing the geographic areas where local government policies and infrastructure are most needed. At the same time, the framework shows the specific sites where the efforts of different stakeholder groups would most need to converge, thus highlighting the need for regional, rather than independent solutions for tourism growth, competitiveness, and sustainability (Canadian Urban Institute 2016).

3.6.1 Public vs Private Sector Roles in Destination Planning and Development

The key lesson from the LGSP-LED projects is that tourism circuit development should be planned and executed as a public-private sector partnership within a destination. Ideally, it is a partnership with clearly defined roles for the local governments and their partners in the local business community. The private sector is expected to drive tourism growth through business investment, product development, and workforce development – functions where businesses are generally more capable than public sector agencies. On the other hand, local governments must provide a local policy and public service environment that enables the efficient and ultimately profitable operation of tourism-related enterprises in their attraction sites and service centers. Beyond policies and regulations, LGUs can do this by taking on functions, such as destination marketing and public infrastructure investments, that the private sector may not have the resources nor interest to perform by themselves.

Interestingly, the manner by which the LGUs and their private sector partners worked with each other varied from one LGSP-LED destination to the other. In destinations where the municipal tourism units were not yet very experienced, such as in Panglao-Dauis-Baclayon and Metro Dumaguete, private sector institutions took more active leadership roles in the core activities of product development, workforce development, and destination marketing. However, in destinations like Metro Naga and Northwest Leyte, local governments needed to be more active drivers of these functions because the private institutions were not yet organized enough to take on the lead roles.

Nevertheless, whether the local projects were led more by the LGUs or by private sector associations did not seem to have a significant effect on the tourism circuit development programs' effectiveness and sustainability. It appears that public-private sector partnerships and strong leadership are equally necessary ingredients. Concrete results were demonstrated in those destinations where both LGUs and private sector associations were actively engaged in the planning and implementation of the tourism circuit development plans. At the same time, strong institutional and individual leadership was necessary to ensure that the partnerships sustained their energy and the momentum for change within the destination.

3.6.2 Leadership and Destination Management

The regional nature of tourism circuits will require inter-municipal cooperation on the shared economic, environmental, and social concerns of LGUs in the same destination. In the Philippine system of local governance, the provincial governments are best positioned to provide the leadership and the resources needed to support the separate as well as joint activities of the municipalities. In almost all the project

sites, the provincial governments have dedicated offices and staff who could provide the technical assistance and mentoring that their municipal counterparts needed (Canadian Urban Institute 2016). Fully engaged and dynamic governors who embraced their roles as champions of local tourism were particularly effective in pushing the inter-LGU tourism initiatives in provinces like Albay, Bohol, Davao del Norte, and South Cotabato.

Governors and, to a slightly lesser extent, mayors of gateway cities provided critical political leadership for the overall development of tourism circuits. However, the industry competitiveness element of the destination must be led by private sector institutions. In Metro Dumaguete, Bohol, Davao del Norte, the Calamianes Islands, and Metro Iloilo, respected leaders from the local business chambers or tourism councils were key motivating forces in local efforts to improve the quality and marketability of the respective destinations.

However, the leadership that governors and business chamber presidents provided was largely strategic. Neither was expected to provide hands-on, day-to-day supervision of the circuit development programs. These had been the responsibilities of interim project implementation teams organized specifically for each site's LGSP-LED project. To continue and scale up the tourism circuit development programs, the public and private sector partners may need to explore the joint creation of permanent destination management organizations (DMO) for each of their sites.

3.7 Conclusion

In summary, planning is an essential activity to achieve the goals of tourism development. It is concerned with anticipating and regulating change to increase the social, economic, and environmental benefits of the development process (Murphy 1985). Every development process starts with the recognition by local/central government, in consultation with the private and public sector, that tourism is a desirable development option to be expanded in a planned manner. It is necessary to have a clear understanding of the development objectives to be achieved at national, regional, or local levels. Tourism has been seen by many governments as an economic development strategy and if a destination area wishes to maintain tourism as a long-term activity, planning for tourism will benefit only through input from a wide range of participants including governmental and non-bodies, local and regional organizations, businesses, and the host population, since it is extremely difficult to formulate and implement a tourism plan without the strong support and involvement of all these groups.

To conclude, tourism circuit planning approach can be considered for subnational tourism planning if the involvement and the active participation of the tourism stakeholders are ensured, the partnership of public and private sector is strengthened, and leadership in destination management exists. As the TDAs continue to scale up their tourism circuit development programs, the public and private sector partners may soon need to explore the joint creation of permanent destination management organizations (DMO) to sustain those efforts.

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Chapter 4
Nature-Based Tourism in a City Destination: Balancing Planning with Sustainability

Tony S. M. Tse, Bruce Prideaux, and Winnie K. L. Chui

Abstract Hong Kong, like many large cities, has developed a substantial urban-focused tourism sector but has largely ignored the potential of its surrounding natural areas to contribute to its overall suite of tourism experiences. About 40% of Hong Kong has been designed as country parks and special areas. This chapter investigates the potential of Hong Kong to expand its portfolio of attractions to include nature-based experiences. A qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews was used to gather the views of the local stakeholders on the potential for developing nature-based tourism in Hong Kong. Participants were generally supportive but however raised a number of issues that needed to be addressed prior to further development of natural areas. Issues raised included the impact on the local community, the need for independent planning processes, and the concerns about potential negative impacts on the environment.

Keywords Nature-based tourism · Sustainability · Community involvement · Geopark · Hong Kong

4.1 Introduction

Developing competitive and sustainable experiences and ensuring their effective marketing in a crowded market space are key challenges faced by urban destinations (Paskaleva-Shapira 2007). To meet these challenges, urban destinations need to continually refresh and enrich their offerings. Hong Kong is one example of a major

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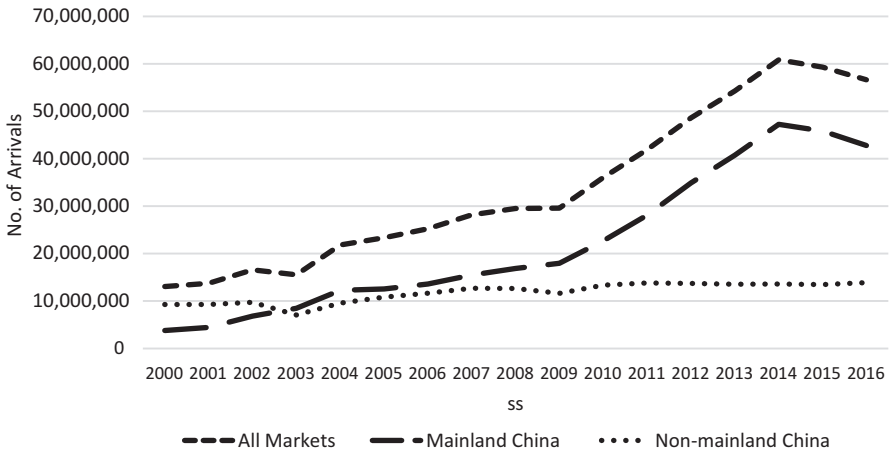

Fig. 4.1 Visitor arrivals by year 2000–2016 (Source: HKTB 2016, 2017)

urban destination that has enjoyed a long period of sustained growth during which it focused on its unique suite of urban-based attractions, city lifestyle, entertainment, cuisine, and excellent air access. However, as Fig. 4.1 shows, tourist arrivals peaked in 2014 at 61 million arrivals before falling to 56.5 million arrivals in 2016 (Hong Kong Tourism Board 2017). Most of the decline occurred in the mainland Chinese inbound market which fell by 3.0% in 2015 and 6.7% in 2016. As in all markets, a fall of this magnitude may be temporary, but if it spreads to other inbound markets, it may signal a more general decline. Traditional responses to declining visitor numbers include short-term strategies such as additional investment in marketing and price competition and longer-term responses that might include adding new attractions and refreshing existing attractions. Tourism theory provides some insights into the growth track that destinations experience over time and how downturns may be responded to. For example, Butler's (1980) destination life cycle theory postulates that destinations enter a mature stage where arrivals either plateau or decline. Escaping this situation requires rejuvenation which typically occurs through investing in new infrastructure and experiences, restructuring marketing bodies, restructuring tourism support services, and in some cases adopting new approaches to tourism such as adoption of the triple bottom line approach.

Hong Kong's tourism industry has generally focused on the destinations' city landscape and its vibrant city life. Images of Hong Kong harbor and its numerous high-rise buildings often feature in promotional material and have emerged as one of the destination's most important iconic experiences. Behind the iconic city landscape lies another rarely promoted and largely unvisited natural landscape. Although comprising over 40% of Hong Kong's landmass, the tourism potential of its well-maintained country park system has been largely ignored by the tourism industry and the government. This underutilized asset has some potential to offer a range of new nature-based experiences that could supplement Hong Kong's overall suite of tourism experiences and allow the destination to generally broaden its appeal in the international market place.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the potential for developing sustainable nature-based tourism experiences that can be offered alongside existing urban-orientated experiences. Given that relatively little attention has been given to tourism development of this type in Hong Kong, the authors first sort to identify the level of support for developing nature-based experiences. While focused specifically on Hong Kong, the authors were also interested in the more general question of identifying issues that needed to be addressed when seeking to develop nature-based tourism experiences within the boundaries of other urban destinations.

4.2 Literature

Nature-based tourism includes a range of activities that are generally determined by the resources available in the area where tourism activity takes place and the level of demand for experiences that are offered. Activities commonly found in nature-based tourism areas include tramping, camping, wildlife viewing, photography, swimming, horse riding, rock climbing, mountain biking, fishing, and boating (Lundmark and Müller 2010; Steven et al. 2011; Tangeland and Aas 2011). Assessing the potential for a specific natural area to accommodate activities of this type requires a systematic analysis of the potential of the resource to support specific activity types followed by an assessment of the willingness of the community to support these activities, the potential for commercial operators to supply a range of support services, the willingness of the public sector to authorize activities and fund the necessary infrastructure, and the ability of the destination to attract visitors. Underlying many of these issues is the concern often voiced by the public in relation to their continued access to public land once commercial facilities such as those that support the tourist industry are constructed (Fredman and Tyrväinen 2010). Other concerns that may be raised include the wisdom of spending large amounts of public money on commercially related products that may or may not be financially viable. In the case of Hong Kong, Chan and Fung (2009, p.231) observed that while there is a record of public sector support for nature-based activities including tourism, the tourism industry has failed to exploit these opportunities, "Hong Kong's eco-tourism is heavily subsidized by the government. Both the contrived wetland park and all other country parks are maintained with billions of dollars from public funds." The following discussion first briefly looks at issues related to resource assessment followed by issues related to sustainability.

The literature offers a number of frameworks and models that can be used to gain insights into the development of natural areas for tourism purposes. Examples include the limits of acceptable change model suggested by Stankey et al. (1985), the natural resource assessment framework suggested by Priskin (2001), and the triple bottom line approach (Elkington 2004).

Taking a supply side approach, Priskin (2001) proposed a natural resource assessment framework based on five elements: the resource identification supported by field checks; the attraction of the resource based on ten indicators that included

flora and fauna diversity, scenic diversity, recreation opportunities, and geologic features; the ease of access to the resource; the level of supporting infrastructure including visitor amenities; and the level of environmental degradation that existed at the site. The assessment has been used by other researchers and is particularly useful in areas that have little existing development. If used for an assessment of the potential to use natural resources to enhance the product offerings of urban destinations such as Hong Kong, Priskin's assessment tool requires a number of amendments including the need to look at sustainability rather than environmental degradation, a need to measure support from the private and public sectors for development, and importantly the level of community support or resistance that can be expected. In a modified version, the framework provides a useful start point for investigating the potential to develop selected natural resources in destinations where some natural resources are already used for tourism activities.

Hong Kong's current position as an urban destination that appears to be experiencing falling demand has parallels to Singapore in the mid-1990. At that time, concern was expressed that Singapore was approaching the maturity stage in the destination life cycle (Henderson et al. 2001). In an effort to revitalizing its suite of tourism products, the Singapore government adopted a strategy to promote ecotourism (Teo and Chang 2000). Given the limited amount of undeveloped land available, the "nature-based" experiences developed in Singapore were largely artificial but with a focus on nature with examples including Gardens by the Bay, Singapore Zoo, National Orchid Garden, Night Safari, and River Safari. In 2014, five of the top nine paid-access attractions were nature related (STB 2014).

A number of scholars (Pérez et al. 2013; Tosun 2001) have pointed to the need to ensure that sustainability lies at the heart of tourism development particularly where experiences are based on nature. In situations where natural resources lie in close proximity to heavily urbanized areas, the integrity of biological processes also needs to be considered. The building of transport or other service corridors can be very disruptive and lead to reduced biodiversity as can the resumption of land for other urban-related uses (Pickering and Hill 2007; Saarinen and Tervo 2006). Other factors that may affect ecosystem stability include pollution from urban wastewater, industrial emissions, motor vehicle exhausts, the introduction of invasive species, and overuse by visitors.

Achieving long-term sustainability, particularly in an era where the impact of climate change (Prideaux 2013) is becoming more apparent, is a difficult task. Although criticized by some as being simplistic, the definition of sustainability outlined in the Brundtland Report (1987) provides a useful start point to understanding the policy processes that are required to achieve sustainability. The Brundtland Report (1987, p.18) states that "Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This definition highlights the need to consider how current use patterns must be consistent with the ability of future generations to use a particular resource in a form that is not been degraded by the manner it is used in the present and instead focus on achieving broader environmental, economic, and social goals.

Under the triple bottom line (TBL) approach suggested by Elkington (2004), sustainability is able to be measured against three key criteria: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, and community participation (Faux 2005). Achieving environmental sustainability requires that the robustness of ecosystems is maintained. One measure of success is the maintenance of biodiversity which refers to species richness. A decline in the number of species may mean that the ecosystem is suffering a loss of biodiversity and a parallel increase in fragility. Measuring environmental sustainability requires ongoing monitoring and the ability to rapidly identify and if possible resolve problems as they arise.

Economic sustainability recognizes the need to sustain businesses that may be associated with tourism development. In some cases, this might also include the natural site itself where shortfalls in public funding may need to be covered by charging entrance fees. In an era where neoliberal economic policy (Dredge and Jamal 2015) based on the user pay principle is increasingly favored by the public sector, it is likely that greater emphasis will be placed on sites' self-funding maintenance and administration. Successfully balancing the need for environmental sustainability and economic sustainability is likely to pose significant challenges to park administers and the public sector in the future.

Achieving sustainability also requires community engagement. As Beeton (2006, p.16) reminds us, "tourism relies on visiting place and people, it cannot exist outside a community." For sustainability to be accepted as an objective as well as ongoing practice, the community, social groups that reside in a specific locality and that share a common system of government, must be engaged and supportive of tourism development. Communities also act as hosts to the people who visit their community.

4.3 Hong Kong's Natural Resources

Hong Kong's urban area occupies just under 25 percent of the destination's landmass. Of the remaining area, about 40 percent has been designated as country parks and special areas covering a total area of 44,300 hectares (GovHK 2016). The Hong Kong government has gazetted 24 country parks which are used for nature conservation, recreation, and outdoor education. In addition, 22 special areas which have a higher level of protection have been created. The distribution of country parks and special areas is shown in Fig. 4.2. These areas are administered by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), and most are located within 1 h travel from the city. An extensive network of hiking trails has been built within the country park network. Lonely Planet (October, 2013), a well-known publisher of guide books, described Hong Kong's trails as being in the top ten of the world's best city hikes, and National Geographic (2013) described the MacLehose Trail in Hong Kong as being in the "World's Best Hikes: 20 Dream Trails."

Some of the cities' natural areas are already promoted as nature-based tourist attractions including the Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark, Hong Kong

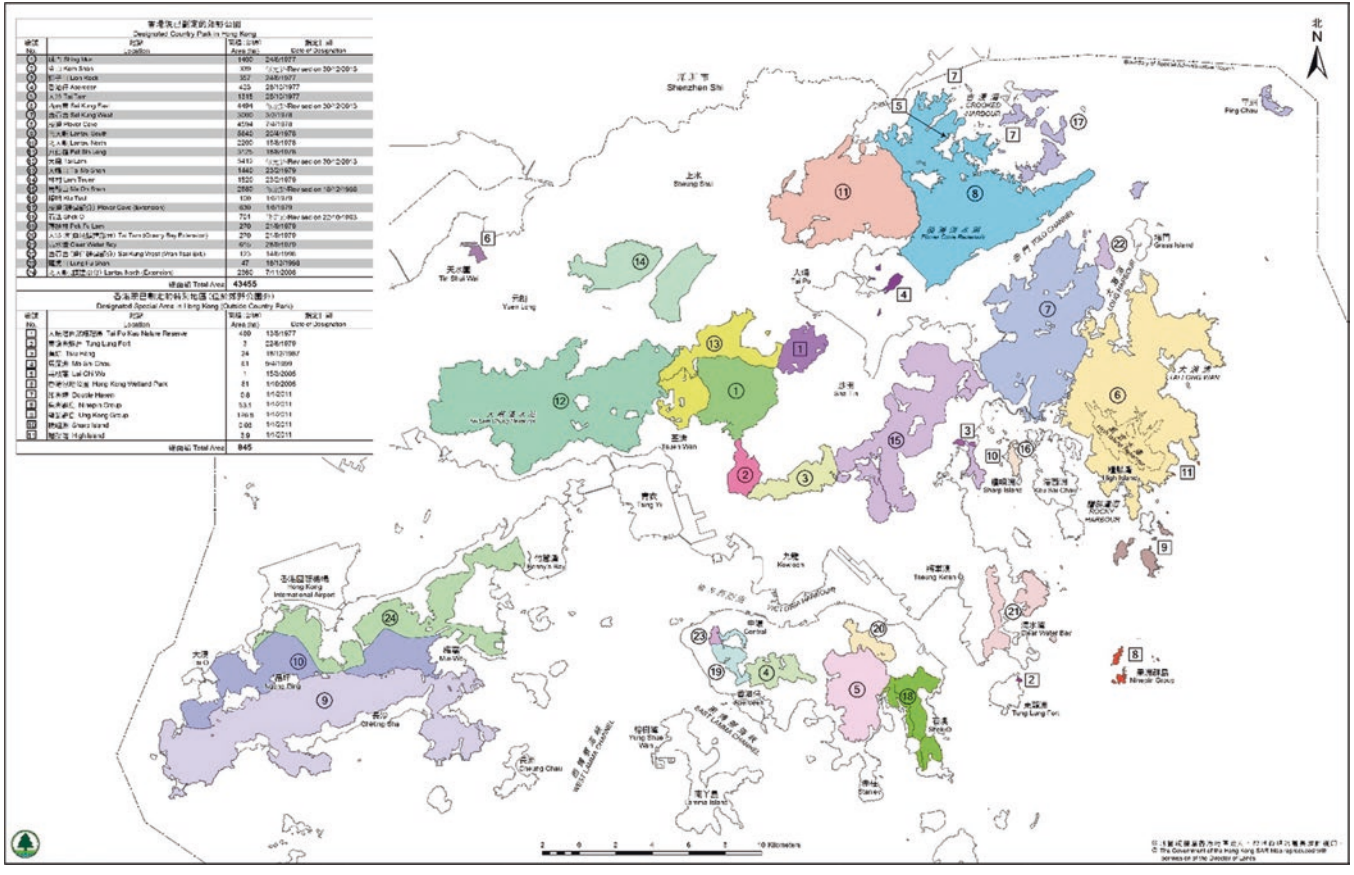

Fig. 4.2 Country Parks and Special Areas Distribution Map (Source: AFCD 2015)

Wetland Park, and Mai Po Nature Reserve. The Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark occupies an area of 150 km^2 and is a member of the Global Geoparks Network (GGN). The Hong Kong Wetland Park located near the border of mainland China has been developed as a visitor attraction and an environmental education facility. Another important but rarely visited site is the 1540 hectare Mai Po Nature Reserve, a Ramsar site managed by the World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong. Located at the midpoint of the East Asian–Australasian Flyway (EAAF) migration route, the reserve is a haven for migratory water birds (World Wide Fund For Nature Hong Kong 2016).

Hong Kong also has 262 outlying and mainly uninhabited islands, some of which are included in the county park network. A number of the islands have recognized ecological and/or cultural values. For example, Po Toi Island is also known as the "South Pole of Hong Kong" and has been recognized as Hong Kong's most beautiful island in public surveys (HKTB n.d.). Other significant islands include Lamma Island which features ocean beaches and is a nesting site for Hong Kong's endangered green turtles.

4.4 Methodology

Given the exploratory nature of this research, a qualitative approach based on semi-structured in-depth interviews was adopted to explore the views of a range of stakeholders on the potential to develop nature-based tourism in Hong Kong. Invitations were sent to a number of public and private sector organizations that were considered to have an interest in developing nature-based tourism. Details of the respondents are outlined in Table 4.1, and they indicate a balanced panel of stakeholders representing government, community, green groups, and the tourism sector. On acceptance of the invitation, each participant was sent a copy of the questions.

Table 4.1 Details of the nine in-depth interviews or written reply

Respondent identifier	Industry sector	Interviewee	Interview format
R1	Attraction	Manager	In person
R2	Community center	Business director	In person
R3	Destination marketing	Manager	Written reply
R4	Green group	Division head of scientific research and conservation	In person
R5	Green group	Project manager	In person
R6	Green group	Assistant conservation manager	In person
R7	Government department	Senior country park officer	In person
R8	Travel agency	General manager, senior manager	In person
R9	Tour operator	Director	In person

Face-to-face interviews were conducted either in Chinese or English, depending on interviewees' preference. Interviewees were also invited to have their interview electronically recorded. The conversations were then transcribed into English. Thematic analysis was used to identify themes from the interview transcripts based on Jennings' (2001) recommendations for coding. As well as undertaking semi-structured interviews, the research team also undertook a preliminary field assessment of potential natural resources. As with all research, a number of limitations may have affected the findings. While the researchers strived to build a representative panel of interviewees, there may have been points of view that were not considered particularly in the community sector.

A modified version of Priskin (2001) framework for natural resource assessment was adopted as a mechanism for reporting the findings. A new item, *support for tourism development*, was added on the basis that without support from the private and public sectors, it is difficult to develop natural areas for tourism purposes. The item titled environmental degradation was deleted based on the general view of the literature that any development of natural areas for tourism should focus on long-term sustainability as an overriding objective. In its place, the item *sustainability* was substituted. Another item titled *experience delivery* was added to the assessment framework based on the view that many of Hong Kong's natural areas are already being used for tourism activity, and it is important to assess if this was having an impact on other items. A final item, *community views*, was added on the basis that even if the public and private sectors support development and there is a demonstrated demand by tourists, it is the community that must host tourists and be prepared to accept the changes that will be brought by tourism development. The framework used in this discussion commences with investigation of resources followed in sequence by attractiveness, sustainability, support for tourism development, accessibility, infrastructure, supporting infrastructure, experience delivery, and community involvement. Questions posed to respondents included a request for observations on the potential impact on local communities. As used in this research, local communities refers to the villages that were located in close proximity to natural areas, not the urban communities found in the more densely populated parts of Hong Kong. Collectively, the modified framework provides insights into the potential for developing sustainable nature-based tourism and provides a useful base to assess if proposed developments are sustainable within the meaning of the triple bottom line approach.

4.5 Findings

4.5.1 Identification of Resources

Preliminary field visits by the research team established that there were a large number of sites that have potential to be developed as nature-based attractions. This includes the Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark, Hong Kong Wetland Park, and Mai Po Nature Reserve. Given that this research is of a preliminary nature,

identification of potential areas for development was based only on natural beauty and/or amenity for activities such as walking, cycling, swimming, and camping. No attempt was made to develop a list of specific sites that may be suitable of a specific activity. An investigation of this type is only possible once potential demand has been determined and government policies relating to specific development types have been promulgated. It should however be noted that recreational facilities including tracks, parking bays, and toilets have already been developed in many areas of the country park system.

The general finding that there is significant potential for future tourism development was supported by all respondents including green groups, destination marketing organization, government department, travel agency, and tour operator. For example, R3 representing the Hong Kong Tourism Board stated "Hong Kong has a lot to offer in terms of nature-based tourism, about 75% of its land is countryside. The city's hiking trails, such as the MacLehose Trail, has already gained recognition from global travellers or hikers. Hong Kong also has a UNESCO Geopark featuring unique landforms and special wildlife, more than 260 outlying islands, and distinctive landscapes and coastlines that offer spectacular views for nature lovers." Respondents also pointed out that that to achieve sustainability, it was essential to undertake proper planning prior to development.

4.5.2 Attractiveness

Participants generally agreed that Hong Kong's country park system offered a range of interesting landscapes that they believed tourists would find attractive. For example, R3 stated:

> The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) is promoting Hong Kong's nature scenery in its key source markets, in particular in long-haul markets and some short-hauls markets such as Japan, Korea and Taiwan. Visitors from these markets tend to be more interested in nature-based tourism. The HKTB has been actively promoting Hong Kong's nature-based tourism products through the 'Great Outdoors Hong Kong' platform, covering the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China, hiking and cycling trails and itineraries featuring outlying islands, etc.

R3 also stated that the city's natural landscapes were promoted through digital media, marketing promotions, public relations, visitor centers, hotlines, and trade activities. In a cautionary observation in relation to attractiveness, R5 representing a green group remarked that "it is not necessary to make all the places too artificial." R6 and R9 agreed that the close proximity between the city center and the countryside is one of the attractions of Hong Kong, and R6 observed "Is there any other cities that allows people to reach the nature from the city within an hour (apart from Hong Kong)?" In a similar comment, R9 observed "Tourists can have both (city and green experience) in one day." R4 said "I think mainland Chinese have no interests in natural area. Many areas in the mainland are already rural or near nature. However, things changed. Some mainlanders now like to hike in Hong Kong as well." R1 took Hong Kong Wetland Park (HKWP) as an example; HKWP targets schools in China (for promotion) as it is only a 30 minute drive to HKWP.

4.5.3 Support for Tourism Development

Apart from R1, all respondents supported the development of nature-based tourism. R4 representing a major green NGO stated "Definitely, there is room to let more people assess the nature-based area, for example more in-depth activities like dolphin watching or bird watching can be conducted." This view was supported by R9 representing the travel operator sector who stated "The growing popularity of hiking is an international trend. People nowadays are becoming more health conscious. In Hong Kong, the nature-based resources are out there, visitors will visit these places, and this will happen naturally by themselves." A comment by R3 reinforced this view "nature-based tourism provides an opportunity for the visitors to experience a different side of the city. The unique travel experience can become another highlight to boost up tourism development as a whole." Not all respondents were as positive in their views as evidenced by a comment from R4 who stated "in view of the area of improvement needed (in infrastructure), it seems that there are still few more steps to go in developing nature-based tourism in Hong Kong."

4.5.4 Sustainability

Respondents were mindful that sustainability must be considered as a key issue in any decisions related to developing nature-based tourist attractions. For example, green respondent R4 stated "There is no harm in promoting nature-based attractions like Repulse Bay. Conversely, if touching the more sensitive area, further planning should be carried out before any development occurs. Regulatory measures include regulating the visitors' behaviour, estimating the carrying capacity of the site, restricting the number of visitors should be carried out." R3 supported this view stating that "it is also important that we strike a balance between maintaining the tranquility of the countryside and bringing in more visitors that might have impacts on the environment." R7 representing the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department supported this view and added that his department ranked conservation as the top consideration in all forms of development. R1, a manager of a large nature-based attraction, added that it was important to identify any conflicts between nature and human activities stating that "From the ecologist point of view, nature should be protected instead of further developed."

4.5.5 Accessibility

Respondents highlighted a range of issues related to access to nature-based attractions including construction of roads and port facilities. Many of the issues raised in relation to accessibility also included a sustainability element. R3 raised an

important point "it is important that we strike a balance between maintaining the tranquillity of the countryside and bringing in more visitors who might have impacts on the environment." R6 representing a green group, for example, stated "Careful planning and evaluation should be carried out prior to the decision of improving accessibility." In relation to accessibility, two of the green group respondents, R4 and R6, raised the issue of illegal dumping that has been a problem in the past when new routes are built to provide easier access to country parks.

R3 raised an important point related to planning. He stated that existing policies on countryside development may pose challenges to improving transportation connections: "additional transport infrastructure connecting countryside and city might be limited due to the legislation on countryside development, which will in turn affect the further development of nature-based tourism." R9 representing the tour operator sector raised another issue related to improved access. Government policy allows indigenous male villagers living in the New Territories to apply for permission to erect a small house on a suitable site within his own village (Lands Department 2014). R9 stated that improved access in some areas of the New Territories will encourage more villagers to erect houses leading to a reduction in the landscape value of the areas. There was also some concern that improved access would lead to increased land values and on-selling of property causing possible conflicts within communities and between communities in the New Territories. R9 stated "If the area becomes more accessible, it is possible that more houses will be built. There is also a potential to sell the property at a good price…. None of the stakeholders including the government would like to put themselves in such a controversial position."

4.5.6 Supporting Infrastructure

R7 stated that existing infrastructure was designed to support the recreation needs of the local people and that the number of facilities provided, BBQs, for example, acted as a mechanism for controlling the maximum number of people able to use a specific site. Taking a different standpoint, R9 stated that carrying capacity should be based on the maximum number of people that the environment could take without causing negative impacts.

In support of government policy of using infrastructure to cap visitor numbers, R7 noted that "local and green NGOs were very concerned about any development in country parks" and that the government takes this concern seriously. In relation to infrastructure provision, R4 pointed out that local visitors and overseas visitors perceive nature-based tourism differently, "From the perspective of the Hong Kong community, visiting nature means to go hiking as a means of exercise, not sightseeing. Tourists would perceive that nature-based tourism is one of the tourism products that they can enjoy while visiting Hong Kong." R6 questioned if the government would have a comprehensive plan before starting infrastructure development such as roads, "after a road is built, there is a need for other amenities like toilets, street

light and catering outlets. More visitors mean more pollution. The government has to think about how to deal with the sewage for example."

4.5.7 Experience Delivery

In relation to the existing delivery of nature-based tourism experiences, R4 made a number of insightful comments and described the situation in Hong Kong in the following way: "eco-tours are run by small tour operators. They have limited knowledge about conservation of nature, how tourism contributes to the community or how to preserve tourist spots. Travel agencies are offering products that take tour groups to some remote area, and they claim this kind of experience is an eco-tour." This view is also affirmed by R8. On the other hand, according to R4, "local people do not understand the concept of eco-tours or eco-tourism. They are not aware that firms that offer this kind of products are not eco-tours." R4 also stated that while a number of travel agencies use the word "ecotour" in their promotion, many of these operators "may not be conscious about the possible environmental impact caused by the tour activity."

R8 as well as R4, R5, and R6 felt that the government had made a poor attempt at raising awareness of Hong Kong's existing nature-based tourism. For example, R8 representing a travel agency that operates nature-based tours has been attempting to build domestic demand which is currently fairly low. R8 did however observe that it was possible to charge a premium for some tour products. Both R8 and R9 observed that neither a travel agency license nor a tour guide license was required for operating or leading local tours for local residents; however, licenses are required when the clients are international visitors.

The quality of interpretation is one of the factors that can affect the overall quality of nature-based experiences. Respondents agreed that there is a lack of tour guides who have deep knowledge of nature and are able to provide quality interpretation. R5, for example, said "Interpretation is an important element in formulating in-depth nature-based tourism experiences. Interpreters are meant to deliver proper information to the visitors. However, the standard of existing interpreters in Hong Kong is not high. They seem to have a lack of training, knowledge and interpretation skills. There are insufficient qualified guides in Hong Kong." R8 representing the travel agency sector is also a member of the training committee of the Travel Industry Council (TIC) and expressed concern that "to obtain a tour escort (outbound) or tour guide (inbound) license is easy….the existing training content is mass tourism oriented and does not include nature-based tourism."

4.5.8 Community Involvement

The community is a key stakeholder in tourism development. R6 pointed out that villagers may not be sufficiently prepared to face an influx of tourists. R9 pointed out that in some cases, villagers want to participate in discussions about development plans and have their voices heard by the government. However, they reported being largely ignored by the government, which pushed them away. Both R8 and green group respondents indicated that they involved the local community in nature-based tourism activities by adopting a bottom-up approach. R8 related how his organization had tried to cooperate with the local people and share the fruits of the income from tourism with the local community:

> we have done a lot with the local people in TaiO and Lai Chi Wo. A few years ago, we ran a tour programme with the local village, and gave them part of the revenue. This was the right thing to do. Sometimes local villages rely on us and expect to receive a stable income through operating tours. However, as a small business, it is not possible to give a very large share of the income to locals, and assure them that tours will be organized on a regular basis. On the contrary, the larger-sized company would not do this for local people. They are profit oriented and will only try to maximize their profit.

R7 said "to enhance the accessibility of the Geopark, we cooperate with a NGO (Sai Kung Community Center) to promote Geopark." The Sai Kung Community Center is a community center that contributes in running the Volcano Discovery Centre, arranging weekend shuttle service, and training the local community to be guides in the Geopark. The provision of the shuttle service enhances the accessibility of the site while training courses helps to provide interpretation for tourists. Collectively, this creates jobs in the local community.

R4 was concerned that there is an imbalance of power between the community, the tourism industry, and the society: "The commercial sector is quite influential and skillful in making use of scientific terms to prove that projects impose minimal impacts on the environment. It is okay they say, to launch the development project. However, Hong Kong does not have a reliable legal system or administrative system to balance the power of different stakeholders." R6 provided an example to illustrate that the results of community consultation can be skewed to support a specific viewpoint.

> The feedback received from the public on the subject of opening up the road was quite extreme. The locals who would benefit from the road strongly agreed with this move, while ordinary residents think that making no change is the best way to go. When accessing the carrying capacity of an area, local's views should be taken into account. The type of organization providing feedback may influence the result. If it is conducted by the government or a developer, the first thing that locals think about is the amount of compensation. WWF has experience with talking to the local people. The locals know that WWF is a green group and does not have money. So, locals are more willing to tell WWF things beyond the economic benefits, they even give suggestions on the best way to developing the area… to ensure that the survey results fully represent the local communities views.

4.6 Discussion

The aim of this chapter is to explore the potential for developing sustainable nature-based tourism experiences that can be offered alongside existing urban-orientated attractions albeit on a relatively small scale. In particular, the study has modified Priskin's framework for analyzing the potential for developing sustainable nature-based tourism experiences and identified preexisting problems such as the right to build houses, potential for new roads to be used as illegal rubbish tips, and room to consult local communities. The framework components are (1) identification of resources, (2) attractiveness, (3) sustainability for tourism development, (4) sustainability, (5) accessibility, (6) supporting infrastructure, (7) experience delivery, and (8) community involvement. Collectively, the framework enabled the researchers to look at three key aspects of sustainability: resource sustainability, economic sustainability of enterprises that are benefiting from this form of development, and community sustainability. These aspects can be bundled together as the triple bottom line approach to sustainability. Beyond Hong Kong, the application of this framework offers other Asian destinations with nearby natural areas an approach that will assist them to identify nature-based experiences that can be used to supplement their existing suite of urban-based experiences.

It is apparent that Hong Kong has a significant inventory of natural resources that have potential to be developed as nature-based tourism experiences. Any development of these natural resources should give high priority to ensuring that current biodiversity is not affected by future development. The responses by many of the participants indicated qualified support for developing tourism experiences of this type. For example, green groups stressed the need for planning and consultation prior to any development being authorized. They also noted that comprehensive consultation has not been a regular inclusion in past planning exercises undertaken by the government. Green groups also expressed concerns that developing nature-based experiences for international tourists may generate negative local sentiment or create tension based on the worry that money raised from local tax payers will be used for experiences that the locals may not be able to enjoy because of high prices. This finding echoes Fredman and Tyrväinen's (2010) concerns about the rights of the public to have free access to public space.

Results that relate to community engagement indicate a number of concerns that will need to be addressed before large-scale nature-based tourism experiences are built. From a community perspective, the concerns include lack of consultation particularly when decisions are being made about the possibility of opening tourism experiences. It was also apparent that there was concern about the neutrality of past research into the views of local communities. Further, it was apparent that local communities want to see benefits from this form of tourism but feel that this has not occurred. Green groups in particular questioned the efficacy of investing large sums of public monies in projects that may not generate significant income. The wetland was one case cited and supports the view previously expressed by Chan and Fung

(2009) about the potential of waste of public funds on projects that failed to generate a reasonable economic return.

It was also evident that the two public sector agencies involved in this form of tourism have quite different agendas. The HKTB views its role as promoting Hong Kong, including its natural areas, to overseas tourists. On the other hand, the AFCD which manages county parks and other reserves places a high priority on conservation rather than education and recreation. The AFCD also has a specific focus on locals rather than overseas tourists. If Hong Kong is to successfully develop its nature-based resources as tourism experiences, both the HKTB and the AFCD will need to agree on strategies that will protect the interests of local communities, ensure that the recreation needs of Hong Kong residents are meet, and develop tourism products and experiences that will appeal to international tourists but at the same time not place undue pressure on nature-based resources.

4.7 Conclusion

On the evidence provided by respondents, there is a strong case for supporting the view that there are opportunities to use Hong Kong's considerable natural areas to provide another resource to support the destination's tourism industry. If developed effectively and in a manner that is sustainable, this resource may be able to assist the destination move from its current state of stagnation to one of rejuvenation using the terminology first suggested by Butler (1980). Singapore's employment of eco-experiences lends weight to the view that nature-based experiences can help reignite tourism interest in urban destinations.

In any development, long-term sustainability must be seen as a core requirement. Participants pointed out a number of issues in this regard with community participation and carrying capacity being of uttermost importance. The application of the triple bottom line approach provides a useful approach to ensuring long-term sustainability.

The findings also highlighted the importance of interdepartmental cooperation, the need for government to consider seriously the views of local communities, and the very useful role that NGOs can play. The findings also highlighted the importance of protecting the landscape and the biodiversity it contains. Protecting the landscape and its ecosystems are fundamental to the long-term success of nature-based tourism.

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Chapter 5
Participatory Planning and Tourism Development in the Maldives: A Prerequisite of Sustainability?

Aishath Shakeela and David Weaver

Abstract Based on a quantitative survey of 200 local residents from two structurally different communities, this chapter investigates the extent to which locals perceive that they are represented in tourism planning and development processes in the Maldives, a classic pleasure periphery which also encourages the parallel development of community-focused tourism. Residents want to be included in local tourism policy and planning processes but feel excluded. However, alienation is much less expressed where development of and dependency on tourism is far more advanced. Participatory planning remains an elusive aspiration for local residents with vested interests in how tourism is developed given very high dependency on the sector.

Keywords Local residents · Policies · Participatory planning · Social representation · Maldives

5.1 Introduction

Small tropical and subtropical islands disproportionately accommodate global tourism, accounting for 5% of international stayover arrivals but 0.3% of global population (Weaver and Lawton 2014). Such locations possess weak primary and secondary sectors but rich endowments of sea, sand, and sun, thereby compelling many governments since the 1960s to stimulate economic development through resort tourism. Indeed, many island destinations have embraced international tourism as a perceived panacea (Ioannides 2000; Nowak et al. 2007) assumed to create ample employment and foreign exchange earnings (Shakeela and Cooper 2009). From a sustainability perspective, such benefits are offset variably by revenue leakages (associated with high imported inputs), excessive economic dependency on the

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sector, seasonal demand fluctuations, and high expatriate employment, factors all associated with restricted economies of scale. Improved quality of life, moreover, may be offset by sociocultural costs including cultural commodification, demonstration effects, and increased crime (Jones et al. 2012).

Most governments embrace the rhetoric of public participation as a critical component of policy frameworks that claim adherence to principles of sustainable development. However, because such 'participation' mostly involves a one-way flow of decisions from authorities to communities and very limited actual consultation (Garrod et al. 2012; Tosun 1999), it cannot adequately inform planning that reflects sustainable tourism outcomes by incorporating the knowledge and preferences of local residents. A paradox therefore exists wherein government claims of economic success and local empowerment through tourism are often not matched by similar sentiments among alienated local residents disaffected by low wages, employment uncertainty, erosion of traditional culture, and environmental degradation (Shakeela and Weaver 2016).

Because governments 'have a pivotal role and possess the potential power to control, plan and direct the growth and development of tourism' (Mowforth and Munt 2003, p. 293), it behoves them to provide sustainable benefits to those they purport to represent. Local residents, additionally, deserve involvement in decisions that affect their quality of life for ethical reasons (Easterling 2005; Ritchie 1993) and because they possess high stakeholder status (Garrod et al. 2012). Community empowerment or participatory planning, whereby local residents are involved in every stage of tourism decision-making process, can offset many of the negative impacts associated with tourism development (Jamal and Getz 1995; Reid et al. 2004), especially if this occurs within the context of 'community-based' or 'community-responsive' tourism that complements the existing local culture and economy (Reed 1999). In any context, giving residents a platform and voice is a meaningful way in which local residents can be involved in tourism development processes (Gunn and Var 2002), provided this is facilitated beyond the level of mere tokenism. According to Elliot (1997, p. 101) 'good policy formulation requires considerable research and inputs from those who are implementing policy at the grass roots or impact level'.

Such inputs imply the conferral and exercise of power, but Church and Coles (2007) argue that there is insufficient theoretical and conceptual engagement with power discourses in sustainable tourism development that attend interactions between the governing and the governed. Hall (2008) has identified public policy-making foremost as a political activity, while Hollinshead (1999) posits the ubiquity of power projection and resistance in contemporary tourism. Often, power projections are manifested as a top-down approach to tourism development wherein those with power resist attempts to concede or share control (Telfer and Sharpley 2008).

Accordingly, residents are seldom empowered to take meaningful control of the development process (Liu 2003), even in so-called community-based initiatives (Farrelly 2011). It is also possible that 'local power', where apparently attained, is concentrated in the hands of the local élite rather than the community as a whole (Weaver 2006).

Low empowerment and the experience of substantial negative impacts can together instigate negative resident reactions towards tourism development and tourists, thereby undermining the sector. Doxey's (1976) classic 'irridex' proposes sequential change in resident attitude towards tourism as the latter escalates, with initial euphoria giving way to increasing irritation and antagonism. Similar patterns are apparent in the destination life cycle concept of Butler's (1980). More recent research, however, argues that resident attitudes are neither linear nor uniform. Huimin and Ryan (2012) suggest that time creates greater tolerance of tourism, while Ap (1992) contends that cost-benefit assessments – or social exchange, associated with level of contact – influence attitudes. Significant elements of support and opposition, as well as ambivalence, will therefore occur among residents at all stages of tourism development.

In tourism policy formulation, relationships between the public and private sector, and the extent to which residents are represented, therefore have significant implications for tourism sustainability; those more actively involved are more likely to be supportive and positive (Huh and Vogt 2008). This enables more balanced power relationships, empowering residents to participate more fully in decision-making. Residents will then have vested interests in the performance of tourism activities. Notably, this does not necessarily have to involve direct participation in planning and policy as per the ideal of community-based tourism (Scheyvens 1999) but could involve indirect control through designated intermediaries such as advisory committees, community organisations, or specialised government agencies.

It is within this context that we explore local representation and participation in tourism development in the Maldives, a classic 'pleasure periphery' destination country that nonetheless displays important countervailing tendencies through the encouragement of localised small-scale tourism development (see case study). We empirically investigate the extent to which local residents perceive themselves as having a voice and are represented in tourism planning and policy decisions that pertain especially to their own local island communities. As in other tourism-intensive island states, government is actively engaged in tourism policy and planning and is guided by a series of increasingly enlightened master plans. However, policy and planning decisions are typically informed by industry involvement, and political leadership and power control therefore can deter successful policy development and implementation (Dodds and Butler 2008), inducing uneven and unequal tourism development (Mowforth and Munt 2009).

Case Study: Tourism Development in the Maldives

Since 1970, tourism in the Maldives has grown exponentially and embodies classic features of 3S tourism, including 124 enclave resorts, 142 safari boats (*dhoni)*, 381 guesthouses, and 16 hotels that accounted in 2015 for most of the available 36,483 beds (MOT 2016). Another 106 enclave island resorts are being developed (MOT 2015). In 2015 tourism contributed 24% to GDP and 41% to government revenue (National Bureau of Statistics 2016), representing the largest foreign exchange earner and employer. Due to size constraints, enclave resorts must be developed as self-contained operations on a one-island-one-resort basis through leasing arrangements that overwhelmingly favour the Maldivian élite. These entrepreneurs hold disproportionate power in parliament and advocate for favourable legislation, having blocked for many years an increase in the minimum wage and increasing the length of the leasing period. Moreover, new minimum wage laws are not widely enforced, leading to widespread employee unrest and strikes (Merrett 2013; Moosa 2008; Nazeer 2011).

Although a Government Tourist Board (now Ministry of Tourism) was established in 1974, there was initially no active government engagement in tourism policy, planning, and development (MTCA 2008; Niyaz 2002), with the industry being largely self-governed and abetted by the élites. Nevertheless, government has acted as a tourism facilitator by upgrading, at the time, the only existing airport in 1981 to international standard. With increasing international arrivals, signs of unsustainable mass tourism emerged, including tourists visiting inhabited islands displaying behaviour incompatible with local culture and religion. Initial Tourism Master Plans (First Tourism Master Plan, 1983–1995; Second Tourism Master Plan, 1996–2005) were focused on tourism expansion, product development, and training rather than remediation of these negative impacts.

However, the Maldives Tourism Act (Department of Tourism and Foreign Investment 1979) tried to address perceived incompatibilities by prohibiting nudity, gambling, and tourists staying in locally inhabited islands other than Malé (the capital). Safari boat movements were also restricted to designated tourism zones. Under a permit system, resorts were permitted to sell alcohol, an allowance extended to safari operations in 1990. Initial policies were focused on ensuring minimal interaction between locals and tourists. For example, until 2007 Ministry of Education rules prohibited Maldivian students from visiting resorts unless accompanied by a parent or a guardian (Shakeela et al. 2010). Even as of 2017, locals could not visit a resort unless employed there or arriving as a tourist. While a local employee can serve alcohol, bartending remains restricted to expatriate employees.

Despite the dominance of enclave resorts, limited community-focused tourism was permitted in the 1970s and early 1980s on inhabited islands within the central tourism hub of Malé Atoll and near the international airport

(continued)

(MTCA 2008; Niyaz 2002). However, enclave resort developers argued that low-price tourism threatened their high investments. Subsequently, the permit system for community-based tourism was revoked in 1984. The issue of local community empowerment through community-responsive local tourism re-emerged in the Third Tourism Master Plan (2007–2011), which advocated a parallel strategy of guesthouse-based tourism "to bring in greater economic opportunities to inhabited islands" (MTCA 2007, p. 58) while avoiding the perceived negative social and cultural impacts associated with élite-controlled enclave tourism. The Fourth Tourism Master Plan (2013–2017) further mobilised support for community-level tourism, based on the premise that '*decisions about what is best for tourism development at atoll and island level cannot be made by a blanket policy from Malé. Tourism planning must be site specific, involve communities and the industry and aim to establish "island roles" in tourism*' (MTAC 2013, p. 53). Community consultations in tourism development processes, however, have yet to materialise despite a rapid growth of guesthouses on inhabited islands.

5.2 Methods

Two island communities, exhibiting contrasting levels of openness to community-based tourism, were selected for the empirical investigation. The first, Kaafu Atoll Huraa (local population 1017, land area 25.1 ha) is located within the main tourism hub of North Malé Atoll. Huraa accommodates seven guesthouses (58 beds) (see Fig. 5.1). Tourism is heavily concentrated in this atoll, with 25 resorts (5844 beds) operating in North Malé Atoll; three of which share the same lagoon as Huraa. Further 17 resorts (3132 beds) are located in South Malé Atoll. From the 1970s Huraa has maintained a very close relationship with the resorts in Kaafu Atoll, which sell day-trip excursions to tourists to demonstrate local life. Local island community members capitalise on these economic opportunities, with a large number of souvenir shops catering to visiting tourists. As such, this is a highly tourism-dependent community, with 31 out of 50 respondents solicited in this research directly employed in tourism.

The second island, remote Gnaviyani Atoll Fuvahmulah (local population 12,012, land area 491.7 ha), is the third largest Maldivian island and an independent atoll accommodating one guesthouse (8 beds). The opening of a domestic airport in 2011 and the changes brought to the Tourism Act have opened potential for tourism development. However, acceptance of tourism as a local economic activity is very limited. For instance, a hotel development has been proposed but has faced protests from local residents (Hamdhoon 2005) on the basis that tourism will introduce

Fig. 5.1 (**a**) A guesthouse at Huraa (L); (**b**) Tourists visiting a souvenir shop on the island (R)

Fig. 5.2 Part of Fuvahmulah demarcated as 'uninhabited island' for hotel development

alcohol to the island community. To overcome this challenge, the government demarcated two zones of Fuvahmulah as 'uninhabited islands' (Jameel 2011), one which was contested by local community members. Due to local resistance, construction of the proposed hotel had not yet proceeded as of early 2017 (Fig. 5.2). The closest atoll, Seenu Atoll, approximately 43.3 kms away, operates two resorts (830 beds). A far more incipient stage of tourism development and engagement, in comparison with Huraa, is thereby indicated.

Applying random sampling techniques, the first author, who is Maldivian and fluent in local Divehi language, visited households on both islands to recruit participants (one survey per household and only from those 18 years of age or older). Based on the aforementioned populations, 50 and 150 valid surveys were completed during December 2013 and January 2014 by local residents in Huraa and Fuvahmulah, respectively. These numbers were sufficiently large to allow the authors to administer tests of statistical significance to the results. The self-administered survey examined tourism impacts, attitudes towards tourism, and tourism planning and development. We present findings of the latter section. All statements accommodated responses on a five-point Likert scale with 'strongly agree' (=1) and 'strongly disagree' (=5) polarities. For analytical purposes (i.e. minimising the number of cells with less than five responses), the 'strongly agree/agree' and 'strongly disagree/disagree' options were combined into respective 'agreement' and 'disagreement' variables.

Informed by the relevant literature (Andriotis 2004; Dodds and Butler 2008; Mowforth and Munt 2009; Telfer and Sharpley 2008; Weaver and Lawton 2001), the first subtheme explored local control over island tourism planning and development. Specific questions focused on (a) whether locals should have control over how tourism is developed within their island communities and (b) whether locals actually *have* adequate control over tourism development within their island community.

The second subtheme (Garrod et al. 2012; Jamal and Getz 1995; Reid et al. 2004; Tosun 1999) considered participatory planning in tourism development. Specific questions explored respondent views on (a) how tourism is developed on their island, (b) whether locals should have a voice in how tourism is developed there, (c) whether government have consulted local residents about tourism development there, (d) whether government authorities have paid attention to residents' views in tourism planning decisions, and (e) whether tourism decisions should be made with community participation.

The final subtheme explored resident satisfaction with government planning and management of tourism (Bramwell 2010; Hall 2007, 2008). Respondents were asked what are their views on (a) any dissatisfaction with how tourism is planned, (b) their beliefs as to whether tourism is growing too fast for the island community to cope with, and (c) whether government effectively manages the industry.

5.3 Results

Substantial differences pertained in age, gender, education, and employment structure between the two samples, with Huraa respondents tending to be younger, male, primary education qualified, employed, and being employed previously in tourism (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 Respondent demographics

		Atoll and island of respondent		
		Gn. Fuvahmulah, $n = 150$ (%)	K. Huraa, $n = 50$ (%)	Total (%)
Age	18–30	45.3	62.0	49.5
	31–45	40.7	16.0	34.5
	46–60	10.0	16.0	11.5
	60+	3.3	6.0	4.0
Gender	Female	70.0	36.0	61.5
Education level	Primary	42.0	66.0	48.0
	Secondary	30.7	16.0	27.0
	Post-secondary	10.0	8.0	11.5
Employment status	Employed	34.0	72.0	43.5
Previous tourism employment	Yes	17.3	66.0	29.5

Table 5.2 Local community control over tourism planning and development

		Agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Chi-squared tests
Should have control % within atoll and island of respondent	Gn. Fuvahmulah	82.0	10.7	7.3	$X^2 = 1.189$; $p \leq .552$
	K. Huraa	76.0	12.0	12.0	
Total		80.5	11.0	8.5	
Have control % within atoll and island of respondent	Gn. Fuvahmulah	22.0	1.3	76.7	$X^2 = 59.461$; $p \leq .000$
	K. Huraa	74.0	10.0	16.0	
Total		35.0	3.5	61.5	

5.4 Local Community Control over Tourism Planning and Development

No statistically significant relationship was identified between island of residence and views on whether residents should have control over tourism development within their community; respondents from both communities expressed strong sentiments that they should have such control. In contrast, the two samples are markedly dissimilar with respect to actually having such control, with those from the tourism-dependent island of Huraa strongly in agreement and those from Fuvahmulah in strong disagreement (Table 5.2).

