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Editor's Dais

The hospitality and tourism industry in the 21st century promises to be knowledge rich and very turbulent. The classic experience, so successful in the 20th century, is unlikely to survive in such an environment. The evidence indicates it will be replaced by new forms of specialized hospitality & tourism functions involving large numbers of functionally specialized researches tied together to examines how destinations and organizations are creating marketing experiences in order to entice an increasingly sophisticated exchange relationships. The Research papers in this issue too determinant towards 21st century rich exchange relationship and knowledge.The article **Children's programs in the U.S. Lodging industry by** Zhenxing Mao, Tzu-Chu Chien, Yun-Kyung Choi, Pearl Brewer –USA classify the characteristics of the United States hotels which provide children's programs as a great number of them have already established these services. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were performed to analyze the characteristics of hotels with children's programs. All surveyed properties strongly agreed that children's programs in the lodging industry are a growing trend. Independent hotels were more likely to offer children's programs than chain hotels. Up-scale hotels provided more of a variety of children's programs compared to mid-scale and economy hotels.The Research Paper **Integrated Coastal Tourism Zone Management in Greece by** Paris Tsartas, Dimitris Lagos & Theodoros Stavrinoudis-Greece case brought to light a twofold mission, consisting first of the adoption of this new planning process and second of the creation a Greek network of cooperation of all the stakeholders involved in the developmental and administrative aspects of the tourism industry in the coastal tourism zones. The Research Paper **Reality, Perceptions and Tourism Policy in Crete: The Interrelationship** by Konstantinos Andriotis, David Roger Vaughan-U.K studies focused on two aspects of that development: the outputs and outcomes of development and/or the perceptions of local residents of those outputs and their outcomes. Based on secondary and primary sources, this paper investigates the match between the reality and the perceptions of the outputs and outcomes of tourism policy in Crete and assesses the implications. The article **The role of Tourism in European Regional Growth** by **George M. Korres, George Tsobanoglou and Aikaterini Kokkinou-Greece** focuses in the fields of tourism and regional growth in Europe. Moreover, it attempts to analyze the evaluation of tourism and industrial sectors in European Union. It combines both a theoretical and an empirical background. It also investigates and attempts to explain the role and socio-economic effects of tourism activities in the convergence and divergence process of European regions (in an attempt to interpret the so-called Dutch Disease phenomenon). **An Interactive Tutoring System for Tourism and Hospitality Students** by Rosanna Leung, Steven Chan and Rob Law paper describes the architecture of an Interactive Tutoring System (ITS) for assisting hospitality and tourism students at Hong Kong Polytechnic University to learn Information Technology. It suggest that the ITS can assist students to identify their knowledge level and monitor their study pace. The Study **Stakeholder Views of Legalized Casino Gambling in Taiwan: Taiwanese Student Perceptions** by Professor Dallen J. Timothy and Shing-Ku Tsai –USA showed that prior casino experiences do not affect current perceptions; the only demographic characteristic that does is gender. Research Paper **Win-Win-Win Model in Greek Rural Tourism Leader+ E. U Initiative Paradigms** by Leonidas A. Papakonstantinidis-Greece aims to denote that rural & isolated communities, implementing the **win-win-win** methodological tool -well known as Papakonstantinidis Model- based on local skills, social cohesion –mainly expressed by rural tourism activities- may be led to their own endogenous and integrated development.The feedbacks, suggestions, opinions for up gradation are openly invited for the beneficiation of its readers.

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BOOK REVIEW

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Corporate Identity and Public Relations in the Hotel Industry

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Abstract : From the point of view of hospitality management, corporate identity is reported to constitute an undoubtedly significant corporate asset. However, the concept has received little attention from researchers in the field. One particularly neglected area concerns the way in which hospitality organisations reveal their identity through communication. In this connection this paper seeks to add a perspective by presenting the approach and main findings of an exploratory study of practitioner perceptions of corporate identity and related public communications (PR) activities in the hotel industry. The data presented in this study involve the examination of the views of the marketing directors of five-star hotel properties in Athens, Greece. Given the paucity of prior research in the area, an exploratory investigation was adopted. This was based on the use of a semi-structured interview schedule. The results suggest that the investigated hotels have to a certain extent taken on board the concept and practice of corporate identity communication as part of their PR work. Yet, confusion over the relevant terminology continues to rage and the concepts of corporate identity, image and reputation are treated as synonymous.
Keywords Corporate identity, Public relations, Hotel industry, Greece