5.5 Participatory Planning in Tourism Development

No significant relationship was identified between respondent's island and perceptions that they have a voice in how tourism is developed there, with informants in both locations disagreeing with the statement. The follow-up question, however, revealed an extremely strong desire among both samples to have their voice represented in tourism policy and planning. The majority of respondents from both islands state that government have not consulted local residents about tourism development, actual or prospective, on their island community (Table 5.3).

The islands did differ on the issue of whether government paid *little* attention to local residents' views in tourism planning decisions, with three of four Fuvahmulah respondents agreeing, compared with just one-third of those in Huraa. There is strong concurrence among both sets of respondents that tourism decisions must be made with local community participation.

Table 5.3 Participatory planning in tourism development

		Agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Chi-square tests
Locals *have* voice in how tourism is developed on island % within atoll and island of respondent	Gn. Fuvahmulah	30.0		70.0	$X^2 = .071$; $p \leq .790$
	K. Huraa	32.0		68.0	
Total		30.5		69.5	
Locals *should* have voice in how tourism is developed on island % within atoll and island of respondent	Gn. Fuvahmulah	94.7		5.3	$X^2 = 2.778$; $p \leq .096$
	K. Huraa	100.0			
Total		96.0		4.0	
Government have consulted local residents % within atoll and island of respondent	Gn. Fuvahmulah	21.3	9.3	68.7	$X^2 = 4.929$; $p \leq .177$
	K. Huraa	24.0	20.0	56.0	
Total		22.0	12.0	65.5	
Government pay *little* attention to resident views % within atoll and island of respondent	Gn. Fuvahmulah	72.7	2.7	24.7	$X^2 = 26.089$; $p \leq .000$
	K. Huraa	36.0		64.0	
Total		63.5	2.0	34.5	
Tourism decisions must be made by locals % within atoll and island of respondent	Gn. Fuvahmulah	84.0	4.7	11.3	$X^2 = 5.227$; $p \leq .073$
	K. Huraa	78.0	14.0	8.0	
Total		82.5	7.0	10.5	

Table 5.4 Resident satisfaction with government planning of tourism

		Agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Chi-square tests
Tourism growth too fast for community to cope with% within atoll and island of respondent	Gn. Fuvahmulah	30.0	15.3	54.7	$X^2 = 3.996$; $p \leq .136$
	K. Huraa	26.0	28.0	46.0	
Total		29.0	18.5	52.5	
Government manages industry well % within atoll and island of respondent	Gn. Fuvahmulah	46.7	6.0	47.3	$X^2 = 5.393$; $p \leq .067$
	K. Huraa	58.0	12.0	30.0	
Total		49.5	7.5	43.0	
Dissatisfaction with government tourism planning % within atoll and island of respondent	Gn. Fuvahmulah	70.7	2.7	26.7	$X^2 = 66.690$; $p \leq .000$
	K. Huraa	8.0	26.0	66.0	
Total		55.0	8.5	36.5	

5.6 Resident Satisfaction with Tourism Planning

Sampled residents of the two islands displayed comparable ambivalence as to whether tourism is growing too fast for the island community to cope effectively. A significant relationship between respondent's island and dissatisfaction with government's approach to tourism planning and development was identified, with Fuvahmulah residents being far more likely to express dissatisfaction than respondents of Huraa (Table 5.4).

5.7 Discussions and Conclusions

This study identifies the extent to which residents of two structurally different Maldivian islands have a voice and exercise control in local tourism planning and policy decisions. In both contexts, there is strong agreement that residents *should* have a voice but do not actually have one. There is also strong agreement that residents should exercise control, but only Huraa residents agree that they *have* control. Huraa residents also reveal positive perceptions about attention paid by government, tourism growing at an acceptable rate, government managing industry well, and overall satisfaction with government planning. Fuvahmulah residents, in contrast, display negative perceptions for all these statements. A first observation is corroboration from the residents themselves, as per core sustainability tenets, that they should be involved in local tourism-related planning. However, secondly,

residents generally do not perceive themselves as having a voice. This critical area of non-alignment needs to be rectified through increased capacity-building and meaningful community consultation, but need not necessarily extend to higher levels of involvement that require specialised technical skills or large investments of time.

A third observation then is the need to consider the marked difference in perception between the two sampled islands. Both reveal a dominant social representation of tourism planning in which residents are typically excluded from tourism policy and planning processes, but the alienation is much less expressed in the location where development of and dependency on tourism are far more advanced. Huraa residents may still not be actively engaged in local tourism policy and planning processes but have some control over how tourism is developed and thus tend to be more positive about the government approach to the latter; they also have over 40 years of exposure to the sector. While the disparate results from Huraa and Fuvahmulah corroborate the contention of Huimin and Ryan (2012) that attitudes towards tourism become more tolerant with the passage of time, they somewhat contradict other models, and notably Butler's (1980) tourism area life cycle, which argue for a progression from favourable attitudes during early tourism stages to less favourable attitudes during the more advanced stages when the breaching of local carrying capacities, may be imminent or already evident. Another observation, however, is that significant minorities on both islands disagree with the dominant attitudes, indicating the need for further investigation to see whether these dissenters are distinctive in any significant way.

Social exchange theory may help to resolve these contradictory assertions, wherein attitudes are mediated by the realisation – or not, in the case of underexposed Fuvahmulah – of tourism-related benefits. It may be that despite not having a 'voice', most Huraa residents are satisfied because of the not insubstantial direct and indirect benefits they obtain from tourism in nearby enclave resorts as well as from their long experience of local community-based tourism. This speculation is supported by Shakeela and Weaver (2016), who found that Maldivian residents were overwhelmingly supportive of two European tourists who were revealed in a YouTube video as being surreptitiously abused by resort employees pretending to officiate at a supposed wedding ceremony. The apparent dynamic is fear of bad publicity causing damage to the all-important tourism industry and hence strongly held sentiments for censure or punishment of the perpetrators who threaten the sector by their actions. It seems probable, in contrast, that the widespread dissatisfaction among Fuvahmulah residents is related to frustration over the lack of similar benefits from their own less well-articulated local tourism sector yet concurrent reluctance to develop the latter due to fears of cultural contamination. Tourism intensity, and implied receipt of economic and other benefits, therefore, appears to substantively influence satisfaction with government tourism planning regardless of whether they believe they have a voice in that process or not. Further empirical research in the Maldives is merited to further investigate these complex and diverse attitudes among the people who have the most to lose or gain from local tourism development.

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Part III
Managing Asian Destinations

Chapter 6
Managing UNESCO World Heritage in Vietnam: Visitor Evaluation of Heritage Mission and Management of Trang An Landscape Complex

Huong T. Bui, Tuan-Anh Le, and Phuong-Dung Ngo

Abstract This chapter explores visitor perception of heritage mission and management practices at Trang An Landscape Complex, a World Heritage Site inscribed by UNESCO in 2014. Quantitative research methods were employed to survey 150 international and 128 domestic tourists. In comparison to international tourists, domestic groups demand both physical and intellectual accessibility as well as value-for-money travel. Regarding heritage management, international tourists are enthusiastic about uniqueness, identity, and local community representation, but they are critical about conservation, education, and interpretation. The analysis of current heritage governance reveals a need for Trang An management board to pay attention to issues of overcrowding and integrate development opportunities in a buffer zone with tourism and heritage management.

Keywords Trang An Landscape Complex · Heritage tourism · Visitor perception · Heritage mission · Heritage management · World heritage site · Vietnam

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6.1 Introduction

Vietnam is a socialist country with strongly centralised political structures. Aligning with economic reforms since 1986, the Vietnamese government came to realise during the 1990s that one way to win international recognition was through promotion of its heritage (Logan 2009, p. 90). Beginning in the 1990s, the growth of the tourism industry and the development of cultural heritage policy in Vietnam became deeply intertwined. The government saw heritage tourism as a powerful economic and diplomatic tool; consequently, heritage preservation received a great deal of attention as the most important economic activity in Vietnam, relative to other cultural endeavours (Lask and Herold 2004). Research on Vietnam heritage tourism has been broadly covered in three publications concerning Southeast Asian tourism: *Heritage Tourism in Southeast Asia* (Hitchcock et al. 2010), *Tourism in Southeast Asia* (Hitchcock et al. 2009), and *UNESCO World Heritage in Southeast Asia* (King 2016). These publications explore world heritage sites in Southeast Asia in a comparative context.

Moving forwards from extant literature, this chapter explores issues of heritage management in the one-and-only mixed-heritage site in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Vietnam, the Trang An Landscape Complex. Being the newest designated UNESCO World Heritage site, announced in 2014, the designation of Trang An has transformed the site from a local satellite destination in northern Vietnam into a mainstream national-level tourism destination, forming a strategic heritage tourism triangle of Trang An (Ninh Binh), Ha Long Bay (Quang Ninh), and Thang Long Imperial Citadel (Ha Noi). The heritage triangle has expected to boost the heritage profile of northern Vietnam in parallel to the established route of Hoi An – Hue – My Son in the central region. The outstanding values of Trang An Landscape Complex has been a research topic for numerous ecologists (Ebenau et al. 2011; Nadler 2015; Nguyen 2016; Tran and Chang 2012) and geologists (Rabett et al. 2011); however, to date little research has been conducted about its heritage management and tourism development. Therefore, this unique site provides an ideal venue to further explore the topic of conservation and sustainable management of heritage properties in developing countries. Early attention to the balance of heritage conservation and tourism management is important to examine the determinants and antecedents of UNESCO-nisation, an opportunity that has been largely missed in other designated heritage sites in Southeast Asia. This chapter examines the Trang An Landscape Complex on a framework of heritage mission and management (Garrod and Fyall 2000) against a backdrop of strong tourism demand. The chapter assesses international and domestic tourists' perceptions of heritage missions and management practices, and whether they intend to recommend the destination. The research pinpoints a need for an integrated and holistic approach to heritage management and conservation, where tourism is viewed not in isolation but as part of an organic set of pressures.

6.2 Literature Review

6.2.1 Heritage and Tourism

The concept of heritage refers to tangible and concrete elements of the past (buildings, monuments, artefacts, sites, and constructed landscapes), as well as those aspects of culture expressed in behaviour, action, and performance (usually referred to as 'intangible' cultural heritage') that are interpreted, valued, and judged to be worthy of our attention, interest, and protection (Long 2003, p. 536). In fact, conceptualisation of heritage tourism has proved difficult to define and categorise. Smith (2009) remarks that terms such as 'heritage tourism', 'art tourism', 'ethnic tourism', or 'indigenous tourism' are often used interchangeably. However, she prefers to classify heritage tourism along with 'urban cultural tourism', 'cultural rural tourism', 'creative tourism', and 'popular cultural tourism' as separate subtypes of the broad category of 'cultural tourism'. Heritage tourism as argued by King (2016) comprises a part of cultural tourism, which according to Richter (1999) is 'applied by some to almost anything about the past can be visited' (p. 108). Tourism in this case becomes an activity which commercialises the past (Williams and Shaw 2009). Conceptualisation of heritage tourism as cultural tourism, however, has limited resources within cultural heritage category and leaves out groups of natural heritage and landscapes.

Heritage landscapes are regarded as human constructions resulting from people's relationships to the natural areas in which they live or move. Timothy and Boyd (2003) note 'heritage landscapes traverse a multitude of settings ranging from the natural and pristine to the built-urban and artificial' (p.9). Heritage landscapes are increasingly being acknowledged for their economic and social significance which have become invaluable tourism resources. However, many landscapes of significance to indigenous communities have usually been visited by people who, while interested in the scenic or recreational value of the landscape, may have little awareness of the cultural values of such sites, owing to a lack of tangible remnants (Carr 2008). The presence of these remains and the interpretation of the cultural significance of landscapes can serve an educational purpose and provide a heritage experience that is specific to the location in which it occurs (Timothy and Boyd 2003). Nevertheless, research on landscape heritage has been relatively limited.

While academic literature concentrates on the cultural, educational, and practical conservation aspects of heritage tourism, Garrod and Fyall (2000) pioneer the discussion on the link between heritage tourism and sustainability. They outline the criteria for a successful heritage attraction, including (1) attractions must be inexpensive and visitor-friendly, (2) attractions must be physically and intellectually accessible, (3) attractions must be able to balance the needs of the visitors and the conservation imperative, (4) attractions must be able to maintain the authenticity and integrity of the site, and (5) attractions must deliver value for money. In addition, Garrod and Fyall (2000) detail eight different elements of heritage management, including conservation, accessibility, education, relevance, recreation,

financial, local community, and quality. These eight elements are argued to demonstrate a strong resonance with the notion of sustainable development.

Conventional approach to heritage tourism in Western literature, however, has been criticised by Tim Winter (2007). In particular, the author outlines problems of definition and categorisation, social and political production of heritage and its historical contingency, heritage deployed in the interest of national political legitimacy, the commercialisation of heritage, the Eurocentrism which has underpinned judgements about what constitutes the global value of heritage, and finally the tendency to marginalise local communities in the interest of national and international importance. This criticism also points out that there are significant economic, social, political, management, conservation, and interpretation differences between the developed and developing worlds in terms of heritage tourism (Timothy 1999). Many issues in the less-developed world create everyday obstacles to the sustainable development and management of heritage tourism, including the role of the community in decision-making, sharing the benefits of tourism development, empowerment and power, ownership of historic places and artefacts, lack of funding and skills, and forced displacement to accommodate the growth of heritage tourism (Hampton 2005). While most of these problems are also evident in developed countries, they tend to be more pronounced in the developing regions of the world (Timothy and Boyd 2006). Here comes the need to reorient academic attention to sustainable heritage tourism management in the context of developing country, where Vietnam sets an example.

6.2.2 Heritage Tourism in Vietnam

Major heritage sites in Southeast Asia, particularly those designated by UNESCO, have grown to become very significant tourist attractions. In 2014, the Asia Pacific region had 36 UNESCO world heritage sites, significantly contributing to national prestige and identity, international profile, and government plans for domestic and international tourism development (King 2016). Publications on heritage tourism in Southeast Asia have several chapters about Vietnam that cover a range of heritage sites in Hue (Johnson 2010), Ha Long (Parnwell 2010), and Phong Nha-Ke Bang (Vu 2016). Within the tourism economy, the ancient city of Hoi An, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is the most important tourist destination in the centrally located Quang Nam Province. Hoi An has taken advantage of the increased international profile that accompanies UNESCO World Heritage Lists by capturing external expertise and mobilising local community support to build a well-defined image of a historic city (Brooks 2008). While the majority of studies present a supportive and positive view of tourism development in Hoi An (Di Giovine 2009a, b), there are warnings that the town may be moving off the track of sustainable development (Avieli 2015). Hoi An is an ideal site to explore the aspect of heritage commodification evidenced in souvenir business (Bui and Jolliffe 2013; Trinh et al. 2014).

Echoing the call for sustainable tourism development in the world heritage city, publications on heritage tourism in Vietnam are increasingly concerned with the politics of development and sustainability. The study of Bui and Lee (2015) uses a case study of the Central Sector of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long, a UNESCO World Heritage site located in the capital city of Vietnam, and argues that in heritage of national importance and international significance, politicisation has been prioritised and results in diminishing the use of heritage for commercial purposes such as tourism. Among very few works on natural heritage in Vietnam, Parnwell (2010) explores the notion of 'natural heritage', and the power relations that lie behind this concept. He uses the examples of Ha Long Bay in Vietnam and Phang Nga Bay in Thailand to compare and contrast coastal natural heritage management efforts within and outside the framework of UNESCO World Heritage designation and protection. Both locations have come under intensifying pressure from both tourism and other forms of modern development, which have threatened both the aesthetic and intrinsic values of these distinctive landscapes.

Another approach is seeing heritage tourism as objects of the 'tourist gaze' to reveal how the heritage is consumed by domestic and international tourists (both Asian and Western). Bui and Le (2016) illustrate the differences in the perception of destination image, satisfaction attributes, and loyalty perceptions among domestic and international visitors to Ha Long Bay. International visitors to the Ha Long Bay region have higher standards and are more critical than domestic visitors when judging this destination and its associated services. While international visitors highly value the quality of basic services, domestic visitors demonstrate favourable attitudes to the destination, despite low satisfaction in augmented services. Not only different in perception, domestic and international tourists in Vietnam are also treated differently by travel agents. The marginalisation of domestic tourists in Vietnam offers an interesting angle when Gillen (2009) examines the role of travel agencies. Such businesses segment their markets, not in the familiar language or cultural, eco-, or special interest tourists but via a reading of their clients' everyday spending and behavioural habits. He suggests that such clients run contrary to tourism industry stereotypes of who are its 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. The stability of these categories, however, is now under threat: a change, Gillen argues, that holds important consequences for the social fabric of Vietnamese identity. Continuing the discussion on changing social process in contemporary Vietnam, Bui and Jolliffe (2011) fit the picture of domestic tourists into a wider context of sociocultural and economic development in Vietnam to explain some of the unique behaviours of domestic travellers. In detail, the main influence is that the family values are reflected via Vietnamese domestic travel patterns. The role of the employer sponsorship in shaping individuals' travel decisions reflects a distinctive model of corporate travel (or social tourism) in the transition period from a central-planned to a market economy. The study also identifies a perception gap between tour operators who focus on promotion, while travellers loved to seek value-for-money rather than low-cost travel. Drilling on the tourism business sector, Bennett's (2009) insightful study of development of tourism business in post-*doi moi* Vietnam shows how the state's efforts to control the development of tourism in this transitional economy are

systematically thwarted by everyday corrupt practices whereby tourism enterprises are more or less obliged to provide kickbacks to officials if they are to introduce, sustain, or expand their tourism businesses. Local-level officials are able to take advantage of the vague wording of state resolutions to allow considerable discretion to interpret the regulatory environment in a manner that ultimately gains them considerable personal leverage and financial benefit. Officials thus become key conduits through which tourism entrepreneurs must operate if they are to negotiate the complex regulatory environment. The understanding of heritage tourism in Vietnam cannot be comprehended without a systematic analysis of management from both the perspective of governance bodies and of visitor perception. This study, therefore, aims at bridging this gap by contributing to the proliferation of heritage study in Vietnam, in particular, and in Southeast Asia, in general, by analysing heritage tourism at the newest world heritage site—Trang An Landscape Complex—within the framework of heritage mission and management proposed by Garrod and Fyall (2000).

6.3 Tourism Development and Heritage Management at Trang An

The Trang An Landscape Complex is a karst limestone landscape located entirely within Ninh Binh province, North Vietnam, which is only 90 km southeast (2 h by road) from the capital at Hanoi.

The complex covers 6172 ha, mainly contained within three contiguous protected areas: the Hoa Lu Ancient Capital (314 ha); the Trang An – Tam Coc – Bich Dong Scenic Area (2483 ha) along the Sao Khe river, with fields for rice and other crops and farming villages; and the Hoa Lu Special-Use Primary Forest (3375 ha), where excavations of a series of limestone caves in recent years have provided evidence for seasonal human activity between 33,000 and 1000 BCE. The complex is surrounded by a buffer zone of 6268 ha with some villages but primarily the rice paddy fields and gardens of subsistence farmers. The property was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage mixed property in 2014 on the basis of cultural criterion (v) and natural criteria (vii) and (viii). By criterion (v), Trang An is the most outstanding locale within Southeast Asia and is significant in the wider world for demonstrating the way early humans interacted with the natural landscape and adapted to major changes in environment over a period of more than 30,000 years of human history, from the Late Pleistocene to Holocene times, which represent the recent geological evolution of the limestone karst massif, which shifted dramatically between continental, insular, and coastal settings. The universal outstanding value of the natural criteria (vii) was justified as the tower karst landscape of Trang An is among the most beautiful and awe-inspiring areas of its kind anywhere on Earth, with the dominant landscape of a spectacular array of 200 metre high, cliff-bounded limestone rock towers and conical hills, enclosed with valleys filled by waterways

and caves. In addition, according to criterion (viii), Trang An is an exquisite geological property that displays more clearly than any other places on Earth the final stages of tower karst landscape evolution in a humid tropical environment and strong evidence that sea level has varied there in the past. Trang An is therefore widely regarded as of global importance for illustrating the interaction of karst evolution with changing sea levels and associated water-table levels.

Regarding heritage management, there are comprehensive legislation and regulations for the protection and management of the Trang An, such as UNESCO's conventions concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 1972 (1987), Biological Diversity 1992 (1994), and CITES 1973 (1994); the national laws on Cultural Heritage 2009, Tourism 2005, and Environment Protection 2005; and relevant degrees and documents. However, assessing factors affecting the property in 2016, UNESCO (2016) revealed that tourism devilment, with 5 million tourist arrivals in 2015, was identified as an immediate threat to the universal outstanding value of the Trang An Landscape Complex. Threats identified include the need to revise (1) the management plan and zoning plan, including a tourism management plan, (2) potential overcrowding and environmental impacts due to tourism, and (3) lack of an appropriate surrounding buffer zone. In response to the request of the World Heritage Committee, Ninh Binh Provincial People's Committee (2015) extended the buffer zone and approved the Trang An Landscape Complex Management Plan with a vision to 2030, including nine groups of action plans for the 2016–2020 period. However, the paradox of balancing the effective heritage management of the outstanding universal cultural and natural values as well as maintaining its integrity and authenticity with the booming tourism development remains a consistent challenge for the complex. The management structure of the Trang An site is complicated and involves various parties as indicated in Fig. 6.1.

Prior to the designation of World Heritage, the Trang An – Tam Coc – Bich Dong Scenic Area and Hoa Lu Ancient Capital were among popular tourist destinations in Vietnam. Travel itineraries for Northern Vietnam tours within 100 km from Hanoi often include Trang An in a day tour or two-day-one-night tour. The opening of Bai Dinh, the largest Buddhist pagoda in northern Vietnam in the late 2000s, has turned the area into a pilgrimage destination in addition to the traditional form of cultural and natural tourism, meeting the diverse needs of tourists. Tourist arrivals to the Trang An Landscape Complex have rapidly increased. In 2016, the complex received 5.7 million, consisting of 5.1 million domestic (89%) and 632,297 international (11%) tourists, a growth of 13.6% in comparison to 2015, with the associated ticket entrance revenue of VND 230 billion (or US$ 10 million). Despite being a popular tourist destination and designated World Heritage title, the Complex of Trang An Cultural Landscape has no single visitor centre. This considered a major drawback of the current heritage interpretation and education (Ninh Binh Provincial People Committee 2015).

Visitor arrivals to Trang An usually peak in the first 3 months following the Lunar New Year, when pilgrims visit at festival times in March, with relatively few visitors over the remaining 9-month period. Visitors often confine to a well-defined linear network of waterways, with a large proportion of the property receiving few

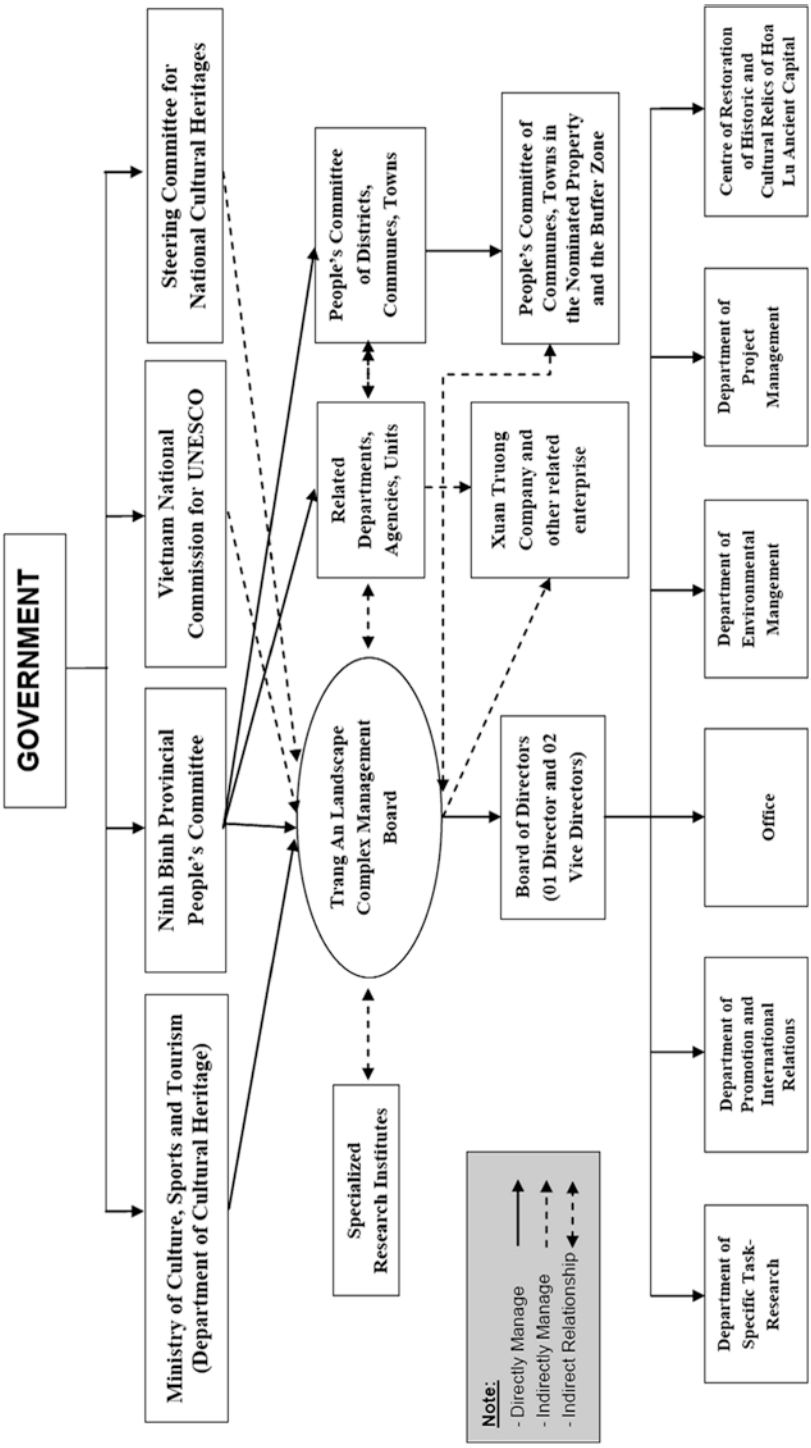

Fig. 6.1 Organisation structure of Trang An Landscape Complex Management Board

or no visitors. Major waterway transportation almost exclusively uses small traditional-style sampans rowed by locals. Visitation to the site, however, is highly seasonal and has caused negative impacts on facilities and visitor experience. For example, 2600 operating boats and associated tourist activities impacted negatively on the natural environment and visitor experience, especially during the peak visitor times (traditional festivals and public holidays). The core visitor activities include cycling, hiking, cave visiting, river boat sightseeing, visiting the King Dinh-Le temples and Bai Dinh pagoda, and appreciating nature and culture. Visitor activities are predominantly in the daytime, with little use of overnight accommodation. Major types of tourism developed at the site include ecotourism, cultural and religious tourism, and other recreational activities. In 2016, the State of Conservation Report to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre indicated tourism development as a major threat to the universal outstanding values of the site. Possible impacts include overcrowding; impacts from recreational activities, such as rock climbing; and plan for residential and university development in the buffer zones. Although current levels of tourism are within the existing management capacity, the anticipated steady increase in numbers will require careful vigilance, comprehensive planning, and enhanced capability for management intervention to minimise any increased incidence of environmental or social impact (World Heritage Centre, 2016). Therefore, research is encouraged to investigate current state of heritage management for tourism at the Trang An Landscape Complex.

6.4 Study Methods

A deductive approach using a questionnaire survey (Creswell 2012) was constructed based on the framework of heritage mission and management (Garrod and Fyall 2000). The primary data was collected in November–December 2016 using self-administered surveys at the site of Trang An Landscape Complex within 1 week. In total, 278 complete questionnaires, consisting of 150 international (54%) and 128 domestic (46%) visitors, were collected and analysed. Additionally, the authors reviewed secondary sources, including international, national, and provincial archival records, such as UNESCO reports, socio-economic reports, management regulations and policies, tourism development plan, and memos during the fieldtrip.

The questionnaire consisted of four sections designed to gain an insight into both domestic and international visitor profiles and their perceptions on heritage mission and heritage management and their intent to recommend the site. The first section collected socio-demographic information about each respondent, such as gender, age, level of education, occupation, and income. The second sought visitor's perceptions on the importance and the performance of seven aspects of a heritage mission (Garrod and Fyall 2000), namely, (1) inexpensiveness, (2) visitor-friendliness, (3) physical accessibility, (4) intellectual accessibility, (5) balance of conservation and visitation, (6) authenticity and integrity, and (7) value for money. The answers were rated on the Likert-type scale from 1 (not important) to 6 (very important). The

third section examined the seven dimensions of the heritage management practices using the adapted 19 items of Garrod and Fyall's (2000) heritage mission and management framework. The last section explores the participants' intent to recommend the site. For data analysis, the authors adopted Importance–Performance Analysis (IPA), developed by Martilla and James (1977). This approach is widely employed to identify the aspects for which, given their importance, under- or over-perform. The results were visually presented in a four-quadrant scatter plot. T-test was used to identify the difference between the responses of domestic and international visitors. Results of analysis are presented in the section below.

6.5 Findings

6.5.1 Heritage Mission

Analysing and comparing the mean values of seven aspects of heritage mission of the Trang An Landscape Complex, it was found that domestic visitors tend to be a homogenous group and variance in their rating was relatively low. Compared to international tourists, the domestic group highly valued accessibility (both physical and intellectual) to the heritage and access to a value-for-money package. International visitors rated the maintenance of integrity and authenticity higher than the score of domestic counterparts (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 Importance performance of heritage mission

	International tourists (N = 150)		Domestic tourists (N = 128)		T-test	
Items	Means	SD	Means	SD	t-value	Sig.
Importance						
Inexpensiveness	4.09	1.27	5.08	0.85	2.12	0.03
Visitor-friendliness	4.83	1.12	5.00	0.83	1.41	0.16
Physical accessibility	*4.03*	*1.40*	*5.02*	*0.79*	*7.07*	*0.00*
Intellectual accessibility	*3.97*	*1.48*	*4.93*	*0.86*	*6.48*	*0.00*
Balance development and conservation	*4.90*	*1.11*	*5.28*	*0.85*	*3.12*	*0.00*
Integrity and authenticity	5.22	0.92	5.20	0.94	−0.22	0.82
Value for money	*4.79*	*1.10*	*5.25*	*0.82*	*3.87*	*0.00*
Performance						
Inexpensiveness	4.40	1.15	4.44	0.84	0.35	0.73
Visitor-friendliness	4.77	1.01	4.70	0.85	−0.57	0.57
Physical accessibility	4.65	0.90	4.67	0.90	0.15	0.88
Intellectual accessibility	4.35	1.22	4.39	1.02	0.29	0.77
Balance development and conservation	4.77	0.92	4.64	0.97	−1.19	−0.14
Integrity and authenticity	*4.89*	*1.01*	*4.43*	*1.09*	*−3.62*	*0.00*
Value for money	*4.83*	*0.97*	*5.00*	*0.81*	*−3.59*	*0.00*

Using mean values of seven items measuring heritage mission, the authors conducted an Importance–Performance Analysis (IPA). Each element of the heritage mission is represented by a plot with two values, one is the mean for importance and the other is for performance. The benchmark lines divide the chart area into four quadrants at the vertical and horizontal middle points. Observed in Figs. 6.2a and 6.2b, seven plots representing the importance heritage mission skew on the higher end in the answers of domestic tourists. However, in terms of performance, the two groups were relatively similar. While domestic tourists rated maintenance, integrity, and authenticity under the benchmark score, international visitors positively evaluated destination's performance on these dimensions. Domestic tourists also critically rated visitor-friendliness and physical accessibility, as the criterion was of high importance but performed below the average.

6.5.2 Heritage Management

Garrod and Fyall (2000) define eight different elements of the heritage management framework including conservation, accessibility, education, relevance, recreation, financial, local community, and quality. Excluding the financial management element, the 19 items, measuring 7 dimensions of heritage management, were used in the survey at Trang An. International tourists were enthusiastic about uniqueness, identity, and local community representation. However, they were more critical about conservation, education, and interpretation, the area where their ratings were

Fig. 6.2a IPA international tourists

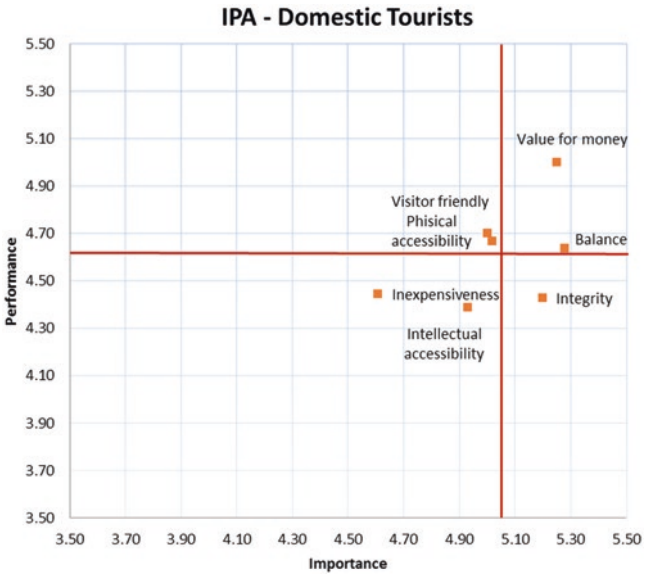

Fig. 6.2b IPA domestic tourists

much lower than the scores given by domestic tourists. Also, interpretation programs for international visitors are underrepresented. Perhaps, language barriers and limited information in languages other than Vietnamese at the site explain this poor evaluation. Another reason might be negligence of the site management to enforce effective heritage education and interpretation targeted at international visitors. Site management should also pay more attention to disaster prevention, as this is among the lowest-rated categories by both international and domestic tourists (see Table 6.2).

6.5.3 Likelihood to Recommend the Destination

Interestingly, while domestic tourists were more demanding of heritage mission and positive about heritage management practices, they were less likely to recommend the destination to friends and relatives. In their evaluation of the complex features, international visitors showed a positive attitude. They saw the place as interesting and enjoyable. Similarity between two groups was found in the evaluation of value for money, which is consistent with the findings earlier in relation to heritage mission (see Table 6.3). Findings on likelihood to recommend reinforce the earlier argument that domestic visitors tend to have higher demands. Perhaps, they are repeat visitors and have been familiar to the destination. For international visitors, what they experienced at the sites was new and exciting, and therefore, their attitude tends to be more positive.

Table 6.2 International and domestic tourist perception of heritage management

	International tourists (N = 150)		Domestic tourists (N = 128)		T-test	
Items	Means	SD	Means	SD	t-value	Sig.
Heritage site is unique for the country	5.09	1.02	5.01	1.07	−0.68	0.50
Heritage site is heavily visited by public	*4.50*	*1.08*	*4.85*	*0.98*	*2.82*	*0.01*
Heritage site has high educational merit/potential	4.64	1.11	4.86	0.93	1.74	0.08
Heritage is likely to be lost unless conserved	5.06	1.11	5.27	0.89	1.72	0.09
Attraction is under pressure due to high visitation	4.46	1.13	4.54	1.20	0.52	0.61
Attraction is under threat from natural disasters	*3.51*	*1.59*	*4.09*	*1.30*	*3.26*	*0.00*
Heritage is safeguarded through conservation	4.75	1.06	4.79	0.96	0.38	0.70
Heritage is properly managed	4.70	1.14	4.89	0.89	1.48	0.14
Conservation work prevents visitors from full access	3.71	1.43	3.94	1.36	1.36	0.18
Conservation requirement limits recreational potential	*3.53*	*1.53*	*4.26*	*1.28*	*4.24*	*0.00*
Heritage education plays important role	*4.86*	*1.18*	*5.14*	*0.86*	*2.18*	*0.03*
Interpretation enhances understanding of the heritage	*4.67*	*1.35*	*4.95*	*0.95*	*1.97*	*0.05*
Interpretation at the heritage assets is effective	*4.21*	*1.47*	*4.54*	*1.09*	*2.09*	*0.04*
Heritage assets are relevant to the country as a whole	4.93	1.20	5.06	0.98	0.92	0.36
Heritage assets reflect the identity of local community	5.01	1.09	4.85	1.04	−1.29	0.20
Heritage gives the local community a sense of pride	5.12	1.03	5.07	1.03	−0.36	0.72
Heritage works in harmony with local community	4.83	1.24	4.91	0.95	0.60	0.55
Heritage brings economic benefit for local community	5.05	1.14	5.18	0.90	1.03	0.30
Heritage assets provide recreational opportunities	4.88	1.04	4.99	1.00	0.90	0.37

6.6 Discussion and Conclusions

Education and accessibility are interdependent and important elements in the mission of a heritage attraction (Garrod and Fyall 2000). While accessibility refers to the extent of how people experience the universal values of a heritage, education

Table 6.3 Likelihood to recommend the destination

	International tourists (N = 150)		Domestic tourists (N = 128)		T-test	
Items	Means	SD	Means	SD	t-value	Sig.
You should visit	*5.49*	*0.84*	*5.17*	*1.03*	*−2.80*	*0.01*
Place is interesting	*5.35*	*0.91*	*4.73*	*1.32*	*−4.53*	*0.00*
Place is value for money	4.91	1.08	4.80	1.24	−0.80	0.43
Coming here is enjoyable	*5.37*	*0.83*	*4.83*	*1.29*	*−4.20*	*0.00*
Coming here is worth of time	*5.23*	*1.13*	*4.87*	*1.27*	*−2.50*	*0.01*

plays a vital role in achieving intellectual accessibility. In order to appreciate heritage values, visitors must be able to understand its nature and significance. However, the heritage mission questionnaire survey shows a low score from both international and domestic visitors on intellectual accessibility. Particularly, the domestic are more demanding on this aspect, with mean score of 4.93 over the international of 4.39. On further investigation into heritage management, the findings indicate that in addition to their apprehension for conservation, international tourists are also concerned with education and interpretation. The authors are in favour of expanding this aspect's function from supporting visitors with their travel planning and guidance to providing education and interpretation on the value of the Trang An Landscape Complex through displays and multimedia information. Furthermore, the effectiveness of interpretation and education is an important agenda for site management. Language barriers may hinder visitors' understanding and appreciation of heritage. The low satisfaction levels on heritage interpretation found in this study are congruent with Carr's (2008) comment on limited visitor awareness of the cultural value of heritage landscape.

Another issue that demands immediate attention is overcrowding during peak season. Visitation to Trang An is highly seasonal in the first 3 months of the year and confined to a well-defined linear network of waterways, with a large proportion of the property receiving few or no visitors. Due to the uniqueness of transportation by boat along the waterways, a supply of 2600 operating boats is a shortage in peak season but an oversupply in the other 9 months of low season. Perhaps this is the reason why domestic visitors demand more attention to the physical accessibility to the site. Types of tourism at Trang An provide another explanation for low satisfaction and intention to recommend among domestic tourists. For the Vietnamese, Trang An is part of a pilgrimage route to Huong Tich Pagoda and Bai Dinh Pagoda. Pilgrimage is an annual activity in the festive seasons. Therefore, visitation to Trang An is understood as a religious responsibility for the Vietnamese, and there is no need to 'recommend' someone to travel there. However, international visitors travel for relaxation and to enjoy sightseeing, paddling, and other recreational activities. Thus, they tend to show positive evaluations of excitement due to the recreational opportunities at the site. Consequently, they recommend the site and associated activities to prospective travellers. Different travel motivations, types of activities, and time for travel found in this study reflect the previous finding of Bui and Le

(2016) about international and domestic visitors in Ha Long Bay. However, findings from the two studies somehow contradict, as international visitors to Ha Long Bay are more critical about its tourism services. Again, types of tourism experienced by tourists explain this result, as Ha Long is a purely sightseeing destination, while Trang An functions as a pilgrimage stop. Therefore, the types of domestic visitors to the two sites might be different.

For the Trang An Landscape Complex mixed heritage designated by UNESCO, sustainable development and management are a responsibility shared by many stakeholders. Although the current level of tourists is within the existing management capacity, the anticipated steady increase in numbers will require careful, comprehensive planning to minimise increased incidences of environmental or social impact. It is a critical issue in relation to the buffer zone of 6268 ha, in which 50% of the buffer zone is reserved for residential and university development. The new residential development will increase population density and that may accelerate the impact of visitor overcrowding in the pilgrimage season. Consequently, integrity and authenticity of the heritage are under threat. Learning from the experience of Hoi An (Avieli 2015), Trang An might need to adopt careful land-use planning to balance the needs of both conservation and development.

The case of Trang An highlights issues of destination planning, management, and development that are congruent with Winter's (2007) claim about different social and political productions of heritage for tourism consumption in emerging economies in Asia. Tourism has been developed in Trang An for decades before being designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site. The site has no comprehensive land-use planning and meaningful heritage interpretation prior to the designation. In other words, site planning lost its guidance role for the development of tourism, while site interpretation does not aid in enhancing visitor awareness and appreciation of the value of the heritage. The designation of UNESCO World Heritage serves political, and destination marketing purposes, but not necessarily reinforces sustainable development through comprehensive planning and sound interpretation. The case of Trang An addresses challenges facing heritage destinations in Asia. The lesson of managing cultural landscape of Trang An is relevant for many destinations in Asia, which are seeking UNESCO World Heritage designation and are in preparation and documentation of tourism development at heritage site of national and international importance.

In summary, this study provides a snapshot of heritage tourism management and operation at the Trang An Landscape Complex in Ninh Binh, northern Vietnam. Findings from the survey of international and domestic tourists reveal several issues concerning visitor management and heritage conservation that call for the immediate attention of stakeholders. The study, however, has several limitations requiring further research. First, the authors only conducted a visitor survey; therefore, it is impossible to uncover the notion of heritage tourism from those who are involved in governance and management of the site. Future research should explore and develop further investigation from the local, provincial, and national level of heritage management. Second, a comparative study of Trang An and other cultural and natural heritage sites in Vietnam would enhance a comprehensive understanding of heritage

management practices nationwide. Finally, since heritage interpretation was a weakness identified in this study, future researchers could take this opportunity to grasp readers' interest.

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Chapter 7
Against the Flow: Challenges in Tourism Development for a Small-Border Town in Thailand

Chachaya Yodsuwan, Piyatida Pianluprasidh, and Ken Butcher

Abstract While management of cross-border tourism destinations has been of considerable interest to policy makers and tourism scholars for a long time, less attention has been given to Asian tourism destinations. A region well known worldwide is the Golden Triangle which shares its borders with Laos, Thailand and Myanmar. This chapter identifies key tourism planning issues, through interviews and a survey of key stakeholders, faced by a small town on the Thai side of the border – Chiang Saen. This tourist destination in Thailand draws local and international tourists because of its proximity to the Golden Triangle. Four broad issues restricting tourism development for Chiang Saen were identified: a complex web of stakeholders, powerful vested interests, a lack of identity or planning direction, and weak market attractiveness. Core Thai values of fatalism, relationship building, harmony and hierarchy contribute to the existence of these planning issues and constrain problem resolution. Furthermore, western style recommendations for planning development are likely to be ineffective. However, suggestions that leverage Thai values have potential to assist local tourism planning.

Keywords Cultural values · Stakeholder complexity · Power relations · Destination attractiveness · Future uncertainty

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7.1 Introduction

The management of cross border tourism destinations has been of considerable interest to policymakers and tourism scholars for a long time, especially in North America and Europe (e.g. Martinez 1994; Timothy 1995; Ioannides et al. 2006; Blasco et al. 2014). Less attention has been given to Asian tourism destinations that share borders with one or more other countries. A region well known worldwide is the Golden Triangle which shares its borders with Laos, Thailand and Myanmar. The chapter focuses on a particular border town in the Golden Triangle – Chiang Saen, Thailand. This tourist destination in Thailand draws local and international tourists because of its proximity to the Golden Triangle and the past history of the region as a global centre for opium trafficking. Indeed, it is arguably the key vantage point for visitors to view the convergence of the three bordering countries that form the Golden Triangle.

Situated on the Mekong River, Chiang Saen provides a culturally rich tourist experience in contrast to its counterpart town on the Laos side of the Mekong River. While a special economic zone (SEZ) has been established across the river in Laos, the SEZ is principally a casino resort drawing modest numbers of mainland Chinese tourists to the resort and sometimes to the region. This development in Laos follows the building of another casino resort across the river in Myanmar. In both cross border developments, there was a great deal of hope expressed by residents of Chiang Saen that these tourism projects would provide a substantial economic boost to the region and Chiang Saen in particular. However, fragmented sectional interests appear to mitigate against a strong regional approach to tourism development. Furthermore, a multifaceted and large bureaucratic presence in Chiang Saen provides difficulties for coherent tourism policy development. The main purpose of this chapter is to identify key issues affecting tourism development for Chiang Saen. A secondary goal is to integrate Thai cultural values into the analysis of tourism development issues.

7.2 Tourism Development in Border Towns

First, we briefly examine the extant literature relating to destination tourism development. We follow Haugland et al. (2011) and define tourism destination development, in broad terms, as those strategic activities that provide value for the individuals and institutions involved with the destination. Moreover, McKercher (1999) states that destination tourism is a demand-driven activity aiming to satisfy customer needs and wants. Overall, there is a consensus that most tourism destinations comprise a complex and interrelated network of individuals and institutions to produce a destination product (Buhalis 2000). Furthermore, most scholars agree that for a tourism destination to be successful, a degree of cooperation and collaboration between key players is required (e.g. Jamal and Getz 1995). Hence, a range

of factors thought to be critical to tourism development have been advanced. For instance, Haugland et al. (2011) argue that destination capabilities, destination level coordination and inter-destination bridge ties are essential. These factors reflect a process for distributing resources, coherent activities and open communication channels that captures the complexities in a destination. Furthermore, required elements thought to be instrumental in bringing destinations to an integrated development phase have been depicted in various models. For instance, Bramwell and Sharman's (1999) collaborative framework included elements, such as inclusiveness, collective learning and consensus building, whereas individual-oriented systems and their players are mostly concerned with their own goals (Haugland et al. 2011).

Commercial activities at border crossings have been a feature of trading for centuries. Towns and cities have been built as a consequence of their role in cross border trade. Thus, commercial activities are often a bedrock for the economies of such border areas. In more recent times, tourism has been an added economic activity to many border regions. Authors, such as Gelbman and Timothy (2011), acknowledge the growing importance of tourism development in border regions. In general, the reasons why tourists are attracted to border regions mostly relate to a curiosity with something different (Timothy 2000). However, this difference across borders can manifest in various ways. Different cultures, legal systems and economies separated by a border may provide rich tourist experiences, or great shopping opportunities (Spierings and van der Velde 2013; Amante 2013) or participation in prohibited or restricted activities, such as gambling or prostitution. Often the border experience is one that involves a natural phenomenon, such as a river. However, tourists can also be attracted to the notion of just being in a place where countries meet.

In turn, the examination of cross border development and collaboration has received scholarly interest because of the complexities involved in achieving sustainable cooperative growth in a border region. For instance, a number of authors, such as Timothy (1995) and Ioannides et al. (2006), have used the cross border partnership model developed by Martinez (1994). This model links different levels of cross border contact leading to an integrated approach to destination development. Implicit in such modelling is the assumption that an integrated relationship between cross border players is desirable and possible. However, a number of scholars question whether such a desired end state of integration is achievable (e.g. Ilbery and Saxena 2011). For instance, Timothy (1995) notes that cross border efforts to establish and maintain collaborative partnerships are very time consuming and costly and may not produce beneficial outcomes for all parties.

Power relations appear to be a critical factor in tourism development. First, border tourist destinations traditionally develop within the constraints of competing national priorities (Timothy 1995). Thus, national government interests may override other sectoral interests (Lovelock and Boyd 2006). At the individual or micro level, Blasco et al. (2014) also note the key role of political agendas. This is reflected in arguments between tourism and non-tourism interests, between different types of tourism and between local versus outsider interests (Lovelock and Boyd 2006). For instance, Ilbery and Saxena (2011) suggest that economic policy goals may vary between shopping, tourism and labour migration at a destination. At the same time,

not all players are active and champion the ideas of tourism development (Blasco et al. 2014). Indeed, these authors argue that most players are passive participants. Consequently, this creates a situation which allows border town development to simply favour those already in power (Timothy 1995). In a tourism development model introduced by Blasco, Guia and Prats (2014), the authors identify five factors that help to explain the emergence of border town tourism structures: cross border institutional similarities, bridging arrangements, leadership/entrepreneurs, close and power-symmetric personal relationships and serendipity. Importantly, the attitudes of pre-existing regional organisations and institutions toward border town development are a critical factor in the introduction of new ideas. In border towns where 'old' economies are dominant, 'new' economies may be slow to take off. Accordingly, Ilbery and Saxena (2011) pose key questions such as: Do national interests dominate border interests? Do pre-existing power relations resist new power-sharing relations? How do competing interests restrict effective development of a coherent tourism product? These are all good rational questions from a western perspective. An equally compelling question is how efforts to develop tourism in Chiang Saen are affected by Asian values. Accordingly, any review of the inter-organisational environment will be incomplete without an understanding of appropriate Asian cultural values (Komin 1990).

7.3 Background History of Chiang Saen and the Border Region

Chiang Saen is a small town situated on the banks of the Mekong River in Northern Thailand (population about 50,000) – see Fig. 7.1. Geographically it is located where the Ruak River meets the Mekong River, thus providing a three-way intersection of Myanmar (north of Ruak River), Laos (east of Mekong River), and Thailand (west of Mekong River). The cross border region in Laos and Myanmar remains largely undeveloped, apart from some scattered villages and two stand-alone casino resorts for international tourists. Chiang Saen is also less than 1 hour drive from the larger Thai city of Chiang Rai (Mueang district population about 220,000) which receives a large contingent of international and Thai tourists. The Thai sister city of Chiang Mai (Mueang district population about 230,000) is located a further 3 h to the west and attracts a still larger number of international and local tourists. Both Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai operate as gateway cities for tourists arriving by air to the region. Thus, Chiang Saen is a recognised destination for tourists visiting Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai who seek to undertake half day or full day tours around the Lanna region.

Historically, Chiang Saen has a rich story to tell. Some scholars even attribute Chiang Saen as the birthplace of the Lanna Kingdom. Lanna means a million rice fields, and the Lanna Kingdom included the northern region of Thailand and part of Laos and Myanmar. Lanna had its own style of arts and spoken/written language

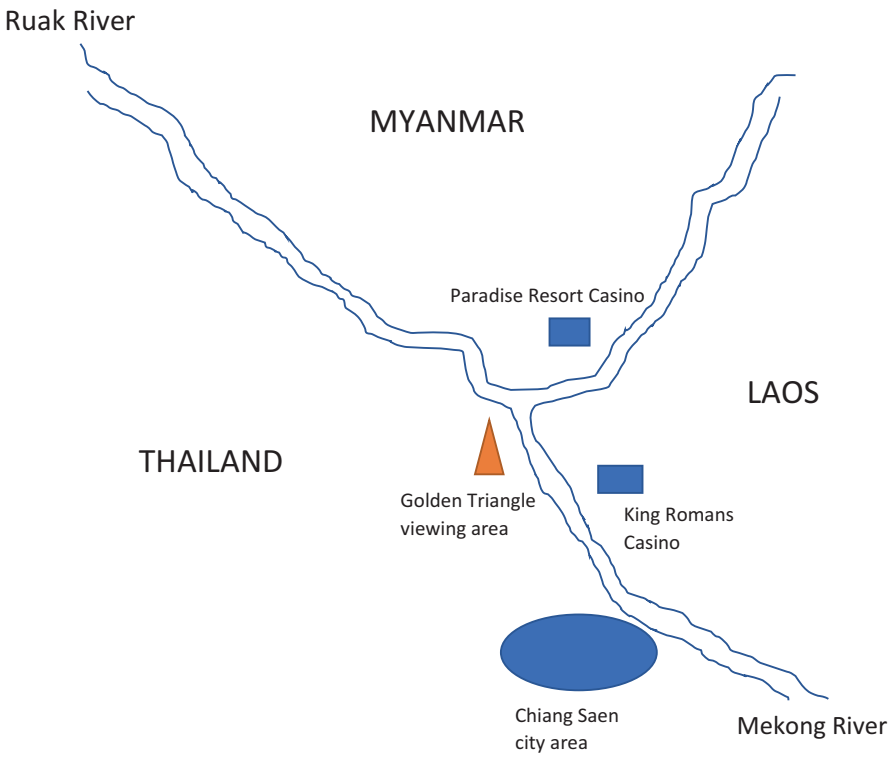

Fig. 7.1 Map of the Golden Triangle viewing area

which is still evident in northern Thailand today. According to myth, Chiang Saen was a hidden ancient city named Yonok Nak Phan, which existed over 2000 years ago to the north of Chiang Rai. The consensus of evidence about the historical existence of Chiang Saen suggests that the city was founded prior to the reign of King Mengrai of the Lanna Kingdom. Today, Thais accept that King Mengrai was the first King of the Lanna Kingdom and Chiang Saen was the first capital city of the Lanna Kingdom at the end of the thirteenth century. The founding of the major Lanna cities of Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai is also attributed to King Mengrai. Thus, the Lanna Kingdom existed outside of Siam (former name for Thailand) until the eighteenth century. While Chiang Saen experienced a decline as a centre of political power during the sixteenth century and was no longer regarded as a capital city, Buddhism expanded substantially through the actions of many city governors. Scholars record that about 75 temples within the city and 66 outside Chiang Saen were developed in the two centuries after foundation, certifying the central role of Chiang Saen as an important Buddhist civilisation.

Commercially, Chiang Saen is essentially a small port city in an agricultural region. Traders have transported goods down the Mekong for centuries, and this is still the case today. Hence, the local economy tends to depend upon agricultural

produce and to a lesser extent its role in providing trading services. The Mekong has also provided input to the local economy with fishing activities. Thus, powerful interest groups tend to come from the two main longstanding activities for Chiang Saen – river commerce and agriculture. In the last century, the area also developed its infamous reputation for opium trafficking. Illegal opium production reached a global scale in the 1960s, enriching powerful interests and those participating in corrupt behaviour. Opium production has now been drastically reduced, especially on the Thai side of the border. This reduction was a consequence of Thailand's Royal Projects Foundation. The foundation, established by King Bhumibol, promoted crop substitution programs to eliminate underlying problems, such as poverty. The Doi Tung Royal Project of the princess mother of the late King Bhumibol is now an extremely popular tourist attraction for local and international visitors.

In the past decade, tourism development has largely occurred across the border, in both Myanmar and Laos. There has been little activity in Chiang Saen, itself. The casino on the Myanmar border called Paradise Resort was built about 10 years ago. This casino draws Thai gamblers, whereas King Romans on the Laos border draws mostly Chinese gamblers. Since the opening of the Laos casino, there are direct flights from Chiang Rai to Kunming, China, resulting in an influx of Chinese visitors to Chiang Rai for on travel to the casino in Laos. Casinos are illegal in both China and Thailand. Thai gamblers appear to prefer the Paradise Resort in Myanmar rather than King Romans in Laos due to language barriers within the Laos resort. Moreover, the number of Chinese who travel by cars to the region is also increasing. These groups of drive tourists will drive from the southern part of China through Laos then onto Thailand. They will enter Thailand via one of the border towns with a bridge over the Mekong River, such as Maesai or Chiang Khong. The final destination is mostly Chiang Mai, so they would drive through Chiang Rai, quickly visit the Golden Triangle and then travel direct to Chiang Mai. However, at the same time as Chinese tourists are increasing in numbers, it appears that the number of European tourists is declining.

7.4 Identifying the Challenges

For this case study, a range of tools were used to collect and collate data. First, we note that case studies are recognised as an invaluable tool to examine cross border destinations (Timothy 2000; Jordan 2007). Accordingly, we focused on a single border town but collected data from multiple sources, such as government websites, researcher observation, interviews with local stakeholders and a content analysis of tourist experiences reported online. Specifically, visitor reviews posted on TripAdvisor were analysed. Posts were placed mostly in English (270/300 posts). At the same time, unstructured interviews were carried out with 15 key stakeholders from the public (five local authorities) and private sector (six accommodation and four restaurant entrepreneurs). The respondents comprised senior managers within the public sector and owner/managers within the private sector. Respondents were

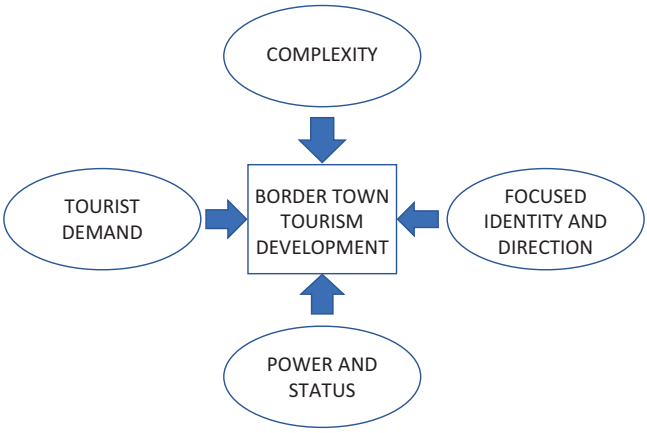

Fig. 7.2 Broad factors influencing tourism development in the border town of Chiang Saen, Thailand

long-term residents of Chiang Saen and thus familiar with tourism development activities over a long period of time. The research team also visited the town and observed its key features on several occasions. Accordingly, a cross section of views and opinions were obtained to gather an appreciation of the challenges facing Chiang Saen. Overall, issues arose that could be grouped into four broad factors. In addition, it is clear that development issues arose or were exacerbated by Thai cultural values. Thus, new insights have been gained into the difficulties faced by Asian tourism planners, given that Thai management styles and practices resemble those of other Asian countries (Niffenegger et al. 2006). Figure 7.2 depicts these four factors.

7.4.1 Complexity

There are a large number of mostly public agencies involved in regional governance for this small border town. Indirectly, most of these agencies play a role in how decisions relating to tourism are made and executed. Having a large number of agencies involved produces a high level of interconnectivity which increases the complexity of town decision-making. Such decisions often involve zoning applications, building approvals, visa processing, infrastructure, leisure facilities and the like. However, it is recognised that often major policy decisions are made in head offices rather than branch offices. Thus, there is also a high level of interdependence upon others for favourable decisions. Again, such interdependence provides a high level of complexity. Overall, there are 45 government agencies in Chiang Saen. We can ask, why are there so many public agencies in such a small town? Part of the answer is

reflected in the emphasis placed by Thais on personal relationships (Knutson et al. 2003). This core cultural value is a strong Asian value where developing and favouring personal relationships is more important than institutional efficiencies. Indeed, Thais place far more weight on good interpersonal processes rather than the outcomes from such processes. So distinct is this preference that Thais do not have a translatable word for 'achievement' (Komin 1990). While western bureaucracies can become bloated, there are more often interventions to reduce inefficiencies and consolidate inter-organisational arrangements to achieve better outcomes. In Thailand, achieving desired end goals is subordinated to the protection of personal relationships.

While there are a large number of public agencies in Chiang Saen, no government agencies responsible for tourism are based in Chiang Saen. The Chiang Rai Provincial Office, Tourism Authority of Thailand Northern Office Region 2 and Chiang Rai Provincial Ministry of Tourism and Sport cover development for Chiang Saen. Accordingly, tourism is one of the few areas that does not have direct government representation on the ground. Thus, local administrative bodies play important roles in tourism development in Chiang Saen with support from central tourism agencies. The two local administrative divisions (Wiang Chiang Saen Subdistrict Municipality and Wiang Subdistrict Municipality) are responsible for border area management, including tourism. One public sector respondent commented that 'collaboration among local people is important for tourism development in the area, yet zoning arrangements [in the town centre] cause confusion and decision making does not often go smoothly'. As Thailand is far more developed than both Myanmar and Laos, many thousands of migrants cross into Thailand either legally or illegally each year. Being a border town makes it more difficult for local governance. For instance, one private sector respondent indicated that 'migrant workers communication problems with local people and government agencies take up time and effort'. Accordingly, tourism development is often accorded a low priority.

At the national government level where many tourist decisions are made, cross border collaboration is confounded by multiple interests. The Golden Triangle reflects three national governments – host country Thailand (Chiang Saen), Laos and Myanmar. However, a fourth country with interests in the region is China. The emergence of a Chinese Special Economic Zone (SEZ) is called 'Kings Roman of Laos Asian Economic and Tourism Development Zone' at Ban Ton Pheung in Laos. This SEZ is located directly opposite to Chiang Saen, and the casino is easily visible from the Thai side. Thus, not only is there a geographic tripartite national involvement in the region, China is a fourth country that is involved in its economic development. Again, one can deduce that subordinate countries, such as Thailand, will give a high level of respect to such a powerful stakeholder. Hierarchy and respect are important core cultural values. So powerful is this core value that subordinates defer to hierarchy, and we could say 'go with the flow'. It would be improper for Thais to criticise such powerful interests (Knutson et al. 2003). In addition, in one part of the Golden Triangle region in Myanmar, a strong nongovernment militarised entity controls parts of the region. Respondents indicate that while the Thai region of the Golden Triangle is 'opium'-free, there is a mystique about its infamous

history worldwide. Furthermore, the SEZ in Laos is largely a casino operation controlled by Chinese entrepreneurs. Thus, personal interests intersect with regional and national interests. Hence, one can see how the large numbers of stakeholders with varying agendas make cross border tourism development problematic.

7.4.2 Power Relations Between Stakeholders

This factor relates to power and status held by key stakeholders and the capacity of tourism supporters in Chiang Saen to influence tourism development. In particular, the acceptance of personal relationships that transcend institutional arrangements lends itself to personal interests being tantamount. In so doing, tourism projects may be rejected or accepted, not on merit but on other factors. Hence, reward power is a strong factor that can influence particular developments in Thailand – tourist or otherwise. Furthermore, the core value of utmost respect for hierarchy more often results in a top-down approach to development. In particular, Komin (1990) singles out government officials as one group low in 'task achievement' values and very high in their need to behave deferentially toward superiors. Thais will not openly criticise superiors. Indeed, the simple questioning of tourism policies or suggesting new ideas is tantamount to criticism and looked down upon.

Respondents tended to agree that Chiang Saen's primary role is to provide commercial support for agricultural and logistics activities. Respondents from both private and government sectors mentioned that local people see less benefits from tourism than established sectors. As one local businessman commented, 'tourism generates low income compared to trading and shipping'. Indeed, a number of respondents indicated that 'the most popular tourist attractions are in Chiang Rai and that is where tourists stay overnight and spend more money'. For such well-established commercial industries, there will be persons and families in Chiang Saen that have high community standing. Again, Thais will often behave deferentially toward such individuals. Furthermore, Timpa (2012) argues that in collectivist societies, members of well-established groups will be expected to support group leaders. Thus, entrenched positions of power are consolidated. A further core cultural value relates to how Thais favour established systems and processes over the uncertainty of new ideas (Komin 1990). While respondents could see the potential of tourism development, there was not a sense that tourism will provide a boom industry for the town or region. Accordingly, stakeholders appear to be approaching tourism development in a more opportunistic and reactive manner. To aggressively promote the development of new or less developed industries, such as tourism, would not be favoured by most Thais. Failure of the SEZ in Laos to deliver strong benefits to people in Chiang Saen reinforces feelings of uncertainty held by local operators.

Many respondents noted the lack of benefits accruing to Chiang Saen from the Kings Roman Casino operation. The idea of a special economic zone (SEZ) just across the Mekong River in Laos had widespread appeal in Chiang Saen, especially

initially. This early reaction to the large-scale casino operation is unsurprising. Small players in any market tend to be susceptible to the promises of major projects. Furthermore, as Thais hold great value for hierarchy, the announcements of major projects by leading industry and political figures would be well received. In hindsight, tourism operators in Chiang Saen now see that the nature of a gambling resort in an out of the way place with a high level of vertical integration afforded few opportunities for locals. In particular, Kings Roman Casino Resort would be aiming to control access to and from its resort and guest movement in and out. Normally casinos seek to minimise leakage of guest expenditure. If the casino is the end-point destination, then the casino will hold guests 'captive' by providing all facilities they require and enhance the guest experience from within. Thus, casinos will be part of a vertically integrated travel system that controls movements to the resort.

Therefore, not only do different sectoral interests mitigate against new tourism-related developments; there is a general feeling of the Thai value of 'particularism'. This value relates to a trait to accept one's fate rather than seek control over your destiny. When a community feels that certain goals are outside of its control, they will accept whatever circumstances are present. Inertia and a lack of perceived personal benefit are strong constraints. Respondents often commented on the lack of resources in the community and how control of the budget for tourist spending is primarily vested in the national government. Accordingly, there is a lack of strong community support for tourism, so attempts at tourism development can be half-hearted. This acceptance of the current circumstances is evident in how one respondent commented on the level of hospitality skills in Chiang Saen: 'Local businessmen don't bother to encourage local staff to develop their hospitality skills nor upgrade their language proficiencies to engage with an international tourist market'. This lack of control over the tourism environment is reinforced by:

- Powerful third part government involvement, namely, China. It would take a brave businessperson to object to China's involvement in the region.
- No control over the border region, including self-governing entities in Myanmar and entrepreneurs in Laos SEZ.
- Lack of institutional controls (or transparency) – gambling, prostitution, immigration, labour hire.
- Small brother to competing Northern Thai destinations, such as Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai.
- No local champion for tourism development in Chiang Saen.

In one key area, the research team felt that Chiang Saen had ownership over a key facet of the tourism product: the Golden Triangle brand. At present Chiang Saen 'owns' the vantage spot to view the Golden Triangle. This is arguably the town's major tourism asset. The loss of this major asset would be a devastating blow to tourism prospects in Chiang Saen. Up until now Chiang Saen has proprietary control over the Golden Triangle as the best location to view the conjunction of the three countries. Arguably Chiang Saen may well have ceded this unique control of a major asset to the casino resort. Guests staying at the resort can view the same conjunction of countries but from Laos not Thailand. There is no reason for guests

at the resort in Laos to cross the river to see the same view from Thailand. Moreover, the SEZ could construct its own stand-alone viewing platform for the three countries next to the casino resort. Similarly, the other Golden Triangle attributes on display in Chiang Saen can be easily duplicated by the resort or other commercial operators in Laos, e.g. opium-growing history. Such forward thinking is not a natural trait in the Thai cultural system. Thais are more comfortable with a past orientation, stability and tend to avoid uncertainties.

7.4.3 Uncertainty About Future of Chiang Saen Tourism Development: A Lack of Identity

'Should we promote Chiang Saen as a heritage city?' That was the question posed by one local restauranteur. It is an important question. The challenge for those seeking to promote Chiang Saen is to overcome the indecision about which way to go. Historically, Chiang Saen tourism has been based on five aspects:

- The Golden Triangle
- Heritage of Lanna Kingdom
- Mekong River
- Elephant camps
- The slow-relaxing Northern lifestyle

In Chiang Saen, one group of local stakeholders supports a port city and commercial activity. Another group supports Chiang Saen to become a heritage city. As one respondent stated, this issue has been debated for a long time – port city or heritage city. 'In my opinion, tourism industry is the best for Thailand. It should be supported by the government'. Another respondent noted that heritage sites are mixed in residential and commercial areas in Chiang Saen, such that 'you may see some people hang their towel near the pagoda' . A further informant lamented on the lack of awareness by local residents of the tourist potential:

> Invasion of heritage site is still evident. People don't understand what is tourism. I think we should provide tourism knowledge to the local people, point out that tourism is important to the area and perhaps to them. I think it would be better if they understand.

Expanding the tourism product to include its role as a staging point for gamblers to reach two casino resorts muddies the water about how Chiang Saen should be positioned. In contrast to this pro-gambling position, the current city slogan is 'Chiang Saen – Land of the Faith'. This slogan is essentially religious in nature. Given that 95% of the Thai population are Buddhist, this form of slogan is not one that distinguishes Chiang Saen nor the region. In recent times, there has been a push to make the Chiang Rai Province (including Chiang Saen) a health, herb and heritage destination. The public/private and academic sectors are seeking to collaborate on this new positioning. While tourism officials in the west may seek to position destinations in a more focused manner, Asians have a high-context culture that

tolerates flexibility (Niffenegger et al. 2006). In situations where context is more important, ambiguity is accepted. Thus, Thais are comfortable with multiple aspects confusing the brand image, or switching from one aspect to another as circumstances dictate.

Furthermore, the Thai Government has more recently announced development plans for a number of border regions in Thailand. Several border points have been flagged as having potential to be special economic zones, including Chiang Rai. Local authorities in Chiang Rai are developing improved transportation infrastructure to Chiang Saen to prepare for a connection point in the special economic zone network. This is expected to enhance accessibility to the city and promote more investment and tourists. Chiang Saen offers small river docks for trading with Laos and beyond. China is widening and deepening the river to allow for greater commercial access. The Thai Government has supported China's approach to provide improved shipping access, despite continuing environmental protests. Thus natural tourism characteristics are being changed – less fishing and natural beauty. It appears that development in Chiang Saen is being pushed in certain non-tourism directions but this top-down direction is likely to fit with Thai cultural orientations.

7.4.4 Attractiveness to Primary Stakeholders: Tourists

Destination attractiveness is a critical factor for any touristic place. Without a strong 'pull' factor for Chiang Saen, tourist demand will stagnate. According to local stakeholders, Chiang Saen arguably has three unique selling points – the two aspects of the Golden Triangle brand (geographic location and opium history) and as a heritage site of the birthplace of the Lanna Kingdom. In addition, Chiang Saen offers a relaxing Northern Thailand holiday lifestyle in close proximity to the Mekong River. The operation of several elephant camps in the area also creates tourist demand. These latter attributes are offered at several destinations in Northern Thailand. A core weakness of Chiang Saen as a tourist destination is highlighted by a local businessman who commented:

> Tourism attractions in Chiang Saen mainly are heritage sites. Tourists who spend overnight here do not have much to do. For example, Thai tourists visit Chiang Saen but stay in Chiang Rai so they can go to the night bazaar for shopping or window shopping.

The local businessman was referring to the situation where tourists stay overnight at Chiang Rai just less than 1 h away. This comment relates in part to the lack of scale that bedevils all small tourist destinations. Thus, places like Chiang Saen find it difficult to compete with the larger urban centres that are located nearby for the overnight stay market. Accordingly, small tourist centres attract day trippers and perform a whistle-stop function for packaged tour operators. Tourists will visit such places without spending too much time. Tour operators bundle a number of attractions to make the package attractive overall. This whistle-stop function is

difficult to escape. Tour operators treat Chiang Saen more like a roadside destination where tourists stop to take a photo before going on. A review of current packaged tours advertised on the internet and main streets of Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai confirms that the Golden Triangle is one of the attributes for packaged half-day or full-day trips.

Furthermore, the Chiang Saen stopover for guests transferring to the two casinos (Paradise Resort in Myanmar and King Romans in Laos) operates more like a small transit hub, whereby the operators change transportation modes. Thus, travel by road transfers to a river crossing by boat and then back to a road trip across the border. Little opportunity exists at this transit stop for guests to explore Chiang Saen. The two cross border casinos have effectively enhanced the function of Chiang Saen as a whistle stop – much like a bus station. Visitors are just passing through quickly. While the heritage sites illustrate a unique historical story, the physical sites are small ruins in disrepair and often hidden next to commercial and residential buildings. Visitors have very little to see and nothing of exceptional touristic value. Natural assets are not supported by rebuilt nor renovated assets nor artificial assets. Similarly, the story of opium is illustrated in several sites but is small scale.

The main attraction for tourists appears to be its geographic location. The opportunity to visit the Golden Triangle and view three countries together is appreciated by tourists. One post on TripAdvisor from a Swiss tourist stated: 'this is one of the places on earth you have to see, such amazing location, with these three countries around'. Similarly, one tourist from the USA remarked 'I love that I was in three places at once and had a great time exploring the area and taking the scenic view'. Most reviewers on TripAdvisor mentioned that it was worth a visit. However, this general evaluation was more often qualified by comments, such as 'there was not much to see'. Overall, people enjoy the three border countries experience. It appears that tourists feel a strong sense of 'being' when they imagine themselves at the convergence of three SE Asian countries – 'I was at the Golden Triangle'. After that the tourist gaze becomes less romantic. Hence, many reviewers said it was okay to visit if you are staying close by in Chiang Rai. Other reviewers noting that it was nothing special – just a popular viewpoint to take a picture and move on. It was quite a long way to go for not much to see as the following post indicates:

> It's just a shared border between Thai-Laos-Myanmar separated by the Mekong River. Not a nice landscape or visit. Just worth it for the been there done that factor. If you don't have spare time don't do it. (Switzerland, 2015)

This rather perfunctory and boring end to viewing the Golden Triangle was enhanced when tourists spoke about combining the viewing of the Golden Triangle countries by actually visiting the member countries. This visit was done in a small 'long-tail' boat that offered a degree of adventure and excitement to tourists who had not experienced such means of travel before. The following post exemplifies such comments:

> Our trip involved a long-tail boat ride on the Mekong River, so you are exactly in the middle of Thailand, Laos, and Burma/Myanmar. Then off to view a temple and high point to look over Laos and Myanmar. We did enjoy this trip. The views are beautiful. (Australia, 2016)

The distance travelled to visit Chiang Saen appears to be an important factor. Tourists are calculating the touristic value versus the psychological cost of visiting. Of the tourists who complained a lot, most of them travelled from Chiang Mai. It was a long and tiring day trip for them to see less than what they expected. The comparison between long rides in the minivan versus shorter trips from Chiang Rai is illustrated in the following two posts:

> Obviously there's no fun visiting there…. But if you [stay] in Chiang Rai, you should definitely go there just to experience the chilly feeling of that bada** where opium were hugely traded. At least you can tell your friends you've been there.

> Absolutely not worth it, they put you on boat where the only thing to see are the casinos built by Chinese on the banks of the river, and then you go down into a piece of land where there are only street vendors and children asking money, cannot find anything quaint.

Given that a key feature for tourists is the viewing opportunity of three countries converging, the infrastructure to view the landscape tends to disappoint visitors. After a tiring road trip, a general feeling of being underwhelmed is evident. Photo opportunities are not spectacular, and artificially created photo opportunities are weak. First, the viewing platforms for the Golden Triangle at Chiang Saen are confusing. There is a large statue of Buddha sitting atop a large boat sculpture erected at the entrance which blocks the view and distracts visitors from the whole purpose of the visit. As one post stated – 'the newly finished huge Buddha at the golden triangle view point impedes easy accessibility to the viewpoint and riverfront' (Stuart, Thailand). The viewing platform is poorly designed with garish railing and décor. A new viewing walkway with modern facilities is further down the road but easily missed by those on a short stopover or not interested or disappointed at the entrance. If first impressions are critical in marketing terms, then one can see how visitors are somewhat disappointed. The major attraction to the Golden Triangle is the triangle itself, but reviewers note 'land development in the vicinity is not attractive at all. The statues and decoration at the spot seem eclectic, the shop along the street sells the same type of merchandise'. Compared to the large size of the Buddha statue, the signage for the Golden Triangle is very small. The photo opportunity is completely lacking. The dysfunctional presentation of the Golden Triangle vantage point is largely a function of the bureaucratic processes involved in tourism development. Different Thai agencies were responsible for different aspects of the vantage point, with intermittent budgets.

7.5 Conclusion

Four key challenges for tourism development in Chiang Saen have been identified through a series of observations, interviews and scrutiny of secondary sources. Collectively, these four challenges would appear to show that this small town of Chiang Saen faces insurmountable obstacles. The four broad challenges identified are:

- High level of complexity
- Unequal power relations between stakeholders
- Uncertainty about the future of Chiang Saen tourism development: a lack of identity
- Weak attractiveness to primary stakeholders – tourists

Indeed, it would appear that progress in the region is heading downstream from the aspirational goals of tourism operators. A key factor embedded in all four obstacles appears to be core Thai values. Traditional values of fatalism, relationship building, harmony and hierarchy are all evident in the challenges identified. Accordingly, solutions to providing effective tourism development in Chiang Saen depend upon the same core values. A western style solution is not appropriate.

The development of specific recommendations to solve the problems of Chiang Saen is beyond the remit of this chapter. Our goal is to identify challenges facing tourist promoters in Chiang Saen and to better understand them from an Asian perspective. However, we can illustrate the difficulty of applying logical western style ideas on tourism development to emphasise our point. Thus, we have presented the four ideas below that could be part of any set of western style recommendations to enhance small town tourism development. In the adjacent column, we comment on how such western-oriented ideas fit with core Thai values. We add brief comments later on how solutions could be developed to fit better with Thai cultural values.

Greater collaboration among all relevant stakeholders	The Thai value of hierarchy will reduce equitable consideration of ideas from diverse stakeholders
Better objective setting for Chiang Saen tourism promoters	Thais are not task oriented like western managers, and personal relationships are paramount not outcomes. In Thai society it appears incumbent on the top management to set meaningful objectives
Encouragement of grass roots innovations	Low-level individuals, especially Thai officials, will be reluctant to present ideas to persons of higher standing Preservation of 'face' is critical
Encouragement of self-development and funding generation within the town	Thais are fatalistic about the future. They have less belief in individual development and are happy to be reliant on others

Accordingly, possible solutions to overcome Thai cultural values could include new collaborative groups that comprise participants of relatively equal status to encourage more open dialogue. New conduits for upward flow of information could

be created and utilised, e.g. the young tourism innovators forum. The Thai government could encourage all commercial developments for the region to include action plans that are inclusive of tourism development needs. That is, any government plan to expand the commercial port activities could include criteria that creates tourism space, e.g. touristic dining and street market facilities positioned as part of the working port facilities.

The main lesson from this case study is that core cultural values are inherent in the pattern of inter-organisational relationships involved in border tourism. In particular, the shared collectivist – high-context cultures of many Asian destinations will require an Asian approach to border tourism development.

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Chapter 8
Temples, Tuk-Tuks and Orphanages: A Contemporary Examination of Tourism Development, Management and Community-Based Tourism in Cambodia

Simon Pawson, Scott Richardson, and Paul D'Arcy

Abstract The objective of this chapter is to deliver an update of contemporary tourism in Cambodia, its development and management, with particular reference to initiatives toward sustainable and community-based tourism (CBT). The chapter opens with a narrative relating a historical account of tourism in Cambodia pre-2000. Attention is then focused on contemporary tourism, post-2000, specifically the economic performance of tourism, the governance and planning of tourism, cultural and sustainability initiatives, heritage and tourism, tourism resources, infrastructure and marketing strategies. The second part of the chapter turns its attention to the Royal Cambodian Government's strategy to promote rural- and community-based tourism for the purposes of regional development and poverty alleviation. The chapter concludes by discussing the current precarious balance between rapid tourism development and sustainable positive benefits for Cambodia, the land and its people. This update serves as a valuable insight into the twenty-first-century complexities of tourism development and management in a Southeast Asian emerging economy.

Keywords Community-based tourism · Cambodia · Tourism development

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8.1 Introduction

In 1962 Ruth Tooze, an American working in Cambodia, wrote a richly detailed monograph of the country, describing it as "a land of contrasts, a land of challenge …. a nation slowly emerging from the cocoon of its ancient ways, not quite sure of the shape and colours of its unfolding wings" (Tooze 1962). Four years later, the 1966 Shell tourist guide for Cambodia commences "Nestled in the heart of South East Asia, yet so easy to reach, the sunny, hospitable Kingdom of Cambodia offers an appeal to the tourist which can hardly be paralleled to world round". The 1960s are popularly referred to as Cambodia's Golden Age. Under King, Prime Minister and later Head of State, Norodom Sihanouk, the modernisation and westernisation of Cambodia was rapid. Infrastructure development such as roads, transportation and communication influenced the growth of a flourishing tourism sector. Photographic images from the 1960s provide a sense that Cambodia was a popular, modern and sophisticated destination. From the 1970s, the American War in Vietnam and associated bombing of Cambodia closely followed by the Pol Pot regime decimated not only the tourism industry but the entire country. Between 1975 and 1979, Cambodia's borders remained closed to the outside world. Following the onset of peace in the early 1990s, Cambodia's tourism industry once again began to develop rapidly. It was, and still is, viewed by many as the economic and social panacea contributing to the redevelopment of the country. In 2015, the travel and tourism sector accounted for a direct contribution of 13.5% of GDP, with a total contribution of approximately 29.9% of GDP (WTTC 2015). The continued rapid development of the tourism industry, and the influence of external forces, has led to a myriad of complex social, economic and environmental issues. For any tourism scholar, Cambodia provides a rich and rewarding environment to undertake research.

The research of well-known tourism theorists such as Cohen (2001), MacCannell (1973) and Urry (2002) confirm that with the continued growth of global tourism, communities themselves, especially those in developing or newly developed countries, have either benefitted or suffered from tourism development. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) (2004) suggests that small, remote and traditional communities are particularly vulnerable to the subsequent consequences of tourism development. Jafari (2001) evinced this phenomenon by noting tourism's expansion into the developing world during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Jafari noted there were numerous tangible examples of the negative impacts of tourism in these peripheries calling into question the logic of unrestrained 'mass tourism' development particularly of western domination. During the 1960s as countries in the developing world became decolonized and independent, the United Nations (UN) began to promote community development as a mechanism for poverty reduction in rural areas. The philosophy of this approach was to remove the dependency on charity and involve local people in decision-making about their community (Catley 1999). Flaws relating to top-down decision-making were quickly identified in this approach. From this, a new dialogue commenced that suggested a more active involvement from the local community, specifically regarding

development issues in their community, can bring about positive change (Sebele 2010). From the late 1960s and early 1970s, aid agencies such as the World Bank and the US Agency for International Development commenced to promote the merits of local participation in decision-making concerning community development. Moreover, as Catley (1999) explains, these types of agencies went further and suggested that local participation can be extended to programme implementation, programme monitoring and sharing the benefits of development.

There has been much discourse in the field of tourism studies arguing for the inclusion and involvement of the local community toward tourism development. Beeton (2006) and Gunn (2002) both agree that the local community is a key resource in sustainable tourism. Lea (1988) goes further commenting that local participation becomes an essential ingredient if tourism is to be used as a catalyst for national development. Woodley (1994) suggests community participation in tourism and the management of tourism can contribute toward a more sustainable approach, more opportunities for local people to benefit from tourism, positive attitudes toward tourism development and better conservation of local resources.

Dredge and Jenkins (2007) comment that those involved in tourism research have raised concerns that some communities, especially in developing countries, have little voice with respect to their involvement in tourism and its associated development. The lack of participation has resulted in a multitude of complex and sometimes misunderstood factors. An example of this is Cohen's (2001) extensive exploration in Thai Tourism. Cohen (2001) revealed that hill tribe tourism north of Chiang Mai was beginning to show negative social and economic issues as a consequence of tourism development; specifically, the lack of 'voice' from local communities was of concern. Cohen (2001) cites the work of MacCannell (1973) to discuss the 'artificial' or 'commodified' tourist space in Northern Thailand. The literature draws our attention to the towns of Meo Doi Pui and Lisu Lao Tha and highlights inauthentic and contrived souvenirs, traditional dress and showcasing a 'primitive appearance' for western tourist consumption. This is one of perhaps many possible examples of communities losing control or being excluded from the management of tourism, or simply attempting to 'cash in' by meeting the aggressive consumption needs of the 'western mass tourist'.

The development of community-based tourism has allowed for a direct relationship between the community and the tourism industry to occur. The underlying principle of community-based tourism is for this type of tourism to be used as a sustainable and responsible mechanism for overall community development. Numerous studies in recent times critiquing both tourism's relationship to community development and the contribution of community-based tourism have investigated these phenomena (Harris 2009; Hiwasaki 2006; Reimer and Walter 2013; Sebele 2010). The previous work of such authors has provided a valuable insight into the evolution of community-based tourism, but more importantly suitable methods to complete a specific investigation of CBT projects and their impacts on communities throughout SE Asia.

Tourism in Cambodia has grown significantly in the recent years. Despite the growth and rapidly increasing social, economic and environmental impacts,

compared to archaeological and heritage studies, Cambodia is still to become a popular case study for tourism scholars and researchers. Both international and domestic tourists are now travelling beyond the main tourist areas of Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, choosing to include regional Cambodia into their itineraries. It is not only the major tourism areas witnessing rapid change but also the small-scale communities in regional areas still in their infancy concerning tourism development. These communities are perhaps the most vulnerable from rapid unplanned tourism development.

Despite the popularity of Cambodia as a tourism destination, the past 30 years of civil war, political turmoil and instability, specifically the devastating impact of the 1976–1979 Khmer Rouge regime, resulted in the decimation of the tourism industry. Following the 1993–1994 UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia) intervention in Cambodia, the country embraced a scenario of social, political and economic reconstruction. Since the early 1990s, tourism has grown rapidly. Cambodia attracts a curiosity in both its ancient and modern history. The Cambodian government considers tourism as essential for the country's ongoing socio-economic development and re-establishing a national identity (Chheang 2008).

Cambodia provides an important case study for tourism development in an emerging economy. In the twenty-first century, Cambodia is a country that has been considerably scarred by its recent past. Archaeological evidence suggests that Cambodia may have been inhabited as early as 4200 BC (Chandler 2008); however it is the Angkor period between the eighth and thirteenth centuries that continues to hold the greatest relevance to the Khmer people and the international tourism community. From the end of the French protectorate in 1949, Cambodia has experienced a multitude of political upheavals that culminated in 30 years of civil war. The 1970–1973 American bombing of Cambodia was the catalyst for Pol Pot's political party, the Khmer Rouge to seize power during 1975. The Khmer Rouge forced Cambodia into agrarian collectivism for a period of 3 years. During the 1976–1979 Democratic Kampuchea (DK) period, Kiernan (1996) estimates that at least 1.5 million Khmers were either murdered by the Khmer Rouge or died of disease or starvation. Following the 1978 Christmas Day liberation of Cambodia by the Vietnamese, the country has undergone several painful transitions on its path to recovery and democracy.

The Royal Government of Cambodia desires to attract a specific tourist market that immerses into far more than just visiting the temples within the greater Angkor Archaeological Park and visiting sites associated with the Khmer Rouge period. However, it cannot be ignored that Siem Reap, home to the greater Angkor Archaeological Park, remains the most popular destination and attraction within the country. At the conclusion of 2011, the Ministry of Tourism (MOT) reported that Siem Reap had received 1,610,076 international arrivals compared to 1,271,786 for the remainder of the country (MOT 2013). Despite slow tourism development in areas outside the main tourism peripheries of Sihanoukville – Kep, Phnom Penh and Siem Reap provinces – the government has continued a discourse promoting the benefits of eco-, community-based and pro-poor tourism development in regional areas.

8.2 Community-Based Tourism

Community development and its relationship to tourism is a multidisciplinary and complex field of inquiry. It encompasses definitional understandings of spatial and physical communities; it also concerns social, economic, environmental, political and cultural issues, community assets, resources and capital, specifically how they may be harnessed to become building blocks of healthy sustainable communities. It is possible to establish an integrated relationship between community development and tourism by literally identifying the commonalities between community development and concepts of tourism. The further consideration of social, economic and environmental impacts of tourism needs to be appreciated in this relationship, specifically how these impacts influence community development and tourism. Another element encompassing this relationship is sustainability, moreover how sustainable development is intrinsically linked to tourism and destination communities.

There has been much discourse relating to community development, moreover its relationship to tourism. Communities as a holistic concept, their tangible and intangible assets are a resource on which tourism depends and also consumes. The interaction between the tourist, tourism, development and the community is in a constant state of evolution, contributing toward either positive or negative outcomes for the associated stakeholders. These interactions and their consequences form the underlying principles and theories of tourism management that have been constructed. Challenges for those involved in this field of inquiry are initially defining 'the community', 'sustainable community development' and 'tourism's contribution to community development'. Questions are often raised in the initial stages of the inquiry, specifically, whose community? How can the community be defined in spatial, social and economic terms? How should the community be presented to the tourist? Who decides this, the tourist or the community? Adding to this milieu are the complexities of how social mobility is changing the 'local' composition of the community and its relationship to the emergence of a global community (Hall and Richards 2000). It may prove challenging or problematic at the early stages of inquiry to have definitive answers for these questions; however they do require ongoing consideration as inquiries in community and tourism proceed.

Beeton (2006) commences her examination of community development and tourism by also exploring the concept of 'communitas', explaining that chiefly it is a whole group of people entering a liminal time and space with associated consequences. This concept becomes particularly meaningful when considering the relationship between globalisation, tourism and the community as noted by Hall and Richards (2000) and further explored by Leiper (2003) and Weaver and Lawton (2010) in their narratives concerning the evolution of tourism. The global phenomenon of modern mass tourism confirms communities, as a result of the mass tourism era, are in a constant flux. The majority of literature succinctly concludes that interactions between tourists and their host communities result in a multitude of widely researched and documented consequences affirming communities in continual change (Cohen 2001; Gunn 2002; Hall 2003; Hall and Richards 2000; Leiper 2003; Weaver and Lawton 2010).

To better appreciate the importance of community development through tourism, specifically in the twenty-first century, it is essential to first understand the context and evolution of modern mass tourism. It can be argued that the consequences of interactions between tourists and stakeholders, including communities before the 1950s, were minimal. Societal factors since the 1950s have also significantly pushed people toward participation in tourism activities. Dann (1977) and Crompton (1979) moved away from simply attempting to identify tourism movements and economic contributions and focused on a better understanding of what motivated people to become a tourist. Dann (1977) considered a range of societal factors that push people toward becoming a tourist. He then examined a range of factors existing in destination that influenced tourist decisions. Weaver and Lawton (2010) used these early investigations to provide an extensive narrative of push and pull factors commencing with the argument that the industrial revolution gave society a new concept of the relationship between time and task. Work and rest were divided in chunks of time establishing delineations between the task and what was required to be completed between different periods of time and when people could officially stop for rest. Days off were identified and periods of longer-term breaks were established, for example, the 2-day weekend and annual leave. This gave employees more time to pursue leisure activities during their periods away from work and greater opportunity to engage in tourism activities requiring a longer period away from home. Attitudes toward leisure activities also have changed since the industrial revolution, specifically with more emphasis now placed on the meaningful benefits of travel such as cultural and educational enlightenment. These social attitudes toward tourism activities have also resulted in a different approach to work, rather than the industrial age's emphasis on production; we now see an emphasis on consumption, with tourism being part of consumption patterns. It may be argued employees now 'work in order to play' – work is important for the purposes of acquiring funds for leisure-based activities such as tourism. Urbanisation, a general reduction in family size and increased life expectancy over the past 100 years have also influenced people to pursue tourism-related activities. Smaller families, increased leisure time and discretionary income suggest that it has become more affordable to take the family on a holiday while urbanisation has provided a reason for those living in a 'concrete jungle' where congestion, noise and overcrowding are common place to escape from their environment by pursuing tourism activities. Increases in life expectancy, the introduction of superannuation and societal affluence have resulted in older persons pursuing more tourism-related activities from the time of retirement. This trend has seen a significant increase in the older person's tourism market. Leiper (2003) also examined motivations to travel using a sociological approach. He utilizes Barzun's (2000) cultural trends, chiefly emancipation, secularism, individualism, self-consciousness and primitivism arguing they "have shaped tourism, contributing to its growth, forms and present popularity" (p. 45).

An understanding of the evolution and principles of sustainable tourism and sustainable tourism development provides a foundation to examine, develop and manage CBT. Murphy (1985) was one of the first to apply the term CBT in his examination of tourism development, its evaluation and strategies for future devel-

opment. It was not until the 1990s that the narrative concerning sustainable tourism substantially increased and identified CBT as a specific strategy contributing toward sustainable tourism development. The Brundtland Report concerning sustainable development *Our Common Future* provided explicit recognition of the concept of sustainable development. The report proposed the following definition; "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED 1987, p. 43). The report highlights a balance between the natural environment and socio-economic development. Community participation, specifically toward the protection and improvement of a community's quality of life, is also paramount within the report. Since the report's publication, the definition of sustainable development and the report itself has gained widespread analysis and discussion from scholars, scientists, environmentalists, lobby groups and politicians alike. Using the principles of the report, the United Nations implemented a non-binding voluntary action plan to address sustainable development titled Agenda 21. The plan identifies important priorities for sustainable development for the twenty-first century (United Nations Division for Sustainable Development 1992).

Another commonality arising from the discourse and literature of sustainable tourism and community development is the involvement and participatory role of the community itself, an essential component toward achieving sustainable development. Bramwell and Sharman (2000) state that there are many potential benefits for the community if it is involved in the tourism planning process. Tosun (2006) explains that participation by the community would in turn facilitate the implementation of sustainable practices because of the opportunities created for the community to gain more equitable benefits from tourism development. Lee (2013) found that community attachment and community involvement were critical factors toward the success of sustainable tourism development within communities. It is reasonable to argue that tourism studies tend to agree that allowing a community to participate and become involved in tourism planning and execution can lead to high levels of engagement and support toward the sustainable development of tourism. Scholars have also paid attention to the different types of participation from artificial or coercive participation leading to poor levels of support to genuine holistic participation resulting in an engaged community that is supportive toward tourism development (see Tosun 2000; Tosun 2006).

As identified by the UNWTO (2008), there are four arguments as to why community participation toward tourism development and management remains essential: firstly because a top-down or insular approach has previously failed to address issues arising from tourism and associated development at the community level, secondly because involving the community will enhance social and human capital that will be required to tackle further problems, thirdly because the community will have the ability to better control large tour operators and developers in turn avoiding the negative consequences of mass tourism and lastly because the community will be able to better identify and address developmental needs at a grass-roots level and moreover examine ways on how tourism may be able to address these needs. Reflecting these arguments, McIntosh and Ritchie (2011) proposed a model of

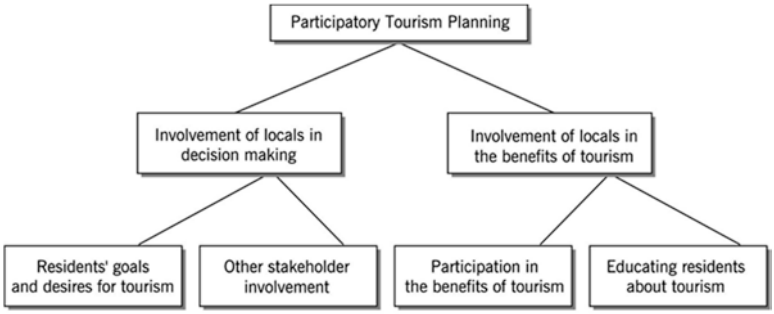

Fig. 8.1 A normative model of participatory tourism planning (Timothy 1999, p. 372)

holistic or normative participation in tourism planning (Fig. 8.1). The model shows two perspectives, firstly the involvement of the local community in decision-making and secondly the involvement of the local community in the benefits of tourism. Involving the local community in decision-making concerning tourism development and management can assist the community determine their own goals toward developmental needs in the community and also the role stakeholders should play toward supporting the community achieve these goals. Involvement by the community also has the potential to better educate the community members regarding the benefits of holistic participation and secondly the benefits of educating community in the positive and negative outcomes of tourism. This process also has the possibility to build upon the pool of community's human capital available, specifically through shared community knowledge that the participatory environment allows to develop (Timothy 1999).

Early and perhaps more comprehensive study relating to CBT can be found in the work of Ashley and Garland (1994) titled "Promoting Community-Based Tourism Development: Why, What and How?" This investigation, relying upon Namibia as a case study, examined the stakeholder perspectives of CBT and how these perspectives or approaches assisted toward community involvement in tourism meeting the various local, regional, and national objectives. The report concluded in a multitude of recommendations, chiefly policies for effective CBT. Apart from the scholarly narrative, the authors also provide an insight into the operation of early CBT in Namibia. Hobson and Mak (1995) also offer an exploration into early CBT that examined home visits and CBT in the context of Hong Kong's Family Insight Tours. During the early 1990s, we also see scholars identifying and exploring CBT in their Masters and Doctor of Philosophy dissertations. Examples include Woodley's (1994) dissertation that investigated culture, perceptions and community-based tourism in Baker Lake, Northwest Territories, while Reimer (1994) investigated community development and participation in Pangnirtung, Northwest Territories, using the location to collect ethnographic data concerning CBT for her applied analysis of community participation.

To better appreciate the evolution of CBT and CBT research, Stewart and Draper (2009) draw our focus to the importance of CBT projects and resulting studies aris-

ing from Northern Canada since the 1970s. While their article focuses on the role of the researcher, the reader can easily deduce from the narrative CBT that has been operating and studied in numerous Northern Canadian communities for the past four decades. It is reasonable to argue that from 1996 to present day, CBT enterprises have become more commonplace in destinations, specifically in the developing world. This is chiefly attributed to greater knowledge concerning the benefits of CBT as an alternative to mass tourism and as a tool to address poverty in rural and regional communities (Harrison and Schipani 2007). Also since the 1990s, a far greater focus in academic literature has been paid to CBT, evidenced by the increase in publications and variance in investigations and case studies specifically concerning CBT and its various components (for earlier publications, see Godde et al. 1999; Harrison and Schipani 2007; Hiwasaki 2006; Jones 2005; Ndlovu and Rogerson 2003; Novelli and Gebhardt 2007; Russell 2000; Sproule 1996; Wearing and McDonald 2002).

Anderson (1991) provided one of the earliest definitions of community-based tourism as:

> Tourism development in communal areas, where the poorer majority live, has potential to not only increase local incomes and jobs, but also to develop skills, institutions, and bring about empowerment of local people. Tourism is therefore a key industry for facilitating greater growth, equity, and poverty alleviation in communal areas. In addition, benefits from tourism in communal areas are seen by many as a key tool for building local support for conservation and sustainable natural resource use (and a sustainable tourism product) in the communal areas. (p. 3)

Tasci et al. (2014, p. 263) provide a more recent definition of community-based tourism as "a tourism resource development and management paradigm distilled from half a century's evolution of conceptual and philosophical approaches to resource management. Its ontology is embedded in the sustainability paradigm that encourages community participation for a more equitable and holistic development". Spenceley (2008, p. 288) developed three criteria to determine if an enterprise is qualified as CBT:

1. Located in a community (e.g. on communal land or with community benefits such as lease fees)
2. Owned by one or more community members (i.e. for the benefit of one or more community members)
3. Managed by community (i.e. community members could influence the decision-making process of the enterprise)

8.3 Emergence of Community-Based Tourism in Cambodia

The concepts of sustainable and responsible tourism development are emphasized through Cambodia's 2012–2020 Tourism Development Strategic Plan; however in reality Cambodia continues to face significant challenges toward the achievement of

the plan's objectives. Winter (2007) acknowledges this by identifying the recent significant growth of tourism in Cambodia has revealed "the aspirations and tensions, anxieties and paradoxical agendas, which have emerged due to the lure of the tourist dollar and the need to prevent the rampant destruction that the dollar and its bearers might bring" (p. 2). For consideration, also is the rapid development of Siem Reap and Sihanoukville since 2005, and the Government's neo-liberalist support of development in these tourism peripheries that has been chiefly responsible for the growth of mass tourism and associated development, specifically from regional markets such as China and Korea. As evidenced by Tolkach and King (2015), "neoliberal policies aimed at economic development in the least developed countries tend to favour large resorts, cutting taxes and converting customary owned land into a traded commodity and may impact adversely on communities" (p. 389). The continued development of large resorts, tax concessions for international developers, land repossession, the exploitation of natural resources in environmentally sensitive areas and slow socio-economic development in rural areas are all common occurrences in modern Cambodia (Strangio 2014). The ills of pursuing neocolonialist and neo-liberalist development strategies and associated behaviours or in Cambodia's case allowing the continued growth of mass tourism influenced by a neo-liberalistic agenda have resulted in a tourism sector where negative social, economic and environmental elements are taking precedent over the possible shared benefits of tourism and improved livelihoods for the majority (Springer 2011).

The most recent policy document concerning tourism planning, development and management is the Tourism Development Strategic Plan 2012–2020 (Royal Government of Cambodia 2012). This policy document, through the identification of a framework, clearly demonstrates the government's commitment to sustainable tourism development and acknowledges tourism's potential to improve socio-economic issues in the country. The plan's opening narrative confirms the importance of sustainable tourism in Cambodia, stating:

> the tourism sector plays an important role in contributing to socio-economic development, job creation, revenue generation, the improvement of people's livelihood and poverty alleviation. Tourism is essentially considered to be green gold, a major element of green economic development, since the sector revenue is instantly inducted into the national economy, thus enhancing Cambodia's gross domestic product. In this way, the development of sustainable and responsible tourism actively contributes to national development: the preservation, protection and conservation of cultural, historical, and natural resources, and mitigation against climate change. (p. 1)

Moreover, the plan reconfirms its commitment to sustainable tourism development through identifying its 2012–2020 vision as "to encourage nature and cultural tourism development in a responsible and sustainable manner, in a way that tourism benefits socio-economic development, job creation and poverty alleviation" (p. 3). The plan's objective is to achieve 7 million international visitor arrivals by 2020 in turn earning 5 billion US dollars in revenue. To ensure tourism is developed sustainably for the purpose of reaching these targets, the plan further identifies five core principles for tourism development summarized as:

1. Tourism businesses will be able to operate in a competitive open market economy.
2. Comprehensive and clear policies will guide tourism development.
3. Improved cooperation between government and private sector to enhance tourism development.
4. Better opportunities for local communities through community-based tourism, to participate in tourism development in turn encouraging sustainable tourism development, asset protection, employment opportunities and poverty alleviation.
5. Legal improvements to ensure laws can be enforced effectively to protect legitimate tourism operations and sustainable and responsible tourism practices and to ensure quality within the sector.

As specific barriers to sustainable tourism development, the plan identifies the importance of matching product to respective markets; the decline in the quality of tourism product, specifically attractions; the lack of holistic tourism quality standards; the limited capacity of human resources in the sector, both in vocational and management tourism occupations; the high cost of airfares compared to other Southeast Asian destinations; the lack of quality tourism research to guide decision-making, specifically research related to tourism marketing; and effective tourism promotion infrastructure. The plan further identifies obstacles concerning accessibility and connectivity to Cambodia, specifically by air, tourism safety issues concerning food and water, prostitution and human trafficking, drugs and economic leakage.

Carter et al. (2015) were able to establish the current key themes of sustainable tourism development in Cambodia and associated challenges through the examination of 77 related documents. These themes and challenges include the following: (1) eco- and nature-based tourism, specifically the imbalance between existing product and growing tourism numbers; (2) greater community engagement to achieve sustainable outcomes and the current community capacity based upon Cambodia's recent history to achieve this; (3) stakeholder perceptions and values as mechanisms of tourism success, particularly the differences between the initial perceptions gained through guidebooks and other sources of information that tend to frame Cambodian culture in a colonial context to the actual experience of the Cambodian tourism product; (4) cultural heritage becoming Cambodia's key tourism attraction and the challenges of the existing narrow focus on the Angkorean period, the colonial period and the civil war and neglecting pre-Angkorean or contemporary culture (this narrows socio-cultural meaning, therefore placing sustainability at risk); and (5) the increasing foreign investment influencing tourism outcomes, specifically the damage of economic leakage and being unable to grow local community investment and control and ownership of tourism businesses, in turn prohibiting sustainable tourism to be achieved. Carter et al.'s research concludes arguing the necessity to better understand the national, regional and local context, as they are all crucial toward achieving Cambodia's vision and outcomes for sustainable tourism. Moreover, the last two decades of government policy (as

identified in examples earlier in this chapter) have tended to focus on idealistic visions and broad statements concerning sustainable tourism development. Policy and associated plans have lacked the detail to "convert to on-ground action" (p. 812). To achieve a viable policy and planning framework, Carter et al. recommend that a deeper analysis of the "Cambodian context and consideration of its needs, recent history, poverty levels and current power structures" should be conducted (p. 812).

While there has been an emphasis placed on ecotourism and CBT by the government in recent years, specifically through its policy documents, identifying the development of CBT in Cambodia is somewhat more problematic due to the existing limited documented information. Reimer and Walter (2013) comment international non-governmental organizations have chiefly been responsible for providing resources and expertise to establish, finance and manage ecotourism and CBT ventures in Cambodia. The first CBT project was established in 1988, at Yeak Laom Lake, located in Ratanakiri Province. The project, which is now managed by the local community, markets its lake and associated swimming activities, the nearby jungle, trekking and the opportunity to learn about the local indigenous culture. As more CBT projects emerged in Cambodia, specifically in national parks and conservation areas, in 2002 the Cambodian Community-Based Ecotourism Network (CCBEN) was established through support from a private sector partnership. The primary purpose of the CCBEN was to promote and support the development and ongoing management of CBT projects for the purposes of conserving natural and cultural resources and improving local livelihoods (Khanal and Babar 2007). The CCBEN members consisted of travel agencies, educational institutions and, at network's peak in 2012, 14 CBT projects. The network established a website sharing information about its member's projects, contact details and the importance of CBT in Cambodia. As of 2016, the network appears to be not active; however they have maintained a Facebook page with updates of recent activity. The Ministry of Tourism official tourist website, Tourism Cambodia, maintains a webpage dedicated to CBT in Cambodia (Tourism Cambodia 2017). The webpage contains a narrative explaining what CBT is and the importance of CBT to Cambodia. Further links access current CBT projects and how to behave/what to expect for tourists wishing to experience CBT. It is important to note that all CBT projects in Cambodia to date have been established with the support of the private sector, mainly NGOs. While the government's policy appears extremely supportive of CBT, in reality CBT in Cambodia would not be possible without the continued support from the private sector. As identified by King, Basiuk, Serey and Yem (2009), there is a consequence from private sector partnerships that has a direct impact on the overall sustainability of a CBT. It is evident that the private sector, specifically tour companies, participate in CBT through assisting the NGO in promoting their poverty alleviation initiatives and in turn have little, if anything, to do with the everyday management and sustainable initiatives of the project. International and local tour companies remain an attractive revenue source for CBT operators; however given the size of the tour operator, there is the continued risk of the tour operator negatively influencing CBT operations and sustainable strategies. A recent example of this is an international tour operator given permission to offer a luxury tented experience in a protected

zone of Banteay Chhmar temple. Local human capacity has also proved a barrier toward CBT sustainability, with a continued reliance on external support for more advanced operational skills.

At the conclusion of 2016, according to the Ministry of Tourism's official figures, there was a 4.9% increase to 66,349 for the number of inbound tourists visiting ecotourism sites throughout Cambodia (Ministry of Tourism 2016). The international press has also been supportive of Cambodia's CBT efforts. Examples of this include a 2016 article in The Diplomat titled "Cambodia's Experiment with Responsible Tourism" (Hsieh 2016) and a 2017 article in The Guardian titled "The Angkor Wat alternative: exploring Cambodia's forgotten ruins" (Baker 2017). The greatest challenge for CBT in Cambodia will be the continuing precarious balance between mass tourism and alternative tourism and the ability for CBT projects to achieve their sustainability goals while remaining true to the purpose and functions of CBT. External CBT certification and accreditation has the opportunity to play a valuable role toward the competiveness, quality and sustainability of existing and proposed projects.

8.4 Conclusion

The Royal Cambodian Government has continued to be an active and supportive proponent of sustainable tourism development, and from 2000 onwards, promoting the importance of ecotourism and CBT. The government's belief is through sustainable tourism social and economic advancement is achievable, specifically in regional areas. Moreover, sustainable tourism has the potential to contribute toward the protection of heritage and the environment and retain Cambodia's unique cultural practices. The second theme is the implementation and operationalization of the government's policies and plans that has been seriously constrained by the lack of capital, resources and expertise. The government's plans provide a broad agenda and framework for sustainable tourism development, but fail to address strategic implementation plans at regional and community levels. In reality, tourism development in Cambodia has concentrated on attracting overseas investment for mid-market to luxury market development in Siem Reap, Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville, specifically in the hotel and tour company sectors. The growth and ongoing support, including funding for ecotourism and CBT projects, have been in the majority through NGOs. The actual development of sustainable tourism in regional areas and communities has been a lot slower than the desired outcomes as indicated through government policy. Local contribution to regional and national tourism policy is in the majority, non-existent. The future success of sustainable tourism initiatives, specifically CBT, will depend on the attitude of stakeholders involved, the government, local communities, NGOs, tourists and the private sector. If there is mutual agreement and cooperation to address the current weaknesses inhibiting sustainable tourism development, there exists a far greater opportunity to realize government policy.

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Chapter 9
What Tourism Can Do: The Fall of Pastoral Manali Resort in the Kulu Valley of the Indian Himalayas

Tej Vir Singh, Masood A. Naqvi, and Gaitree (Vanessa) Gowreesunkar

Abstract Tourism is a queer paradox. It can be benign and malign, and at times it can conserve and consume resources, protect natural capital while damages heritage and so on. This dualism in tourism is not inherent or native to its character, but it is due to some policy failure, bad planning, ill governance, poor management of skills or want of new knowledge. This chapter shall illustrate the case of Manali in the Indian Himalayas which is now transformed from a rural pastoral settlement to an urban destination due to lack of sustainable pro-growth policy and tourism intelligence inaction. Efforts are being made for implementing sustainable tourism policy through 'Explore Rural India Project' that shall decongest Manali destination and diversify tourism activity all-through the Kulu Valley with Naggar as a satellite resort.

Keywords Green tourism · Tourism intelligence · Governance · Knowledge transfer · Manali · Indian Himalayas

9.1 Introduction

Tourism is a much misunderstood phenomenon. To some it has a genius for self-destruction; for others it is benign and beneficent. Tourism is a huge paradox – a self-contradiction – that at a time it is capable of conserving and consuming resources, can be good and bad, protect natural capital while damages heritage and culture and so on. This duality in tourism is not inherent or native to its character,

The first author revisited the Kulu Valley after a span of 25 years to review further the development and landscape changes of Manali.

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but it is due to some policy failure, bad planning, poor governance, lack of management skills, and want of new knowledge. Tourism researchers are wary of finding out the secret that why a sustainable destination goes awry and falls prematurely. Before planning for developments and growth of a destination, researchers, planners and stakeholders ought to know what tourism can do. This chapter shall illustrate the case of Manali in the Indian Himalayas which is now transformed from rural pastoral settlement to an urban destination due to lack of sustainable pro-growth policy and intelligence inaction. It also suggests that by community resilience not only negative impact could be minimized but the benefits that tourism can bring to host communities could be increased.

Having learned lessons from the tragedy of British hill stations, Manali in the Kulu Valley was groomed as a model of green tourism having abundance of meadows, pastures and forested slopes all around with the bisect of river Beas. The resort was raised after completing sustainable exercises such as EIA, resource reconnaissance, measuring resource resilience, framing sustainable policy, zoning of most fragile areas and blending of forestry and agriculture with tourism which was prescribed. Surprisingly, Manali, within a period of 25 years, appeared on the world map, as the Chamonix of India. Even the resilient community and the state government believed in expansionism without sustainable pro-growth policy. Hence due to unsustainable expansion, Manali has been transformed into a destination which is now crying for succour to sustain its resources. Outgrowth of this resort could be balanced if the concept of small is beautiful would have been retained; green policy would have been reinforced with strengthened governance, and special attention would have been devoted to the use of tourism intelligence innovation and knowledge management. Would Manali come back to its splendour is a question which the State government and the local community have to answer.

9.2 Manali's Transformation

Manali is situated in the green Kulu Valley of the Western Himalayas at an elevation of 2000 m (Fig. 9.1). This amenity-rich rural settlement sits on the Beas River surrounded by lofty forested slopes, a narrow alpine valley 80 km long and 1.5 km wide. Manali was not easy to reach and hence for centuries it remained almost a closed system. For the Hindus, it was *Kuluvanth-peeth*, the last place for human settlement. The village was rarely visited except by some mountaineers or traders to collect fodder for their mules.

The genius of the place is in religion because there are 360 human gods and goddesses in the Kulu-Manali area, and each Valley is preceded by some god/goddess who are responsible for the environmental security and sustainability. In Kullu Dussehra festival, the goddess Hadimba monitors the green environment. Lord Manu, the first Hindu lawgiver, had his abode in the old part of Manali. The Valley is consecrated to gods and goddesses, metaphorically known as the Valley of Gods. Manali presents a fascinating green landscape, punctuated by agricultural fields,

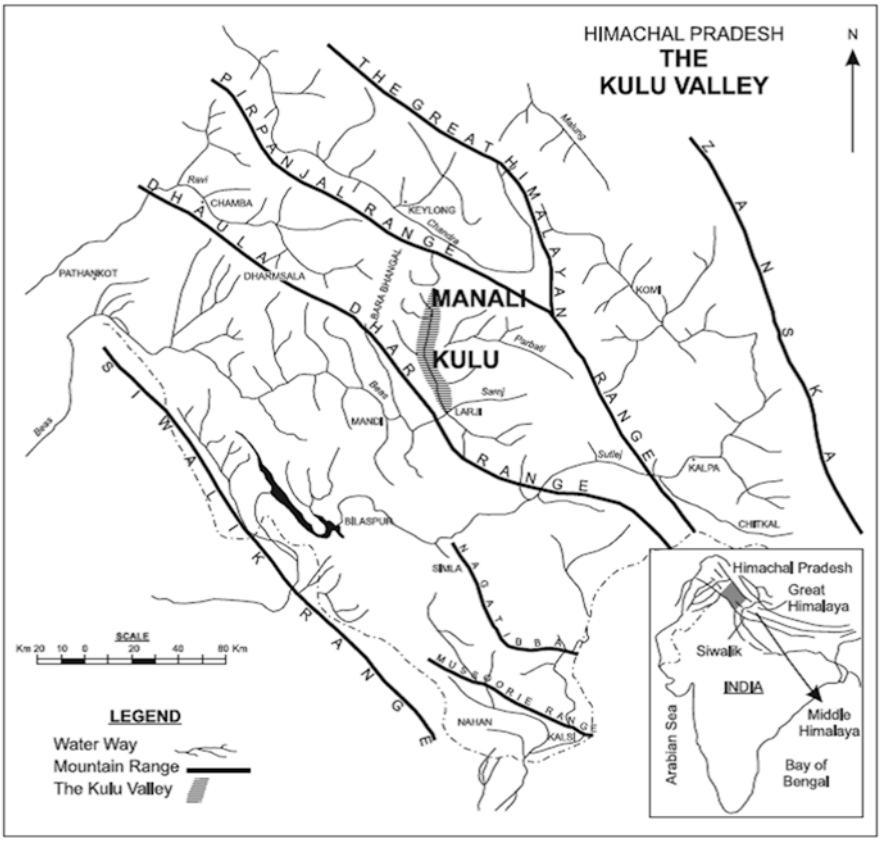

Fig. 9.1 Kulu-Manali in Himachal Pradesh (Source: Author)

forest stands, pastures and orchards. The beauty of this spectacle is heightened by appealing human settlement: timber-bonded houses with roofs of slates and shingles. Natives are handsome and hospitable. They are happy-go-lucky fellows who frolic and dance in colourful costumes and abandon themselves to jollity after their harvest or in a festival like *Dussehra*. Manali is nature's child – too good to be given to tourism.

It is rightly said that beauty should remain away from the beast (read tourism) – unfortunately Manali could not resist the temptation. Tourism makers who had witnessed the fall of hill stations of the colonial days, particularly Shimla which is about 265 km southeast of Manali, and how uncontrolled tourism can erode the beauty of a place desired ardently to build a model tourist resort in the Himalayas. India, after achieving her freedom (1947), opened doors for social tourism (tourism for all), and in consequence these resorts were ravaged by hordes of tourists. Shimla's carrying capacity for residents and visitors was originally 25,000 visitors

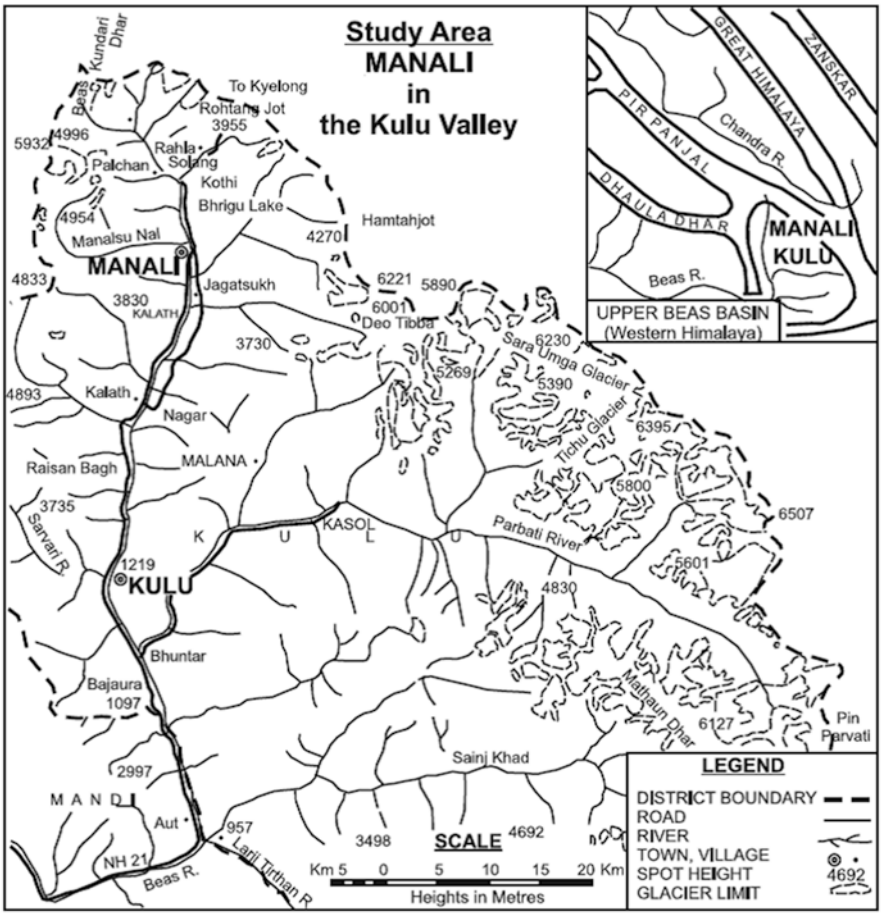

Fig. 9.2 Manali in the Kulu Valley (Source: Author)

(Pubby 1988); now tens and thousands of visitors have overwhelmed the beautiful township. And, this ugly growth goes on unabated with environmental graft, traffic snarls, water stress, power crisis and so on.

Taking note from Shimla's debacle, tourism makers in private and public sectors decided to develop the Kulu Valley as a recreation corridor of Himachal Pradesh with Manali as a prime destination (see Fig. 9.2). Resilient local community supported the project wholeheartedly and founded a monitoring committee, known as *Samaj Sudharak Samiti*, who would work as a watchdog agency. The Central Government also came forward to help develop the plan as the then Prime Minister of India had stayed in Manali in 1958 and was all praise for the place's uniqueness.

9.2.1 Planning for a Green Tourism

A high-powered committee with foreign expertise (environmentalists, landscape analysts, architects, leaders of destination management organizations and local opinion leaders) proposed a comprehensive Master Plan to be developed for the entire Valley after having conducted resource assessment and pre-impact studies and identifying sensitive and resilient areas. A firm and robust policy was prepared that shall respect Manali's fragile environment. No development would take place in zoned areas, and designated areas for a particular activity should be permitted such as pasture lands, agricultural fields or forest stands so that Manali's bucolic appearance remains green and culturally vibrant. Some areas such as *Manu's abode* and *Hadimba* temple were marked as sacred zone where no tourism activity would be allowed. Mechanized road that started in 1930 should be extended to Kulu and Manali. Thus the first 5-year tourism plan was put to action in 1977 with the guiding mantra of small is beautiful and that community values, community identity and community's assets should not be sacrificed 'for more the merrier' concept. Manali's tourism, as far as possible, should be locally owned, locally managed and locally catered to avoid leakages; linkages of tourism with agriculture, horticulture, forestry and local products were encouraged. Organic tourism by then had set in, but with the growing popularity of Manali, tourist arrival increased from 12,000 in 1975 to 40,000 within a decade's period (Singh 1989). The stakeholders were happy on tourism incremental growth. Tourism to Manali further erupted as the road came in on the two sides of the river Beas. For an astute planner and developers, it was time to check the stage of the development, how much is not too much, how to manage growth without curtailing development and how to protect pasture lands that were being predated for tourism development.

9.3 Evolution and Growth

Three factors were responsible for the tourist boom: the popularity of Manali, access to the destination by road (later on by airways) and the terrorism in the neighbouring Kashmir Valley. More tourists were diverted to the safer Kulu Valley (Kuniyal et al. 2004). The new middle class now liked to spend their leisure time in Manali, and within a period of 25 years, tourist number soured to one million. To meet the demand of tourists, the infrastructure, both soft and hard, had to be matched to the crying needs of visiting community. Added to this huge visitor population, the elite and well-to-do class of society moved to this resort. According to an estimate by Himachal Pradesh Department of Tourism, the Kulu Valley, Manali in particular, hosted 102,479 international visitors, while domestic tourists swelled to the size of 3,187,436 in 2014 (this included religious tourist) (see Table 9.1). Resident population also increased from 2433 people in 1991 to 8096 in 2011 (Census of India 2011). Since both residents and tourists population are increasing in leaps and

Table 9.1 Month-wise estimate of tourist arrivals in Kulu/Manali for 2014

Month	Domestic tourists	Foreign tourists
January	106,218	3342
February	115,924	3636
March	253,132	7363
April	320,514	8881
May	383,762	11,344
June	413,637	10,432
July	329,665	13,397
August	456,671	13,267
September	308,865	12,136
October	277,061	12,035
November	171,289	7182
December	50,698	1294
Total	3,187,436	104,309

Source: Department of Tourism, Himachal Pradesh

bounds, Manali has now developed large enough to arrest the flow of tourists who have significant consumptive prowess. And hence with increase in tourist demand, supply became scarce. In the early stage of development, the public sector renewed their accommodation for the use of tourists, such as forest rest house, log-huts, inspection houses and circuit houses. Tourist bungalows grew up one by one in the Valley's hotspots. Central Government constructed unique travel lodges in Manali.

Mountains are not made for too many men and least for tourist crowd. This message failed to reach the stakeholders who saw dollars in tourist's pocket. Market forces captured the resort's economy, and even some community members looked towards the jobs that tourism creates: urbanized places with modern facilities. In the first place, the planning area was extended up to the village Vashisht in the north and Aleo sector in the south-east of Manali (see Fig. 9.3).

In the absence of any pro-growth policy, tourism, gradually and imperceptibly, entered into the sensitive areas of pastures and agricultural land; the awoken community members of the society and opinion leaders began to realize 'if growth means the loss of community's best assets then the tourism has started sinning and the communards must be on the alert' (Singh 1989). Haphazard growth started with the construction of private houses which in turn served as homestays, and finally they were converted into residential houses.

9.3.1 Policy Failure

Manali, when the first author studied the Kulu Valley for the first time in 1978, had reached its optimum level with few capacity strains that expressed in shifting of land use and congestion in the main Manali bazaar.The growth impact could also be

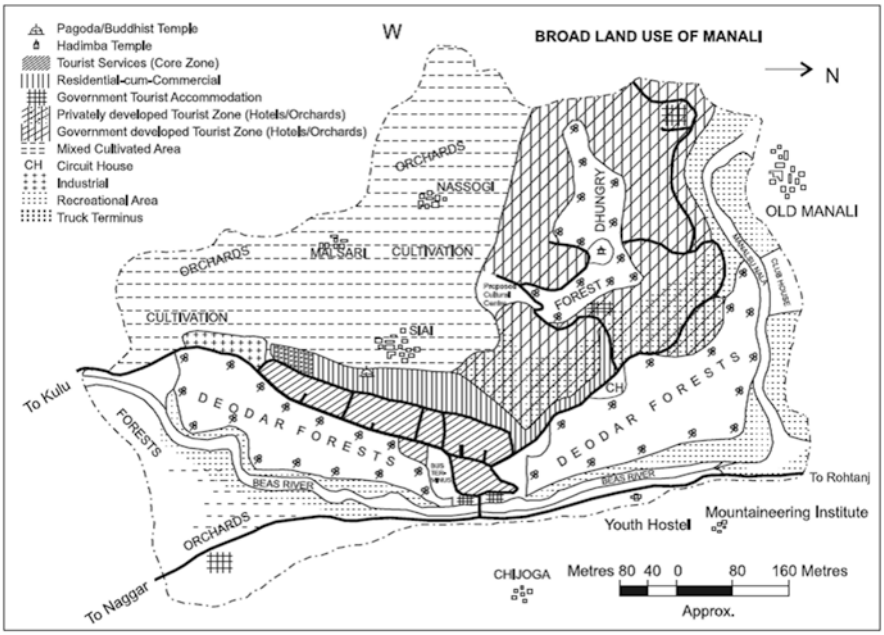

Fig. 9.3 Manali land use (Source: Author)

marked on town's fringes where unauthorized constructions had sprung up, overlapping the neighbourly agricultural fields.

One who had seen Manali in the 1960s or even in the 1970s could easily mark the change that had taken place in the resort's morphology, social and ecological makeup – a virtual contest between the resort's planned growth versus unplanned growth. The core policy behind the development of Manali was of conservation-oriented development which clearly laid down in the following words:

> The destruction of ecological capital of any ecosystem reduces its development potential, no matter how much money be spent on it …. In fact, higher the ecological damage the higher will be the impediments to sustain development. (EDDT 1976:11–12)

The Dhungri forest presents an exotic site where foreign tourists experience a mystic solitude, was to remain roadless, and no vehicle should find ingress into the protected zone. It was interfered by providing mechanized road access. Noisy tourists belonging to neo-rich class broke the silence of Dhungri forest by their nonchalant activities, bohemian behaviour and boisterous attitude. Much against the regulation, three-storeyed buildings were coming up that disturbed the terraced style of settlement where the first terrace was along the west-bank of the river, interrupted by a deodar woodline. The first British settler, Banon, introduced the tradition of guest houses amidst apple garden. Slowly and gradually Manali put on the urban sophistication. But the new government of Himachal Pradesh felt that there

was a need to adopt pro-growth policy as the demand over-stripped supply, particularly in accommodation. Manali's natural increase in resident population was around 6000, while peak-day influx of tourists was 6650 in 1991. Land mafia had entered into the Manali's green landscape, and outsiders were planning hotels – a few like Piccadilly had already come up as a visual eyesore. Consumerism, environmental graft, violation of green practices and trespass into the bucolic zone were reported by Singh (1989). Local voice grew feeble under endogenous and exogenous pressures. There was need of site-specific management approaches. Rapid growth in a short period of time can cause irreversible change in a destination community (Bosselman et al. 1999: 109). This is a known fact that whenever tourism goes unbound, it breeds like cancer. Bodrum (Turkey) and Santorini (Greece) met the same fate. Every promising resort has to pass through this impasse when global forces emerge and neoliberal trends push tourism to expand for competitiveness. Here is the rub, when stakeholders should decide for the resort governance model – corporate directed or community focused! Search for governance model will decide which way to go. Changes in governance strategies provide useful keys to understanding the dynamics and competitiveness of destinations (Bramwell and Lane 2012: 221).

9.3.2 Resort Governance

Mostly the governance option ranges from 'corporate-directed' to 'community-focused' approaches. The Manali form of governance was of community-driven strategy where government would only play the role of an enabler of essential facilities and preliminary infrastructure for community-type destination. In this approach, as visitors almost crossed over the limit of acceptable change situation, the host community would be the determining group. The lack of governance means that the host community has gone indifferent and self-centred, allowing mass tourism to have a full play with the natural, social and cultural capital (Chauhan 2009). Manali, given with limited resources, experienced unlimited growth within a short span of time. Therefore rethinking on resort's growth was very important and necessary.

Not that the community remained a passive spectator to tourism's tragedy of mass growth, they launched campaign against the public sector to save Manali, agitated through mass media, conducted rallies and persuaded voters to oust these makers of law who cannot preserve our heritage. They cried against further development of tourism that has already transgressed tourism development zones; any tourism construction design must be compatible to Manali's green image (Singh 2008: 1155). But voices of local community fell on deaf ears, except that some areas were included for development such as Central sector, Aleo sector and Dhungri sectors (excluding Hadimba temple area). Sector-wise details of different land uses of Manali planning up to 2001 are shown in Table 9.2. The table shows that Manali village is gradually transforming into a process of urbanization, losing its rural character. Out of 650 ha of land within this area, about 274 ha (42%) shall be urbanized

Table 9.2 Proposed land use of urbanizable area: 2001

Sl. no.	Use	Central	Dhungri	Aleo	Area in Hectares	Percent
1.	Residential	16.10	4.90	7.46	28.46	14.70
2.	Tourism	12.05	25.95	17.46	55.00	28.44
3.	Commercial	3.15	1.35	1.00	5.00	2.84
4.	Facilities & services	3.64	3.46	4.93	12.03	6.36
5.	Gòvt./Semi govt. offices	1.00	0.10	—	1.10	0.56
6.	Parks/open spaces city forest	18.81	33.45	20.45	72.46	37.50
7.	Traffic and transportation	8.97	6.08	3.55	18.60	9.60
	Total	63.52	75.29	54.34	193.15	100.00
8.	Horticulture	15.65	43.92	11.03	70.60	—
9.	Waterbodies	—	—	10.00	10.00	—
	Grand total	79.17	119.21	75.37	273.75	—

Source: Town and Country Planning Department, Himachal Pradesh, Shimla

in the above three mentioned sectors with 14.70% land to be used for residential purposes. About 28.44% land will be used for tourism besides 37.5% for parks, open spaces and city forest. Given the appropriateness of tourism, the seventh plan did not happen as the community had aspired for. Planners and developers had no option but to amend the policy and urbanize Manali and shape it into a green tourist town (Gardner et al. 2002).

As a newcomer in the field of tourism development, Manali's stakeholders could not manage tourism growth nor did they make sincere efforts to share tourism knowledge. Many planners and tourism owners were working with trial-and-error method 'there was a search for balance between the community tolerance and tourism growth, between the host communities' quality of life and the visitors' quality of experience'(Singh and Singh 1998). But it needs intelligence and knowledge management which they were lacking. There are many incremental growth mitigation strategies, but most of them would have been useful only in earlier stage of development with strong monitoring of the resource uses.

9.4 Growth Limitation Strategies

While carrying capacity concept, limit of acceptable change, reducing accommodation facilities, diffusion of tourism activity, expansion strategies and zoning controls are some of the growth limitation strategies that many tourism destinations have employed with advantage, but all these require constant monitoring and suitable action both by the government and community groups. Carrying capacity concept has often been criticized for being ineffective to the extent that some scholars consider it almost a dead concept (Butler 2015). However it is not true, as there are living examples of its effectiveness. For example, Sanibel Island (Florida) presents a singular case of successful growth limitation strategy, based on carrying capacity.

The strength of the Island lies in community's strong commitment. It is clearly mentioned in the vision statement of the Sanibel Plan (1976) that:

> Sanibel shall be developed as a community only to the extent to which it retains and embraces the quality of a sanctuary.

We will cite another good example of Whistler (Canada) which has many similarities with Manali, such as geographic setting as it nestles in Canadian mountains having great attractions. Both Manali and Whistler rose to fame from a nondescript village settlement to a world-class resort, retained natural and cultural attractions that are difficult to access, used community tourism and had speedy growth. Incidentally both came into being in the 1960s. Whistler rapidly grew into a world famous destination that continued the process of community participation and monitoring the impact of development by adopting its growth management strategies. The stakeholders used various mechanisms which have been refined over the years. The Whistlers used highly intelligent and innovative management techniques of growth. For example, they concentrated development in the compact area of the village to avoid sprawl. Despite landowner's resentment, they declared moratorium on development while giving them compensation in the form of zoning trade-offs. The municipal regulatory laws were strictly implemented and monitored such as development of 730 m of land was restricted because of negative impacts upon both environment and the scenic beauty. Whistlers had to pay the cost of environmental monitoring for all major projects (Bosselman et al. 1999: 165).

When the owners of tourism and stakeholders realized that Manali is overbuilt, they found a promise of future growth on the adjoining pastures, green meadows and the mountain slopes ideally suitable for snow activities. They shifted from pro-growth governance model that had limited public input into decision-making to highly democratic community-driven governance (Gill and Williams 2012: 219–235). Manali policy controls failed to limit the tourism's ever increasing growth process.

9.5 Lack of Knowledge Transfer

The effective transfer and use of knowledge is of vital importance for a tourism destination in transition as it faces significant external change and competition (Cooper 2015). Knowledge transfer is not an easy task as it requires clear understanding of the type of knowledge to be transferred and the medium to be used for the transfer. The Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) who are responsible for decision-making, design, organization and management should pay attention to effective use and transfer of knowledge for making viable plan for destinations using tourism intelligence. Unfortunately, Manali was not well-advised by its DMOs and that was responsible for the failure of the tourism plan, and Manali Resort jumped on growth process with little management and regulatory

mechanism; still they cared less for law enforcement and faithful monitoring. The ambitious makers of Manali tourism who desired to establish a model resort over the Himalayas forgot that tourism is a most complex and sensitive business that demands high standards of care and protection of the fragile product – experience, which is difficult to create and easy to undo. Even a single person, visitor or resident can unmake it. It is a business that needs constant caring, caution and control over the product's freshness. Any unintelligent move can destroy the amenity. The case of Whistler community sets a fine example of how *process* affects the *substance* and how an intelligent citizenry has responded to changes overtime.

There are more success stories of resorts that demonstrate techniques, ways and means of harnessing tourism resources without diminishing their appeal. Among such models is Aspen Resort in the valley of Elk Mountains that followed management techniques and innovative policy goals with success. Unfortunately, Manali stakeholders did not use tourism intelligence and the policy propriety nor did they share tourism knowledge that the contemporary alpine resorts had gained by experience and self-worth. Manali did not have suitable space left for further growth while the encroachment of agricultural land went on unabated. Like Whistler's plan of introducing ski-lift activity, Manali too established ski-lift project on its beautiful mountain slopes for skiing. The organizers came up with a ski-village plan on the mountain slope, and a mammoth size project was proposed over 5 ha of forest land embracing 100-acre area dislodging existing villages (Dogra 2006: 9). But due to lack of knowledge transfer, this gigantic project comes as a paradox to once a small hamlet; Manali where Kulvians lived in harmony with nature and Manali as a pastoral resort was gradually shedding off its green shades and was moving rapidly towards tourism culture with growing urbanization, alluring capitalism and overarching globalization. It is reported that the villagers will suffer the tragedy of the commons, as all the water resources such as untapped stream water and groundwater were used for snowmaking and to meet the other needs of the project. If this had happened, the village would have been deprived of the basic right to survive.

During the recent visit to the Kulu Valley, it was found that the entire green Valley was hungry of tourism as most tourists were rushing to Manali. According to the original plan, the entire Valley was to be developed as a recreation corridor offering rural charms, facilities for water sport, rafting, trekking and trailing, nature spotting and angling. Visitors disgusted with urban living rushed to the Valley for their urge for relaxation, rest and recreation – where they can 'stand and stare' forgetting the cares of the world. Around the mid of the Valley lies the history and heritage buried that only a few get a chance to enjoy. For instance, Naggar located at the mid-point between Kulu and Manali at a height of 1851 m is a fascinating village overlooking the meandering Beas, is a storehouse of interesting stories of oral history and royal heritage. Naggar was once the residence of the Raja, and now his palace has been converted into a heritage hotel. One can see splendid snow clad Himalayan peaks from the hotel. The place has amazing markers of tourism such as super natural narratives of the people and mysterious stories about the royal romances; the Valley's entire colourful rural settlement can be enjoyed from the

highly placed Raja's palace. There is more to Naggar's cultural assets than can be described in this short space.

Unfortunately little research has been conducted so far into the Valley's oral history and ethnography which can provide interesting stuff for myth-making – a tool for attracting tourists. To our mind green tourism is the only hope in the mountains (Singh 1992: 192).

9.6 Manali: Tourism Intelligence in Action

Tourism intelligence refers to DMO's ability to identify, engage and learn from disparate stakeholders within and outside the destination. It must acquire, filter, analyze and prioritize data and information from various sources to create knowledge that can be used to fulfil its role in destination management (Sheehan et al. 2016). The Central Government of India used tourism intelligence in developing indigenous tourism in the Kulu Valley using Garrison's *shifting rule* (Cited in Butler 1974) which shall strengthen the resort resources and generate regional benefit:

> When capacity increases, requires physical expansion, when the expansion cannot be in vertical direction and where space is made more expensive by the presence of phenomena itself, a shift is likely during the time of capacity strain and the shift shall probably occur near the old location as the area of induced expenses will allow.

The Ministry of Tourism of India has recently come up with a fascinating plan 'Explore Rural India Project' that covers 5 villages of the 18 Naggar blocks. The success of this project will be replicated all over the country. Tourist can watch the glorious rise of the sun in the early hours of the morning and can watch Kulu women weaving shawls and observe artisans at park, peasant working in the field and so on. The key feature of the project is getting a taste of rural India. Hospitable Kuluvians have gradually come up to the expectation of tourism development managers by providing homestays where a visitor can have the feel of real India – eating organic meals and sitting on the ground with a *tandoor* smoking away – and can enjoy the folklore; all this for a very modest price. Some of the local people may take you for a stroll into the village where apples from the trees shall catch your attention; pluck one to munch your way. It is a real delight rarely found elsewhere. The Government of India will set aside initial funding for over 5 years for training locals in hospitality. The project is path-breaking and an intelligent use of resources. People will get employment and many would share knowledge by mutual intermingling. A few foreigners who came here for a visit did never return to their homelands; such is the charm of the Valley.

Unfortunately this wisdom came quite late to the makers of tourism when the ski village had already ushered into existence felling Manali's best forested

Fig. 9.4 Solang's ski slopes

slopes, pasture lands and meadows, particularly along the Solang and Rohtang; *pucca* roads were paved after cutting green pine trees that gave a majestic vernal look to the resort and a wonderful backdrop to the Valley. Such damages done to the nature resorts are often irreversible having long-term cumulative effects as 'our understanding of species responses to development activities is limited'. For example, land clearing for ski trail necessarily eliminates some amount of forest habitat that takes away the sheen and shine of the mountain landscape (Strong et al. 2009: 126).

Here community resilience played an important role, and *panchayats* and community leaders rose *en mass* against the construction of gigantic ski village that was a virtual hazard to the environmental security and community's basic vision – 'small is beautiful'. What they desired for was Manali to remain Manali – a green, nature-based community-driven resort, endeared by guests and loved by hosts, sharing the gains without leakage – a vision that the community elders had foreseen in the original draft plan. They would not mind the development of skiing on a smaller scale and may also like to participate. Thus, the mammoth project was shelved, and instead a smaller project along the Solang's excellent ski slopes was considered ideal for this project where heli-skiing was in practice (Fig. 9.4). Simultaneously, a Power Himalayas Limited project was awarded to a local Himachal company through a global bidding process. The power project will meet the needs of visitors and local residents. A French company by the name *Pomagalski* was given the responsibility of installing passenger ropeways. The company was known as envi-

ronment saviour, using advance technology that would enable the project to reduce tree felling in the pathways of *Gandola* (Chauhan 2009).

The entire project will take 1.87 ha of government's forest land; a 5 ha was set aside for planting 5000 conifer trees. Among the terms and conditions of the project, it was emphasized that tourism should not be developed in isolation but mixed with other community activities.Three *panshayates* (Barau, Palchan and Shanag) will receive a sum of rupees 12 lacs per annum for the development from the government for a period of 40 years. The *panchayats* will utilize this amount for improving infrastructure and environmental caring. This project started in 2005.

9.7 Concluding Remarks: Lessons Learned

Manali is now developing in a sustained manner, but planners have brought home the truth that 'Policy guides society, society does not guide policy' (Goulet 1993). There are three fundamental elements that underlie all tourism policies: visitor satisfaction, environmental protection and adequate reward for developers and investors (Acerenza 1985). Anyone who had witnessed the charms of Manali's landscape earlier will miserably miss the beautiful nature's pleasure dome and can ask in dismay 'where have gone those green pastures, the amazing forest groves of deodars and mystifying gloom of Dhongri forest and where is the abode of Lord Manu'. Perhaps the old Manali had suffered an untimely demise. Tourism consumes places and cultures and sometimes it uses them to the end. Old time Manali has now become a dreamland which can be enjoyed only in a fantasy. More research is needed on tourism policymaking process. The case of Manali demonstrates that 'where tourism succeeds or fails, largely depends on political and administrative functions and is not a function of economic or business expertise' (Richter 1989: 11). Having said that, it is vital to make a robust and workable policy frame to include opinion leaders of local communities who are affected directly or indirectly and positively and negatively at decision-making stage. In fact, tourism is a community industry (Murphy 1985: 166), and hence community participation is necessary in all stages from policymaking to planning, development and even monitoring; their participation is essential as sometimes they provide more meaningful ground information than what is gathered from administrative database. This is more true of developing societies. That, they are rustic, illiterate and uninformed citizen is a misguiding notion. Manali community was patriotically attached to its landscape beauty and grandeur, and hence they could give a hard resistance to public decision for a proposal of a colossal ski-village project that would not only degrade the environment but also incur leakage as most of the money-rich clientele comes from the developed countries. We were surprised when we were served a fruit can imported from California in a Manali restaurant as desserts when Kulu Valley is

known as the fruit bowl of the country. Localism is the keynote of community-based development.

It is important that policy should remain dynamic as well as flexible, but it should not alter or change on the whims of the government in power. The community should be involved because it bears the brunt of incremental growth. Appropriate technology should be used to mitigate undesired growth from successful best practices. The knowledge transfer is necessary for implementing successful strategies. Intelligent use of tourism resources has maintained quality of several resorts such as Nusa Dua (Bali, Indonesia), Bermuda, the republic of Maldives, Whistler (BC, Canada), Bhutan and Sanibel and so on. The most important lesson drawn from these best practices is that rapid growth of tourism can be harmful. It should be managed with adequate strategies. Generally, all tourism growth in the beginning is organic with minimum adverse environmental impacts (Williams 1982: 215). Some places are unique and spectacular such as the Valley of Flowers in the Indian Himalayas where about 2500 annually spring up during the summers and fade out as autumn arrives. This is nature's garden where flowers emerge on the scene and vanish all by themselves. Only nature takes care of them. Such rare biospheres should not be disturbed by any human activity, least by tourism; they should be preserved for posterity. Manali's Hadimba forest area has been interfered with human artefacts, resulting in its degradation. Proper governance is at the heart of balanced and sensible development of tourism. This is more important in destinations made of tender ecologies and fragile resources. Asia is rich in natural and cultural capital. These should be harnessed in sustainable manner after gaining deep knowledge of ecosystems and resource resilience. Bhutan sets a suitable example of best practice of tourism. Sustainable colonial destinations in the Indian Himalayas, such as Shimla, Mussoorie, Darjeeling, etc., could not complete their life cycle due to unsustainable policy goals. There is a strong need of resource reconnaissance of the landscape set aside for the development of tourism. Best practices of tourism does not come by easily. It is a challenge that the makers of tourism have to face.

Tourism knowledge or intelligence is gained by practical experience. Tourism being a highly complex phenomenon, its intricacies are difficult to discover without having the support of proven concepts, theories and models. Knowledge is universal and anybody can make use of it; knowledge grows upon knowledge. It is also true that what is useful for one discipline may not be as good to other disciplines. Due to lack of appropriate knowledge and intelligence, tourism can create and aggravate problems in any destination, particularly in Asia which is the hope of tomorrow's tourism. Therefore taking lessons from Manali, it is sensible for stakeholders, planners and destination management organizations to evaluate fairly and accurately the social, environmental and economical impacts of tourism before development begins rather than afterward.

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Chapter 10
Refocusing Sustainable Tourism: Poverty Alleviation in Iconic World Heritage Destinations in Southeast Asia

Robyn Bushell

Abstract The exponential growth of tourism in World Heritage sites in Southeast Asia provides economic development, but with it unplanned consequences on the places where everyday life is radically transformed. This chapter looks at the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in particular the interactions of heritage, tourism and poverty. A study of Luang Prabang in Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) considers how small historic towns are transformed by the growth of tourism-led development. It looks at the effect on poverty in this remote rural town that has become an iconic tourism destination due to its World Heritage Listing.

Keywords World heritage · Poverty · Tourism · Sustainable development

10.1 Introduction

The exponential growth of tourism based around World Heritage sites in Southeast Asia provides much needed economic development, but also triggers significant concerns (UNESCO 2005). Heritage professionals, UNESCO, other United Nations (UN) agencies and non-government organizations (NGOs) report many unplanned consequences on the people and places where everyday life is being radically transformed. Small historic towns face an uncertain future, overtaken by development driven by globalization. A hidden cost of this growth is poverty. Is it inadvertently pushed deeper in vulnerable communities? This would represent the antithesis of sustainability, with poverty alleviation a key UN goal (UN 2015).

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This chapter backgrounds UN priorities and sustainable development to explore the interactions of heritage, tourism and poverty drawing on Luang Prabang in Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR). World Heritage Listing has propelled this previously remote rural town into an iconic tourism destination.

From a human rights-based approach to sustainable tourism, the chapter considers some of the influences of considerable tourism development on the wellbeing of those living in poverty. Inadequate attention means relevant data is quite limited. Tourism policy and decision makers tend to focus on macroeconomic benefits of tourism, including gross domestic product (GDP), employment data, visitor numbers and spending, masking a range of social costs that should be part of the sustainable tourism equation.

10.2 Backgrounding Sustainability and Development

Recent decades have witnessed concerted global collaboration and policy formulation around the conceptual dimensions of sustainable development. Initially the discourse was primarily concerned with sustainable use and protection of the natural environment (Bushell 2015). The phrase *ecologically* sustainable development (ESD) was prominent, replaced now by the familiar sustainable development. The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) and the output of their deliberations, the report *Our Common Future* (or the Brundtland Report) (WCED 1987: 16), defined sustainability as development that 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. The WCED brought the concept into common vernacular and usage, gaining broad political support. The Report highlighted the fundamental entanglement of nature, the economy and society and the challenges confronting the global community. Amongst the core principles elaborated, the need 'for developing nations to be allowed to meet their basic needs of employment, food, energy, water and sanitation' and 'for economic growth to be revived with developing nations allowed growth of equal quality to that of developed nations' (WCED 1987: 41).

The Report triggered ongoing global activities and debates. These continue with high-level summits resulting in numerous action plans, conventions, declarations, guiding principles, guidelines and monitoring protocols (Bushell 2015; UNEP 2012). Amongst the important agenda setting meetings, the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, attended by unprecedented numbers of stakeholders from public, private and civic sectors and most nations, precipitated the signing of the influential *Convention on Climate Change*, the *Convention on Biological Diversity* and the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*, amongst others. The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was created, mandated to monitor the implementation of the multitude of Earth Summit and subsequent summit agreements that have ensued. A few key moments and strategies are summarized to contextualize the realpolitik for least developed countries such as Lao PDR.

10.3 Delivering on Promises

In 1972 Indira Gandhi highlighted the dilemma of inequality and poverty and the necessity to alleviate both to make progress in the various arenas of sustainability at the UN Conference on Human Environment (UNEP 1972). In 2000, following the Rio +10 summit, the UN General Assembly adopted the *UN Millennium Declaration*, the most important promise ever made to the world's most vulnerable people (UN 2010a). The formulation of the *Millennium Development Goals* (*MDGs*) in 2005 provided a framework for accountability, generating unprecedented commitment and partnerships towards building decent, healthier lives for billions of people and creating an environment able to contribute to global peace and security for all (UN 2010a). This included setting up the Human Rights Council in 2006. In 2012, the Rio+20 summit renewed the commitment to sustainable development. In 2015 the MDGs were reviewed, resulting in the UN *2030 Development Agenda* (UN 2015). Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with stronger emphasis on human rights replaced the former ten goals and continue the work towards 'balanced' integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development (ESCAP 2016). The need to address extensive poverty is Goal 1.

The metanarrative of sustainable development has evolved in the past 50 years from environmental diplomacy to greater advocacy for social equity, empowerment and socially responsible business practices in both developed and developing nations. Sustainable development nevertheless remains highly contested, regarded as unachievable. The argument is that development is anything but sustainable and rather, increasingly neo-liberal, driven by market-led entrepreneurism and resource exploitation, with wealth accumulation overriding any concern for conservation let alone social equity agendas (Griffith 2002).

Despite the reservations, sustainable development remains an important guiding principle and a central orthodoxy of planning in many countries, albeit with a hybridity of approaches (Raco 2005). The triple bottom-line approach to doing business, embracing the ideal of corporate social responsibility (Portney 2005) has been adopted to an extent in the private sector. Is enough being done, especially by the tourism industry?

As globalism produces a very different world economy, in which tourism is a key player, there is also a cautionary turn from internationalization, a return and entwining with nationalism amidst the debates around the global economy and the future. The outcome of the 2016 UK *Brexit* vote presented a most poignant exemplar (amongst many) of this nationalistic turn. This emerges alongside anxieties around many challenges, global in cause and consequence, with more recent conceptions of sovereignty, community and identity (Sluga 2013) such as the moral and economic dilemma of illegal migrations and climate change reflected worldwide in the success of populist politics. This places global collaborations and negotiations in a precarious position, threatening many things, including the vision of a sustainable future. Despite the challenges, the increasingly important work towards achieving SDGs continues.

10.4 The Link to Tourism and Heritage

While the concept of sustainable development might disappoint on many levels, the need to ensure a healthy environment is our ethical responsibility. We must 'tread more lightly' on the planet in order to leave the legacy of a healthy, civil and prosperous future. Integral to sustainability is the safeguarding natural and cultural heritage. The role of the international community, the individual, the state, the business and the local community in this process has prompted a burgeoning heritage *industry*, built around collaborative partnerships. Not least, tourism has realized a huge opportunity in the appeal of heritage, with a seemingly insatiable appetite amongst travellers, for diverse experiences of both natural and cultural heritage. And regardless of the politics of the nation state versus the free market, the increasing incursions of terrorism, natural disasters, epidemics and the periodic collapse of different currencies, the appetite for international travel shows no signs of waning. There are temporary shifts and perturbations in certain markets and trends, but travel continues with an exponential growth trajectory, nowhere more so than amongst the rising middle classes in emerging Asian economies. Collectively they represent huge populations with increasing freedom, inclination and aspiration to travel and increasingly disposable incomes (Winter et al. 2009).

This broader discussion of sustainable development and the role of tourism and heritage will now focus on what this means in relation to people living in poverty, in places with considerable growth associated with the increasing fascination for heritage and 'branded' as special by their inscription by UNESCO as *World Heritage*.

Luang Prabang, an historic town in Lao PDR, serves as a fitting example of many such places, transformed from an obscure remote location to iconic tourism destinations in just a few decades following inscription, with considerable consequent investment and development. As millions travel to visit these new World Heritage sites, what is the legacy being created, and how does tourism affect the sustainability of these places? Many in conservation believe World Heritage Listing has been hijacked as 'a grandiose marketing tool for those places to see before you die' (Usborne 2009: 1). The hope is that pro-poor tourism, defined by Harrison (2008: 851) as 'tourism which brings net benefits to the poor', will prove a useful strategy intended to deliver benefits in least developed countries such as Laos (Ashley et al. 2001; Mitchell and Ashley 2010).

10.5 Heritage Tourism in Southeast Asia

The Asia-Pacific region, now the world's second most visited tourist region (behind Europe), receives 24% of the global total (UNWTO 2016). Tourist numbers to every country in the region (except French Polynesia) increased markedly over the past decade (ESCAP 2016). Asia and the Pacific led growth worldwide (+8%) in

international arrivals in 2016 (UNWTO 2016). Central to this growth is the continued rise in intraregional tourism, particularly from China. Indeed, from 2012 onwards China has accounted for around one-third of total outbound tourism in the Asia-Pacific. A leading independent Asian brokerage and investment group CLSA predicts the number of outbound tourists from China alone will reach 200 million by 2020 (CLSA 2016). While not all tourists are interested in heritage, it is noteworthy that Vietnam Airlines has new routes directly connecting World Heritage sites around the region including Luang Prabang, and most visitors to Luang Prabang engage with the key heritage features of the town, including its very special streetscape (built heritage) and the early morning alms giving ceremony of tak bat (intangible cultural heritage).

Fragile by virtue of the age and state of material fabric and their demography, small historic towns in Southeast Asia face an increasingly uncertain future as these special places are overtaken by unprecedented socio-economic transformations. Powered by globalization and consumer capitalism, the changes can be so radical that places are almost unrecognizable in a matter of just a few years. Not the sole cause, but significant amongst the drivers of these transformations is tourism investment and development. The growth in visitation described above signals the enormity of the pressures. The region is also experiencing vast socio-economic changes resulting from high national gross domestic product (GDP) increases of 8–11% and massive intraregional developments, including tourism. This growth is not without significant costs (ESCAP 2016). The most vulnerable in these places together with their fragile built and natural heritages carry much of the burden (Murdoch 2015).

These historic small cities and towns, such as Luang Prabang in Lao PDR, Siem Reap in Cambodia and Hoi An in Vietnam, are a key focus of national development agendas, packaged and promoted through their inscription onto the UNESCO World Heritage List. This is regarded as both prestigious and an important element of national identity building. Very strategic in terms of economic development, inscription triggers the growth of tourism. For example, visitor numbers to Japan's Tomioka Silk Mills soared 400% in just 2 years since inscription (Mechtild Rossler Director UNESCO World Heritage Centre, quoted in AAP 2016). According to UNESCO and many heritage experts, these Asian World Heritage urban landscapes have reached a tipping point because of the unprecedented cultural, social, economic and physical changes. The UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP) notes the region has experienced the fastest economic growth in history. This can be viewed as success, but ESCAP also expresses considerable concern at the price, with environmental degradation, economic uncertainty and widening gaps between the rich and poor, cities and rural areas. ESCAP believes future progress against the Sustainable Development Goals is threatened by unsustainable levels of growth (ESCAP 2016). Poverty alleviation, the first of the SDGs, will be considered as an indicator of social sustainability.

Tourism and its part in sustainable development is emblematic in many ways of the modern condition. Described by Bauman (2000) as *liquid*, modernity is now characterized by movement, speed, constant adaptability and shape-changing patterns and configurations, which are temporary. Consumerism and social disintegration

occur simultaneously with social reintegration, compared with preceding *solid-state* modernity, where change was generational, and communications, IT networks and rapid mass transport systems were in their infancy. While not uniform across all geographies and societies, in the context of Asia, this liquid state sits reasonably comfortably in knowledge systems imbued with the notion that things are in constant flux (Staiff and Bushell 2013). But, it creates impacts on the everyday life of local people when the pragmatics of planning and policy systems are unable to keep pace.

10.6 Transformation in Laos PDR

To appreciate the transformation created by the introduction of tourism, and the situation regarding poverty in the country, an appreciation of Lao history is necessary. Stuart-Fox (1997) provides a detailed account of the change that has been a constant in Laotian history. A highly abbreviated thumbnail sketch outlines the challenges of a very small, landlocked nation, sharing borders with China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Burma, a country subjected to repeated radical transformations. Stuart-Fox notes many influences on what eventually became Laos. Beginning with Chinese, then in the first century AD, Indian merchants introduced Theravada Buddhism into Laos. For much of the ninth to thirteenth century, the Khmers (Cambodians) ruled much of what is now Laos. During the fourteenth century, the first unified kingdom of Lan Xang was founded, invaded by the Vietnamese in the fifteenth century and the Burmese in the sixteenth century. In the early eighteenth century, Lan Xang split into three kingdoms, one centred on Luang Prabang in the north. The divided Laos was weakened, and in 1779 Siamese (Thai) forces occupied the three states, with an unsuccessful war of independence against the Siamese early in the nineteenth century. At this time the first Hmong migrated into Laos. In the 1860s French explorers travelled through Laos, and by 1893 the colonization of what became known as French Indochina in territories east of the Mekong – Laos, Vietnam and Kampuchea – began (Stuart-Fox 1997).

During the 1940s the French were fighting the Thais for Laotian territory. The Japanese persuaded the pro-French King Sisavang Vong to declare independence from France; the formation of the pro-Communist Pathet Lao Resistance (Land of the Lao) government followed. Laos was a divided country ruled in part by Royalist governments supported by the USA and by the Pathet Lao assisted by their allies the Viet Minh. When South Vietnam and Cambodia fell to the Communists in 1975, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) was founded as a Communist regime, which eventually banished the monarchy and shunned the practice of Buddhism (Stuart-Fox 1997). Resultant of this history, was the exodus during the 1970s of many of the most educated and wealthy. Together with the ravages of the American Vietnam war, this left deep internal social and political conflict, and a countryside littered with unexploded ordinances (UXOs). The remaining population had poor education and health, which, with the presence of UXOs caused devastating impacts

on rural communities and food production, rendering the economy extremely weak. In 1988, the Lao PDR government made the very pragmatic decision to introduce market reforms and to reopen the country to foreign capital and investment (Stuart-Fox 1997).

Today, Lao PDR remains a poor country, but it is developing rapidly. The 2016 World Bank report provides a useful economic snapshot. The population of Laos had grown to 6.8 million by 2015 from only 2.1 million in 1960. It has also risen from the UN rated 'least developed nation' status to the lower end of lower middle-income economy, with a gross national income (GNI) per capita of $US1,600 in 2014 compared to only $US390 in 1990. It has been one of the fastest growing economies in the East Asia and Pacific region. GDP growth has averaged 7% over the last decade, with some 30% of growth based on the exploitation of water, minerals and forest resources. Construction and services have also expanded. Regional integration through their membership in ASEAN significantly boosted tourism and attracted foreign investment (World Bank 2016). Tourism now represents the second major component of the economy, contributing 14.2% of GDP in 2016 (WTTC 2017).

This growth has contributed to lowering the number of poor with an estimated 23.2% of the population living below poverty thresholds (less than $US1.25 per day) in 2012/2013 down from 39.1% only a decade ago. Still, Laos has a Global Hunger Index (GHI) of 20.1 making it 16th worst worldwide, rated as 'alarming' by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) produces the Human Development Index (HDI), a composite measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and having a decent standard of living. The HDI ranks Laos at 139/186 worldwide (UNDP 2015). Poverty reduction has taken place at a slower pace compared to some regional peers. For example, in Cambodia poverty reduced from 50.2% of the population in 2002 to 17.7% in 2012 compared to a reduction from 39.1 to 23.2% in Laos over the same period. In addition, the macro-economic environment remains challenging, reflecting both domestic and increasingly external risks, needing careful management (World Bank 2016). Lao PDR has made good progress against a number of the (former) Millennium Development Goals (now the UN SDGs), including poverty as discussed, and improving educational and health outcomes. However, certain goals remain underperforming, most crucially in nutrition, with an estimated 44% of children under five being stunted and 27% severely underweight due largely to a lack of food, inadequate water, sanitation and health services (ESCAP-ADB-UNDP 2010). Upstream developments on the Mekong river in China, including the construction of dams, are creating many downstream problems. These include water quality, pollution and availability. These problems for those most reliant on subsistence agriculture. This situation is likely to get worse as the Mekong corridor is developed further (Murdoch 2015). There is also a high maternal mortality rate and more is needed to improve gender equality (World Bank 2016).

This snapshot of the political and social history of Laos provides the context to understand the changes occurring in Luang Prabang due to tourism. In 1990 Laos

received only 14,400 visitors, and this had increased to a massive 4.16 million by 2014 with 92.68% coming from the Asia-Pacific region (LTTD 2014). The World Heritage Listing of Luang Prabang is a key motivator for visitors, but the capital Vientiane receives many more business than leisure travellers.

10.7 Luang Prabang and the Transformation of Everyday Life

The World Heritage town of Luang Prabang exemplifies the complexities, transformations and challenges, due in particular to the speed and constancy of change, as per Bauman's (2000) notion of *liquid modernity*. The various ways tourism is entangled with heritage, community, national development, religious practices, commerce and wellbeing, typifies global and regional dynamics at play (Winter and Daly 2012). This is made more complex in a country in which ideology and national identity has, in living memory, been contested and transitioning (Labadi and Long 2010).

Rich in heritage, Luang Prabang is a small provincial centre. The former Royal capital and then French colonial town, it is located in the central north of the Lao PDR, 300 km north of the capital Vientiane. With a population of around 50,000 people including the surrounding rural area, it has a long and very complicated history as detailed earlier. Being the Royal capital, centre of Buddhist teaching and strategically important during the French rule, its recent history has been tumultuous with all these displaced by Communist rule. From a tourism perspective however, it is blessed with a richness of cultural and natural heritage that makes the town idyllic to the visitor. Sited on a peninsula between the Mekong and the Nam Khan rivers and surrounded by verdant countryside, it presents as a spectacular and tranquil setting. Inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1995 because of its unique fusion of Lao architecture (particularly its 34 Buddhist temples, Royal buildings and some residential properties), French colonial architecture and town planning (UNESCO 1995). Recently, the inscription and statement of 'Outstanding Universal Value' were revised to include the endangered ecological features of the landscape and the intangible heritage of the place, as well as the material fabric of the town. This responds to the threats perceived by heritage experts as the impact of redevelopment (mostly due to tourism) within the historic core.

Luang Prabang continues to face enormous challenges, now as a heritage town with the scale of development currently underway and planned. These include the recent extension and rebuilding of the airport to accommodate larger and more frequent flights carrying many more passengers, a new bridge across the Mekong upstream, planned highway connectivity to go north, a new industrial city being designed for a few kilometres downstream on the Mekong and a fast train envisioned to connect north to China and south through Thailand and Malaysia to Singapore (Bushell and Powis 2009). Once an important but nevertheless small,

remote hilltop area, it is again becoming a hub. These projects are related to its location and increasingly strategic role in interregional mobilities of goods, energy, services and people (for details see Lao PDR's 7th National Socio-Economic Development Plan, 2011–2015) (LPDR 2011). Tourism provides considerable foreign income, rising dramatically from 1991 to become the nation's third largest export industry by 1997 (Yamauchi and Lee 1999) and now second largest earner of foreign income in 2016 (WTTC 2017) and investment. This is not without problems. On the border with China, two casinos have been developed as part of a special economic zone. While well north of Luang Prabang, they serve to reveal the significant social problems that inappropriate tourism development can create, relating to crime, prostitution as well as all the usual significant social costs of gambling addictions (Sims 2016). This represents a problem in any country, but much more acutely in one with the development profile of Lao PDR.

From 62,348 visitors in 1997 to 531,327 per annum (including 152,328 domestic visitors) in 2014 (LTDD 2014), the trajectory is for continued growth, especially with Asian tourists representing an increasing share of the inbound market. Currently, Thailand is the single largest source of visitors to Luang Prabang, but with 120 million outbound Chinese in 2015 (CTRI 2016) and an anticipated 200 million outbound tourists by 2020 (CLSA 2016), the potential increase and intensity of Chinese tourism is obvious, both in Luang Prabang and at other heritage sites in the region (Winter 2009). China is currently the second largest source of visitors. The traditional market shares from France, Germany, the UK, the USA and Australia remain strong, but increases are not at the same rate as the intraregional market. That said, while regional visitors (Thailand, China, Cambodia, Vietnam) represent 86.3% of the market to Laos, and 40% to Luang Prabang, they contribute only 48% of national revenue from tourism (LTDD 2014). This yield is an important factor, so too fluctuations in the market. In 2003 the spread of SARS in Asia and then the global financial crisis in 2008 hit countries like Thailand quite badly with flow on effects to tourism in Luang Prabang. For example, the SARS epidemic resulted in a 14% drop in visitor numbers in 2003. Tourism has recovered but local entrepreneurs worry about oversupply in accommodation, increasing competition amongst tour companies cutting profitability and other businesses relying on visitors creating a drop in standards, undermining the reputation of Luang Prabang as a high-quality destination (Bushell and Powis 2009). There are now signs of appealing to the growing Chinese market. The building of larger hotels outside the town centre (protected by its World Heritage Listing requiring developments to be limited in height and architectural style to remain sympathetic to the heritage streetscape) and the introduction of resorts with golf courses down the river suggest quite a shift in the type of visitation. It is to be hoped that a casino is not added to the mix, something that would be very inappropriate for the wellbeing of the Laos people and for the heritage-based focus of tourism in Luang Prabang.

As a former French colonial town, Luang Prabang was extensively rebuilt by the French in bricks and mortar in the first decades of the twentieth century and now recast and re-presented in terms of the nationalist and revolutionary ideology of the current government. Apart from being a regional market town and centre for higher

learning, with a university and several colleges, it is also a centre of health services for the region, and a river transport hub. Since its inscription as a World Heritage city, it has also become a place of economic opportunity due, in large measure, to the heritage-tourism nexus. The Lao PDR government has promoted the use of heritage as a crucial resource with tourism revenue enhancing the national economy. Controversial changes are commonplace within Luang Prabang's urban morphology. As the provincial town embraces tourism, older buildings are renovated and new ones built in the French colonial style to provide tourist accommodation. The old prison, hospital and the homes of members of the former Royal family have all been transformed to very upmarket tourist accommodation. The French Cultural Centre is now a massage centre (Staiff and Bushell 2013). Across all levels of comfort, the available accommodation has grown with visitor numbers. In 1997 there were 10 hotels and 19 guesthouses. These have grown to some 58 hotels and 312 guesthouses (LTDD 2014) with more coming on stream constantly. It is worth noting that in this mix is an increasing number of four- and five-star properties, many are the conversions mentioned above. These are heritage properties within the World Heritage core and demonstrate the value of heritage. But an even larger number of very basic hotels are emerging just outside the core where development controls are minimal.

This level of tourism infrastructure investment has led to massive transformations and questions of sustainability: environmental, social and cultural. The gentrification of the historic centre has been accompanied by demographic shift as local families sell or lease to investors and entrepreneurs. Many heritage commentators worry about the impact on heritage values and the authenticity of the fabric of the historic core (Berliner 2012; Boccardi and Logan 2007; Dearborn and Stallmeyer 2010; Heywood 2012).

The local bans (villages) have traditionally centred around temples, with families caring for the monastic community. As families move out of the core, the Abbots at the temples question their capacity to provide education, housing and food for thousands of novice monks, who come from very poor rural families, seeking a free education. One answer could be to derive income from visitors, but this shifts the purpose of the monastic community and is not seen as viable. At present only the largest and most important of the temples, Wat Xieng Thong, has an entry fee, managed by the ban not the temple. The movement of families is a complex issue. It affects the life of the bans, the temples and the historic centre as a living cultural landscape. Described as *UNESCOcide*, Marco d'Eramo notes the effect of increasingly large-scale tourism in heritage cities and towns elsewhere, 'whenever a city is named a heritage site, it dies out, becoming the stuff of taxidermy. A mausoleum with dormitory suburbs attached' (D'Eamo 2014: 47).

Families who sell or lease their properties gain very substantial income not possible from any other enterprise, unless they were to finance the conversion from home to guesthouse themselves. Most cannot afford to do so and lack the necessary expertise. In leasing, they move to another part of the town outside the heritage core, where they can afford to build a modern structure with much better facilities, leaving the investor with the financial risk of renovations under the regulatory control of

the World Heritage Listing. The family retains ownership of the property and later will have a renovated property. However, these residents who have moved from the town centre report a loss of a sense of belonging to their community, monastery and its ceremonies and their sense of pride in their old quarter. 'It's not easy to recreate the feeling of belonging to a real community' (Engelmann, quoted in AAP 2016: 5). This accords with research into the effects of the heritage-tourism interface on everyday life, conducted over the past decade (Bushell and Staiff 2012; Staiff and Bushell 2013). Data has been collected, recording changes to the streetscape, the changes to the mix of businesses and business types, patterns of attendance at daily rituals including *tak bat* (daily alms giving) and special festivals. The monitoring of visitation data for changes in visitor numbers, source markets, length of stay and the activities undertaken by different types of visitor helps track how World Heritage designation and the growth of tourism have transformed life in this remote town (Bushell and Staiff 2012).

The reactions of residents to *moladok* or heritage are complex. They express pride in the international recognition their town receives and genuine gratitude for the many opportunities for employment from tourism, either working directly in service roles or in the building boom. Most hope that tourism will continue to thrive. But, most also see this as compromise with change to many things they valued in their former way of life. Many small businesses express frustration with imposed restrictions related to the World Heritage status. For Laotians who live, work and study in Luang Prabang, 'heritage' has become a means of achieving a much better quality of life and understanding that tourism is nourished by the heritage values of the town. Most prefer new houses and modern suburbs. Thongkhoun Soutthivilay, codirector of the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre, reported that her mother who sold her traditional house for a good price and had joined the exodus, found 'life has improved in some ways. But we miss our old neighbourhood' (quoted in AAP 2016: 5). This appears to be the common reaction.

Moving to a new home with much improved flooring, plumbing, bathroom and kitchen reduces the risk of vermin and many illnesses. Not surprisingly, most see many advantages despite leaving their old community. Most of these families could not afford even basic repairs to their old homes, many in extremely poor condition. To afford clean living conditions, to be able to send children to school and to seek medical assistance when family are unwell are essential in breaking the cycle of poverty. It is not surprising most make the choice to move, even when it is tinged with considerable regret.

The investors leasing or buying these buildings are typically Asian business people from Vientiane, Bangkok and China, expatriate Laotians who have been living overseas or French, Australian and other expats. The phenomenon is not new and not specific to this part of the world. The branding associated with UNESCO World Heritage Listing invites tourism development. Residents move out as prices escalate or grab at new business opportunities. Unfortunately this hastens the loss of the authentic character of place (AAP 2016). Locals and heritage experts agree Luang Prabang's rich architectural heritage has been protected by UNESCO's regulations and spared the eradication that has occurred in countless historic sites across Asia.

But most homes and local stores in the historic centre have owners who have or who want to sell or lease. These properties are being converted into guesthouses, restaurants, cafes, bars or premises for tour companies, travel agencies and souvenir goods. The hyper-commercialization and ever-growing influx of tourists and expatriate entrepreneurs catering to tourists' needs have invoked a local joke that it is *Meuang Falang* (Western town) not Luang Prabang. Scenes of everyday life are becoming rarer as house and land prices escalate. A small plot of land that sold for very little a decade ago sold for around $US8,000 only 3 years ago and are now selling for $US120,000 (AAP 2016). Not surprisingly, residents continue to sell or lease, and so more are moving out of the historic core into surrounding areas. Former UNESCO consultant and long-time expatriate resident, Francis Engelmann, indicates the cost to intangible heritage, 'We have saved Luang Prabang's buildings but we have lost its soul' (quoted in AAP 2016: 2).

Visitors are attracted by the ambience of the town: its many temples, the novice monks wandering along the streets, its rituals, the peaceful setting nestled between the two rivers, the enchanting remnants of French colonial architecture and a most charming and chic array of guesthouses and cafes. But sadly, whether things are authentic, whether locals are still attending the temples and whether the guesthouses are original buildings faithfully restored or new reproductions of the French colonial style are not always obvious or even important, especially to visitors for whom travel is in large groups and pre-packaged. But as noted earlier, the mass component of the market contributes a much lower yield than the more discerning, seasoned travellers who travel independently and tend to stay much longer. These visitors seek the authentic living culture not the touristic. So in terms of long-term sustainability and viability, it is the higher-yield visitor who should be encouraged. Maintaining the heritage values will require very careful management as the visitor profile continues to shift.

While tourism is doing well at the moment, it is not a given. During the 2008 global financial crisis (GFC), tourism in Asia, and Laos in particular, slowed for some time causing considerable concern. Outputs, income and employment fell in many developing countries. Per capita GDP fell in 54 developing and 10 transition economies in 2009, and the number of working poor rose by an estimated 215 million. As a result, predictions were altered, estimating some additional 64 million more people would be living in poverty by the end of 2010 (UN 2010b). Such externalities will continue to impact on places like Luang Prabang so reliant on tourism as the new economy.

At this time, little is known about the most poor, especially those with no property to lease or sell, and no education, many living just across the river in very deprived conditions. It is highly unlikely things are improving for them. It is even possible that for some, things are worse. Broad estimates of the impact of external factors on poverty say little about how those impacts are likely to be distributed *within* the poor. According to UN agencies, those most likely to be affected are women, who constitute the majority of Asia's low-skilled, low-salaried and temporary workers. During the GFC, for example, many lost their jobs in export manufacturing, including garments, textiles and electronics, and in tourism and its many

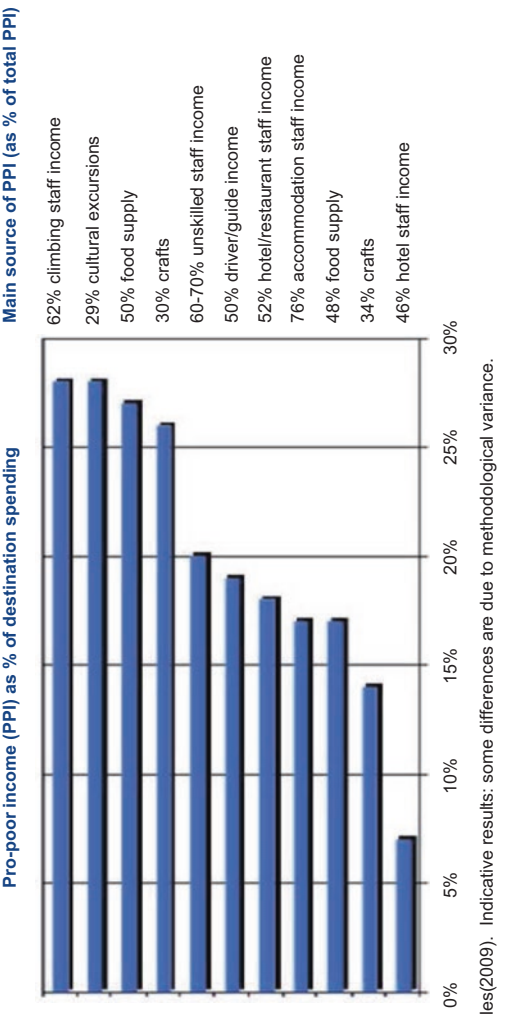
related services. The value chains of tourism mean that declines in tourism ultimately also lead to declines in demand for other service industries and manufacturing, such as textiles. In addition to women being reliant on employment in unskilled trades, when families feel vulnerable, they engage in what are described by the UNDP as 'adverse behaviours' that reduce the chances of escaping poverty. These include withdrawing children from schooling, in particular girls. This suggests that heavy reliance on tourism as a key economic activity can actually expose those living in poverty or on the margins to increased vulnerability and that women and girls are likely to be the worst affected. As a consequence, gender equality and the empowerment of women are central to the SDGs and considered to be a precondition for overcoming poverty, hunger and disease. But progress in relation to gender equality including educational opportunity has been lagging other target areas. Lack of education is a major obstacle to accessing the tools needed to improve families' lives, as well as the prospects of the individual. Poverty and lack of schooling perpetuate many cycles within poverty, including high adolescent birth rates, which jeopardizes the health and opportunities for social and economic advancement of girls (UN 2010a). Without education those living in poverty are unable to grasp the opportunity that heritage-based tourism provides.

The most vulnerable also experience the greatest impacts of crises such as regular floods, SARS and the GFC. Therefore achieving the SDGs and strategically using tourism as a pro-poor tool require increased attention to policies and interventions to eliminate persistent and, in some cases, increasing inequalities between the rich and the poor and those disadvantaged by gender, age, disability, ethnicity or geographic location. The tourism industry, like all areas of economic development, seeks staff with basic education and skills, often even the most unskilled roles are beyond the reach of those with little education. It is therefore essential that any interventions incorporate the delivery of basic tools for entry into the paid workforce (ILO 2013). With tourism so important in Luang Prabang, strategies targeting those in poverty for on-the-job training for the most basic entry level roles would be highly beneficial and feasible. As an example from Hoi An, Vietnam, small rural communities just outside the World Heritage core were suffering as tourism opportunities eluded their village and young people left to find employment in town. A pro-poor community-based intervention by UNESCO, the International Labour Organization and the provincial government of Quang Nam has been very successful, encouraging visitors out of the World Heritage area to spend time in Triem Tay, creating much needed employment (UNESCO 2016). The village was all but abandoned by young people and the elderly had lost hope. With financial assistance, training and marketing for the community-based tourism focussing on traditional lifestyle and intangible heritage, the village is once again feeling positive with young people returning. Interventions from various levels of government with support from the industry are essential.

As well as those in poverty being most vulnerable, the 'working poor' also face risks of falling back into greater poverty. The 'working poor' are those who are employed, but live in households where individual members subsist on less than $1.25 a day. Most are employed in jobs lacking any social protection or safety nets

that buffer against times of low economic demand (UN 2010a), often unable to generate sufficient savings to offset hard times. Across Asia and the Pacific, only 20% of the unemployed and underemployed have access to labour market programmes, such as unemployment benefits or training programmes (ESCAP-ADB-UNDP 2010). Again this points to the need for targeted interventions. Analysis also shows that policies that promote the SDGs and foster domestic demand and inclusive growth provide a stronger buffer against external economic forces. Hence, there is a need for governments to increase the earning and spending power of the poor, especially in rural areas, through improved education, skills and health standards (ESCAP-ADB-UNDP 2010). Tourism can provide a useful vehicle to link all these elements: education, skills and health. With appropriate planning processes, tourism development can deliver community development outcomes in each of these areas, making a greater contribution to poverty alleviation through multiple linkages to economic advancement. The ideal of corporate social responsibility has been adopted amongst many in the private sector. How might the heritage tourism sector assist in places like Luang Prabang?

It has been demonstrated that pro-poor income (PPI), the wages and profits earned by poor households through pro-poor tourism, performs very differently in different contexts. In Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, cultural tourism is the main activity with many common features. In both Laos and Vietnam, some 27% of tourist spending trickles down to the poor, while in Cambodia only 7% reaches poor households (Mitchell 2009) (see Fig. 10.1). Farmers, artisans, construction workers and street and market vendors are all in the tourism supply/value chain. In Luang Prabang, craft spending is high (an average of $33 per visitor) because the quality is very high. Over 50% of this reaches the poor because the crafts are handmade by ethnic minority women and draw heavily on local raw materials of paper and silk. But market-based interventions need to be designed specifically to engage and allow poor families access to opportunity. In Siem Reap (Angkor World Heritage area), Cambodia, the average craft spending is much lower because the quality is not high, the product is mostly being mass produced and much of the craft is imported so it is not authentic to the region, plus with the effect of kickbacks, only 5% actually reaches the poor (Mitchell 2009). Despite these good figures for Luang Prabang, the shifts in the mix of inbound tourists from independent travellers (FITs) to groups, which represents most Asian visitors at this stage of their experience as travellers, and their different spending patterns will have considerable impact on this value chain. Planning issues such as maintaining higher-yield visitors and encouraging visitors to stay longer rather than simply encouraging more visitors are important. This needs to be via appropriate tourism developments that maintain the heritage values, and not allowing any drift into tourism that simply seeks greater financial (ulimately benefitting a few investors) but creates greater issues for locals. The example of the casino on the Chinese border is such an example where profit motive ignores the social costs. Equally important is educating visitors about the value of local heritage, and encouraging the support of local people by purchasing genuinely handmade and local products.



Source: Adapted from Mitchell and Coles(2009). Indicative results: some differences are due to methodological variance.

Fig. 10.1 Pro-poor income from Tourism in selected countries (Source: Mitchell (2009))

Tourism development represents a welcome trajectory in a nation such as Laos, ranked 139th/186 on the 2014 UN Human Development Index (UNDP 2015); it relies heavily on tourism for growth in GDP and 12.8% of employment (WTTC 2015). Not surprisingly for a town such as Luang Prabang, 'heritage' equates to the visitor economy, representing an important development opportunity.

While progress has been made, considerable support is needed to ensure the most vulnerable have access to opportunity. The rate and scale of change challenges most aspects of life in places that have become tourist destinations. Local authorities are often ill-equipped to do more than acknowledge the transformations as potential threats (Aust. Gov 2011), generally lacking appropriate resources and expertise required to address the complex, multi-vector challenges facing these important, but precarious, historic urban environments throughout Southeast Asia.

There is a need for processes that engage local authorities and the tourism business community to create linkages that ensure responsibilities are acknowledged and that World Heritage status is not only generating greater profit for local and expatriate investors but genuinely acts as a pro-poor opportunity. This requires strategic and socially responsible approaches to tourism planning and development. Approaches that enable the protection of heritage values to contribute to sustainable futures, including health and wellbeing for all, in accord with the UN SDGs. For this, foresight, adequate monitoring and good policy are essential to ensure good outcomes from heritage-based tourism and long-term sustainability.

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Chapter 11
'Sharing Tourism Economy' Among Millennials in South Korea

Monica Bernardi and Elisabetta Ruspini

Abstract The chapter focuses both on the relationship between tourism and the new generations (Millennials in particular) and on the connection between Millennials and the sharing economy. More specifically, the chapter explores the case of South Korean Millennials by analysing the project 'Sharing City, Seoul'. This project, launched by the Seoul Metropolitan Government in 2012, is boosting social innovation and promoting local sharing entrepreneurship, also in the tourism sector, with specific regard to Korean Millennials. The case is investigated through a mixed-methods approach, confirming (1) the high involvement of Korean Millennials in the local process of innovation, especially in terms of entrepreneurship, and (2) the importance of a generational perspective for the future growth of the tourist market. The relationship between Millennials and tourism, apart from few exceptions, is still underexplored. However, the understanding of the future tourism trends cannot miss a generational perspective. In order to ensure strong future growth prospects for tourism (in Asia and beyond), the tourism industry has to better understand peculiarities and expectations of the Millennial generation.

Keywords Millennials · Sharing economy · Sharing tourism · Sharing city · Seoul

11.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses both on the relationship between tourism and generational turnover and on the connection between Millennials and the sharing economy. Are Millennials becoming a driving force in the travel industry? If yes, how? More specifically, the chapter explores the case of South Korean Millennials by analysing the

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'Sharing City, Seoul' project (hereafter SCS). The SCS project, launched by the Seoul Metropolitan Government (hereafter SMG) in 2012, is boosting social innovation and promoting local sharing entrepreneurship with specific regard to Millennials. A mixed-methods research design was used for the analysis reported in the chapter.

The relationship between Millennials and tourism, apart from a few exceptions, is still underexplored. Moreover, the literature on the Millennial generation is based mainly on Anglo-Saxon (Australia, Canada, the USA) and European statistics (e.g. see data and reports produced by the Pew Research Center, the Canadian Tourism Commission, the Center for Creative Leadership and the Roy Morgan Research). Nevertheless, as reported by the Singapore Tourism Board in the *Asia Travel Leaders Summit Report 2015* (STB 2015), around 60% of Millennials live in Asia (India, China and Indonesia). Asian Millennials comprise approximately a quarter of Asia's total population, and they are key actors in areas such as travel and purchase habits. For example, Asian travellers are the least likely to use offline methods to book accommodation (TripBarometer 2015). Moreover, Millennials are very interested in travel: they travel more than any other generation, including Baby Boomers, and they are more likely to travel abroad than previous generations (e.g. see the *Canada Millennial Domestic Travel Summary Report* of the Canadian Tourism Commission Research Team or the *European Multi-Generational Travel Trends 2017* of Expedia Media Solution[1]).

Estimation of future tourism trends cannot ignore a generational perspective. In order to ensure strong future growth prospects for tourism (in Asia and beyond), the tourism industry must gain better understanding of the features and expectations of the Millennial generation.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first section analyses the triangulation among tourism, Millennials and the sharing economy, showing the importance of the generational perspective in the tourism sector. The second section discusses the features of Korean Millennials inside the Asian panorama. The third section presents the case of Seoul and the 'Sharing City, Seoul' project (SCS), which is boosting young social entrepreneurship also in the tourism market. The fourth section describes the so-called tourism 'sharing organizations' created as part of the SCS project. A discussion of the main results concludes the chapter.

11.2 Tourism, Millennials, Sharing Economy: A New Triangulation

11.2.1 The Generational Perspective in the Tourism Sector

The importance of the generational dimension in relation to the tourist experience is becoming clear within the world's scientific community (e.g. see Benckendorff et al. 2010; Ruspini et al. 2013; Ruspini and Bernardi forthcoming). According to

[1] Data are available here: https://www.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/2016-11/Programs_MillennialTravel_DomesticReport_EN.pdf; and here: https:/info.advertising.expedia.com/european-traveller-multi-generational-travel-trends (Accessed May 2017).

Mannheim (1952), generational location in history points to "certain definite modes of behaviour, feelings and thoughts" (Mannheim 1952 p. 291). Sharing the same sociohistorical experiences helps the development of similar core values (Cleaver et al. 2000), behaviours (Meredith and Schewe 1994; Schewe and Noble 2000) and consumption patterns, as demonstrated by many scholars (Muller 1991; Taylor and Keeter 2010). For this reason, a generational perspective can also be useful for understanding travel preferences and tourist behaviours, and it can be applied in order to determine how Millennials are orienting the travel market (Li et al. 2013). This issue becomes all the more important if we consider that Millennials are starting to dominate the workplace and to shape the future of organizations, as reported by the *Asia Travel Leader Summit Report 2014* (STB 2014).

The term 'Millennials' denotes a broad group of people whose birth years range from 1981 to 2000. The Millennial generation is not only large (around 1.8 billion young people across the globe); Millennials are also different in many ways from earlier generations. Even if it is not easy to define a whole generation, previous research highlights interesting trends (e.g. see Howe and Strauss 2000; Taylor and Keeter 2010; Rainer and Rainer 2011). In general, their main features have been synthesized with the so-called three Cs: *confident* (they believe in themselves, and they want to emerge), *connected* (they are digital natives and consider the Web an important tool to create awareness and coordinate communal actions and projects) and *open to change* (they seek and support changes) (Taylor and Keeter 2010; Benckendorff et al. 2010; Rainer and Rainer 2011). The economic and financial crisis of the last decade has deeply affected this generation and its lifestyle: they prefer to make sustainable choices, to support socially responsible brands and to live experiences instead of materiality, focusing on the production of shared values (Ruspini 2013; Ruspini and Bernardi forthcoming). These features impact also on the tourist dimension: Millennials travel more often, explore more destinations, spend more on travel, book more over the Internet, look for experiences and information, are intrepid travellers and try to gain as much as possible from their travel also in terms of cultural understanding (e.g. see Richards 2007). The *Millennial Traveller Report* of the Expedia-Future Foundation (2016) confirms these trends: Millennials want to personalise their travel, to be in connection with the environment that they visit and the people that they meet, to taste the local atmosphere and to shape their vacations and experiences through information collected directly from their peers, local people and travel platforms. Being the first digital generation, they make massive use of technology to organize the travel experience, from web surfing to travel booking; they look for a quick, easy and efficient online service. During the travel experience, they want to share every moment via social networks (ibid.); thus, they become themselves a source of travel information. Research indeed suggests that Millennials have a strong influence among non-Millennials with regard to consumer purchases (Santos et al. 2016).

For this reason, the key challenge for the contemporary tourist market is to pay attention to Millennials' features, values and desires, recognizing their potential contribution in terms of innovation and creativity (e.g. see Ruspini and Bernardi forthcoming).

11.2.2 A New Element in the Equation: The Sharing Economy

The relationship between Millennials and tourism is becoming increasingly important and evident due to the support given by the sharing economy. Described as a new social and economic paradigm based on access instead of ownership, the sharing economy, bred by 'tech savvy' in Silicon Valley (Clifford 2015), is changing the market approach (Sundararajan 2016). Rachel Bootsman (2013) defines it as 'the reinvention of traditional market behaviours, such as bartering, renting, trading and exchanging, through technology, enabling them to take place on a scale and in ways never possible before'.[2] ICTs are indeed making possible new solutions and alternative services based on peer-to-peer exchanges that are also impacting on the tourist market (OECD 2016). Before the takeoff of the sharing economy, there were standard hotels, taxis and tour operators; today, simply by using online platforms, every person can temporarily share with other people houses, spare rooms, cars and knowledge. As underlined by Samuel Nadler (2014), the sharing economy has expanded the overall supply of travel options. Through online platforms, it becomes possible:

- To cash in on dead capital, idling assets and latent expertise and thereby increase product diversity and fuel entrepreneurialism
- To access a wide range of services and solutions more affordable than the traditional tourism business, more flexible, more customizable, more authentic and connected with locals
- To increase trust and visitor satisfaction through tools such as peer-to-peer feedback, direct contact, interactive communication and transparency in transactions
- To respond to the contemporary tourism preferences that avoid impersonal and pre-packaged travel and want more authentic and local-based experiences (Dredge and Gyimóthy 2015)

These aspects show the evident connection between Millennials and the sharing economy. A number of studies (e.g. see PwC 2015; TNS Italia 2015) underline that Millennials are the main users of the sharing economy's services, the generation better able to benefit from the paradigm shift. They are confident in the use of online services and always connected; they use social networks and apps to communicate, to share experiences and to retrieve recommendations and information from fellow travellers and local hosts; they look for fast replies and easy-access services; they question private ownership, embracing online access to goods, services, knowledge, spaces and time; they look for sustainability and impact reduction; they seek authentic experiences outside the traditional tourist circuits. In this regard, the triangulation among Millennials, tourism and the sharing economy appears clear. Since they are both users and suppliers, they can innovate the tourism supply. Entrepreneurship is indeed one of the fields where young creativity and vitality has most to offer (Censis 2015), and the growing number of start-ups on the market demonstrates this.

[2] See https://www.fastcompany.com/3046119/defining-the-sharing-economy-what-is-collaborative-consumption-and-what-isnt.

11.3 An Overview of the Korean Millennials in the Asian Panorama

As reported by the *Asia Travel Leaders Summit Report 2015* (STB 2015), around 60% of the Millennials in the world reside in Asia (originating mainly from India, China and Indonesia).

In regard to South Korea, according to the 2015 Korean Census, Korean Millennials, aged 20–34, numbered 10 million (5.25 million men and 4.78 million women), 20% of the Korean population (Park H. 2016). They share the same basic features of all the other Millennials in the world, as described above (Benckendorff et al. 2010; Rainer and Rainer 2011), and especially the Asian ones, even if Asia is a heterogeneous region and we can detect some differences related to the segment of belonging (STB 2014). The *2014 Asia Travel Leaders Summit* identified five distinct segments related to the life stage and considered the younger segment, called the 'idealist' and 'want-it-all' one, more interested in meaningful work, and the older segment, the so-called money seekers or family focused or breadwinners, more interested in practical financial and lifestyle aspects. Other differences have a geographical basis. According to the *2015 Asia Travel Leaders Summit Report* (STB 2015), Asian Millennials differ by region and even more by country: Chinese are the largest spenders and prefer 'brand name destinations'; Indonesians look for budget airlines and cheap accommodations and are deal seekers, together with Singaporeans; Indians are big spenders in terms of flights and food but choose cheap accommodations (ibid.).

In general, Asian Millennials, included Koreans, and especially Indian and Chinese ones (Lee 2016), are leading the global consumer market: the CBRE Research (2016) reports that they tend to eat out more often, and they are more interested in travelling abroad than their Western counterparts. It should also be considered that Asia has the fastest-growing mobile phone market and that Asian Millennials spend 24 h a week on their phones (TNS 2015) equal to 48.5 days per year, interacting with content on social media platforms (46%), watching videos (42%) and shopping online (12%) (ibid.).

They are becoming a driver of growth in the tourism sector: the travel magazine TRBusiness, citing recent research by Counter Intelligence Retail (CiR) (Turner 2016), reveals that *Millennial* and *Asia* are the two keywords of the travel industry. According to the CiR research, a huge growth in international traffic is expected in key markets such as India, China, Malaysia, Thailand and South Korea. These forecasts are confirmed by the Agility Research & Strategy Centre in its report *Generation AAA* (affluent, aspirational and ambitious). The report surveyed 900 millennial respondents in China, India, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and South Korea, highlighting that 77% choose destinations where they can engage in new activities and experiences, 61% want a customized experience and only 38% prefer a packaged group-led tour (Mirza 2017).

Korean Millennials match this pattern. They are the result of a dynamically changing society (Park et al. 2010), from a socio-economic and political perspec-

tive, that meet the Internet spread and the globalization (ibid.). In the late 1980s, Korean society changed from an authoritarian and regulated system to open and deregulated economic, social and political systems (Lee 2008), creating new social, economic and also tourist opportunities. The main beneficiaries of this more liberal environment were the Millennials: cooperative team players, interested in diversity rather than homogeneity and in the quality of life (general well-being: financial security, job satisfaction, family life, health and safety) (Rogerson 1999; Nussbaum and Sen 2003; Nuvolati 2010) more than money and power (Seo 2003). They look for flexible travel arrangements and authentic local life experiences, and they want autonomy and power of control (STB 2015).

Nevertheless, despite these preconditions, the idea of an optimistic, entitled generation in South Korea is just a stereotype (Chong 2016). A 2014 survey by the Pew Research Centre (Parker 2015) revealed a generation pessimistic about the future. This pessimism had many causes: (1) the economic crisis that affected also South Korea, (2) the connected reduced employment opportunities that led to growing youth unemployment and housing insecurity, (3) the rapidly ageing society, (4) increasing poverty among the elderly and (5) an alarmingly low birth rate due primarily to the financial insecurity that discourages young people from starting a family (Kim and Park 2006; Chong 2016). Moreover, the Korean society is extremely competitive, and the strong social pressure on the Millennials (competition, high expectations) is generating a massive spread of stress-related pathologies (Kim et al. 2010; McDonald 2011).[3] However, one of the biggest problem for Korean Millennials seems to be the ageing society (Higo and Klassen 2015; Chong 2016): baby boomers are ageing, but they are still on the market[4] fuelling the increase in youth unemployment; moreover, young people are already facing higher taxes to finance the pensions of the upcoming mass retirement of baby boomers (Ibid.). For this reason, the Korean Millennials have been dubbed the 'give-up generation' referring to the many things that they are forced to relinquish (Cho and Stark 2017; Hwang 2011): dating/courtship, marriage, childbirth, employment and ownership, interpersonal relationships and hope.[5] The expression is often used by young people along with another satirical term, 'Hell Joseon',[6] to criticize the current Korean socio-economic situation, especially in terms of strong competition, pressure and hardships in the workplace (Cho and Stark 2017; Fifield 2016).

[3] The suicide rate is still among the highest in the world (Kim et al. 2006; OECD 2015a).

[4] The retirement age increased to 60 in 2017 from 55 in 2016 for both men and women (https://tradingeconomics.com/south-korea/retirement-age-men, accessed June 2017). Moreover, according to OECD data (OECD 2017), life expectancy at birth is rapidly increasing as well: 75,4 years for men and 82,1 for women (total population: 78,8) in 2006 and 79 years for men and 85,1 for women (total population: 82,1) in 2016.

[5] There are some connections with the US 'boomerang generation' whose members choose to live with their parents after previously living on their own and postpone marriage and family because of economic difficulties. The Korean 'give-up generation' is also comparable to the Japanese 'Satori generation' (Kelts 2014) and in Europe to the '1000 euros generation' in Italy (Incorvaia and Rimassa 2013) and the '700 euros generation' in Greece (Gouglas 2013).

[6] Joseon is the historical name for South Korea.

11.4 Seoul and the 'Sharing City, Seoul' Project

Seoul, the South Korean capital, is a megacity with more than 10 million citizens and 25 million people living in the metropolitan area.[7] Its economic development has been fast and disruptive. In less than 50 years, the so-called Miracle on the Han River (Fontanella Khan 2013) has transformed the city into a global economic power, generating a wave of rapid industrialization, urbanization and modernization, raising the education level and living standards and fostering strong technological development (Swanson 2009). Today Seoul is a hyper-technological hub (Digital Media City, Gangnam) with the highest average connection speed in the world[8] (Akamai 2017); nearly 99.2% of households have Internet access and eight of ten Koreans are connected (Statista 2017). Nevertheless, as briefly described in the previous section, large swathes of the population are in dire socio-economic straits. Particularly in Seoul, where more than 24% of South Korea's total population is concentrated,[9] the effects of economic crisis, unemployment and poverty are affecting people and especially young people and the elderly.

For this reason, in recent years, the SMG has sought to identify alternative solutions to respond to the main urban issues, mostly relying on social innovation (OECD 2015b; Bernardi and Diamantini 2016). In 2012, the Park Won-Soon administration identified the sharing economy as a possible lever to encourage local economic development, to reduce environmental impacts and to favour social cohesion. It launched the 'Sharing City, Seoul' (SCS) project involving citizens in many public consultations, promulgating ad hoc ordinances to manage the project[10] and creating special committees and divisions of experts on social innovation.[11] (Johnson 2014). The project pertains to the 'Smart Seoul' programme (Hwang and Choe 2013) and falls within the social economy frame (SMG 2016). In general, the SMG is strongly people-centred[12] and proposes many programmes to support young Koreans in finding alternative solutions in these times of economic, social and relational crisis (SMG 2017). The city administration's plans set some key objectives: to encourage creative young professionals in order to strengthen the economic foundations of the future, to explore and foster Seoul-style futuristic innovative jobs, to support young people's business incubation systematically and to create good and sustainable jobs based on sharing and collaboration (ibid.). With these aspirations,

[7] Data from the World Population Review 2017 'Seoul Population 2017'; available at the address: http://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/seoul-population/ (accessed June 2017).

[8] The average connection speed in Seoul is 28.6 Mbps, while the global average is 7 Mbps.

[9] Data from the World Population Review 2017 'Seoul Population 2017'.

[10] 'Seoul Metropolitan City Sharing Promotion Ordinance', 'Seoul Metropolitan Government Act for Promoting Sharing'.

[11] Social Innovation Division, ShareHub – online platform, Sharing Promotion Committee, Sharing Facilitation Committee, Sharing Economy Advisory Board. For more details see: Bernardi and Diamantini (2016).

[12] See slogans such as 'citizens are the mayor' and 'making Seoul a city for the citizens and by the citizens'.

dedicated spaces, like YouthHub and YouthZone, have been created (ShareHub 2015); they are urban laboratories, co-working spaces and hubs of innovation that connect young people with each other and with the administration and local businesses. The SCS project itself boosts young entrepreneurship; to date, the SMG has selected within the project 82 so-called 'sharing organizations' among both new start-ups and social enterprises already existing and working on social problems. They receive economic, logistic, administrative and marketing support, and they operate in different fields, sharing information/content, space, goods and objects, experience, time and talent. 43.3% of the 'sharing organizations' consist of people aged between 20 and 30 years old and 53.3% of people between 30 and 40 years old (ShareHub 2016), demonstrating the strong impact that the municipal project is having on young people. Also the users of these services are mainly young: 43.4% in their 20s, 53.3% in their 30s and 3.3% in their 40s (ibid.), confirming data reported by the main studies on the topic (PwC 2015; TNS Italia 2015). The SMG promotes the sharing economy among citizens through lectures, contexts, forums, fairs and festivals in order to socialize people into using the sharing services.[13] Moreover, it organizes training courses and classes for those who have sharing ideas and need help to develop them (e.g. Sharing Economy Start School, Sharing Economy Academia).[14]

Among the 'sharing organizations', also tourism-related services are emerging. Millennials, as seen above, are oriented towards tourism ICT-based solutions, and they are benefitting from the opportunities that the SCS project is giving them. They are aware that the tourism market has great potential and that it is booming; VisitKorea, the country's online tourist portal, talks of 17 million tourists in 2016[15] and of 561,000 jobs in the sector in 2015, 5.1% of the national GDP (Park H-K. 2016). According to some experts (Oh and Zhong 2016; Yu et al. 2011), in order to develop the tourism sector further and to improve competitiveness, it is necessary to diversify the tourist programmes offered, to improve infrastructures, to propose alternative travel experiences and to promote niche sectors such as medical tourism. Within the SCS project, the tourism-oriented 'sharing organizations' are following these guidelines, garnering broad support and positive results in the market. As we shall see, some of them have a business model similar to that of the big players of the sharing economy, mainly that of Airbnb.

11.5 Methodology

The research design uses a case study approach – that is, a nonstandard research design based on an in-depth study of few cases, with a substantive representativeness (Silverman 2013; Bryman 2004; Tusini 2006). Seven 'sharing organizations'

[13] Such as Book Reading Subway, Sharing Imagining workshop, Invigorating Sharing Economy, Sharing Seoul City Fair, etc.

[14] For more details, see http://english.sharehub.kr.

[15] See http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/AKR/FU_EN_15.jsp?cid=2470063.

were carefully selected because of their special tourism vocation inside the SCS project. These are *MyRealTrip*, *LetsPlayPlanet*, *BnBHero*, *Kozaza*, *Hanintel*, *HomeStayKorea* and *LaboKorea*.

The mixed-methods research design is divided into three steps:

1. A literature review about Asian Millennials and their relationship with the tourism market was performed. A number of issues were explored: the Korean socio-economic situation, the Korean Millennials' socio-economic conditions, the sharing economy and the sharing city. A number of online documents were analysed. The choice of using online documents was also prompted by the fact that consultants and experts of the sharing economy, such as Botsman, Rinne, Owyang and Gorenflo, discuss this issue especially through online magazines and websites.[16] In addition, being a great deal of information on the country's status and on the features of the Korean Millennials often available only in Korean, the use of international online magazines enabled us to obtain information that would otherwise have been unavailable.
2. Participant observation technique allowed us (1) to take part in public hearings organized by the SMG, (2) to test some of the sharing tourism services offered by the selected 'sharing organizations' and (3) to visit some 'youth spaces' in the city. Direct interaction and experience facilitate a more accurate collection of data (e.g. see Kawulich 2005).
3. The third research step can be divided into two phases:
   (a) Face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the key players of the SCS project were administered between June and July 2015 in order to meet (1) the founders and the staff of the 'sharing organizations' involved in the SCS project and to collect information about their business models, aspirations and market positioning and (2) some members of the Social Innovation Division and of the Sharing Economy Committee, local experts and managers of YouthHub and YouthZone.
   (b) Analysis of the seven 'sharing tourism organizations' through (1) a document analysis (institutional documents available from SMG, ShareHub and the companies itself); (2) face-to-face semi-structured interviews administered to the local sharing economy experts (Social Innovation Division, Sharing Economy Committee, YouthHub and YouthZone); and (3) face-to-face semi-structured interviews with three selected spokespersons of the 'sharing tourism organizations'. During the fieldwork, the services offered by *LetsPlayPlanet*, *Kozaza and MyRealTrip* were personally tested.

The following section describes the main characteristics of the seven 'sharing organizations' included in this study.

[16] See websites such as www.collaborativeconsumption.com; www.shareable.net; crowdcompanies.com.

11.6 Tourism Start-Ups Context Inside the 'Sharing City, Seoul' Project

In our case-based research, the seven 'sharing organizations' with tourism vocation – selected within the SCS project – were divided into two preliminarily groups: on the one hand, new start-ups created as part of the project; on the other hand, social enterprises already active before the SCS project but which were selected and included in the project.

The following start-ups belong in the first group:

MyRealTrip Co-founded in 2012 by two Korea University (KU) graduates, Lee Dong Gun and Baek Min Seo, *My Real Trip* is a start-up business firm based on the sharing economy. It was born from the desire of the two founders to offer a more personal experience by employing guides with intimate knowledge of the travel destination, and today it provides customized guided trips. In particular, it offers 'niche tours' in local experiences guided by Koreans who are local residents in the foreign country and simply share their own knowledge. The guides, rigorously selected, can be amateur or professional and offer programmes based on their passions, interests and knowledge through the platform and directly connect with potential travellers. As underlined by Lee 'a big change in the travel industry is that guides are gaining their own reputations; in this way the guides become a brand of their own'. He stressed the importance of relations. Indeed, even if 'the transaction itself is processed online, two economic agents interact with each other off-line', the relationship continues after the transaction and sometimes also after the travel. *MyRealTrip* is achieving great success, which has increased, thanks to its inclusion in the SCS project: since its launch, around 18,000 people have travelled in its network of 218 cities all around the world. Today it aspires to becoming one of the main global platforms of guided tours and personalized experiences and plans to create a service for foreigners to travel conveniently in Korea. Recently, in order to diversify its offer, it has launched a partnership with *HotelsCombined*, a global platform for hotel hospitality, to offer price comparisons in its cities' network. In addition, it has just launched a new Chinese platform 'AiyouHanguo' based on Chinese travellers' three main travel purposes in Korea, offering three themes: 'Korean traditional culture' (contemporary and historical sites), 'Korean wave trip' (TV and K-Pop broadcasting sites) and 'Seoul fashion & trends' (shopping spots and must-visit restaurants).

LetsPlayPlanet It was launched in 2012 by the 27-year-old Sun Mi Seo, previously the co-founder of *Traveller's Map*, the first Korean social enterprise in the tourist industry. As underlined during the interview, through *Traveller's Map*, Sun Mi Seo experienced the importance of being connected with locals to live authentic experiences, and she wanted to give this opportunity to all travellers. The idea at the basis of *LetsPlayPlanet* is indeed to connect travellers with local hosts, generating social impact. The motto of the platform is *Travel with Locals and Play for Social Change*. Every traveller can become a change-maker while travelling, having the opportunity to experience an authentic journey, supporting the local economy, starting new friendships and becoming aware of the local context. Today the platform is active in

Korea, Japan, Indonesia, Malesia, Philippines and Nepal, with an expanding community that gathers responsible travellers interested in care of the planet. Inclusion in the SCS project has favoured its visibility, and today it can be considered a successful tourism marketplace.

BnBHero It operates in cooperation with the Seoul Tourism Organization, the Korea Tourism Organization and the SMG. It was launched in 2012, and it works with the same business model as AirBnb, but it originated and is based in Korea. It is a community marketplace where property owners list their properties on the platform for rental. The platform charges a fee (around 6–10%) for the matching service on every reservation booked. Host and guest can communicate through the platform to arrange the stay, and the payment can be made only on the platform. The team is composed of seven members aged between 20 and 40 years old who believe in collaborative consumption and dream of travelling around the world at leisure. The founders decided to create the platform following the AirBnb model to offer the same service but on local bases and to intercept the interests of Asian travellers. As AirBnb does with 'experiences' in order to diversify its offer, so BnBHero is now offering 'Tour services' divided into 'Tickets', 'Transportation (Shuttles)', 'Tour programs' and 'Sim card and others'. It is also incorporating local travel-focused websites and blogs as partners to expand its network and to offer a single 'container' for the accommodation service.

Kozaza This platform proposes the same business model as AirBnb. It is an online hospitality marketplace founded by an over 50-year-old trained in the Silicon Valley who in 2012 created a staff of enthusiastic under 30-year-old to offer the best housing solutions to tourists. The distinctive feature of this start-up is the possibility for tourists to be hosted in traditional Korean houses, the *Hanok*. As stressed during the interviews, this service makes it possible to have authentic local-based cultural experiences. *Kozaza* proposes a variety of themed *Hanok* stays in Seoul's Bukchon Hanok Village and Jeonju's Hanok Village. Recently many *Hanok* have been refurbished and renovated, and today they also offer additional opportunities to taste and experience local life of the past (i.e. tea ceremony, pottery classes, traditional music classes). In 2013, *Kozaza* was designated a sharing company by SMG; and with the partnership of local governments, it is bringing a new accommodation culture in Korea for foreign visitors. Both BnBHero and Kozaza are growing rapidly in the market, especially thanks to the SCS project, and today they can be considered real competitors of AirBnb, reflecting the will of the SMG to preserve the market from 'cannibalization' by the sharing economy's big players (Gorenflo 2014; Hong 2015; Bernardi 2015).

The following start-ups belong in the second group:

Hanintel This is a platform founded in 2009 by the young Matt Lee and Kevin Oh. It is based on the idea of connecting South Korean travellers with compatriots overseas who can offer accommodation. In this case, the impact of the SCS project is not limited to South Korea, and there is an evident dimension of peer-to-peer help offered by the platform to young South Korean travellers. The main aim of the ser-

vice is to facilitate the travel of those who want to be independent but are afraid of or have difficulties in doing so. The help of a South Korean person living in the place of travel can make a significant difference, primarily in terms of accommodation but also in terms of suggestions and tips for the visit and the transport. Sometimes the host acts also as a local guide, making everything easier for the travellers. At the same time, the platform gives Korean emigrants the chance to earn some extra money. The services offered meet a twofold need: on the one hand, they help emigrants; on the other, they help Korean travellers overcome language and cultural barriers. Hanintel today lists over 4000 rooms in 58 cities, including Seoul, Tokyo, New York, Paris, London, Singapore, Hong Kong, Rome, Sydney and Shanghai.

LaboKorea This sharing company is a youth organization with a long story that started in 1973. It can be considered an atypical 'sharing organization' because it was not born within the SCS project and it is not managed by Millennials but addressed to Millennials. Labo stands for 'Language Laboratory', and its members are host families for overseas students. All the programmes are designed to provide cultural experiences while learning the local language; many regional events are also offered, as well as the Home Stay Program (exchanges for non-Korean students interested in spending the summer holidays in Korea to study the language and experience Korean culture). The company was included in the SCS project since its main goal is to connect foreign cultures with the Korean environment by sharing local knowledge and favouring multicultural exchange.

HomeStayKorea This is part of the international *HomeStayKorea* network. Like *LaboKorea*, it is not a new start-up but a company with a long tradition in connecting foreigners with Korean families and local communities. Its main strength is enabling foreigners to experience and understand Korean culture by living in a Korean home with a Korean family. Both host and guest can benefit from this service: the host can experience a foreign culture and learn basic expressions in another language without going abroad. Moreover, apart from conversation and sharing of Korean culture, the host can also suggest tourist attractions or offer guided tours. Hosts and guests often keep in touch after the stay, confirming the ability of these platforms to create new relationships. The organization has been included in the SCS project because it promotes intercultural exchange and sharing and because it favours the spread of Korean culture by using the Internet to ease the connection process. Its staff does not mainly consist of Millennials: the users are primarily young travellers and young foreign students.

11.7 Discussion

The seven 'sharing organizations' can be divided into already existing organizations and companies belonging to the SCS project. They can be further divided into companies managed or founded by Millennials and organizations mainly addressed to Millennials and Z Generation users (where the founder does not belong to the Millennial generation).

MyRealTrip, *LetsPlayPlanet*, *BnBHero*, *Kozaza and Hanintel* were founded and are managed by Millennials. This group shares common features: (1) the Millennials' ability to understand the needs and desires of their peers and, in general, of contemporary tourism challenges; (2) the use of ICTs and the Internet to create new businesses and to offer attractive solutions; and (3) the ability to adopt sharing economy tools to offer affordable, customisable and flexible alternative travel opportunities.

LaboKorea and *HomeStayKorea* are not managed by Millennials; they are primarily addressed to Generation Zed and Millennial users. Generally speaking, the main users of these platforms are Millennials. This finding is consistent with other studies that identify Millennials as the core target of sharing tourism platforms. As stated by *Capturing the Asian Millennial Traveller* report (STB 2015), 78% of the Korean Millennials interviewed used online sources and platforms to get information, and 79% shared their experiences via social networks, travel review websites and blogs. The users were principally Asian, since the platforms, even if operating at an international level, are most known in the Asian region.

We can draw a further subdivision taking into account the types of service delivered:

- *Customized guided experiences*: *MyRealTrip* and *LetsPlayPlanet* provide information on tourist destinations by linking tourists with a local guide.
- *Alternative hospitality solutions*: *BnBHero* and *Kozaza* provide liaison for renting empty rooms to foreign tourists.
- *Connection among Koreans plus alternative hospitality solutions*: *Hanintel* connects travellers with local residents; Koreans living abroad can help Korean travellers in terms of accommodation, suggestions and tours.
- *Culture and language experiences plus alternative hospitality solutions*: *LaboKorea* and *HomeStayKorea* connect young foreigners with Korean families offering home stays and the sharing of cultural experiences.

These four groups of services match the travel needs expressed by the Millennial traveller:

- *Connectivity and sharing*: the use of the Internet and online services to easily and efficiently manage and organize the travel. Millennials rely on technology, mobile device, social media and e-travel solutions, and they look for travel information collaborating with peers online.
- *Authentic experience*: Millennials desire to make authentic, customized and non-standard experiences outside the mainstream circuits.

– *Interaction*: Millennials are searching for authentic, local experiences, appreciating the genuine Korean environment and supporting the local economy.
– *Smart consumption*: Millennials consume less and travel more; they prefer to share rather than own good and services and choose eco-friendly brands and organizations.

Table 11.1 summarizes the main features identified for every 'sharing organization'.

11.8 Conclusions

The chapter offers insights into the connection between Millennials and tourism, confirming the importance of adopting a generational perspective in the definition of tourism's future. From a theoretical standpoint, the findings of this study provide direction for future research.

The Millennial generation is recognized as the fastest-growing group of tourism users in many world areas (Ruspini and Melotti 2016). Yet, despite the importance of this generation for the travel industry, it is also under-investigated. There has been little research on the trends and changes that the Millennial generation is bringing to the tourism industry on both the demand and the supply side.

On the one hand, the recurrent economic and financial crisis has deeply affected this generation and its lifestyle. Yet Millennials seem to be highly resilient: they are increasingly price-sensitive and attentive to shared-economy activities (Ruspini and Bernardi forthcoming). On the other hand, Millennials are the true influencers of creative tourism: they are drivers of innovations in tourism by mixing creativity and technology in order to build and offer experiences that are unique, authentic and multisensorial.

The analysis of the start-ups presented in this chapter confirms these tendencies. Though they are suffering economic crisis and hardships (Lim and Grant 2014; Parker 2015; Moon et al. 2016), Korean Millennials are proving to be responsive and aware of the Internet and market potentialities.

Korean Millennials are engaged in the tourism market from two points of view: (1) with their travel preferences, they act as service promoters and entrepreneurs creating new business models able to provide travel service suited to contemporary tourists, and (2) they know very well habits, desires and expectations of their peers and how to take advantage of the Internet and the sharing economy's tools to respond to emerging needs.

As underlined by a number of scholars (Barton et al. 2012; Jordan 2016; Nielsen 2017), the tourist companies should understand the Millennials' characteristics and values if they want to offer products and services able to meet their specific needs.

The 'sharing companies' of Seoul are good practice examples. One striking feature is the support offered by the SMG: the SCS project is fostering the spirit of entrepreneurship among young people and fuelling their creativity, also in the tour-

Table 11.1 Sharing organizations' features

	Sharing typology	Origin	Staff	Users	Authentic experiences	Creation of relations	Economic gain for hosts/ guides	Diversification and partnership
MyRealTrip	Provides information on tourist destinations by linking tourists with a local guide	New start-up	Millennials	Mainly Millennials	X	X	X	X
LetsPlayPlanet	Provides information on tourist destinations by linking tourists with a local guide	New start-up	Millennials	Mainly Millennials	X	X	X	–
BnBHero	Liaison for renting empty rooms to foreign tourists	New start-up	Millennials	Mainly Millennials	X	X	X	X
Kozaza	Liaison for renting empty rooms to foreign tourists	New start-up	Millennials	Mainly Millennials	X	X	X	X
Hanintel	Connection among Koreans abroad and liaison for renting empty rooms to Korean tourists travelling abroad	Pre-existing	Millennials	Mainly Millennials	X	X	X	–
HomeStayKorea	Culture and language sharing experiences and liaison between foreign young tourists and Korean families for home stay	Pre-existing	Baby Boomers	Z generation and Millennials	X	X	X	–
LaboKorea	Culture and language sharing experiences and liaison between foreign young tourists and Korean families for home stay	Pre-existing	Baby boomers	Z generation and Millennials	X	X	X	–

ism market, generating new opportunities for the creation of start-ups and social businesses. The research has revealed the growth of the 'sharing companies' in terms of visibility, users and success, thanks to their inclusion in the SCS project. If, on the one hand, we detected a significant resilience among the Korean Millennials, on the other hand, we should underline the governmental support that appears to be particularly interesting precisely because of its efficacious top-down support (OECD 2015b).

We conclude by raising some limitations. The exploratory case study is a first attempt to frame the Korean case in terms of tourism and generations. Further analysis is thus needed, aimed at improving the exploratory case study design. A second critical point has to do with the fact that the number of Korean start-ups with a tourism vocation is limited (7 out of 82): this limitation heavily reduced the sample size and the number of interviews. In addition, since the SMG has activated several programmes to promote young entrepreneurialism, it would be appropriate to monitor the development of new tourist sharing enterprises.

As a final consideration, we would stress the need to strengthen research efforts on Millennials and tourism in the Asian continent. As said above, 'Millennials' and 'Asia' are the two most cited keywords of the current and future travel industry (Lee 2016): comparative research between Asian countries is therefore needed.

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Part IV
Marketing Asian Destinations and Experiences

Chapter 12
Creating the City Destination of the Future: The Case of Smart Seoul

Ulrike Gretzel, Juyeon Ham, and Chulmo Koo

Abstract Smart tourism development has become a major focus for many destinations across the world, and particularly in Asia, as it promises competitive advantages by increasing efficiency, fostering sustainability, and enhancing tourism experiences. However, smart tourism development is complex and many destinations are struggling to successfully implement it. This chapter describes various smart tourism initiatives under way in Seoul to illustrate the many layers of smart tourism development and establish the destination as one of the leaders in smart tourism.

Keywords Smart city · Destination management · Internet of Things (IoT) · Mobile technology · Enhanced tourism experience

12.1 Introduction

Smart tourism has spurred tremendous enthusiasm in industry practitioners, government officials, and academics around the world, but particularly in Asia (Wang et al. 2013). Smart tourism promises competitive advantages for tourism destinations in the short run, as well as long-term gains with respect to greater destination management capabilities and competitive advantages (Koo et al. 2016; Boes et al. 2016). For many Asian city destinations, smart tourism has consequently become a strategic goal to be achieved through long-term planning, holistic destination management, and considerable investments in smart tourism infrastructure. Focusing on the destination management aspect, smart tourism has been defined as:

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> tourism supported by integrated efforts at a destination to collect and aggregate data derived from physical infrastructure, social connections, government/organizational sources and human bodies/minds in combination with the use of advanced technologies to transform that data into on-site experiences and business value-propositions with a clear focus on efficiency, sustainability and experience enrichment. (Gretzel et al. 2015a:181)

The ultimate goal of smart tourism initiatives is to develop smart destinations, which are special cases of smart cities. Smart destinations are geographic areas of touristic value in which a variety of smart technologies are implemented to orchestrate and support value creation and exchange among the various actors within the tourism system. The smart tourist forms the center of attention. A smart tourist can be defined as a tourist who benefits from smart tourism by utilizing various information technologies available at a smart tourist destination. Also focusing on the smart tourist and his/her experience, Lopez de Avila (2015) stresses that smart destinations are built on an infrastructure of state-of-the-art technology, which facilitates the visitor's interaction with and integration into his/her surroundings, thus increasing the quality of the experience at the destination. The current literature stresses that smart destination management is needed to implement smart tourism, and enhanced information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure is critical in supporting destinations' efforts to (co-)create the superior tourism experiences promised by the smart tourism paradigm (Boes et al. 2015; Neuhofer et al. 2015; Wang et al. 2013). Management of the technological infrastructure of a destination is usually not seen as a core competence and activity of destination marketing organizations (Morrison 2013), but it is essential for successful smart tourism development.

Following a more detailed conceptualization of smart tourism in the Background section, this chapter explores Seoul, the capital of South Korea, as a smart tourism destination. The analysis is based on a case study methodology as case studies allow for the exploration of contemporary, dynamic phenomena and the real-life contexts in which they are embedded (Yin 2013). Specifically, the case study is descriptive and focused on a single case as Seoul is one of the most advanced smart tourism destinations in the world and can therefore provide important insights for other Asian destinations seeking to implement smart tourism principles. Case studies use multiple sources of evidence. This specific study relied on news, organizational documents, personal correspondence over email with the Seoul Tourism Organization, and participant observation to paint a detailed picture of the many initiatives that together form the basis of smart tourism development in the Seoul metropolitan area.

In particular, the case study "Smart Seoul" highlights six perspectives to illustrate opportunities and challenges encountered when developing and managing smart tourism destinations. In the first part, the case study introduces Seoul as a city and tourist destination, demonstrating its touristic value and smart tourism potential as well as needs. In the second part, smart tourism management in Seoul is discussed to shed light on roles and responsibilities in smart tourism development. The third part explains the smart tourism infrastructure of the city. The fourth part focuses on general smart technology initiatives. In the fifth part, programs specifi-

cally related to smart tourism are presented. The sixth part introduces Seoul's focus on the IoT (Internet of Things) for developing smart tourism.

The chapter ends with a Conclusion section that summarizes the case study and provides general implications for smart tourism development and management in Asia. It also emphasizes once more the growing importance of smart tourism and the need but also unique position of Asian destinations to successfully implement smart tourism initiatives.

12.2 Background

It is important to conceptualize smart tourism as there is still a lot of confusion over, as well as overuse of, the smart tourism concept in academic literature and industry practice (Li et al. 2017). Smart technologies form the foundation of smart tourism. Derzko (2006) describes smart technologies as those that sense, adapt, learn, infer, predict, and self-organize. Prominent examples of such technologies are sensors, beacons, smart meters, near-field communication (NFC), and context-aware mobile applications. However, it is not a single smart technology but rather a digital ecosystem (Gretzel et al. 2015b) that is needed to support smart tourism development. Li et al. (2017) also stress that an all-encompassing technological infrastructure is fundamental to smart tourism. Importantly, in contrast to e-tourism, this digital ecosystem is at least to some extent integrated with the physical infrastructure of the destination. This means that actual things can collect, send, and/or receive information and therefore become smart. Consequently, the so-called Internet-of-Things (IoT) is a central idea driving the conceptualization and implementation of smart tourism.

Zanella et al. (2014) define the IoT as a communication paradigm that envisions that objects of everyday life will be equipped with technology that will make them able to communicate with one another and with their users. In the context of smart cities, and consequently also smart destinations, the objects integrated into the IoT are buildings, transportation infrastructure (e.g., traffic lights, busses and trains, etc.), and energy grids. In the case of smart destinations, specific touristic infrastructure such as heritage structures might also be included. The IoT is facilitated by several technologies such as sensors and Internet connectivity. Mobile applications, context-aware systems, smart displays, and recommender systems are also important for smart tourism as they enable enhanced experiences for tourists (Neuhofer et al. 2015). Further, technology that supports the collection, storage, and retrieval of data is central to smart tourism; yet, it is not really talked about in the smart tourism literature. Zhang et al. (2012) identify cloud computing as a core technology in this context. Jovicic (2017) also mentions cloud computing as an essential aspect of smart tourism destinations in line with Schaffers et al. (2011)'s vision of the smart city as a cloud-based and fully connected city.

A pure technological perspective on smart tourism, however, is not enough in order to successfully implement it. Figure 12.1 presents a schematic understanding

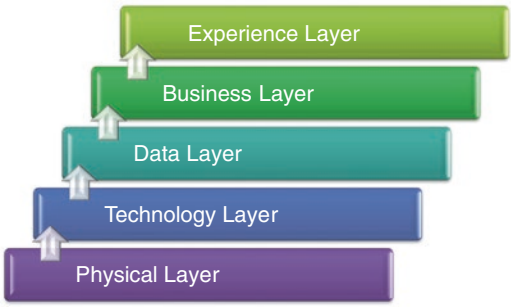

Fig. 12.1 Conceptual layers of smart tourism

of smart tourism as requiring the development and management of different layers of smart tourism infrastructure. It further illustrates that bottom layers provide critical support for subsequent layers. By embedding smart technology into the physical layer of the destination, the virtual and the real can be bridged. The physical layer enables the technology layer to execute diverse functions and broaden its application areas. Importantly, what this physically embedded smart technology infrastructure does is feed into the data layer of the smart destination. The data layer allows for the combination of different kinds of data to spur innovation and enable the creation and operation of a digital business ecosystem (referred to as the business layer in Fig. 12.1). Prominent examples that represent the data layer are the tourism observatories many countries and regions are currently establishing (e.g., European Commission 2017). The services and applications created by the business layer using smart tourism data enable touristic experience enhancement and sustainability goals. This experience layer therefore refers to tourist, host, and resident experiences. The role of smart destination management then is to lobby and maybe even partly sponsor the development of smart tourism infrastructure, to curate and manage smart tourism data, to facilitate development and uptake of smart tourism-related applications within the digital business ecosystem, to support tourists in learning about and consuming smart tourism experiences, and, finally, to link smart tourism with overall quality of life and sustainability development goals.

While a core focus of smart tourism is the in-destination experience, this is conceptually not the limit of smart tourism as smart technology can also be embedded, e.g., in billboards, at tourist origins, and in the transportation infrastructure that brings tourists to the destination, or can pertain to insights and innovation derived from smart tourism data collected at the destination that is applied to marketing initiatives or recommender systems to which tourists are exposed before their arrival. It is also easy to envision a future where smart destinations will deliver offerings that help extend the smart experience in the post-visit phase.

12.3 Smart Seoul

12.3.1 Seoul as a City and Tourism Destination

One of the most advanced destinations in terms of smart tourism development in Asia is the city of Seoul in South Korea. It therefore serves as an interesting case study for analyzing important aspects of smart destination management.

Seoul is a historic city that traces its establishment back to 18 BCE. Since the establishment of the Joseon Dynasty in 1392, it has remained the capital of Korea, and later South Korea, after the Korean War. It is situated on the Han River in the northwest of South Korea. With over 10 million inhabitants, it is one of the world's largest and most densely populated cities (New World Encyclopedia 2017). Despite having been through numerous invasions, colonization, and the devastating Korean War, it has rebuilt itself into a leading and rising global metropolis with the fourth largest metropolitan economy (Parilla et al. 2015) and is home to leading global companies like Samsung, LG, and Hyundai-Kia. Its economic importance and especially its role in producing advanced technologies form the basis of its reputation.

National Geographic (2017) calls it a "city of contrasts," with modern skyscrapers next to ancient palaces and urban landscapes against the backdrop of granite mountains (Fig. 12.2). Traditional cuisine mixes with Korean pop culture and fast-paced business with Buddhism and Korean spas. It is against this background that Seoul has to be understood as a tourism destination.

Fig. 12.2 City of contrasts (Source: http://photos.miceseoul.com/downloads/deoksugung-palace)

According to National Geographic's City Guide (2017), Seoul is one of the most exciting but least visited city destinations in Asia. Nevertheless, while South Korea's tourism overall continues to be dominated by domestic tourism (OECD 2016), Seoul has been able to grow tremendously as an international destination in the last few years. The number of foreign tourists that visited Seoul in 2016 was 13.5 million, which was the highest ever recorded for the city (Korea Times 2017). Among these 13.5 million foreign visitors, 46.8% came from China. The average travel expenditure of foreign tourists visiting Seoul is 1,840,000 won, of which, on average, 57.6% (1,060,000 won) is used for shopping expenses (Focus News 2016). However, Chinese tourists spend an average of 2.13 million won on shopping, more than six times that of Japanese tourists. The South Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (2013) reports that, in 2012, more than 50% of all Chinese, Taiwanese, and Hong Kong tourists to South Korea indicated that shopping was the main reason of their trip.

The top attractions and activities in Seoul are also dominated by shopping attractions and comprise of (1) Dongdaemun Market, (2) Myeong-dong shopping mall, (3) Gyeongbokgung Palace, (4) N Seoul Tower, (5) Insadong food and shopping district, (6) Namdaemun Market, (7) Seoul City Wall, (8) Dongdaemun Design Plaza, (9) Hongdae art and music district, and (10) Cheonggyecheon River (VisitSeoul.net 2017). Importantly, Seoul is the mecca of Korean pop culture (K-pop) and therefore the center of Korean Wave (Hallyu) tourism (Kim et al. 2009). Kim and Nam (2016: 525) define Hallyu tourism as tourism induced by the desire to consume products and/or locations associated with "Korean-generated popular cultural products that are popular throughout Asia and beyond." Seoul is also a major medical tourism destination with an extensive infrastructure of specialized clinics and hotels (Woo and Schwartz 2014). VisitMedicalKorea.com (2017) reports that Seoul accounts for 58.1% of all foreign patients in Korea and that medical tourism in the city experienced a 25% growth in 2014. Not surprisingly, because of its importance as an industrial center in Asia, Seoul is also a major MICE tourism destination (Kim et al. 2015). In fact, it brands itself as "A World Top 3 Convention City." Seoul has successfully hosted MICE industry mega events such as the Asian Games in 1986, the Seoul Olympic Games in 1988, and the Soccer World Cup in 2002 and is planning to expand the MICE industry in the future. How important MICE is to its tourism industry is evident by the Seoul Metropolitan Government's MICE initiative aimed at building a 1.66 million square meter (410 acre) convention hub that connects the COEX Convention and Exhibition Center to the Hyundai Global Business Center, scheduled to be constructed in Samseong-dong, as well as its Seoul Sports Complex plan for the Songpa District (Korea JoongAng Daily 2016).

It is also worth noting that the tourism infrastructure in Seoul is well developed. At the end of 2016, there were 348 official hotel properties listed, representing a variety of accommodation types in terms of star level and ranging from boutique hotels to business hotels to major international chains such as InterContinental

Hotel Group, Marriott International, and Hilton Hotels. Together they offer 46,947 rooms (MiceSoul.com 2017). Guesthouses are also found throughout the destination, and sharing economy-based accommodations, such as those offered by Airbnb, have been widely embraced by the city.

In summary, Seoul is a technology-affine city with a great need to make its touristic potential more accessible to visitors. The attractions and accommodations are dispersed throughout the city, and the types of visitors the city attracts have high and distinct information needs that not only relate to tourism products but also transportation, food, translation services, etc. (Pyo 2005). Seoul's incoming tourist markets are also likely to be smart technology users; for instance, Korean domestic travelers are heavy smartphone users (Lyu and Hwang 2015), international K-pop fans have been found to be active social media users and influenced in their travel decisions by consumer-generated contents (Oh et al. 2015), and the fast-growing market of young Chinese travelers has been portrayed as relying heavily on smart technology when traveling (O'Regan and Chang 2015). Further, MICE and medical travelers venture beyond the regular touristic infrastructure and often have extended or repeated stays, which increases their likelihood to take advantage of smart tourism offerings. As such, smart tourism is in many ways a natural fit for Seoul.

12.3.2 Smart Tourism Management in Seoul

Caragliu et al. (2011) describe smart governance as one of the pillars of smart cities. In the case of smart tourism destinations, this smart governance role is typically taken on by the existing destination management organizations, and this is definitely the case in Seoul. On a national level, destination management in South Korea lies in the hands of the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO), which was established in 1962. It implements the tourism policy directed by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (Kim and Nam 2016). At the city level, the destination is managed by a local destination management organization. The Seoul Tourism Organization (STO) is a public organization under the Seoul Metropolitan Government that is tasked with marketing the city, enhancing the Seoul brand, and developing the city's tourism industry. Although the STO and KTO are two entirely separate entities, they work together in numerous ways when applicable, such as by co-developing tourism offerings, co-hosting and participating together at major international travel shows and exhibitions, as well as co-supporting the bidding and hosting of major international events. Naturally, they also collaborate in the design and implementation of smart tourism initiatives. The STO also joins forces with other city and regional tourism organizations on a regular basis, e.g., recently with the Gangwon Convention Bureau, to develop new tour programs that will draw interest and visitors to both areas. However, no evidence of inter-city/interregional smart tourism initiatives was found.

12.3.3 Seoul's Smart Tourism Infrastructure

As explained in the background section, the technical infrastructure integrated in the physical infrastructure of the destination forms the basis of all other smart tourism layers. In this context of technical infrastructure, WiFi plays a particularly important role. It makes it possible for smart technology to communicate with other technology and, most importantly, facilitates interactions with smart tourism end users who rely on their mobile devices as access points to smart tourism contents. Smart tourists do not want to have to rely on mobile phone networks and potentially pay high roaming rates or might be limited by restrictive data plans.

Seoul's long-standing technology affinity has served the city well in terms of building the foundations of a smart tourism infrastructure early on. Seoul has been successful in using broadband Internet since the late 1990s. Seoul has topped the UN-supported Rutgers Global E-Governance Survey since 2003 (E-Governance Institute 2017). The report indicates that Seoul has the highest Internet competitiveness in terms of broadband Internet penetration, mobile service usage, level of online services, and several other e-governance categories. Seoul has been consistently named the world's most wired city and has been recognized for offering some of the fastest Internet speeds (Wired Magazine 2002; TechRepublic 2015). 4G LTE (mobile wireless broadband 10 times faster than 3G) is available throughout the city and within the subway system, which also provides WiFi and DMB (digital multimedia broadcasting, a digital radio transmission technology developed in South Korea for sending multimedia contents such as TV to mobile devices). Figure 12.3 shows the ubiquitous Seoul free WiFi symbol displayed in the Seoul Subway.

Fig. 12.3 WiFi availability in the subway in Seoul (Source: Photo taken by author)

Fig. 12.4 Availability of WiFi in Seoul (Source: Screenshot taken by author from interactive map available at http://wifi.seoul.go.kr)

WiFi is readily available in most parts of Seoul (see Fig. 12.4 for an illustration of how ubiquitous and almost seamless WiFi access is in Seoul), and the city is making a push to feature free WiFi in all of the city's public spaces by the end of 2017 (Ubergizmo.com 2016). The Seoul Metropolitan Government also provides WiFi location information installed in Seoul as open data (Seoul Open Data Plaza 2017).

Del Chiappa and Baggio (2015) describe the smart tourism destination as a knowledge-based destination that makes information available to all stakeholders in a systematic and efficient way. Open data initiatives are one way in which this can be achieved. Indeed, open data is seen as essential for smart city development and governance (Meijer and Bolívar 2016). Open Knowledge International (2017) defines open data as data that can be "freely accessed, used, modified and shared by anyone for any purpose – subject only, at most, to requirements to provide attribution and/or share-alike" (n.p.). To achieve this, data must be both legally and technically open. This open data provides an important resource for the smart tourism business community seeking to develop new smart tourism mobile applications and engage in other innovation-focused activities. Schaffers et al. (2011) identify open innovation as a key priority for smart development. Egger et al. (2016)'s book on "Open Tourism" further illustrates the many possibilities open data and open innovation provide to tourism destinations.

Smart tourism in Seoul can draw on national, metropolitan, and tourism-specific open data. On the national level, the open data portal of Korea (http://www.data.go.kr) provides national core data across 36 different domains which is made

available to the private sector for commercial exploitation. As of February 24, 2017, the portal listed 276 tourism apps and websites around Korea that were developed using the open data provided by the Korean government; 31 of them provided tourist information specifically related to Seoul. The Seoul Metropolitan Government itself operates a city-level open data portal focused on providing datasets related to Seoul (http://data.seoul.go.kr). The portal provides not only the datasets but also use cases, usage statistics, user guides, opportunities to request open data, and services such as data visualization and open API developer communities. Open data is also provided by the KTO and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. Korea.net (2017) reports that some 125 different businesses and organizations have thrived in recent years thanks to the tourism-specific open data provided by these organizations. A concrete example is SNBSOFT, a firm that uses geospatial open data sourced from the KTO to provide multilingual maps. Together, these various open data initiatives clearly demonstrate Seoul's progress in developing the smart data layer necessary to support innovation in the smart tourism business ecosystem (Gretzel et al. 2015b).

12.3.4 Smart Technology-Related Initiatives in Seoul

Like many other smart tourism destinations, Seoul can build on general smart city developments to support its smart tourism programs. Many of the already successfully implemented initiatives are focused on transportation. While they are mostly put in place for residents, they also offer valuable services to tourists visiting Seoul. Several mobile applications are available that show not only information about public transportation stops and routes to indicate in how many minutes the next bus or subway will come but also provide real-time traffic updates (see Fig. 12.5

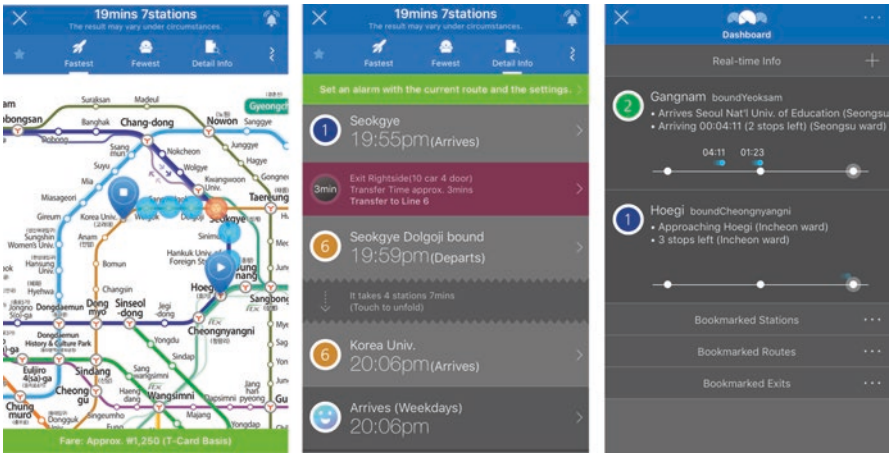

Fig. 12.5 Real-time tracking of public transport (Source: Screenshot taken by author)

Fig. 12.6 Public bike-sharing system "Ttareungi" (Source: Photo taken by author)

and also http://topis.seoul.go.kr/). This real-time tracking is also made available for viewing through displays at subway stations and bus stops.

Another prominent example is the "Ttareungi" system (i.e., Korean horn sound of a bicycle), which launched a public bike-sharing system (Yun 2016). Various bike-sharing sites have been set up around the city. Anyone with the bike-sharing mobile app can find the nearest public bike rental site to pick up a bicycle to use and later return at another rental site. The bicycles are equipped with smart technology, and users can easily unlock them via the corresponding mobile app (Fig. 12.6). The Seoul Metropolitan Government further operates the "Seoul in my hand" platform (http://mediahub.seoul.go.kr), a digital media hub for Seoul citizens. It aims to become a "digital playground" that allows citizens to experience, create, share, and enjoy Seoul-related stories. "Seoul in my hand" offers a participation and interaction space where citizens can upload various types of contents such as articles, photographs, videos, and webtoons. Through "Seoul in my hand," citizens can further see municipal information at a glance and communicate with the Seoul Metropolitan Government. Having all this engaging content about the city available online will also benefit tourists who are looking for authentic city experiences.

12.3.5 Smart Tourism Programs

In addition to the myriad of mobile app development projects in Seoul, there are a number of smart tourism-specific programs that are worth pointing out as they illustrate the city's efforts to foster smart tourism development and ultimately create

superior technology-enhanced experiences for its visitors. One example of a tourism-specific smart city initiative is the Discover Seoul Pass (http://discoverseoulpass.com/index.php/en/welcome), which allows access to Seoul's 16 top attractions with one pass over 24 h. The 24-h time limit of the pass begins from the first scan, and the connected official mobile application displays the remaining time available. The application also displays detailed information about each of the 16 attractions including operating hours, location maps, contact information, and more. Even after the expiration of the 24-h pass, the pass can be used as a rechargeable and reusable public transportation card with no expiration.

Another program launched by Seoul last year is One More Trip (https://www.onemoretrip.net/main/index), an online platform allowing locals to sell unique experiences and tours while offering participants a memorable and different experience. Sellers are screened and reviewed thoroughly before being allowed to sell their programs and experiences, which include such offerings as a Korean brewery tour, traditional Korean name seal making, Korean barbecue tour, and more. Customers can browse the site for experiences by categories based on their interest, read reviews, and can make payments through online platforms such as PayPal and Alipay.

Yet another noteworthy initiative in the smart tourism context is the Seoul Metropolitan Government's Tourism Startup Cooperation Project (http://mediahub.seoul.go.kr/gongmo/1063464), which aims at fostering tourism- and IT-related innovation. The initiative has already led to the development of various IT-based contents and services reflecting the latest IT trends, such as artificial intelligence chat bots and big data, so that foreign tourists can experience Seoul more conveniently.

12.3.6 IoT Development in Seoul

Given the central role IoT developments play in the context of smart tourism, it is important to specifically examine Seoul's IoT-related projects. Seoul has been making great efforts to become a leading smart destination, and developing the city's IoT has been a major focus area in this context. In the "Global Digital Seoul 2020" plan that was announced last year (Seoul Metropolitan Government 2016), IoT plans are prominently featured. One area where IoT technology has already been implemented is the popular tourist neighborhood of Bukchon (i.e., North town of Seoul). Various sensors in the area can count the number of people in the area, track the amount of waste that has accumulated in its trash bins, and display information about parking spaces available (Yun 2016). This technology is being rolled out to other areas of the city as well.

IoT technology is also being implemented within the Seoul City Tour Bus program (http://en.seoulcitybus.com/), with all 80 stops on the tour routes planned to be outfitted with IoT beacon trackers. The beacons will offer tour information for riders in four different languages, providing micro-targeted information about

related tourism venues and infrastructure. The program is expected to be fully rolled out in 2017. These two examples illustrate that tourism-specific IoT-related developments are on Seoul's agenda and will help to further establish it as a smart tourism destination.

12.4 Conclusion

Seoul's traditional focus on technology and its early investments in technological infrastructure are facilitating its transition to a smart city and smart tourism destination. As such, it has a clear advantage in the smart tourism development race over other Asian destinations. However, the case study clearly shows that the technological infrastructure integrated in the physical structure of the city is only the base layer in smart tourism development. Many other initiatives are necessary to propel Seoul toward its goal of becoming a smart tourism destination that can offer its visitors enhanced experiences. These initiatives are supported by all levels of government/destination management and show evidence of strong public-private partnerships. While there is pervasive government influence, there is also a clear recognition of the importance of open innovation to foster smart tourism development. Public-private partnerships are critical to smart tourism implementation (Gretzel et al. 2015b), and Seoul can therefore serve as an important example to other Asian destinations in terms of how to launch and govern smart tourism initiatives.

The case of Smart Seoul clearly demonstrates the importance of holistic destination management for smart tourism development. The KTO and STO, representing tourism at different levels of governance, collaborate closely to not only envision but also implement smart tourism projects. The examples provided further show that many developments that affect smart tourism are not necessarily designed specifically with tourists in mind. A major challenge for managing smart tourism destinations is therefore to lobby for and represent tourism across many different areas and to cooperate with agencies and businesses beyond tourism. At the same time, it is necessary to explore the appropriation and exploitation of general smart technology-related projects for tourism purposes. In many ways, smart tourism in Seoul is able to build on general technology infrastructure. The case study further indicates a great match between smart tourism and the visitors Seoul generally attracts in terms of smartphone adoption levels, information needs, and travel patterns. This might not be the case for other destinations in Asia and beyond. A dispersion of visitors throughout the city might also not be beneficial at all destinations. A clear focus on the top layer of smart tourism, the enablement of high quality, and sustainable experiences is therefore paramount for successful smart tourism development.

In conclusion, smart tourism is a rapidly developing field that will only increase in importance with advances in smart technology. Several governments across Asia (with China probably being the most prominent example, see Wang et al. 2013) have recognized the potential of smart tourism development for their tourism

destinations and are actively promoting and supporting smart tourism projects. However, compared to Seoul, initiatives at other destinations seem to lack cohesion and integration with broader smart city development efforts. The case study of Smart Seoul illustrated that understanding the interdependence of the multiple layers of smart tourism destinations is critical in successfully designing and implementing smart tourism initiatives. It is also clear from the above examples and discussion that smart tourism requires a different kind of destination management, namely, one that reaches out and spans boundaries beyond government and beyond tourism, actively encourages innovation, and keeps the ultimate goal of offering enhanced while also sustainable tourism experiences in mind.

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Chapter 13
Media Discourse on Big Data and Tourism Attractions in China

Mingming Cheng

Abstract Increasingly, with the introduction of "smart destination" by the Chinese central government, big data becomes a popular phrase for tourism practitioners with the promise to transform the tourism industry in China by generating better answers to existing and new questions. Excited by the promising benefits of big data, many tourism attraction agencies have started to use big data to re-engineer their traditional business models. These benefits include better prediction models and "smart" management that could result in continuous improvement of various management and marketing strategies. However, nearly an equal number of tourism practitioners in China expressed their growing concerns about the actual benefits big data can bring. This book chapter reviews recent practices of big data and tourism attraction management in China through media discourse. It examines the interaction of tourism attraction management agencies with other stakeholders on the use of big data through a network perspective. By understanding big data's current practices in China, it aims to paint a clear picture of its development and to help researchers position themselves in the process to identify future research areas, which would ultimately help to harden the potential of big data in tourism.

Keywords Big data · Smart destination · Chinese government · Internet plus · Tourism attraction agencies

13.1 Introduction

Recent advances in technology and growing emphasis on Internet of things have led to a big data era in tourism and hospitality. With the introduction of "smart destination" and "holistic tourism" by the Chinese central government, big data has become an essential part of this transformation in China. Big data is a relatively new

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concept, which refers to the dataset that is beyond the ability of existing software to acquire, manage and process (Snijders et al. 2012). It has three distinctive V features including volume, velocity and variety (Chiera and Korolkiewicz 2017). In the tourism attraction context, volume refers to the large quantity of data generated by all the stakeholders concerning tourism attraction, such as tourists' booking and on-site data. Velocity refers to the speed of the data generation, such as in-time tourist flow, while variety describes the data form, which can be structured (e.g. length of stay, number of tourists) and unstructured (e.g. online review comments and tourists' photos). With big data's advanced algorithms and predictive power, China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) (2016) explicitly highlights the role of big data in transforming the current tourism system in China, believing that big data can innovate the existing tourism products and upgrade the current tourism attraction system so as to have better tourist experience (China Tourism News 2017). With such strong messages from the government, many tourism attraction agencies have started their journey with big data. Various initiatives have been implemented with joint efforts from the local governments, online retailers and big data consultancy firms. However, while such initiatives have received considerable media coverage in highlighting the benefits of using big data, a number of practitioners have raised their concerns over the "actual" benefits big data can bring to tourism attractions. They question that there is still a long way to realise the value of big data. Some even believed that the application of big data might be a guiding principle rather than an achieved goal. With various controversial views towards the application of big data in tourism attraction, many stakeholders (e.g. investors, tourist attraction agencies, local governments) are confused about the future development of big data. This increased scepticism may undermine society's ability to develop relevant strategies to address challenges and tap the potential of big data. Therefore, an opportunity for this kind of inquiry exists in the context of understanding the recent practices of big data and tourism attraction in China. Precisely, by examining the interaction of tourism attraction agencies with other stakeholders on the use of big data through a network perspective, a comprehensive understanding can be gleaned to advance both researchers' and practitioners' knowledge of big data.

This book chapter is organised as follows. It will first present a brief review of the big data development in China's tourism attraction. Then, it will detail its research design through media discourse. Afterwards, findings from the media discourse surrounding each major player are presented, followed by a summary of the intertwined relationship between each player. This chapter concludes with implications arising from this research and future areas of research on big data in tourism attraction.

13.2 A Brief History of the Big Data Development in China

While big data in China can be traced back to early 2010, it did not enter the public until China State Council issued the outline of "The Promotion of Big Data Development" in September 2015, as much of its media coverage in the early stage

was under the name of "smart destination". Soon after the central government's outline on big data, a number of media articles on big data and tourism from the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) were released (see China Tourism News (2017) by recognising the importance of big data as the backbone of "being smart". In parallel, provincial and local governments have also started their own initiatives. Notably, Guizhou, a province in Southwest China, has officially announced its commitment to big data and tourism (Xinhua News 2016) and has been actively engaged with big data by opening its data sources. More recently, in January 2017, "tourism big data joint lab" between China Tourism Academy and C-trip – the largest online travel agency in China – was established. Due to these initiatives, some Chinese-specific concepts have emerged. For example, Tourism Plus (Tourism+) was a new concept from the phrase of Internet Plus in China's prime minister Li Keqiang's government work report in 2015. It was officially announced by the chairman of the China National Tourism Administration – Li Jingzao – describing the use of the Internet and its various applications (e.g. Internet of things, big data, clouding computing) to add value to the tourism industry, fostering its upgrade and redevelopment (CNTA Information Center 2015).

In recent years, the tourism industry in China has witnessed a series of shifts concerning the future growth of tourism attractions. These include tourist experience shifting from suppliers to individual tourists, rapid growth of similar tourism attractions and tourism attractions' heavy reliance on ticket sales. Big data has been seen as optimal strategies to address these existing problems, such as traffic congestion and overcrowding at tourism attractions, and to renovate current tourism products. As such, along with government initiatives, many tourism attractions have explored the application of big data in their sites. However, with limited technological support and big data analysts, tourism attraction agencies face challenges in tapping the potential of big data. Thus, this has inevitably attracted a number of leading online retailers and big data consultancy agencies in China to engage with tourism attraction agencies so as to generate better answers to existing and new questions. Online retailers have shown great interest in this untapped market, as they have a large dataset as well as the technical and analytic capacity. Figure 13.1 presents the recent engagement of major online retailers in China with tourism attractions. While these

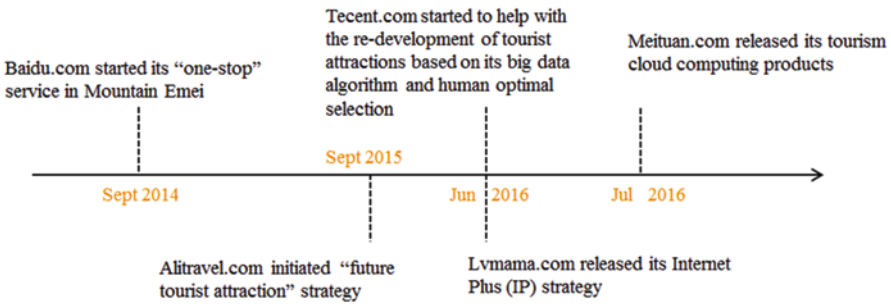

Fig. 13.1 A brief summary of online retailers' engagement with tourism attraction (*Sources*: CBO 2016)

Table 13.1 Key terms

Key terms	Interpretation
Online retailer	Electronic retailers who sell their travel-related goods and services via the Internet
Internet Plus (Internet +)	The use of the Internet and its various applications (e.g. Internet of things, big data, clouding computing) to add value to the tourism industry, fostering its upgrade and redevelopment
Sesame Credit	A social credit scoring system of ant financial services group – an affiliate of Alibaba to rank Chinese citizens based on their past credit records
WeChat	Chinese social media application with instant message, e-commerce and payment
Weibo	A similar Chinese version of Twitter

players' main areas of business are not necessarily tourism-related, they all have a large consumer dataset and the technical capacity to approach big data. For example, baidu.com being the largest online search engine in China, utilising its search database along with other applications, such as Baidu maps, and has taken the initiative to help E-Mei Mountain tourism attraction agencies to be "smart". One year later, AliTravel.com started their "future tourism attraction" project, and soon afterwards, both Tencent.com and Lvmama.com initiated their own big data strategies.

These initiatives indicate that while the big data phenomenon in tourism attractions is recent, its development clearly highlights the attractiveness of big data in tourism attraction with a variety of stakeholders involved. As such, research opportunities exist in the context of understanding the media discourse as a first step to approaching the big data and tourism attraction phenomenon in China. By using a network perspective, this book chapter provides an initial understanding of this recent trend by understanding who are involved, why they are involved and how they are involved. As this book chapter is concerned with big data and tourism attraction in the context of China, many of the terms throughout the book chapter might not be readily accessible to general readers. Table 13.1 provides a summary of the key terms and their interpretation for easy reference.

13.3 Research Design

As big data in tourism attraction is a rather recent phenomenon in China, its wide implications for the tourism industry are not yet fully understood. Thus, the general public relies predominantly on public communication to gain their knowledge about this phenomenon (Schmidt et al. 2013). Among all the public communication, news articles from leading news agencies play a key role in raising awareness and disseminating information (Schmidt et al. 2013; Cheng and Edwards 2017), as they reflect wider trends of "what is going on" (Bednarek 2006) and produce "an agenda setting" effect (McCombs 2013). In particular, news articles, with its framing to

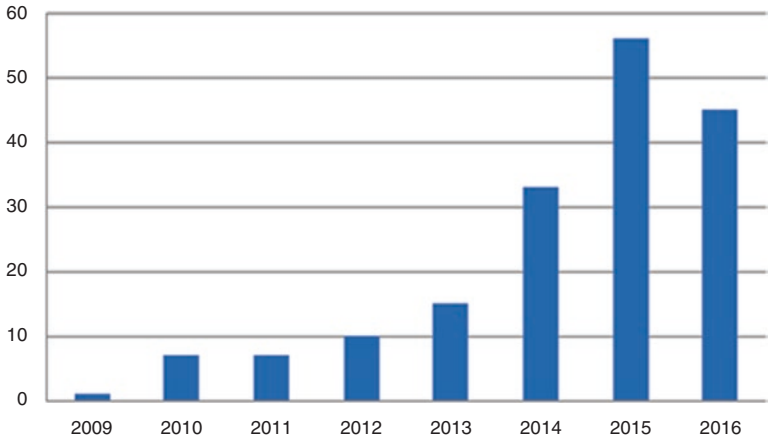

Fig. 13.2 News article per year

select and emphasise, can signal an issue's relevancy to the general public and can potentially affect the priority given by government agencies to a specific issue (Schmidt et al. 2013; Schweinsberg et al. 2017; Cheng and Edwards 2017).

The author searched the keywords – "smart", "big data" or "Internet Plus" along with "tourism attraction" in China's largest database – China National Knowledge Infrastructure under the section of "China Core Newspapers Full-text Database". An initial search returned 185 news articles until the end of 2016. Articles whose main content is NOT concerned with "big data" and "tourism attraction" were excluded. As a result, 170 articles were selected. Figure 13.2 shows the number of news articles published per year. Twenty-eight percent of the articles are from *China Tourism News* (Fig. 13.3).

Two stages of analysis were involved. First, an analysis of word co-occurrence in each article's title was performed to establish relationships between concepts by constructing a relationship strength measure (He 1999). If two words co-occur more often in news articles' titles, they are closely related. The concepts were coded in Chinese and later translated into English. Afterwards, the results were visualised using the network analysis software Gephi (Bastian et al. 2009). Gephi can display large and dynamics networks in real time to help researchers make sense of the data through interactive exploration. In tourism, Cheng (2016) has used Gephi to examine the theoretical network of the sharing economy literature by visually identifying its structure and key players through different colours and bubble size.

The various relationships between concepts are presented through a visualised network. The links between the concepts are based on (1) the normalised weight of the co-occurrence in articles' titles, (2) the distances between any stakeholders through normalised path length and (3) the size of the points reflecting the degree of each point in the network. However, it is important to note that absence of concepts present meaning. It indicates that concepts are not covered in the news articles.

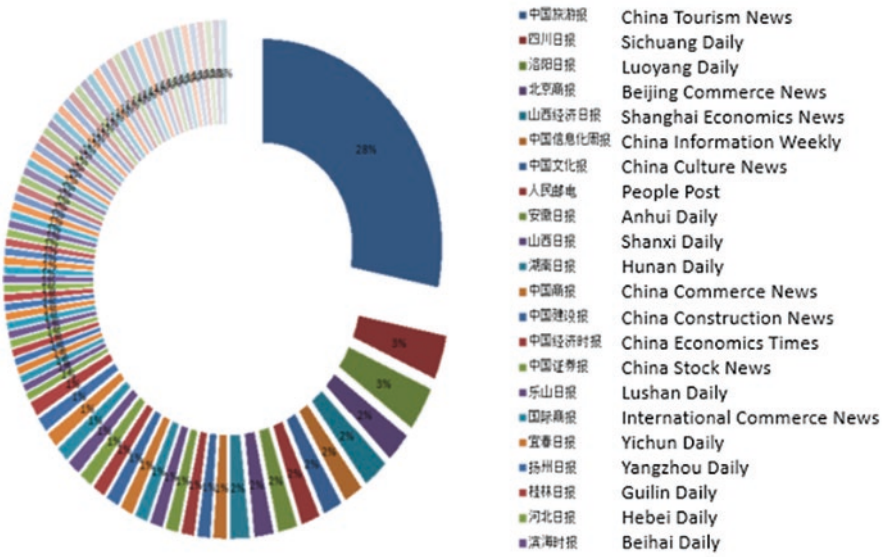

Fig. 13.3 Newspaper outlets (*The top three outlets – *China Tourism News*, *Sichuan Daily* and *Luoyang Daily*)

In the second stage, the authors read through each article by following the network structure (position of each concept and its relationship with others to construct the narratives).

13.4 Findings and Discussion

13.4.1 Structure of the Network

The whole network consists of 108 nodes and 301 edges with an average degree of 5.574, which means on average a node (concept) has 5.574 connections (edges) to other nodes. The top concepts with the highest degree are tourism attraction (86), smart (74), tourism (20), Internet Plus (20), development (19), big data (13), culture (13), Internet (12) and tourist (11). The network density is 0.052 with an average path length of 2.163 indicating that main concepts with high degrees dominate the network (Fig. 13.4). It clearly shows that the node "tourism attraction" and "smart" dominate the network of discussion.

In order to identify whether there are communities of co-occurrence of concepts, Louvain network grouping mechanism was performed (Blondel et al. 2008). Each group is colour-coded. Six clusters of concepts are identified. By analysing the full news articles guided by the network structure, three interconnected discourses emerged: who does it, why they do it and how they do it. As the network was

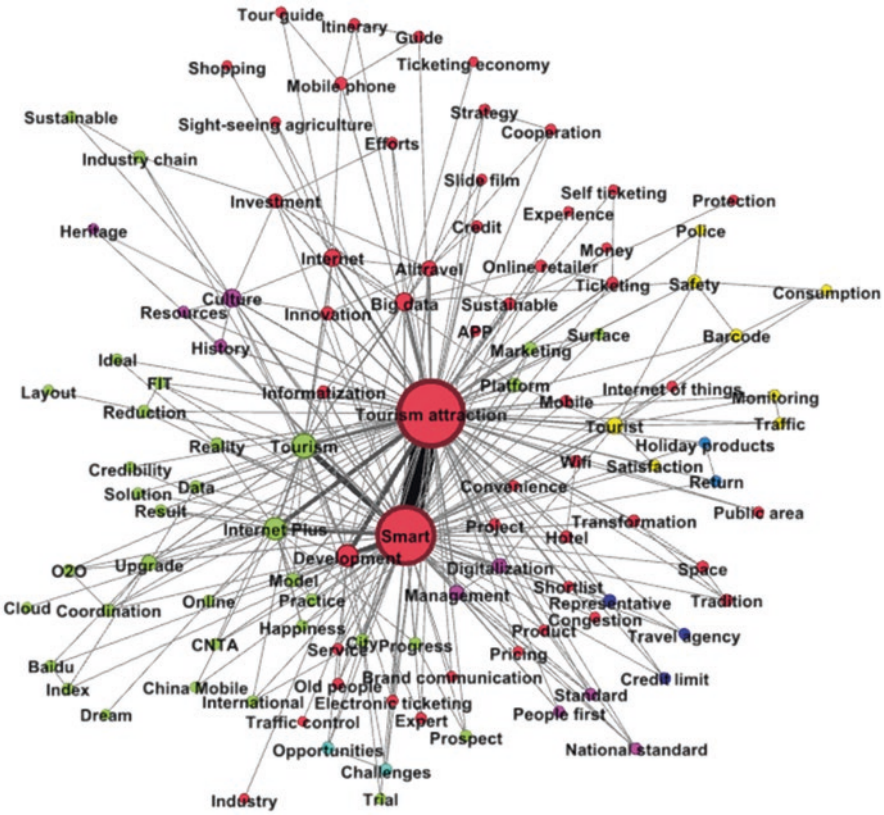

Fig. 13.4 Network structure

generated by the software Gephi, Gephi provides an interactive interface. By clicking a node (i.e. concept) in the network, all the connected concepts and links are highlighted. It visually demonstrates the connectivity of a concept (Cheng et al. 2016). The next section will discuss each cluster and their associated discourse in the news articles (Fig. 13.4).

13.5 Network Perspective: Three Discourses

13.5.1 Tourism Attraction Perspective

Figure 13.5 demonstrates the connectivity of the concept "tourism attraction", which clearly shows the central position of "tourism attraction" in the network. It indicates that tourism attractions have been trying to become smart by using big data and Internet Plus (dark lines in Fig. 13.5). By going back to the relevant news

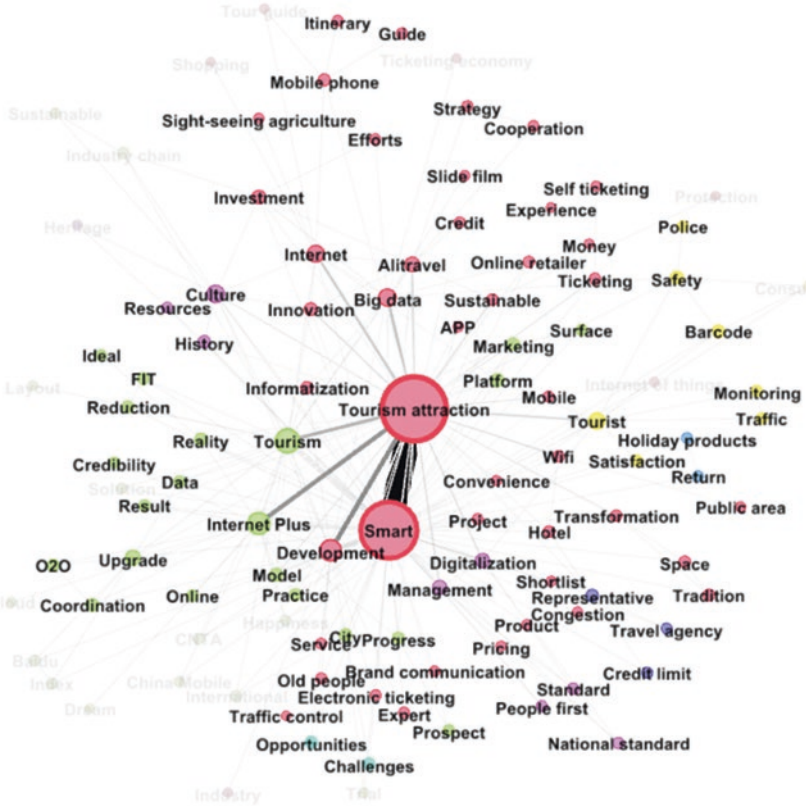

Fig. 13.5 Tourism attraction perspective

articles, two types of discourse emerged on why tourism attractions have been engaging in big data. The first one is from a marketing perspective that big data embedded in Internet Plus can help tourism attraction agencies make target marketing by having a clear image of who their existing and potential tourists are. This will further help tourism attractions to make specific marketing strategies inside their attractions to move beyond the ticketing economy. In addition, tourism attractions can be enabled to understand their channel of marketing so that they can optimise their budget in each channel and set the proper pricing strategies.

The second discourse is from a management perspective. Figure. 13.5 shows that "being smart" by using big data can facilitate a better management of all the elements inside the site, including forecast of ticket sales, parking monitoring, management of the flow of tourists so as to have effective crowd control, sustainable development of the site and provision of emergency services. In addition, big data could help tourism attraction agencies better understand their online presence through the insights generated from social media channels, such as tourist online reviews and as a result, have better management of their online presence. Ultimately,

this contributes to optimal resource allocation inside their own tourism attractions. In return, by having a better management of the sites, tourism attraction agencies can improve tourists' onsite experience by providing tourist-centric services and products.

Therefore, four strategies have been commonly used by tourism attraction agencies. First, tourism attraction agencies have started to upgrade their facilities by recording various data and then feeding the data into the system to better meet their marketing and managerial purposes. Second, the concepts of "mobile app" indicate the fact that many tourism attraction agencies are heavily promoting the use of mobile devices during the entire period of tourists' visit at their sites. Tourists are able to pay for their tourism products through their WeChat or Alipay barcode. In particular, they encouraged the tourists to use their credibility through "Sesame Credit" in their Alipay to rent products without deposit or identify documents to facilitate the transaction. Third, tourism attractions have been engaged in an invisible competition to be regarded as the leading big data driven smart tourism attractions. The analysis of news articles shows that many tourism attractions have been competing to be ranked in the shortlist of "smart destinations". Fourth, a growing number of tourism attraction agencies have a dedicated team to work on big data and its analysis, although the team is relatively small with less than ten people.

13.5.2 Online Retailer Perspective

Online retailers have also been heavily featured (Fig. 13.6: Node Alitravel and online retailor) in the news article as they have a strong business interest in tourism attraction and, more importantly, they have a large consumer dataset and the technical capacity to approach big data. As such, they invite tourism attraction agencies to work with them. For online retailers, using big data is vital to further develop their business channels and improve their marketing competitiveness against other players. Also, they advocate that they are in a better position to help tourism attraction to be innovative, such as building up "credit economy" (people can go to the site with their credit points) and to solve existing problems, such as ticketing economy and safety monitoring (Fig. 13.6). They have been encouraging tourism attraction agencies to be cooperative and open their data sources to have win-win results. With their business interest, they aim to provide a central platform so that all the information can be processed and relevant insights can be produced. Ultimately, they can become the central player of the tourism supply chain in China.

A closer analysis of the relevant news article reveals that these online retailers have undertaken two strategies. One is that they have been actively developing their big data products for tourism attractions as well as offering target solutions to tourism attractions' existing problems. Secondly, they have been actively promoting the values of big data through various conferences and workshops as a means to convince other stakeholders that collaboration will be the ideal solution.

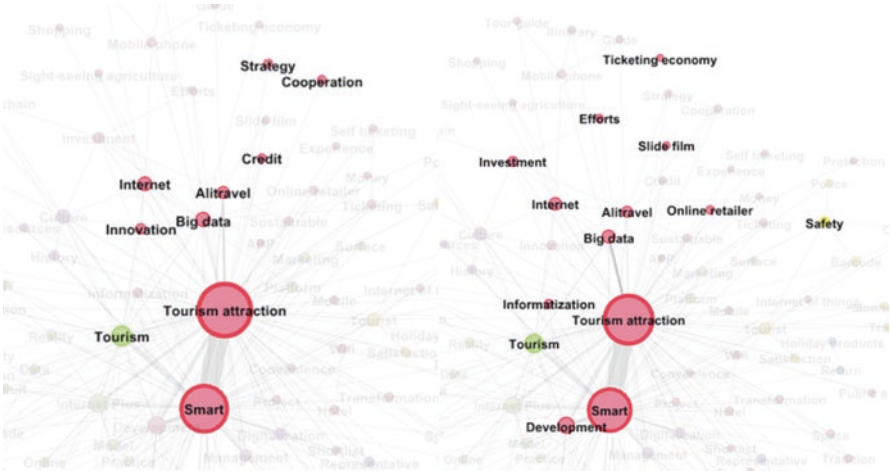

Fig. 13.6 Online retailer perspective (*Notes*: the results were achieved by activating the nodes – Ali Travel and online retailer)

13.5.3 Tourist Perspective

New types of tourists have also emerged in China who as identified by Wang et al. (2016) are "more experienced, sophisticated, demanding and harder to please" (p.311). Two types of discourse are concerned with this type of tourists. First, they have been developing their distinctive preferences and are now demanding a personalised experience in tourism attraction as well as an enjoyable and safe trip with guarantee (e.g. shopping guarantee, effective complaint system) (Fig. 13.7). This is in line with the current tourism development situation in China from a pure sightseeing tour to an individual personalised tourist experience.

The second discourse is about convenience. With massive amount of information, a simple search of any tourism attraction on any Internet search engine can return hundreds of websites in less than a few seconds. This presents difficulties for tourists to effectively become acquainted with the right information for their trips. In addition, with information loading, tourists are frustrated with itinerary planning. By accessing useful and relevant information for tourists, such as attraction capacity, weather, accommodation, toilets and water supply points, tourists would be able to properly design, rearrange their trips and have a better tourist experience. In addition, with various sources of data (e.g. tourist arrivals and ticket sales), information generated by smart information system can be more accurate to provide a smart and safe trip for the tourists. As a result, being smart through big data and Internet Plus could increase the tourists' satisfaction and happiness. Ultimately, it can help boost tourist expenditure at tourism attraction (Fig. 13.7).

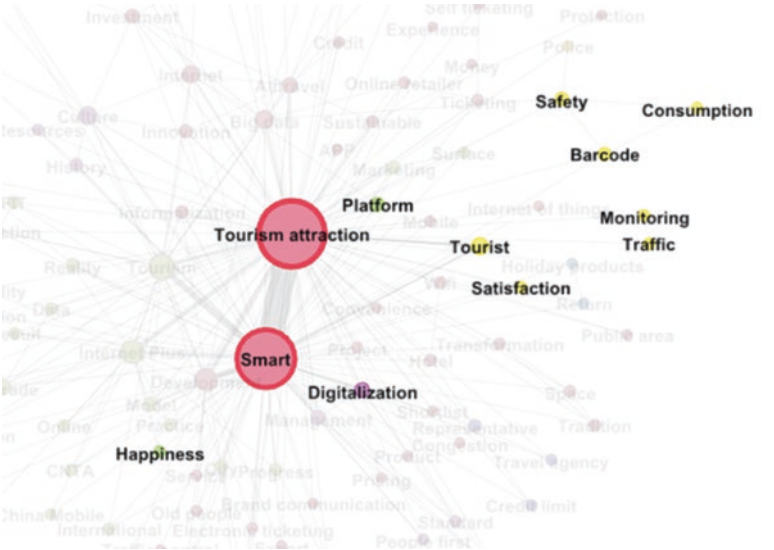

Fig. 13.7 Tourist perspective

13.5.4 Government Perspective

The Chinese government, through its specialised agency – tourism bureaus – envisions that big data can help them better monitor the tourism industry and improve their public services by integrating the data from tourism attraction. This will provide timely information to all the stakeholders to make informed decisions over its policy and regulations. Beyond the tourism bureaus themselves, local governments also believe that with the data from tourism attractions, they can have a better safety monitoring system. This could help the government to identity the flow of tourists including where they are going and travel length in real time and make informed decisions over the transport system arrangement and provision of emergency services. Ultimately, these will facilitate a better destination wide marketing strategy and improve destination competitiveness (Wang et al. 2013).

Notably, CNTA has kept emphasising the usefulness of big data to accelerate smart destination through its official news releases (Fig. 13.8). In January 2015, CNTA released its "Suggestions for Developing Smart Tourism" by encouraging innovative financing models. In August 2015, China State Council, in its report, put the development of "Internet Plus and tourism" as one of seven areas in tourism investment. As a result, it has been attracting various investments on big data projects in tourism attraction. In addition, the messages from CNTA can be perceived as an indication of the legitimation of big data and Internet Plus as the future trend in tourism attraction. As such, news articles in this research even reported the ranking of tourism attractions "being smart".

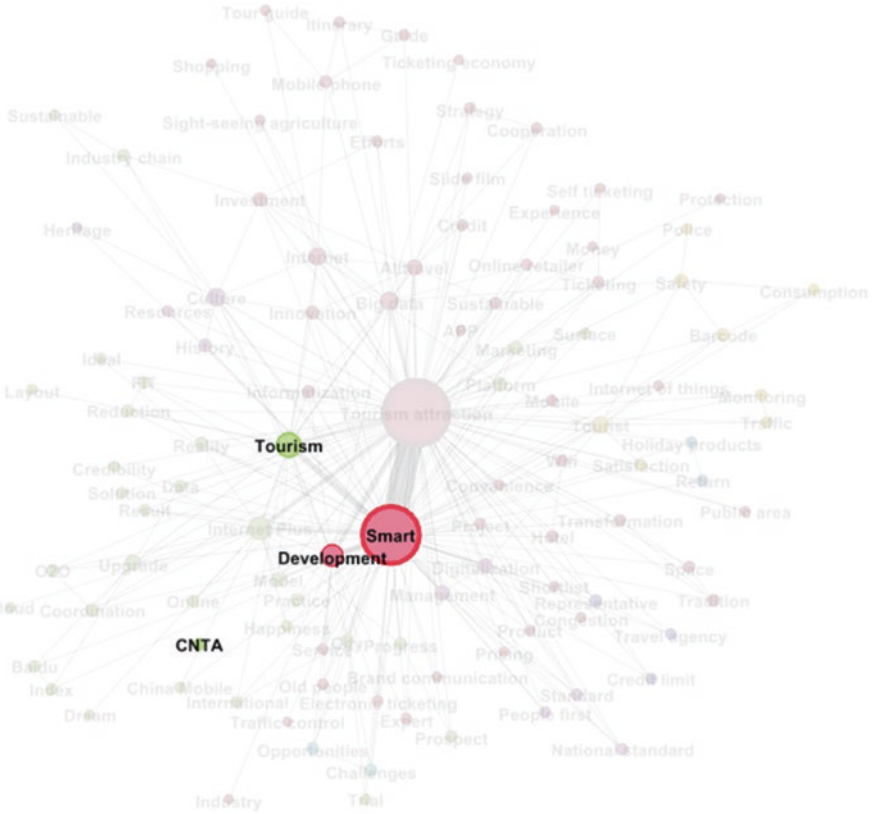

Fig. 13.8 Government perspective

13.5.5 Network of Stakeholders with Intertwined Relationships

The network in Fig. 13.2 presents the intertwining relationship between each major player. It shows that while big data offers promising solutions to existing problems at tourism attraction, the big data trend was strengthened by the involvement of the Chinese government. As a result, more and more tourism attractions have taken further steps in developing their big data and Internet Plus capacity. However, as discussed earlier, big data, as its name suggests, requires a large volume of data to make effective and accurate predictions. Limited data can result in being unrepresentative or losing its predictive power. To make effective use of big data, it requires manpower, investments and resources in order to analyse the data and make effective and relevant business implications. Currently, many tourism attraction agencies do not have a team working on big data. Only a very limited number of tourism attraction agencies are able to have their own big data team, and if they have, their

team is usually very small with less than ten people. More importantly, they heavily rely on other channels to get the data. In terms of the hardware, with such a large amount of unstructured data, it needs high-performance computing capacity to store and analyse the data, which is usually beyond the current capacity of individual tourism attraction agencies. In addition, as big data requires an interdisciplinary approach, tourism attraction professionals might lack background knowledge and thus are unable to derive relevant implications.

Thus, to successfully manage a tourism attraction, attraction management agencies need to have a variety of data. These data include the consumer data from online travel agencies, the data of the tourists within the sites (e.g. length of stay, preferences, on-site shopping behaviour) and data from the government. A careful examination of the articles associated with relevant nodes shows tourism attraction agencies rely on other stakeholders to be involved. Thus, online retailers with its large database initiated the cooperation between tourism attraction agencies, governments and tourism attractions.

Although it seems promising for all the parties to work together, an increasing number of tourism attraction agencies are uncomfortable with such an engagement. They highlight a number of reasons. First, tourism attraction agencies are afraid that their data will be used by online retailers for profits without their consent, and at the end, they might not benefit from the implementation of big data. Second, the so-called big data solutions haven't fully addressed the existing problems. Many promised benefits are unlikely to be immediately realised. As such, some tourism attraction agencies openly express their concerns over the validity of the data from online retailers. For example, the latest report on the Internet coverage in tourism attraction shows that less than 10% of the bookings are made through online travel agencies (OTA) in China (Ly.com 2015), and as such, it raises the questions as to how representative the OTA data is. Third, another group of tourism attraction agencies believe that whether or not, they have implemented big data does not matter that much as their tourism attraction assets (e.g. being listed at UNESCO World Heritage Site) can still attract many visitors without big data. They also express that many tourism attractions are doing "IMAGE Project" as their Internet Plus through big data projects is just a simple combination of tourism attractions' official websites, Weibo and WeChat accounts, which are in contrast to the core value of Internet Plus and big data.

13.6 Conclusion

The findings of this research reveal that the empirical evidence of big data and its applicability is under-reported in the news article, despite the fact that a growing number of research articles have been published around this area (Wang et al. 2016). Many of the promised benefits of big data seem opinion-based. A closer analysis of the news articles also indicates that big data issues were largely framed in a very positive tone. The causes of failure were more likely to be attributed to tourism

attraction management agencies rather than the other main players. Indeed, the fact that news article highlighted the ranking of tourism attraction in "smart destination" list is a form of legitimation towards "big data" and "Internet Plus" in the future development of tourism attractions in China. This increased legitimation can potentially foster individual and collective actions.

Essentially, big data practice in tourism attraction is no difference to other tourism practices in China as it is a learning-by-doing process (Cheng et al. 2017). Most of the tourism attractions in China are primarily engaged with the big data because big data are government-led initiatives, and later on, they realise this approach might not fully align with their goals. As such, the promise of big data is challenged. Given the increasing importance of big data in tourism attractions, the challenge becomes one of how to integrate big data, Internet Plus and tourism attractions as demonstrated through the media discourse to balance different stakeholders' interests. Given China's dominant institution approach, the lesson is that big data and Internet Plus might not be a universal criteria but an individual solution for each tourism attraction.

This book chapter provides an initial understanding of big data and tourism attraction in China through unpacking news discourse. It highlights the complexity of big data and tourism attractions in China. The discourse reveals that big data has the potential to transform the existing tourism attraction system by redesigning tourist experience, improving destination's competitive edge and upgrading its tourism products; but equally, the application is still in its infancy. In particular, with the popularity of big data, many Asian tourism destinations will be engaged with this trend in the near future. To fully tap the potential of big data in tourism attractions is likely to be challenging. Thus, this chapter provides a window into the opportunities and challenges in provision of big data in tourism attractions in Asian destinations by understanding each stakeholder's roles in the process. The lesson learned from this study is that for any tourism attraction to be successful in big data, they need to have the problem-driven data as well as data-driven insights. As such, this chapter invites researchers and practitioners to further investigate the relationship between big data and tourism attractions.

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Chapter 14
River Tourism in China

Ralf Buckley, Travis Winn, Weiyi Li, Peter Winn, and Linsheng Zhong

Abstract Rivers attract tourists in China as elsewhere. There are four main types of river tourism in China: riverbank sightseeing, riverboats, river drifting (*piaoliu ziyou* or *ziyou piao*) and whitewater rafting (*yeshui piaoliu* or *baishui piaoliu*). The first two of these are large sectors, mass tourism activities commonplace worldwide. River drifting, *ziyou piao*, is an activity found only in China and operates at mid-scale, in Chinese terms. Active whitewater rafting follows international models and is currently small scale, but an important contributor to conservation of China's Great Rivers.

Keywords Rafting · *Piao* · 漂流中国 · Conservation · Adventure · Ecotourism · Sightseeing

14.1 Introduction

Rivers act as focus attractions for tourism, in many countries worldwide (Prideaux and Cooper 2009). A number of river sites act as iconic sightseeing destinations, attracting an international clientele. These include spectacular waterfalls such as Niagara, Iguazu and Victoria Falls; large rivers which are themselves major landscape features, such as the Amazon, the Nile, the Congo and the Mekong; rivers flowing through cities that have grown around them over past centuries, such as the Seine, the Thames and the Chao Praya; river sites and crossings with major cultural connotations, such as Quebec on the St Lawrence River or Baoshan on the Yangtze;

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and rivers where the riverbank scenery is spectacular if seen from the water, such as the rocky landscapes at Guilin on the Li River.

Many rivers still act as major corridors for waterborne transport of both cargo and passengers, and these transport routes also operate as tourism attractions (Purdon 1999). Examples include the Rhine and the Danube in Europe (Erfurt-Cooper 2009), the Sepik in Papua New Guinea, the Amazon in Brazil (Prideaux and Lohmann 2009) and the Yangtze (Arlt and Feng 2009) and Mekong (Laws and Semone 2009) in China. Historically, tourists travelled aboard passenger ferries and cargo ships, but currently, luxury liveaboard tourist vessels are commonplace. These operate on flatwater rivers, where large powered watercraft can easily travel upstream as well as downstream. Finally, there are many swiftwater or whitewater rivers worldwide where travel is generally only possible downstream, and where there are numerous rapids and other obstacles that form an attraction for recreational rafting and kayaking. Some whitewater rivers also allow for limited upstream travel using jetboats.

All these types of river tourism occur in China, as elsewhere in Asia and worldwide. In addition, there is a particular model of whitewater tourism that apparently operates only in China. This is known as *ziyou piao*, which translates approximately as river drifting or free river drifting. Younger generations of Chinese domestic and outbound tourists have adopted many types of adventure tourism (Buckley 2016a; Gardiner and Kwek 2016; Sparks and Jin 2016). In this chapter, we review the broad structure of each of these tourism activities. Information is derived from published literature, commercial websites and practical on-site experience in China over the past 35 years. Since that experience is restricted to specific sites, we focus on those sites as case studies.

14.2 Riverbank Sightseeing: Tiger Leaping Gorge, Jinsha River

Many domestic and international tours in China include visits to particular riverbank sites. Here, we illustrate these operations at one case study site, Tiger Leaping Gorge on the Jinsha River, part of the main stream of the Yangtze River. This site lies in the middle reaches, where the river is large, high-volume, and fast-flowing. The Gorge is a constriction in the river corridor, where the flow is forced through a deep, narrow channel incised into a rock. At the entry to this channel is an extremely spectacular rapid or waterfall, where the entire river flow cascades over and around a large tooth-shaped rock in midstream.

Tiger Leaping Gorge is named after a legend, but its modern attractiveness for tourism is derived not only from ancient history and modern spectacle, but also from a recent event linked to nationalist pride. In 1986, a group of American whitewater rafters obtained a permit from the Chinese Government to attempt a source-to-sea first descent of the Yangtze, in return for a very large permit fee, hundreds of thousands of US dollars (Bangs and Kallen 1989; Warren 2016). They were spon-

sored by National Geographic and a large US insurance company, Mutual of Omaha, and the venture attracted a great deal of media attention.

This in turn spurred nationalist fervour in China, where it was argued that the first descent should be Chinese, not foreign. The permit issued to the US group granted exclusive rights, but it was argued that this applied only to international competitors. In practice, two Chinese teams, later combined to a single group, decided to race the US group down the river. Not appreciating that the US group had no intention of trying to run the main rapid in Tiger Leaping Gorge itself, the Chinese team constructed a special sealed "pillbox" raft, completely passive and unsteerable, and tried to send one of its members through the rapid inside this. This leads to fatalities, added to several others that had already occurred. These casualties are perceived, accurately enough, as representing heroism by those involved, and this provided national media coverage, which gave Tiger Leaping Gorge a firm place in Chinese national consciousness and tourism itineraries.

Currently, Tiger Leaping Gorge is a routine stop for bus tours in the region. Buses park on a road at the top of the gorge, and tourists walk down a stepped concrete path to various lookouts. There is now also a pedestrian bridge, a little distance above the main rapid, so that tourists can cross over and view the site from either riverbank. There is an entrance fee to the access road and another to walk down the viewing track. Beside the access road and the concrete path are numerous food, drink, and souvenir outlets, which carry out a thriving trade. There is also a small museum commemorating the Chinese rafters mentioned above. This is very much a mass tourism destination, a place where tourists go as part of package tours, with little prior knowledge of its history. The road continues down the gorge, with views to a number of additional rapids, but these are not accessible on foot, and few visitors drive that section of the road. Most tourists simply take photographs and buy souvenirs and drinks, as they would at any sightseeing destination in any part of the world.

14.3 River Boats: Li River, Guilin

The karst scenery of Guilin, in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, is famous worldwide for its place in Chinese traditional landscape painting. Clusters of small, steep, rugged, grey rock outcrops, rising directly from a flat green agricultural plain, seem stylised and improbable to Western viewers, but do indeed exist at Guilin, and are indeed as beautiful as they seem in Chinese landscape art. One of the most popular ways to view this scenery, as a slowly changing panorama, is to travel downstream on a section of the Li River between Guilin and Yangshuo.

There are many different boat tours and cruises on offer, using different types of watercraft. The most common are medium-scale low-draught ferries that can accommodate large numbers of tourists. There are no rapids, and the boats can proceed downstream quietly. In addition to the karst mountains, scenic attractions

include the riverbanks, surrounding rural landscape and the local practice of fishing using cormorants. Most tours include a bus ride back to the starting point. Some also include guided hikes along trails over specific named and famous karst features near the launch area. There are large numbers of retail outlets for food and souvenirs around the landing area.

The total volume of river tourists travelling along this section of the Li River is substantial. Guilin received over 1.7 million visitors annually as of 2006 (Ma and Hassink 2014), and river trips are one of the principal activities. In the 1980s, for comparison, there were around 1000 tourists per day, of whom over 99% were Chinese. At that time, there was only one kind of tour boat, relatively few shops at the landing area, and nobody spoke English. Judging from current commercial itineraries and websites, TripAdvisor® commentaries and so on, there are now many different boat options and extensive English-speaking retail areas in both Guilin and Yangshuo. There are also numerous printed and online travel guides, with descriptions and illustrations of the principal named rock features.

14.4 *Ziyou Piao*: The Guangdong or Huangteng Model

The only published English language description of Chinese river drifting, *ziyou piao*, seems to be that of Buckley et al. (2014), who referred to it incorrectly as *piaoliu ziyou*. Setting out initially to study the domestic whitewater rafting industry in China, that study identified a physically different outdoor adventure activity, with overlapping nomenclature. In either English or Chinese, the term rafting or *piaoliu* is used to describe both Western-style whitewater rafting as described in the next section (*yeshui piaoliu* or *baishui piaoliu*) and Chinese-style whitewater rafting described here (*ziyou piao*). Both the activity and the business model, however, are in fact quite distinct, as summarised in Table 14.1, drawn from Buckley et al. (2014).

In *piaoliu*, especially the so-called Huangteng or Guangdong model of *ziyou piao*, free river drifting, the rights to use a particular short stretch of a low-volume creek or river are leased exclusively to a single commercial operator, which may be 100% private or a public-private partnership. The river channel may be modified by the tour operator, using engineering means, typically (a) to dam up the flow above the rafting section, (b) to remove obstacles in the rafting section itself and (c) to provide an easy landing and take-out area at the end of the rafting section. In this model, tourists are placed in very small two-person rafts, with no paddles or other motive power. Water is released from the dam to flush the rafts and their passengers down the river to the take-out point. Hundreds of rafts may travel together, like floating corks. The tour operator sells toy water guns, and the tourists spray each other with water. If rafts capsize or tourists fall out, they are rescued by lifeguards stationed along the banks. The experience is thus akin to an outdoor fairground ride. It is packaged with other activities in 1-day bus tours from nearby tourism gateway towns.

Table 14.1 *Ziyou Piao*, Chinese model river drifting, cf. *Yeshui Piaoliu*, Western model whitewater rafting (From Buckley et al. 2014)

Component or characteristic	Chinese *ziyou piao* products	Western whitewater rafting, *yeshui piaoliu*
Access to river	Exclusive	Non-exclusive
Watercourses	Engineered	Natural
River flow, $m^3\ s^{-1}$	0.8–80	20–3000
Rafts, main type	Small, oval, non-bailing	Large, oval, self-bailing
Rafts, alternative type	Multi-pontoon rafts, sit astride	Two-pontoon catarafts with oar frame
Propulsion and steering	None; guide pole and paddle; rarely client paddles, motor	Guide oars or client paddles, rarely motors, never poles
Disembarkation	Flushed onto concrete ramp, automatically	Row actively to riverbank, moor
Safety equipment	No standards, no training, lax rules, poorly followed	Legal standards, strict rules, clients trained before start
Rescuing swimmers	From bank, by lifeguards	From river, by raft guide or safety kayakers
Client clothing	Rarely specified or provided, often inappropriate or inadequate	Provided or specified by tour operator for warmth and safety
Typical trip duration	1–3 h	Half, full or multiple days
Typical daily client volume	Thousands to over ten thousand	Tens to hundreds
Waste management	High volume of litter accumulation	Generally little litter or waste
Enterprise structure	Private, government or mixed	Private firms
Marketed as a type of	Shengtai luyou, ecotourism	Adventure tourism
Bookings mainly by	Groups > independent	Independent > groups
Sold as part of package	Commonly as part of "package" of non-adventure activities	Rarely, with other adventure activities
Subsector associations	Escape, excitement, mass tourism	Nature, outdoors, adventure, specialist

The scale of *ziyou piao* is very large in Western terms, though mid-scale in Chinese terms. Up to 10,000 tourists per day may take a tour at the most heavily used sites, so the overall annual throughput may be in the millions. Some Chinese Nature Reserves and Forest Reserves, however, receive tens of millions of visitors annually (Zhong et al. 2015). Buckley et al. (2014) identified around 350 individual *piaoliu* operators. They estimated that around 80 million young Chinese have taken part in their tours and around 25% of the population sector aged 18–35 years old. This generates an overall turnover of over a billion dollars annually.

Whilst the Huangteng or Guangdong model of *ziyou piao* is most heavily used and best known, there are also other domestic Chinese *piaoliu* models in operation. As described by Buckley et al. (2014), for example, there are some tours where pas-

sengers are expected to paddle, and others that use motorised multi-pontoon rafts. These are more closely allied to Western-style whitewater rafting, albeit still distinct.

14.5 Whitewater Wilderness Rafting: Last Descents River Expeditions (漂流中国) and the Great Rivers

Whitewater rafting and kayaking are well-established components of the adventure tourism and recreation sector worldwide (Beckman et al. 2017; Buckley 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010a, b, 2012, 2016a, b; Houge Mackenzie and Kerr 2013; Wu and Liang 2011). There are several key aspects to this Western or international model (Table 14.1). Raft companies generally do not possess exclusive rights to use the rivers concerned, but obtain permits from land management agencies. Rafts are commonly steered and powered using oars or paddles, except for the very largest rafts (e.g. on the Colorado Grand Canyon, USA) that are steered using small outboard motors.

On the river, the participants may be passive, as in oar rafts, or active, as in paddle rafts; but in either case they are expected to take responsibility for their own safety and to swim and self-rescue if the raft capsizes or they fall into the river. For rivers with more difficult rapids and whitewater, it is commonplace for raft tours to be accompanied by safety kayakers, who can rescue any raft participant that gets into difficulties. For multi-day trips, tourists are also expected to take an active role whilst in camp on the riverbanks (Fig. 14.1), with the degree of involvement depending on the structure and price of the tour, which sets the guide/client ratio (Buckley 2006, 2007).

Since post-Revolutionary China became open to inbound Western tourism during the 1980s, a number of Western river aficionados have used this Western model to lead expeditions along sections of the great rivers of western China. The early years of exploration, including first descents, are catalogued thoroughly by Winn (2017). A small number of entrepreneurs have succeeded in establishing viable commercial rafting businesses on the great rivers of western China. These are similar in scale, flow and gradient to iconic international rafting rivers such as the Colorado in the USA, the Sun Khosi and Karnali in Nepal, the Zambezi in Zambia and Zimbabwe and the White Nile in Uganda.

The first commercial operator to run repeated Western-style rafting trips on the same river in China was apparently Earth River Expeditions on the Great Bend of the Yangtze. The best-known operator at present is Last Descents River Expeditions (漂流中国), a Chinese company run by a young Chinese-speaking US expatriate and his US and Chinese family and colleagues. This company, which operates Western-style wilderness rafting tours for Chinese domestic tourists, originated from two US-based expedition companies, Earth Science Expeditions and Shangri-La River Expeditions, as described by Buckley (2003, 2006, 2010c) and Winn (2017).

Fig. 14.1 Last Descents (漂流中国) camp, multi-day floating forum, Yangtze River near Baoshan

Whilst it operates as a commercial tourism enterprise, the ultimate aim of Last Descents is conservation of the rivers and river corridors. That is, it is a conservation tourism operator in the sense used by Buckley (2010c). To achieve this goal, it has adopted a wide range of river-related activities for Chinese participants. For example, it has trained Chinese raft guides and taken them to run the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River in the USA. It has set up China's first youth kayaking club and run educational trips for Chinese school children. It has run information trips for Chinese politicians and billionaires. It has made movies (Jennings 2008; Stauffer-Norris 2017; Stauffer-Norris and Winn 2016) and been featured in national and international newscasts. It has made >100 hundred presentations at universities, private banks and other venues around China. All these programmes are designed to increase Chinese interest in river conservation, especially the Great Rivers of western China.

Most recently, in 2017 Last Descents was invited by the local government of Zaduo County, Qinghai Province, to design a raft tourism programme for the Mekong headwaters zone of the newly declared Sanjiangyuan National Park, China's first IUCN-II protected area. Sanjiangyuan is operating in pilot mode from 2017 to 2019, with full declaration intended in 2020. During the pilot period, visitor infrastructure, facilities, recreational opportunities and management programmes are being designed and constructed. A number of areas have already been identified as visitor and tourism centres. The designs proposed by Last Descents emphasise

the importance of retaining some key areas on Sanjiangyuan as wilderness, with access only by human-powered travel, by raft or on foot. This is critical for conservation, for local communities, and for visitor experience and to comply with IUCN-II requirements. This zone and potentially also other zones of Sanjiangyuan are envisaged as a river-centred national park, and a suite of river tourism opportunities will be central to the visitor experience.

14.6 Conclusions

Rivers are significant destinations for tourism in China, as elsewhere in Asia and worldwide. The highest-volume, lowest-priced mass tourism destinations are scenic spots such as waterfalls, cascades and rapids, viewed from the riverbanks. The example described here is the very spectacular Tiger Leaping Gorge on the Yangtze, but there are many others, such as Nuorilang Waterfall in Jiuzhaigou Nature Reserve. Many other rivers, less well known, contribute to the scenic attractions of parks and reserves. An example is provided by Hawk Protecting Whip Stream in Zhangjiajie Forest Park. This stream is named after a nearby rock formation, which in turn is named after a recently invented "legend" devised by local authorities as a tourist drawcard. Destinations such as Tiger Leaping Gorge, Zhangjiajie and Jiuzhaigou may receive tens of millions of visitors annually.

Intermediate, in both volume and price, are river tours where tourists are passive participants. These include flatwater riverboat cruises, exemplified here by the Li River cruise at Guilin, but also including large liveaboard cruise ships on sections of the Yangtze and of the Mekong or Lancang Jiang. Passive river tours also include the Chinese *ziyou piao* model of river drifting, exemplified above by the Huangteng model popularised in Qingyuan County, Guangdong Province, but also operational at >350 sites elsewhere in eastern China. These passive river tours receive hundreds of thousands of visitors annually or perhaps more.

The lowest tourist volumes, but highest per capita prices and highest individual rewards to participants, apply to multi-day wilderness or remote-area whitewater raft and kayak trips. As outlined above, these originated from Western styles and expeditions, but have evolved into Chinese companies that are owned by Chinese citizens within the Chinese legal system, operate using Chinese currency, hire Chinese staff and advertise to Chinese tourists in the Chinese language on Chinese web platforms. The example described here, Last Descents, has minimal online presence in English, just enough to provide contact information.

The future of river tourism in China is closely linked to river conservation. Hydroelectric dams are proliferating throughout western China, with ~150 individual dams either built, under construction or proposed. These dams abolish the opportunities for remote-area wilderness rafting tourism on free-flowing rivers. They may increase opportunities, however, for rafting on dam-controlled flows and flatwater cruises on the dam impoundments. In many countries, river tourism may also provide an economic counterweight to hydropower development (Buckley

2010c). In China, however, the expansion of dams for hydroelectric power generation seems to be driven by very large-scale policy related to climate change and regional economic development, so tourism is a minor economic player. There are also strong and growing Chinese policy interests in the conservation of biodiversity, ecosystems, water quality and minority cultures, all of which can be achieved by conservation along the corridors of the Great Rivers. In recent years, there have been large campaigns within China to protect the Salween River, the Nu Jiang, from the large-scale hydropower development that has modified the Mekong (Lancang Jiang) and Yangtze River corridors (Winn 2017). The remote-area rafting trips run by Last Descents River Expeditions can assist in these Chinese conservation efforts by providing access and information to otherwise inaccessible areas.

Sanjiangyuan National Park provides a new opportunity to demonstrate the social, cultural, conservation and economic importance of river tourism within China. In other countries, the political, social and economic value of river tourism has been shown to outweigh hydropower, and rivers have been conserved as national parks. China has been different, because its rafting industry, *piaoliu ziyou*, did not rely on unmodified river corridors. The potential economic opportunities from wilderness rafting and associated backcountry adventure tourism at Chinese scale, however, are enormous. Perhaps Sanjiangyuan can show a new future for river tourism throughout China.

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Chapter 15
Factors Affecting How Young Hosts Welcome Tourists: An Asian Case Study

Mao-Ying Wu and Philip Pearce

Abstract This study contributes to an understanding of how young citizens in developing tourist areas view and welcome tourists and tourism. The work is embedded in and builds on the conceptual and theoretical traditions of the tourist gaze and intercultural contact literature. The work was conducted in Lhasa, Tibet, and explored the views and preferences of over 250 young hosts for the types of tourists who visit the area. Photo-elicitation interviews, focus groups, and a questionnaire-based survey were employed in sequence to generate data. The welcome given to the tourists varied according to the classifications employed and the locations which the tourists visited. Five factors, which have relevance for other contexts, were identified to interpret the prospective welcome likely to be given to future tourists. The key issues shaping the young hosts' responses were the immediate public impression tourists created, the extent of cultural distance between hosts and tourists, the nature of the tourist sites, local cultural values, and the hosts' social life. Ways to assess young citizens' views for incorporating in planning sustainable destination are offered.

Keywords Host gaze · Tibetan youth · Tourist classification systems · Preferences · Mediating factors

15.1 Introduction

Local residents in tourism communities are both sources of interest to tourists while also being observers of those who gaze at them (Maoz 2006). Residents as sources of interest have been widely researched since Urry proposed the concept of the

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"tourist gaze" (Urry 1990). This study inverts the direction of the gaze and considers the residents' perspectives and associated receptiveness towards those who visit them (Moufakkir and Reisinger 2013). More specifically, this study chooses the Old Town of Lhasa, Tibet, as the study site. It embraces three research aims. Firstly, the work initially addresses how the youth in the Old Town of Lhasa classify the tourists who ascend the mountains to see them. Secondly, the degree to which different kinds of tourists are welcomed is then considered. Thirdly, the discussion identifies the factors that mediate the young hosts' gaze towards all travel to and through this region. The material in this chapter builds on earlier work with this sample of Asian respondents (Wu and Pearce 2013a, b). The development and enhancement offered in this chapter to earlier work lies in the incorporation of the insights from recent literature including multiple papers about the views of hosts available in the book by Moufakkir and Reisinger (2013). By deploying the conceptual approaches offered in that volume and by reworking the analysis of the results, the researchers have built a better understanding of the roles of tourists and hosts in this distinctive Asian setting and can therefore offer broader implications for managing tourist-community interactions in Asian destinations.

To achieve the academic goals set out above and provide the perspectives of Tibetan youth towards those who visit their setting, an initial review of relevant research in the host gaze area is undertaken. This work identifies key opportunities to refine our knowledge. The key steps in the study are then reported and include a consideration of the research context, the research respondents' profiles, and the research techniques. The findings on the young hosts' gaze towards tourists, and the multiple mediating forces which shape the relevant perspectives, contain implications not just about this special location but also potentially apply more broadly to other destinations where locals are not yet very familiar with tourists.

15.2 Literature Review: Host Gaze

15.2.1 Key Ideas About the Host Gaze

The gaze concept was proposed by Urry (1990). It initially focused on tourists and how they viewed their "unusual or strange" hosts. In recent years, reconsiderations of the gaze studies in tourism have emerged. They include the host/reverse gaze (Moufakkir and Reisinger 2013), the secondary gaze (Huang and Lee 2010; MacCannell 2001), the intra-tourist gaze (Holloway et al. 2011), the expert gaze (Wu 2012), and the family gaze (Baerenhold et al. 2004). The interest of this article is in the host gaze, which is also labelled as reverse gaze (Gillespie 2006) and local gaze (Huang and Lee 2010; Jordan and Aitchison 2008).

The task of understanding the locals' views of tourists was first embraced by the pioneer anthropologists who studied cultures in contact (Smith 1978). In these studies there was an implicit recognition that the local communities and hosts were not

simply part of the scenery for the visitors but functioning social groups with clear views about tourism and tourists. For example, Crick (1989) expressed concern about the harm that tourism could do to local youth. He advocated research to examine how the young hosts see tourism. One application of this idea of studying the gaze of the local youth was carried out by Canosa et al. (2001). They examined how the local adolescents in Positano, Italy, see tourists. Stereotypes and negative images were identified, possibly because the sheer numbers of short-term visitors prevented detailed knowledge and interaction. Canosa et al. highlighted the importance of the low season as a time of recovery for the local youth in terms of recapturing their local identity and activity patterns. The perceptions of those aged 13–15 years old and those aged 16–19 years old were different, with the latter being less positive and seeking to move away from their hometown because of the strong tourism presence. In an extension of this kind of work, Maoz (2006) and Uriely et al. (2009) studied social interaction between hosts and visitors in a number of settings. In these cases in India and southern Israel, respectively, the researchers reported a degree of empowerment deriving from the way the locals organized their views of the tourists. Maoz (2006: 222) observed that "both tourist and local gazes exist, affecting and feeding each other". Importantly, in these studies there is the ongoing recognition that the hosts are not passive and powerless, but through stereotyping and objectification, they do define tourists in distinctive ways and exercise some control over their situation.

In a recent book edited by Moufakkir and Reisinger (2013), studies in a number of settings highlight the practical and conceptual value of continuing to analyse encounters from the local as well as the tourist perspective. For example, Morrison (2013) observes that in Thailand, the consequences of the host gaze extend to the way the government manages access to the country through visa controls. Tourists from some "undesirable" countries have greater difficulty in entering the kingdom. In another example, Reisinger and Turner (2003) examined the Turkish hoteliers' views of Russian tourists. They reported a range of negative perceptions underpinned by misunderstandings and contrasting views of what each party considered to be appropriate behaviour. Bunten (2013), studying indigenous tour guides in Alaska, reported findings showing that the guides build some emotional protection for their identity and create positive feelings of self-worth by gazing on and categorizing the diverse tourists they entertain. Sometimes these categories were not very flattering. The implication from the studies cited is that hosts are not passive actors in the tourist-host interaction process but active interpreters of their experiences and the social contacts they encounter.

15.2.2 Research Opportunities

There is therefore a growing literature focusing on hosts' active roles during tourism development. Research in this area, however, can be more insightful and useful if we consider the following issues.

Firstly, an emic understanding of the locals' definitions of tourists and how they classify them tends to be missing. In previous studies an academic definition of tourists is often adopted, or more simply, the term is taken for granted, rather than considering the lay concepts constructed by the hosts (Amuquandoh 2010). This weakness in the existing approaches heightens the value of the current interest in exploring the hosts' direct classification and perceptions of outsiders.

Secondly, when turning to the samples of the hosts who have been studied, many studies of the host gaze have focused on the views of the tourism service personnel (Bunten 2013; Maoz 2006; Reisinger and Turner 2003). A wider view of the hosts' responses, including new target samples, can be a useful addition to the breadth of the research.

Thirdly, it is an important feature of this kind of work that the diversity of tourists being studied is appreciated. Previous studies have tended to focus on specific groups of tourists, such as solo female tourists (Jordan and Aitchison 2008), gay tourists (Hughes and Carlos 2010), young backpackers (Maoz 2006), Western tourists (Erb 2000), or tourists of a specific nationality (Pizam 1999). Studies like these are helpful, but other and broader samples of tourist types and their origins can be valuable to build our understanding.

Last but not least, most of the gaze studies are about the interactions between Western tourists and hosts in developing countries and communities. Few empirical studies have explored the gaze of hosts from non-Western settings, although an awareness of this opportunity has been recognized (Huang and Lee 2010). Research from this developing world perspective is necessary, especially in contemporary tourism where the Asian world, in particular, is both providing and receiving significant numbers of tourists (Leung et al. 2015).

In noting these conceptual directions in the gaze literature, the present research seeks to contribute to the analysis of host-guest perceptions in tourism studies. Some dimensions and variables to be considered in assembling such a data resource for further conceptual development include ensuring that the work is built on an emic perspective, that multiple geographical spaces are considered, that a breadth of tourism circumstances are reviewed, and that the work offers accounts looking towards the future as well as cataloguing the present circumstances and past developments.

15.3 Research Methods

15.3.1 The Research Context

The research context of the current study is the Old Town of Lhasa, Tibet. Lhasa is well-known for its high altitude and the belief of Tibetan Buddhism. The Old Town of Lhasa is located in the city centre and occupies an area of 6.74 km^2. It keeps the original structure of a traditional city, including the street layout and its architecture style. It is rich in tourism resources, including 3 world heritage sites, 56 traditional

Tibetan yards, 27 Buddhist temples and Islamic mosques, and other tangible and intangible assets. Though small in size, the Old Town is influential in Tibetan culture. Further, due to its role as the main city and capital, it is also the area where most tourists first encounter Tibet (Tudbden and Li 2011).

With the improvement of access through expanded rail links (since 2006) as well as increasing air access, tourism in Lhasa has been growingly dramatically. In 2015, 11.7903 million tourists visited Lhasa and the number is expected to keep increasing (Lhasa Statistics Bureau 2016). Tourism development in the Old Town, as well as the whole Tibet region, witnesses a strong seasonality. In both 2014 and 2015, more than 85% of tourists arrived from May to October, with July and August forming the peak season (Lhasa Statistics Bureau 2016). Considering the large scale of Chinese tourists' mobility and the great potential in the low season, tourism development in Lhasa is considered as the rising development stage in Butler's (1980) widely cited tourism area life cycle model. The management of tourism community relationships at this specific stage is essential, as it will directly affect the development of the following stages and the sustainability and quality of the whole destination area.

15.3.2 The Research Respondents

Tibetan youth were of special interest in this study. In particular, "post-1980s'" youth, who were born in the 1980s, were studied. In the Chinese society, "post-1980s'" youth is an important cohort. They are the first generation in China who have gone through and benefited from China's dramatic social and economic changes, with its roots in the government's opening reforms since 1978 (Moore and College 2005). Arguably, they have formed distinctive psychological and sociological characteristics from their predecessors (Deng et al. 2009). Secondly and most importantly, youth are recognized worldwide as the main players and "indicators" of the future, because they represent a source of cultural innovation and dynamism (World Bank 2007). In the Chinese context, "post-1980s'" youth are the potential leaders for social and economic development, including tourism. Thirdly, as far as peripheral areas, like Lhasa, are concerned, local youth's continued residence is pivotal to the human capital of the social regions (Muilu and Rusanen 2003). Last but not least, in tourism and youth studies, young hosts are "the missing half". That is, young tourists have been widely studied, while young hosts have been overlooked (UNWTO 2008).

In the Old Town of Lhasa, there are two groups of "post-1980s'" youth. Lhasa, as a newly developed tourism destination, has attracted 133,000 migrants from other regions, mainly Han Chinese (Lhasa Municipal People's Government 2009). A number of these migrants live or/and work in the Old Town of Lhasa. Due to the distinctively tough plateau environment, they tend to be young and play critical roles in Lhasa's tourism development. This study has therefore incorporated the migrant youth as another group of research respondents together with the indigenous Tibetan youth.

15.3.3 Research Methodology

Three research methods, photo-elicitation interview, focus groups, and a questionnaire-based survey, were involved in the current study. They were conducted in combination and also as a sequence with data collection from each phase providing guidelines for the next approach. Figure 15.1 concisely explains the reasons for using each method.

15.3.3.1 Photo-Elicitation Interview Study

The research technique of a photo-elicitation interview is allied to the growing role of visual images in contemporary life (Pearce et al. 2015). In photo-elicitation interviews, photos are integrated into the interview process (Collier and Collier 1986). A photo-elicitation interview is different from the conventional sociological or anthropological interview. In this kind of interview, photos, rather than questions which may or may not make sense to the informants, are at the centre of the discussion (Pink 2007). With photos as the eliciting stimuli, the participants work collaboratively with the researcher in a more equal and natural environment to portray, describe, or analyse a social phenomenon (Harper 2002). During the interview, the researcher acts as a listener when the participant interprets the photos and narrates the stories behind the photos for the researcher (Collier and Collier 1986).

In the current research, where the researchers are outsiders, special attention was paid to create a relaxing atmosphere, where the respondents can feel free to talk. Photo-elicitation interviews, rather than traditional interviews, were thus adopted. In detail, four photo-elicitation interviews were undertaken. The four interviewees, two indigenous Tibetan youth and two migrant Tibetan youth, were recruited through one of the researchers' networking in Tibet. The participants were offered

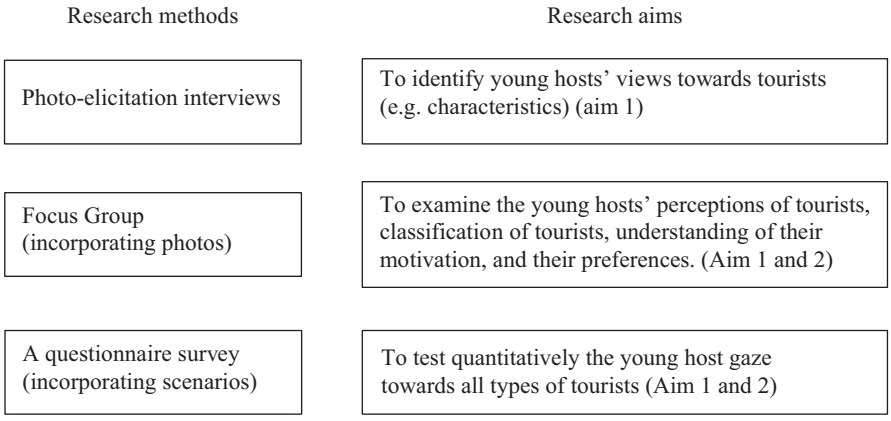

Fig. 15.1 Research methods and research aims of this study

Table 15.1 Profile of focus groups in the Old Town of Lhasa

Group	Ethnicity of members	Major occupation	Number of participants	Length (min)
FG-1	Tibetan	Educated, stable jobs in government	5 (2 male, 3 female)	92
FG-2	Han	Various areas of tourism industry	6 (3 male, 3 female)	67
FG-3	Tibetan	Hostel	4 (female)	49
FG-4	Han	Work in different areas in Lhasa after education there	5 (3 male, 2 female)	62

a digital camera and asked to take 10–15 pictures in a week's time to express their views on tourists and what the tourists would like to see in their community. Interviews lasting 40–60 min were conducted on an individual basis in a Tibetan traditional tea room, and the participants' views were recorded with their permission. The data from photo-elicitation interviews were content analysed.

15.3.3.2 Focus Group Study

On gaining the initial information about the young Tibetans' views of tourists, focus groups were then organized to identify the young hosts' perceptions of tourists, classification of tourists, understanding of tourists' motivation, and their own preferences for types of tourists. Focus group participants were recruited through key informant recruitment approach (Peek and Fothergill 2009). The first two key informants were the first and third interviewees during the photo-elicitation interviews, while the other two informants were a manager in a Tibetan Hostel and a Han civil servant. With the key informants' assistance, four focus groups were organized (see profiles in Table 15.1). Diverse techniques were adopted during the focus group to encourage the participants to talk openly and freely; the tactics were using the pre-existing friendship of subcommunities, choosing familiar venues, facilitating the discussion with pictures, and providing snacks and drinks. The researchers also kept reminding participants that there were no right or wrong answers in anything they said and that it was not necessary to reach a consensus.

Most of focus groups were transcribed within 1–3 days after their completion. The transcription was done in Mandarin. Subsequent analysis and presentation of quotes and voices were reexpressed in English as required. Analysis of the focus groups followed Krueger and Casey's (2000) five-step framework – familiarization, identifying themes, indexing, charting, and interpretation. Direct quotes from focus groups are used in interpreting the results of this study.

Table 15.2 The research profile of the survey respondents

		Statistics	
Demographic profiles		Frequency ($N = 258$)	Percent
Gender	Male	149	57.8
	Female	109	42.2
Regional origin	Indigenous Tibetan	134	51.9
	Migrant Tibetan	124	48.1
Education level	Junior middle school or under	27	10.5
	Senior middle school or equal	71	27.5
	College/university	138	53.5
	Postgraduate or above	22	8.5
Religious status	Devout believers	81	31.4
	Periodic temple attendees	65	25.2
	Not religious believers	112	43.4
Contact with tourists	Always	20	7.8
	Often	57	22.1
	Sometimes	139	53.9
	Seldom	42	16.3
Benefits from tourism	Totally benefited	27	10.5
	Benefited to some extent	94	36.4
	Not directly benefited	97	37.6
	Not benefited at all	40	15.5

15.3.3.3 A Questionnaire-Based Survey

Material relevant for the questionnaire was constructed based on the emic information gained from the photo-elicitation interviews and focus groups. In detail, 258 valid questionnaires were collected in the Old Town of Lhasa. All the questionnaires were delivered on a face-to-face basis, either by one of the authors or three Tibetan research assistants from a local university. Surveys were mainly collected through visiting local households and tea rooms in the study site.

Table 15.2 reports the demographic information about the survey respondents. The sample was well-distributed in terms of gender, regional origins, religious beliefs, contacts, and benefits from tourism. The education level was higher than the average level of youth in Lhasa. It was not the result of using a convenience sample but caused by two contextual issues. Firstly, the incorporation of the better educated migrant youth raised the overall education level. An independent sample t-test comparing the education level of the two groups supported the earlier sentiment ($t = -4.07$; 2-tailed $p = 0.000$). The second reason for the higher education level was that when the research team conducted the household or tea rooms' survey, the individual who had received the highest education was frequently pushed forward to complete the survey.

15.4 Research Findings

15.4.1 Overall Representations of Tourists to Lhasa

This study does not employ a standard UNWTO or other textbook definition of tourism. Instead it takes the terms tourism and tourist in ways which the local people in Tibet use and understand the concept. These lay concepts of tourist and tourism were initially explored during the photo-elicitation interviews and were further discussed in the focus groups. Six photos were elicited from the interview stage, reflecting local youth's images of the tourists who ascend the mountains to see them (see examples in Fig. 15.2).

The photos of tourists were used to stimulate discussion in the focus groups. Typical statements describing tourists include "tourists are temporary visitors from other regions, both home and abroad". "Tourists are outsiders, and they will head back home or other destinations soon". A number of participants thought pilgrims

Fig. 15.2 Some images of tourists to the Old Town of Lhasa. Source: Provided by the photo-elicitation interviewees, used with permission

were not tourists, because "basically, tourists are consumers". "Tourists are paying for their tickets, food, accommodation, and other items. Their consumption accelerates the economic development in Lhasa". Other comments included, "tourists are recognizable in appearance, because tourists look and act differently from local residents. They usually wear colorful sportswear, with a camera or smart phone". To summarize the young hosts' representations, *tourists in the Old Town of Lhasa are "outsiders", who stay temporarily, consume a lot, and look different.*

In terms of who are tourists, the indigenous youth and migrant youth reported some differences in defining "look different". The indigenous youth tended to focus more on appearance, while the migrant youth focused more on the consumption and behavioural issues.

15.4.2 Classification of "Outsiders"

Based on the initial understanding of tourists, further questions were asked in the focus groups to examine the young hosts' understanding of tourists. The young hosts noticed that tourists to the Old Town were heterogeneous. They were seen as differing in age, gender, nationality, and occupation. They also indicated that tourists travelled in different styles (e.g. package and independent), used different transportation (e.g. airlines, trains, coaches, and self-driving), stayed in different accommodation (e.g. hostels, family inns, budget hotels, and upscale hotels), had different lengths of stay (e.g. few days to several weeks), had different interests, and were involved in different activities (e.g. visiting well-known world heritage sites, temples, local markets, museums, wetlands, and lakes). Nevertheless, the most frequently noted grouping criteria were based on racial and national differences. They suggested that the "outsiders" wandering around their community included "foreigners", "inland Han people", "Eastern Asians", and "*Khampa and Amdo* Tibetans" (see Fig. 15.3).

In the young Tibetans' language, "foreigners" represented the Caucasians. Being "white" was the key characteristic to these Tibetan youth. "These foreigners are the people we are curious about but have difficulty in communicating with, because they speak in English or other languages". They considered "foreigners" as a single culture and did not distinguish between tourists from different Western countries. "I think these white people, with blue eyes and high noses, are similar. I can't tell the differences between an American and a German, or whatever". Tourists from East Asia, mainly Japan and South Korea, however, were excluded from "foreigners" and were regarded as another single group. Meanwhile, the most common tourists were "inland Han people", which was further divided into middle and west inlanders and coastal inlanders. The youth referred to most of the regions outside of Tibet as inland China, with Inner Mongolia as an exception. Additionally, they pointed out that Tibetans from other regions, mainly *Khampa* and *Amdo*, who spoke different dialects, but shared similar culture, were also tourists. Other tourists, such as those from South Asia (e.g. Indians and Nepalese) and Africa, were small in number but were identified as a further separate group.

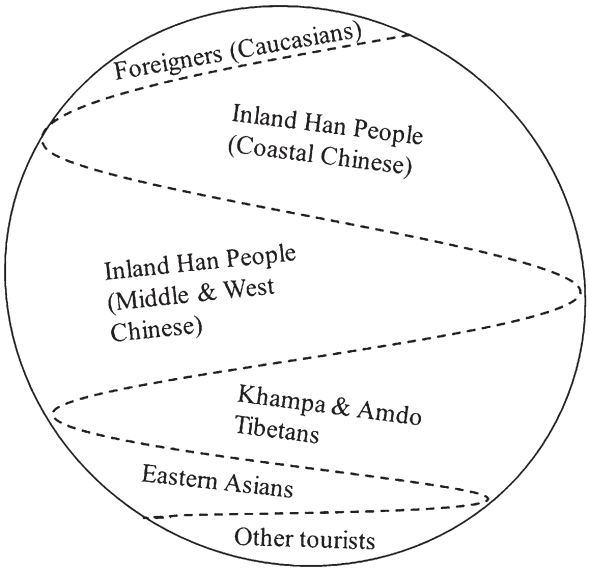

Fig. 15.3 Classification of tourists by Tibetan young hosts. Note: The space allocated in Fig. 15.1 approximates the importance attached to each group by the research respondents

15.4.3 Why Do "Outsiders" Come?

Questions about what motivates the outsiders to visit Lhasa were also raised in the focus groups. Interestingly, most of the members believed that it was the local attractions that drew the tourists. In detail, five sets of tourism assets were perceived as attractive to "outsiders". These five tourism assets, including both developed and underdeveloped ones, were the world heritage sites, the religious sites, the traditional Tibetan yards, Tibetan daily life and customs, and Tibetan medicine. They were initially identified through photo-elicitation interviews and discussed during all the focus groups.

Occasionally, some words describing tourists' motivation emerged, such as "seeking a challenge", "novelty", "belief", and "exoticism". Further questions were asked to probe their understanding of why tourists would like to see the attractions they mentioned earlier. The focus group members suggested that tourists are diversified, and they visit Lhasa for different reasons. In their opinion, Eastern Asians and Tibetans from other regions are in pursuit of spiritual enhancement. "Foreigners" are more adventurous and keen to challenge themselves, while the "Han people" are looking for fun, escape, recognition, novelty, learning, relationships, and nostalgia.

15.4.4 Preferences for Specific "Outsiders": Focus Groups' Interpretation

The examination of the motivations suggested that the Tibetan "post-1980s'" young hosts had varied views towards different tourist groups. Thus, a question about their preferences for specific "outsiders" was asked in the focus groups, as well as assessed in the questionnaire-based survey. This material speaks most directly to the sense of welcoming tourists.

In the first focus group which was comprised of five well-educated Tibetan ethnic youth, they suggested that "all visitors to Lhasa are guests and welcomed, no matter where they come from". If they can choose, they prefer "those who respect Tibetan culture, religious beliefs and rules" and "those who spend more and stay longer".

The second focus group members were the migrant youth in Lhasa working in tourism. They indicated that they preferred the tourists with greater consuming power. For example, Northeastern Chinese were generally considered as generous, while the coastal Chinese and Asians were not preferred, because "they are smart and enjoy bargaining". In their mind, the Caucasians were acceptable, especially for world heritage sites, because they are environmentally responsible.

In the third focus group, the Tibetan ethnic youth working in a local hostel offered different perceptions. In their opinion, all tourists should be welcomed, but those believing in Buddhism are most welcome to visit religious-related sites. They also expressed a favourable view towards those who respect Tibetan culture, for example, the Caucasians. Meanwhile, they showed negative attitudes towards the official business visitors, who are usually catered for by the local government.

The youth who moved to Tibet and who had received higher education in Tibetan universities were the respondents for the last focus group. They worked in various areas. They offered very different attitudes. The tourists they welcomed the most were coastal Chinese as well as the Northeastern Asians. Additionally, they welcomed anyone who brought economic or social benefits to Lhasa.

An analysis of the focus group data suggested that the indigenous Tibetan groups were more influenced by the Buddhist ideology that "everyone under the heaven is brother and sister". They asserted many times that "all visitors are guests, and all of them are welcomed". Meanwhile, they emphasized the importance of respecting their culture. One indigenous Tibetan participant in the first group observed, "Tibet is diversified. It is much more than religion and exoticism. Their photos are misrepresenting Tibet and will, possibly, mislead future tourists' perceptions. …Those who appreciate our culture and customs, and respect our people, are always welcome."

The migrant tourism-related groups paid considerable attention to the tourists' consumption patterns. They preferred those who were from wealthy areas and those who spent more money. One of them suggested, "I liked the coastal tourists, but not now. These people are very shrewd and always bargain with us. Those from northeast and middle China, with less traveling experience, are more easy-going and

generous. We can make money from their pockets. …My friends (business friends in a local souvenir market) and I prefer those who spend more (L-FG-2)". The other migrant Tibetan group did not have clear preferences towards different groups of tourists.

15.4.5 Preferences for Specific "Outsiders": Questionnaire-Based Survey's Interpretation

A suggestion arising from the focus groups study was that the young hosts might prefer certain groups visiting certain sites, while the preferences may change when other sites are considered. In the questionnaire, respondents were asked to specify which tourist group they would like to attract in the future for each kind of tourism asset. Five tourist groups were specified.

As a result, 216 out of 258 cases who specified their preferences for tourist groups were considered as valid. Descriptive analysis indicated the overall preferences (see Table 15.3).

Some complex patterns reported in Table 15.3 indicate that the hosts' preferences depend on their understanding of different tourist groups, as well as what tourism assets the tourists are visiting. Foreigners, the tourists from Western countries, were slightly preferred, even though they only constituted a small part of the tourism market (from 1.93% to 8.21% in 2005–2011) (Lhasa Statistics Bureau 2016). This preference was especially evident when the world heritage sites were considered. Overall, coastal Han Chinese and middle and west Han Chinese received moderately high preference ratings. These two groups did not vary substantially in terms of preferred percentages. Tourists from inside Tibet, *Khampa and Amdo* Tibetans, were not always regarded as tourists (see focus groups discussion), because a high proportion of them visit the Old Town for pilgrimage reasons and do

Table 15.3 Preferences for tourist groups for the tourism assets

	Tourist groups				
Tourism assets	*Khampa* and *Amdo* (N/%[a])	Middle and west Han (N/%)	Coastal Han (N/%)	Eastern Asians (N/%)	Foreigners (Westerns) (N/%)
World heritage sites	5/2.3%	48/22.2%	60/27.8%	12/5.6%	91/42.1%
Religious sites	41/19.0%	41/19.0%	58/26.9%	18/8.3%	58/26.9%
Traditional yards	23/10.6%	54/25.0%	50/23.1%	16/7.4%	73/33.8%
Daily life and customs	13/6.0%	60/27.8%	46/21.3%	22/10.2%	75/34.7%
Tibetan medicine	34/15.7%	62/28.7%	45/20.9%	24/11.1%	51/23.6%

[a]Percentages refer to the row

not behave as classic tourists. They were considered as one of the most desirable groups. The number of tourists from oriental countries (East Asians) was small at the time of research (2010–2011). Though Japan and Korea are the top tourist-generating countries for Tibet, their potential as tourists was not rated highly by Tibetan "post-1980s". Compared with tourists from other origins, they were accorded the lowest preferences.

In addition to the basic frequency analysis, the cross tabulation between the preferences for tourist groups and regional origins of tourists was examined using the chi-square test. It was found that the indigenous Tibetan hosts and the migrant Tibetan young hosts reported significantly different preferences for types of tourists visiting the traditional Tibetan yards ($\chi^2 = 16.49$, $p = 0.002$) and Tibetan medicine ($\chi^2 = 18.73$, $p = 0.001$). For the traditional Tibetan yards, the indigenous hosts preferred Tibetans and tourists from middle and west China, while the migrant youth strongly preferred the coastal Han Chinese and foreigners. Concerning the Tibetan medicine, the most desirable market recognized by the indigenous youth were the middle and west Chinese, followed by *Khampa and Amdo* and foreigners. The migrant youth, however, shared their preferences equally between the coastal Han Chinese and the Eastern Asians.

15.5 Discussion: Mediating Issues on the Young Host Gaze

Based on the research findings, as well as recent studies developing the host gaze concept, this study suggests that in the Old Town of Lhasa context, there are five major forces that mediate the young hosts' gaze. These forces are image formation processes, cultural distance, the nature of tourist sites, the hosts' social life, and their social values (see Fig. 15.4).

15.5.1 Image Formation Processes

Interaction between groups in contact is inevitably built on the initial classification of the other, with the most readily available, easily accessible criteria driving the descriptions (Tajfel 1978). In the case of the Tibetan young hosts, these image-forming mechanisms were shown to be visitors' appearance and their origins. Other sorting criteria such as age, gender, and transport type were minor factors in the spontaneous determination of tourist groups.

From the focus groups, it is apparent that that the classifications of tourists employed by the hosts are useful organizers to guide their thinking. These classifications do not, however, become fixed stereotypes applied invariantly across multiple tourist settings and types of attractions. Instead the applications of the distinctions made about types of tourists are graded and subtle: the tourist settings and attractions visited matter.

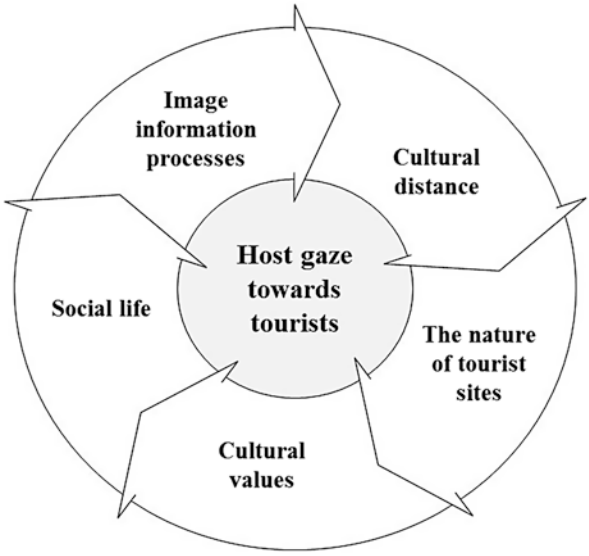

Fig. 15.4 The five forces that mediate the young hosts' gaze towards tourists to Lhasa

15.5.2 Cultural Distance

Cultural distance and its influence on the host gaze have been empirically studied by Moufakkir (2011) when he examined how the Dutch hosts gaze on German tourists and Asian tourists. He suggested that the Dutch hosts were critical of German tourists, while they were fairly tolerant with Asian tourists because of the latter's different cultural background. This view was partly observed in the Old Town of Lhasa. The Tibetan young hosts showed high preferences for "foreigners" (Western tourists in Tibetan youth's language). It may be linked to their perceived "good behaviour" (e.g. "don't complain about the entrance fee for the world heritage sites" and "showing interest in local culture") (FG-1&4). The tolerance is also informed by the substantial cultural distance. The photo-elicitation interviewees and focus groups members acknowledged that they did not have detailed knowledge about Western tourists. However, "since they come from far away, we should be hospitable and welcome them".

It is, however, worth pointing out that the cultural distance and geographical distance do not always work in this way when it comes to viewing different subcultures from within the same or similar culture (Confucian culture in this context). The young Tibetans saw other Tibetan ethnic groups (*Khampa and Amdo)* and west and middle Han Chinese as more desirable for visiting traditional Tibetan yards and Tibetan medicine than the more geographically distant coastal Han Chinese tourists. The process of categorization and the degree of welcome towards tourists from within a culture may be affected by forces other than relative similarity or dissimilarity or physical distance travelled.

15.5.3 The Nature of Tourist Sites

Pearce (2005) suggested encounters between tourists and other tourists and, by implication their hosts, are strongly influenced by the nature of the settings they visit. These contextual considerations also apply to host gaze studies. Both the focus groups and questionnaire-based surveys indicated that the preferences for different tourist groups were related to the object or field of view of the tourists. For world heritage sites, the young hosts preferred Western travellers and coastal Chinese, who were regarded as having more travel experiences and seen as more "civilized". By way of contrast, for Tibetan medicine, which is linked to the people's representations of health and therapies, middle and west Chinese were viewed as the preferred tourist group.

15.5.4 Cultural Values

The influence of cultural values on people's social representations of tourism has increasingly been emphasized (Ateljevic and Doorne 2003). Values which can be proposed as relevant in this context include the traditional values (Tibetan Buddhism and Confucianism) (Szeto 2010), the modern culture (influence from Western culture) (Stanat 2005), and the contemporary cultural forces pertaining to Tibet associated with an immediate concern about stability (Fu 2010).

The cultural values reflected in the host gaze appear to derive in part from the traditional Confucian and Buddhist ways of thinking. In the questionnaire-based survey, as many as 42 (out of 258) participants chose "others" rather than specifying their preferences for certain group of tourists. These 42 respondents included 31 indigenous Tibetan youth and 11 migrant youth to Lhasa. According to the face-to-face explanations offered by the participants after the survey to research team members, "others" often meant that all tourists should be welcomed. For many respondents, all tourists are "guests" and should be welcomed equally. This phenomenon is deeply rooted in both Confucian and Buddhist values. According to Confucius, loving others is a great way of cultivating ourselves, especially to be a gentleman, in the full sense. In this sense, "everyone visiting Lhasa should be welcomed (FG-1,3 &4)". Being friendly to others is also one of the Buddhist ethics in dealing with an outside society (Harvey 2000). Following these perceptions, it is clearer as to why nearly one sixth of the respondents would not choose a specific group but rather welcomed tourists of all origins.

15.5.5 Social Life

While no direct data from the study support this issue, a wider view of the perceptions of the tourists suggests that attitudes may differ in the high and low seasons. A large number of indigenous young hosts treated seasonality as neutral or even positive, because they connected seasonality with the benefits of a long off-season. Typical statements include, "…Work and leisure are complementary parts in our life. They cannot be separated without destroying the joy of work and the bliss of leisure. So why not welcome the low seasons (FG-1)?" "We enjoy the peaceful time without tourists wandering around and gazing at us (FG-1)". "It's winter time. It is a traditionally relaxing time to enjoy the harvest and the sunshine (FG-3)". The migrant young hosts, however, tended to connect seasonality with job insecurity (short-term employment rather than sustainable long-terms jobs), low returns on investment causing subsequent high risk in operations, and problems relating to crowding, parking, and the overuse of facilities during the peak season.

15.6 Conclusion

We know much about the tourist gaze, but our understanding of the host gaze, especially the young host gaze, is comparatively meagre. This study examined how the young hosts in the Old Town of Lhasa view tourists who come to see them, their society, and their landscapes. A series of research methods, including photo-elicitation interviews, focus groups, and a questionnaire-based survey, were adopted to explore this research topic. In essence, it suggests that the "outsiders" have the unique power to gaze at the local community, but the local hosts also have their views of the world challenged and possibly changed by those who look at them. The local community may therefore seek to classify visitors in fresh ways and hence physically or psychologically control those who seek to gaze at them.

This case study indicates that the young hosts had their own lay concepts and understanding of who are tourists and why they come. Tourists in their eyes are generally outsiders whose appearance is different and who spend money in their community. They came from different parts of the world, e.g. other Tibetan regions (Khampa and Amdo), middle and west Han China, coastal China, Eastern Asia, and Western countries. Stereotypes towards tourists from different regions were observed. The young hosts were shown to have subtle preferences for types of visitors depending on the settings being considered. Building on the previous studies in the host-tourist contact, it can be suggested that the host gaze is a fluid concept. It is influenced by the interaction among multiple factors, e.g. image formation processes, cultural distance, nature of tourist sites, cultural values, and the social life. This summary of the mediating factors has the potential to be applied and tested in other contexts.

The work reported in this chapter contributes to the current literature in five ways. Firstly, this study employed a diversity of research methods and created a nonthreatening environment for collecting information. Thus the emic voices of the young hosts were elicited, which enhances our understanding of the host-guest interaction (Amuquandoh 2010). Secondly, this study incorporated both the ordinary hosts and tourism service hosts as the research respondents, rather than being merely focused on the service staff (Maoz 2006; Uriely et al. 2009). This breadth of interest better represents the community voices. Thirdly, this study empowered the young hosts to define and classify tourists in their communities. The findings revealed diversity in the views of tourists and moves beyond views of specific tourist groups (Hughes and Carlos 2010; Maoz 2006). In addition, the results, especially the young Tibetans' articulate views towards the Han Chinese tourists, further support the increasing academic appeal of researching the changing tourism world and the rise of tourists from less developed countries (Leung et al. 2015). Further, by focusing on the young hosts, this chapter offers a starting point for policymakers and managers, who are looking for future-oriented and tailored directions to enhance tourism community relationships (Bramwell and Lane 2011). Last but not least, the work offers implications for destination planning and management in less developed areas. Specific techniques such as those used here can elicit youth and local voices who can add their local knowledge as tourism is planned and grows.

In summary, the kind of work described in this chapter may be viewed as having two broad implications for the sustainable development of tourism in emerging Asian destinations as well as those locations where rapid growth is destabilizing local ways of life. The approach is built on respecting the importance of local voices as a guide to preferred types of tourists, tourism development, and tourist activities. Firstly, the contemporary vision of tourism for communities can be built through the interactive visualization and discussion processes outlined in this chapter, an approach consistent with the suggestions emanating from publications about the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development (cf. DASTA 2017). A second way in which the present chapter contributes broad implications from the particular case lies in appreciating that strong cultural frames embodied in religious and spiritual values predispose Asian hosts to view the whole business of tourism in ways unfamiliar to Western commentators. This perspective was highlighted in the present study when substantial numbers of young hosts stated that their values drove them to welcome all tourists in an undifferentiated way as a part of their approach to interacting with all others. As tourism researchers and promotional bodies attempt to use target marketing to attract certain kinds of tourists to destinations to foster sustainability goals (cf. Font and McCabe 2017), it is valuable to consider ways to work with the local cultural and religious values rather than impose solutions which contradict long-held ways of responding to outsiders.

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Chapter 16
Cultural Heritage Tourism Through the Lens of Youth: The Case of Thai Youth Visitors to Ayutthaya Historical Park, Thailand

Siwasak Pansukkum and Jason R. Swanson

Abstract While youth tourism and cultural tourism – two increasingly important segments of tourism activity – have been widely researched, an opportunity exists to further examine the intersection of youth travel demand and cultural tourism supply. Understanding youth travelers (aged 15–25 years old) is important because they are eager to explore and learn about different cultures (Guo P, AU-GSB e-J 4(2):70–80, 2008), yearn for a sense of freedom (Schönhammer R, Phenomenol Pedagog 10:19–27, 1992), and are different from previous generations of travelers (Richards G, Wilson J, Tour Rev Int 8(2):57–67, 2004, Boukas N, J Cult Herit Manag Sustain Dev 2(2):164–169, 2008). Cultural tourism destinations are popular with youth travelers as they seek to explore different environments and experiences by visiting places and sites with abundant historical and current cultural qualities (Moisa 2007). Beyond the connection with youth tourists, cultural tourism is significant in that this industry provides positive effects upon the economic and social dimensions of a community, revitalizes destinations that may otherwise be forgotten or underdeveloped, and provides resources for the expansion of conservation activities (McKercher B, du Cros H, Cultural tourism: the partnership between tourism and cultural heritage management. The Haworth Hospitality Press, Binghamton, 2002).The purpose of this study is to provide an understanding of young Thai visitors' behaviors and attitudes associated with cultural heritage tourism in Thailand by identifying their personal profile and discerning their views toward cultural heritage destinations. Additionally, the current study also examines the historical attraction site's attributes that youth visitors consider important and how these attributes meet the needs of these young visitors. For this study Ayutthaya Historical Park situated in Ayutthaya province in Thailand, designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in

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1991, was selected as the data collection site. Results reveal that the beauty of historical buildings and landscape, the preservation of cultural heritage attraction sites' authenticity, the maintenance of the historical buildings' exterior, and the maintenance of the historical buildings' interior are considered the most important attributes to the youth visitors. Attributes considered as weaknesses of the attraction sites are the number of toilets available, the amount of parking spaces provided, the amount of restaurants and dining areas, and the quality of souvenirs offered at the attraction sites. Furthermore, the quality of staff service and activities offered at the attraction sites was found to also need emphasis and attention.

Keywords Ayutthaya Historical Park · Cultural tourism · Heritage tourism · Youth behavior · Youth visitor

16.1 Introduction

The youth tourist market has been growing gradually in the past decade and is expected to keep growing in the future (UNWTO 2016). Because the unique attitudes and behaviors of youth positively affect the tourism industry in general, tourism policy makers and tourism marketers in many countries worldwide highlight this group as a primary tourist demographic. Among several types of tourism, the interest of cultural and historical attractions appears to influence youths to travel (Moisa 2007; Garrod and Fyall 2000). Misiura (2006) indicates the preference of tourist in their travel choices between the ages of 18–35 years old is to travel to areas that have cultural attractions rather than to areas with other leisure activities. Tourism Queensland (2012) revealed similar findings that more than 20% of Australian tourists between 15 and 34 years old plan to visit the cultural attraction sites in their own country and participate in cultural activities provided at those sites.

Cultural heritage tourism is considered a core foundation for the sustainable tourism development of a country. Visitors' travel experiences, attitudes, and behaviors are crucial elements for determining successful destination marketing and provide useful information for analyzing the performance of a destination site's management (Prentice et al. 1998). Because there is a positive relationship between youths and cultural tourism, the tourism organizations and institutions who are responsible for cultural tourism planning in many countries have adopted cultural tourism policies and strategies to serve youth tourists (Boukas 2008). Although many researchers focus on youths and their travel patterns, there is limited effort to investigate youth travelers' attitudes and behaviors when traveling to cultural heritage destinations. In Thailand's case, although there have been extensive cultural heritage tourism studies, information concerning the youth demographic and their cultural tourism experiences is still limited.

The purpose of this study is to provide an understanding of young Thai visitors' attitudes and behaviors toward cultural heritage attraction sites in Thailand with the

hope of helping tourism planners and tourism organizations that are responsible for cultural tourism planning to create appropriate strategies to serve the needs and desires of youth visitors as well as create a sustainable tourism industry. Furthermore, this study also examines the historical attraction site's attributes that are considered important to youth visitors and how these sites meet their needs. The research results could be used to develop a cultural heritage evaluation tool that can be applied to other attraction sites, initially in Thailand but also in attraction sites worldwide. For this study, Ayutthaya Historical Park situated in Ayutthaya province in Thailand, designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1991, was selected as the data collection site.

16.2 Literature Review

16.2.1 Who Youth Are

In previous tourism studies, age range was used as the defining factor of who falls into the youth tourist demographic. For example, Swart (2010, p.19) defines youth visitors as "people 25 years old and under who travel outside the family unit, not for business, and not primarily to visit friends or relatives." This definition is consistent with several other studies such as Theuns (1991) and Jefferson (1991) that define youth visitors as people between 15 and 25 years old who travel from their homeland either in a group or individually. However, the definition of who is considered to be a youth visitor encompasses a slightly different age range by some, as shown in United Nation Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization – UNESCO (2002) – who defines youth visitors as people 15–24 years old. Others, like Simpson (2005), consider people 18–25 years old to be youth tourists, and Nair et al. (1989) define the youth visitors' age range to be from 15 to 28 years old. Since this study concentrates on a particular group of visitors, specifically youth visitors, the definition of the age of the youth is crucial. The conclusions of the previous studies verify the youth visitor age to be between a minimum age of 15 years old and a maximum age of 28 years old. However, the age ranges of between 15 and 25 years old are the most cited; therefore, this is the age range used in this study.

16.2.2 Youth Visitor Motivations

It is recognized that safety conditions are among the most important issues considered by youths when they travel (Egyptian Student Travel Service 2008). Moisa (2007) points out that young people are sometimes worried about safety and security while traveling. This group is likely to reschedule the trip if they learn about an accident that happened at the site or nearby. In addition to the concerns about safety

in terms of transportation, political unrest and disasters are also sources of anxiety among young travelers (Egyptian Student Travel Service 2008).

Another motivating factor influencing youths to travel is the quality of service provided by the chosen destination. Moisa (2007) and Mundojuven (2007) mention that quality of service, such as a state-of-the-art booking system and exceptional staff performance, is a key aspect that youths look at when planning trips. The quality of service encompasses the atmosphere that represents the desires of their age group: quick service, response with multiple options, and utilization of information technology to manage trip details. Moisa (2007) revealed that one of the motivations of youth travelers is the ability to participate in activities arranged by the destination, specifically local activities. Moisa's study is consistent with the study conducted by Richards and Wilson (2003) who also examined youth tourists' motivations and found that one of the biggest motivations driving youths to travel is the desire to experience popular tourist attractions and cultural attractions (historical monuments and sites, museums, religious buildings, castles, cultural events, etc.), followed by interacting with the locals. Interarts (2008), Guo (2008), and Park (2006) state that some youth tourists desire to participate in activities arranged at the site or destination, especially outdoor and recreation activities. Murphy and Pearce's study (1995) is consistent with the studies above and affirms that youth travelers will look through the offered activities first and then look at the beauty and the facility of the sites or attractions.

Because the unique behaviors of this tourist group differ from other tourist groups, such as adult and family tourists (Guo 2008), they draw the attention of private sector organizations and government agencies in countries who wish to develop their tourist marketing strategies to encourage youths to travel more often to the destinations in their countries. Therefore, the current study uses the youth visitors' motivations as a guideline to construct a research instrument to achieve the objectives of the study.

16.2.3 Cultural Heritage Tourism Situation in Thailand

Like many countries in the world, heritage tourism in Thailand is a fast-growing sector and is the second most popular tourism product of the country after natural resources: sea, sand, and sun (Pansukkum 2009). Cultural heritage attractions such as temples, ancient monuments, historical parks, and museums have primarily served as attractions for the Thai tourism industry for decades. Many of these attractions have been designated as World Heritage Sites by UNSECO. Examples of these cultural heritage attraction sites include Ayutthaya Historical Park located in the central region, as well as Sukhothai Historical Park and Kamphaeng Phet Historical Park that are located in the northern region.

Recently, many organizations that market and preserve cultural heritage attraction sites, such as the Fine Arts Department, the Tourism Authority of Thailand, and the Thailand Ministry of Tourism and Sport, have become aware of the importance

of the attractions and are trying to create effective plans to sustain the sites. Although the tourism industry has recognized that the youth travel market is an important generator of tourism income, measurement of the size and importance of this demographic has not been easy due to a shortage of supporting statistical data. In Thailand, only a few studies have focused on youth tourists in relation to heritage tourism. For instance, Chairatudomkul (2008), who studied the cultural route concept as a tool to enable conservation in Thailand, found that most Thais, especially young people, do not have proper knowledge and understanding of Thailand's history. This is primarily due to a lack of appropriate media such as publications, conferences, research papers, museums, and exhibitions. Chairatudomkul's results are supported by the findings of Sangpikul and Batra (2007), regarding the perspective of Thai youths regarding ecotourism in Thailand, and found that Thai youths had only a moderate level of ecotourism knowledge because of the shortage of information available to them.

Currently, the importance of some historical heritage attraction sites in Thailand has decreased. The study by Ayutthaya Historical Office (2015) revealed that the number of Thai visitors visiting Ayutthaya Historical Park especially young-age people has dropped since 2011, while the study by Hayamin (2010) also revealed the number of visitors visiting Sukhothai Historical Park has also reduced. The studies above mentioned that one of the possible reasons that may disrupt the number of visitors to visit the cultural heritage site is the lack of proper maintenance. Thongjan (2013) stated in the study regarding the cultural studies that some heritage sites in Thailand are disregarded and overlooked by the government because of budget constraints. The study revealed that being left in a poor state, some cultural heritage attractions lose their attractiveness and the numbers of tourists visiting the sites have declined. Therefore, to urge tourists, especially Thai youth tourists, to visit sites is crucial. This is not only to increase the economy of the attraction sites but also to acknowledge, understand, and be aware of the importance of historical heritage sites.

16.3 Research Purpose

The purpose of this research is to assess three aspects of cultural heritage tourism: the travel behaviors of youth visitors, the youth visitors' attitudes, and the strengths and weaknesses of the cultural tourism attributes of the attraction sites. Ayutthaya Historical Park, designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1991, located in the center of Ayutthaya province in Thailand was selected as the data collection site. The site covers 720 acres comprising six historical attractions that represent the unique style of architecture of the Ayutthaya period. To evaluate the first aspect, the behaviors of the youth travelers toward cultural heritage attractions in Thailand were studied to better understand this specific group. To assess the second aspect of this study, youth's attitudes toward the perceived importance of, and satisfaction with, the cultural heritage attributes were studied in order to identify the ability of

cultural heritage attraction sites to satisfy the youth tourism demand sector. For the third aspect, the importance-performance analysis (IPA) was used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the cultural heritage tourism attributes.

16.4 Research Method

This study used two methods of data collection: the intercept survey method and the in-depth interview method. The intercept survey method was selected to evaluate information about respondents' demographics, traveling behaviors, and attitudes toward cultural heritage sites. The respondents of the intercept survey were selected from the people who visited Ayutthaya Historical Park during the field survey (December to February 2016). Only visitors who were between 15 and 25 years old and were of Thai nationality were asked to participate in the survey. In total, a sample of 367 respondents participated in the intercept survey.

The intercept survey instrument was divided into three sections: personal demographics, traveling behaviors, and visitors' attitudes toward cultural heritage attributes. The list of cultural attributes used in the study was developed based on previous studies regarding cultural heritage attraction sites as appeared in the studies by Boukas (2008), Egyptian Student Travel Service (2008), Moisa (2007), and Guo (2008). Descriptive analyses, such as frequency and percentage, were used to summarize responses to questions in the first and second sections of the survey. To measure the youths' attitudes toward the perceived importance of, and satisfaction with, cultural heritage attributes, respondents were asked to indicate the perceived importance of, and their satisfaction with, each attribute. These were measured using a five-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (least important/very dissatisfied) to 5 (most important/most satisfied). The mean scores ($\bar{x}$) and standard deviations (sd) were calculated and subjected to an importance-performance analysis (IPA) to investigate the strengths and weaknesses of cultural heritage attributes in the view of Thai youth visitors.

The importance-performance analysis or IPA is generally used to evaluate the product and service performance to understand the needs of customers and the opportunities to maintain the strengths and improve the weaknesses of the attraction sites. In order to examine the strengths and weaknesses of cultural heritage attributes evaluated by this study, a quadrant graph was constructed. The median values of both importance and satisfaction were used as the intermediate scales to divide the graph into four quadrants according to Martilla and James (1977). Strengths and weaknesses can be identified depending on the position of the mean scores of each attribute plotted in the graph. Attributes located in *Quadrant I* are considered the major strengths of the attraction sites (high importance and high satisfaction).

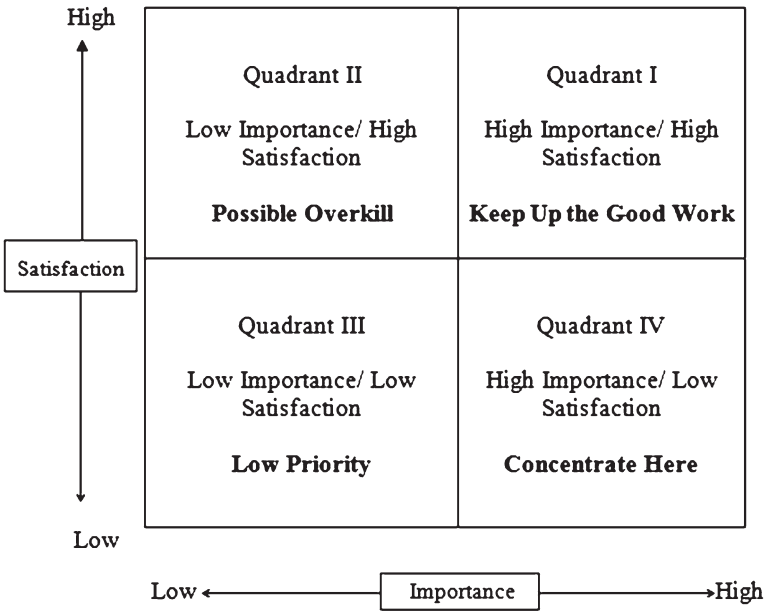

Fig. 16.1 Importance-performance analysis (IPA) (Source: Martilla and James (1977))

Quadrant II represents the minor strengths of the attraction sites (low importance but high satisfaction). *Quadrant III* shows the minor weakness of the attraction sites (low importance and low satisfaction). Importantly, attributes located in *Quadrant IV* are identified as attributes that are major weaknesses of the attraction sites (high importance but low satisfaction) (Fig. 16.1).

The in-depth interview method was selected to encourage the sampling group to share additional in-depth information regarding their behaviors and attitudes when visiting cultural heritage attraction sites. Six participants were chosen from the survey respondents who had experiences in visiting Ayutthaya Historical Park more than twice within 1 year. A total of eight open-ended questions regarding their experience while visiting the cultural sites including the reason for visiting the sites, their motivation, their preference, the perceived importance and satisfaction attributes, the strengths and weaknesses attributes, and suggestion for the sites' improvement were asked. Since the in-depth interview method was less structured than the intercept survey, this provided an opportunity for the interviewer to gather more detailed information and for the respondents to freely express their views and opinions. Content analysis was used to analyze the data gathered from the in-depth interviews.

16.5 Research Findings

16.5.1 The Findings Derived from the Intercept Survey Method

Out of the 367 survey respondents, 50.7% were female and 49.3% were male. The majority age range of both groups was between 18 and 20 years old. Most of the respondents were Buddhists (93.2%) and were local residents of Ayutthaya province. Examining their educational background, their employment status, and their monthly income, the data showed that the greater number of the respondents held high school certification (44.1%), were unemployed (55.9%), and had no monthly income (52.6%).

The survey responses regarding the travel behaviors associated with cultural heritage attraction sites showed that most of the respondents had visited Ayutthaya Historical Park at least once before the current visit (56.1%) and that they had traveled with friends and family members (85%), while 15.0% of them traveled to the site alone. The maximum number of people per travel party visiting the cultural heritage site was less than five people. When the time spent in advance planning their cultural trip and how they traveled to the sites was analyzed, the results showed that the participating youths spent less than 1 week planning and traveled by themselves in their own car. The majority of the respondents expected to spend 1–2 h for each visit and expected to spend less than ฿ 400 for each person for the whole trip.

Examining the purposes of their visit, the majority of the respondents visited the attraction sites with the primary purpose of exploring the architectural structures, museums, and ancient remains (68.1%), followed by the secondary purpose of relaxation (55.9%), and the tertiary purpose of learning Thailand's culture and history (50.4%), respectively.

Table 16.1 summarizes the results of respondents' attitudes toward Ayutthaya Historical Park. As Table 16.1 shows, the mean importance score of cultural heritage attributes varies between 4.08 and 4.45, which falls under the category of *very important* on the five-point Likert scale. The five attributes rated most important were the beauty of the historical buildings and landscape (4.45), the number of toilets available at the attraction sites (4.44), the maintenance of the historical buildings' exterior (4.37), the maintenance of the historical buildings' interior (4.34), the preservation of the cultural heritage attraction sites' authenticity (4.34), the signage provided at the attraction sites (4.34), and the cleanliness of the attraction sites (4.33).

In terms of satisfaction level, all of the attributes were rated between 3.50 and 3.95, which falls within the *fairly satisfied* to nearly *very satisfied.* The five attributes that received the highest satisfaction ratings were the beauty of the historical buildings and landscape (3.95), the preservation of the cultural heritage attraction sites' authenticity (3.89), the choices of souvenirs offered at the attraction sites (3.83), the maintenance of the historical buildings' exterior (3.82), and the maintenance of the historical buildings' interior (3.81).

Table 16.1 Thai youth visitors' attitudes toward cultural heritage attributes

	Importance		Satisfaction	
Cultural heritage attributes	$\bar{x}$	sd	$\bar{x}$	sd
Safety system (SS)				
SS 1.The safety of public transportation to the attraction sites	4.08	.87	3.65	.83
SS 2. The safety of transportation within the attraction sites	4.13	.78	3.64	.81
SS 3. The security system and safety management at the attraction sites in cases of emergency, i.e., flood, robbery	4.16	.77	3.64	.85
Information and knowledge (IK)				
IK 1. Using information technology, i.e., social media, to help plan the tourist's trip	4.11	.80	3.66	.89
IK 2. The amount of information about the history of the attraction sites provided	4.17	.81	3.76	.73
IK 3. The amount of information about the local culture, architecture, and the local way of life provided	4.18	.80	3.71	.78
IK 4. The opportunity to learn about the local culture offered	4.21	.81	3.68	.81
Service quality(SQ)				
SQ 1. The friendliness of the tour guides	4.14	.83	3.70	.86
SQ 2. The historical knowledge offered by the tour guides	4.19	.82	3.77	1.84
SQ 3.The friendliness of the attraction site's employees	4.18	.80	3.67	.86
SQ 4.The historical knowledge offered by the attraction site's employees	4.22	.81	3.65	.92
Attraction and site management (AS)				
AS 1. The beauty of the historical buildings and landscape	4.45	1.76	3.95	.82
AS 2. The maintenance of the historical buildings' exterior	4.37	.73	3.82	.89
AS 3. The maintenance of the historical building's interior	4.34	.74	3.81	.76
AS 4. The preservation of the cultural heritage attraction site's authenticity	4.34	.76	3.89	.79
AS 5. The preservation of the natural environment in the attraction sites	4.36	.74	3.80	.81
AS 6. The cleanliness of the attraction sites	4.33	.77	3.76	1.39
AS 7. The signage provided at the attraction sites	4.34	.77	3.77	2.28
AS 8. The number of restrooms available at the attraction sites	4.44	2.72	3.55	.97
AS 9. The cleanliness of restrooms at the attraction sites	4.30	.82	3.73	2.74
AS 10. The number of reception areas available at the attraction sites	4.31	.77	3.71	.80
AS 11. The choice of souvenirs offered at the attraction sites	4.13	.88	3.83	2.39
AS 12. The quality of souvenirs offered at the attraction sites	4.22	.85	3.64	.91
AS 13. The choice of food offered at the attraction sites	4.15	.82	3.63	.86
AS 14. The quality of food offered at the attraction sites	4.20	.81	3.63	.91
AS 15. The amount of restaurants and dining areas available at the attraction sites	4.22	.82	3.58	.95
AS 16. The amount of parking spaces available at the attraction sites	4.25	.85	3.50	1.10

(continued)

Table 16.1 (continued)

Cultural heritage attributes	Importance		Satisfaction	
	$\bar{x}$	sd	$\bar{x}$	sd
AS 17. The quality of parking spaces available at the attraction sites, i.e., the distance from the parking area to the attraction and the distance from the entrance to the parking area	4.11	.86	3.63	.85
Activities offered in the site (AO)				
AO 1. Regular events and activities organized at the attraction sites offering cultural heritage knowledge, i.e., the campaign to urge tourists to travel to historical sites and volunteer guides	4.14	.78	3.67	.82
AO 2. Non-regular events and activities organized at the attraction sites offering cultural heritage knowledge, i.e., light and sound show	4.13	.83	3.70	.86

Source: Authors' fieldwork

Consistent with the rankings of all importance and satisfaction, the findings could be interpreted that all of the cultural attributes performed well and did not need to be improved. However, when the mean scores between the importance of and satisfaction with each cultural heritage attribute were plotted on the four quadrant graph, several significant findings were found.

According to the findings from the IPA (see Fig. 16.2), nine attributes were located in *Quadrant I*. In this quadrant, four out of nine attributes scored relatively high levels in both importance and satisfaction. These attributes were considered to be the strengths of the attraction sites and need to be sustained. These attributes included the beauty of the historical buildings and landscape (AS 1), the preservation of the cultural heritage attraction sites' authenticity (AS 4), the maintenance of the historical buildings' exterior (AS 2), and the maintenance of the historical buildings' interior (AS 3).

However, the results also show that six of the attributes received relatively high importance but low satisfaction. These six attributes were located in *Quadrant IV*, which could be considered weaknesses of the attraction sites that need to be improved immediately. These attributes included the opportunity to learn about the local culture offered (IK 4), the quality of souvenirs offered at the attraction sites (AS 12), the historical knowledge offered by the attraction site's employees (SQ 4), the number of restaurants and dining areas available at the attraction sites (AS 15), the number of toilets available at the attraction sites (AS 8), and the amount of parking spaces available at the attraction sites (AS 16).

16.5.2 Findings Derived from the In-Depth Interview Method

It is evident from the in-depth interview that youth's motivations, attitudes, and behavior influenced their travel experience (findings are summarized in Fig. 16.3). Their positive travel experience could happen when the sites can fulfill their needs

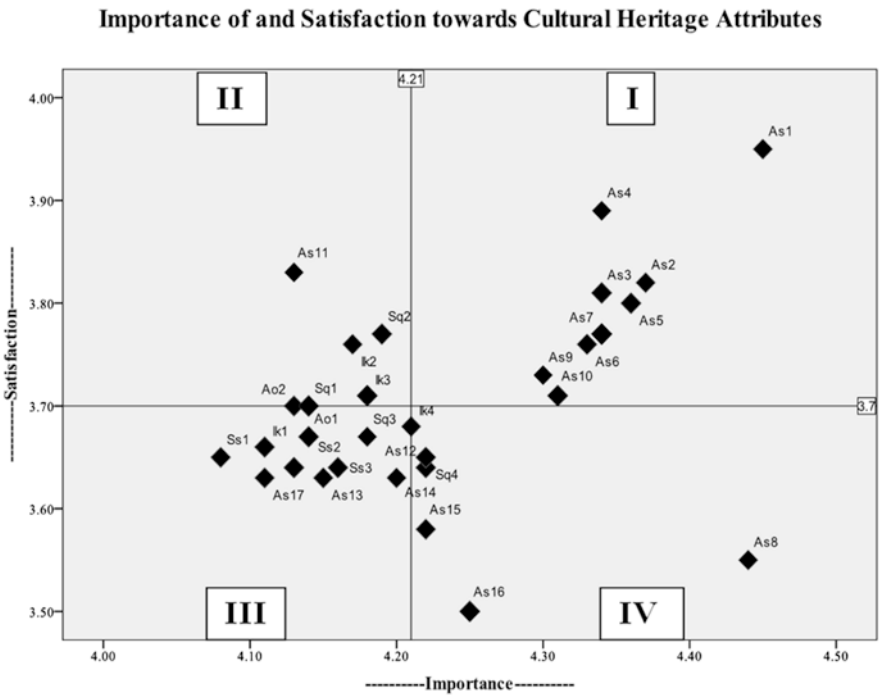

Fig. 16.2 Importance-performance analysis (IPA) (Source: Authors' fieldwork. Note: See Table 16.1 for full description of each attribute)

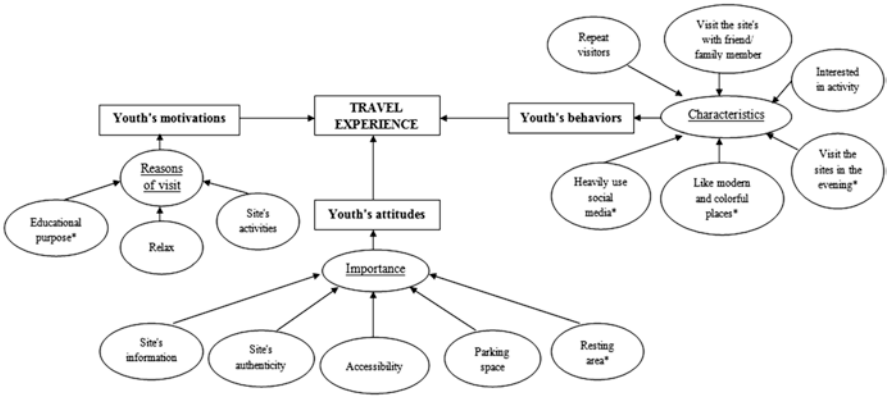

Fig. 16.3 Findings derived from the in-depth interview (Source: Authors' fieldwork. Note: Attributes with an asterisk are additional information found different from the intercept survey)

and desires. Looking at the motivation and reason for visiting the cultural heritage place, most of the interviewees visited the cultural sites for educational purposes, i.e., to do homework and school assignments, followed by the purpose of relaxation, and to participate in the activities organized in the attraction sites.

The youths' travel experience is also shaped by their attitudes toward the cultural heritage sites. Several attributes emerged from the analysis as relatively important attributes when visiting cultural heritage attraction sites. The attributes they perceived as important include the information offered onsite, the sites' authenticity, accessibility to the attraction site, parking spaces, and the resting areas. These attributes are largely consistent with quantitative survey findings; however, the resting areas are a new attribute revealed in the interviews.

According to the youths' behaviors with cultural heritage sites derived from the interviews, several important behaviors were revealed. It was found that social media and the World Wide Web were the most popular media participating youths used to search for tourist information and for booking trips. Being interested in the cultural activities and being repeat visitors of the cultural heritage attraction sites were also found to be significant. However, another youth characteristic that may disrupt the trend to visit the cultural heritage sites was a preference to visit modern and colorful places such as shopping malls and amusement parks.

Regarding their time of visit and travel companion, some of the interviewed youths favored visiting the attraction sites during the weekend and in the evening on weekdays. As regards their travel companions, some of the youths visited the attraction sites with friends and family members.

16.6 Discussion and Conclusion

16.6.1 Youth Visitors' Behaviors Toward Cultural Heritage Tourism

The findings showed that most of the respondents are repeat visitors, as is also found in many other countries (Tourism Queensland 2012). Although the majority of visitors according to the intercept survey visited the attraction sites with a group of friends, family members, and/or relatives, some of them visited the sites alone (15.0%). Tourism marketers who are responsible for promoting cultural sites such as the Tourism Authority of Thailand and the Ayutthaya Historical Office should focus not only on group visitors but also independent visitors since the trend of visiting the cultural attraction sites by small group (two to three visitors) and individual visitors has increased each year (Egyptian Student Travel Service 2008).

This study found that the average money expected to be spent during a trip was less than ฿ 400 per person, including the cost of the entrance fee. The study by Boukas (2008) shows a relatively similar finding that youths who traveled to cultural attraction sites in Greece spent £11.24 which was around ฿ 561.45 per person per visit. According to the result, "price-friendly" strategy could be one of the criteria the organization that are responsible for promoting the site should focus on.

Because each person has different personal background and experience, their reasons for visiting the cultural heritage attractions are also different. This study found that most of the respondents visited the cultural heritage attractions because they wanted to observe the architecture, museums, and ancient remains followed by the desire to relax and to learn about the culture and history of the attraction sites. The study conducted by Krippendorf (1987) supports the current findings and reveals that the two most important psychological motivations that drive people to visit the cultural heritage sites are the sites' history and areas for relaxation. Regarding the age of the majority of the respondents, most of them fell in the age range of 18–20 years old. A previous study by Richard and Wilson (2003) found that people in the age range 15–25 years old are eager to learn about the different culture and prefer to have new experiences through travel. The findings of the current study provide further support for previous studies on motivational factors driving the youth's visits to cultural attraction.

Another significant behavior of young people in relation to cultural activities this study found was their interest in participating in events and festivals. Cultural activities could be a significant factor attracting youths to visit the cultural heritage sites (Murphy and Pearce 1995; Park 2006; Guo 2008; Moisa 2007). One possible conclusion from this study, according to the purpose for visiting these sites the respondents cited, is they want to avidly learn the culture and history of the attraction sites through the events and festivals organized at the actual location. The study found that among many choices on how to search for information about the attraction sites, the Internet and World Wide Web received the greatest responses. This is not surprising due to the fact that youths (15–25 years old) live in the age of modern technology and use the Internet and World Wide Web heavily to search out the large availability of information on websites, blogs, online newspapers, and online magazines rather than going out to the travel agents or buying the magazines from bookstores (Hostelworld 2007). Therefore, the Internet and World Wide Web are found to be significant sources of information for youth visitors and must be taken into consideration for further marketing research regarding the youth tourist's behavior. In addition, these online media are essential tools that need to be concentrated upon to help related organizations who are responsible for promoting the attraction sites to communicate with youths directly as a target market.

16.6.2 Youth Visitors' Attitudes Toward Cultural Heritage Attributes

In the views of young visitors, all attributes available in Ayutthaya Historical Park are important, which reflects their positive attitudes toward cultural heritage tourism. The findings are consistent with other cultural tourism studies, as revealed in the studies by Smith (2003), Boukas (2008), and Hayamin (2010). Previous studies show, and this study concurs, that the historical buildings, objects, and the history of the sites were the most influential variables that attract youths to visit the cultural heritage sites. However, the number of toilets available at the attraction sites

appeared to be the second most important, which is related to the management of the facility that could be counted as one of the important attributes the site manager needs to improve.

These findings are in accordance with Boukas (2008), who states that the quality of the maintenance process at the attraction sites is counted as the most important attribute in the youth's opinion when visiting the cultural heritage attractions in Greece. Similarly, Pedersen (2002) also found that the excellent maintenance of the authenticity of a heritage place influences the tourist to visit the cultural sites. The viewpoints of youth visitors on the quality of a sites' interpretative information and the sites' authenticity indicate the significance of their attitudes and behaviors, as well as their need to have accurate information about the history and the preservation process of the heritage buildings and sites. This shows a positive trend for the cultural tourism as youth visitors who are concerned about the information and the preservation of the sites will be quality adult visitors in the future.

The safety of public transportation to the attraction sites ranked as the lowest importance level. The finding here is different from the study by Boukas (2008), who mentioned safety and security on the attraction sites in Greece rated *fairly important* in the view of young people. Another study by Egyptian Student Travel Service (2008) had different findings from the current study and revealed that safety of transportation was relatively important to youths when visiting the cultural heritage attractions. In the case of Ayutthaya Historical Park, the ranking of lowest importance level of this attribute is not surprising when the youth demographics and travel behaviors are examined. Most of the participating youths are residents of Ayutthaya province who are familiar with the attraction sites, travel by their own transport, and so may disregard this attribute.

As far as satisfaction levels are concerned, this study found that all attributes were rated between *fairly satisfied* and *nearly very satisfied* (3.50–3.95). However, some attributes need to be monitored closely because the gap between the importance level and the satisfaction level was found to be relatively big. These include attributes such as the amount of parking space, the number of restroom available at the attraction site, and the amount of restaurant and dining areas available at the attraction sites. Attention is needed to improve the site's performance in these areas given their relatively high importance in the youth's evaluation of a cultural tourist site.

16.6.3 The Strengths and Weaknesses of Cultural Heritage Attributes

The result of IPA shows that the beauty of the historical buildings and landscape, the preservation of the cultural heritage attraction sites' authenticity, the maintenance of the historical buildings' exterior, and the maintenance of the historical buildings' interior gained highest scores in both importance and satisfaction. These attributes could be counted as the strongest strengths of the attraction sites and need to be

sustained. However other attributes also listed in Quadrant I, such as the preservation of the natural environment in the attraction sites, the signage provided at the attraction sites, the cleanliness of the sites and the toilets, as well as the number of reception areas available at the attraction sites, are also counted as strengths of the attraction sites.

The findings also revealed the weak attributes of the cultural heritage sites. Those included the opportunity to learn about local culture offered, the quality of souvenirs offered at the attraction sites, the historical knowledge offered by the attraction sites' employees, the amount of restaurants and dining areas available at the attraction site, the number of toilets, and the amount of parking spaces available at the attraction sites. According to the finding derived from the in-depth interview method, staff performance was mentioned unsatisfactorily which could be counted as the weakness of the attraction as well. One expectation of youth visitors is for the attraction site to provide more attributes with high quality that accommodate all visitors. Since the findings from the two methods show that all above attributes are considered as weaknesses and may disrupt the trend to visit the cultural heritage attractions, they need to be focused upon and improve quickly in order to create positive travel experience for visitors.

In conclusion of the evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the attractions sites based on the youth visitors' point of view, all attributes were perceived as having importance. This is a clear indication of the youth demands when visiting the cultural heritage destinations. The findings of the current study could be used by attraction site managers of Ayutthaya Historical Park and in other cultural heritage sites. Tourism policy makers and tourism marketers should also consider ways of maintaining and improving the quality of those attributes that are of high perceived importance in the view of young visitors to ensure the attributes meet the needs of the visitors to the cultural heritage attraction sites.

16.6.4 Recommendation for Further Study

While the current study reveals some significant findings that should be highlighted for cultural heritage sites' development and management, the study has a number of limitations which suggest directions for future research in this area. The researchers of the current study make some recommendations for further study to be focused upon.

First, the current study used the intercept survey and in-depth interview methods to collect data. Other qualitative research methods, such as focus groups and observation, could offer more in-depth results regarding the target demographics' perspectives toward cultural heritage attraction sites.

Second, the current study selected only Ayutthaya Historical Park as a data collection site. To collect data in other cultural heritage sites that have similar characteristics could prove beneficial. A comparison between visitors of different cultural destinations would give further insights into the motivations and the behaviors of young tourists.

Third, since cultural activities are strong motivators driving youths to visit cultural heritage sites, further study focusing on youth preference for cultural activities could prove constructive. The data regarding the demand and preference of young tourists could potentially help the tourism organizations and site managers create activities and guidelines that would increase the number of youth tourists that visit these cultural heritage attractions.

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