Introduction

Management scholars argue that corporate identity is an essential part of powerful corporations. A strong corporate identity can differentiate a firm from its competitors (Dolphin 2004), significantly enhance financial performance (Cooper 1999), influence customer's buying behaviour (Nguyen and Leblanc 2001), and have a strong impact on stakeholder loyalty (Balmer 1995). However, while there is a great deal of evidence to show that organisations have become more interested in the benefits that management of the corporate identity might bring, much ambiguity exists as to how firms should do this (Van Riel 1995; Ruth and York 2004). One area characterised by such ambiguity is related to the way in which an organisation reveals its identity through communication, and in particular through the use of public relations (PR). Indeed, noticeably absent from relevant discussions has been any significant body of research concerning what corporations are actually doing in the way of adopting identity management as a separate and substantial aspect of PR (Hutton et al. 2001). Past studies have attempted to provide some evidence regarding the ways in which firms can communicate their identity to key publics through PR, but most discussions have remained only theoretical (see Davies and Miles 1998; Hutton et al. 2001).

From the point of view of hospitality management, ¿bservation of leading chains around the globe has indicated that many of them frequently change their identity (Van Doorn and McCaskey 2003). Balmer and Gray (1999) note a number of environmental forces contributing to the increased number of changes made in corporate identity: acceleration of product life-cycles, deregulation, privatisation, increased competition, globalisation, mergers and acquisitions, and public expectations for corporate social responsiveness. In these factors, Herstein *et al.* (2007) see reasons for the increased interest of hotel chains in corporate identity: the need to differentiate due to increased competitive activity and rivalry, redefinition of marketing in terms of developing/maintaining relationships, and increasing recognition of the value of integrated marketing communications. Hales (1997) points out that implementation of a corporate identity strategy is also of increasing importance for stand-alone hotels. Indeed, with so many leading organisations claiming to offer excellent service and facilities, this can no longer offer sufficient differentiation (Morgan et al. 2003). As a result, the need for organisations to portray a unique identity is more critical than ever. As Nguyen (2006) argues, even for a tourist who has never visited a hotel, a particular place, or even a country, this identity is their first impression of the organisation and may have a great influence on buying intentions.

Yet, although identity emerges as an undoubtedly significant corporate asset, it has received relatively little attention from researchers in the hospitality sector. Related previous research has been more focused on the associated concept of image, while at the same time focusing on the destination rather than the corporate level (Hosany et al. 2006). With the exception of the work of Herstein et al. (2007), tourism and hospitality research is marked by the absence of any systematic effort to understand issues related to the way in which organisations communicate their corporate identity. This missing element has not gone unnoticed. Indeed, Oh et al. (2004) identify the paucity of corporate identity studies in the field. Having reviewed a total of 97 outputs in hospitality marketing research for the period of 2002-2003, they indicate that corporate identity did not emerge as a research topic in any of them. The same source suggests that only 2.1 percent of the reviewed studies has analysed issues related to PR.

Against this background, this paper presents the results of an exploratory study of perceptions of corporate identity and related PR activities among a sample of marketing directors (MDs) of five-star city hotels in Athens (Greece). Hence, it offers insight into current practice *vis-à-vis* corporate identity communication at the top level, i.e. among marketing executives managerially responsible for communicating their hotel's corporate identity. Collected data were therefore based on privileged information, with key players in the field that were in a special position "to know". As well as contributing to knowledge about views and activities in this rapidly expanding area, the research also has a more general significance considering the enhanced role of PR recently observed in the hospitality industry, and the likelihood that fast changing market and business conditions are forcing hospitality organisations to re-examine the communication value of PR (Kotler et al. 2006). The study is very much a pioneering work in this field and uses the broader literature on corporate identity management and PR as a specific context in which to focus on relevant questions within the context of the hospitality industry.

Corporate identity and PR

The subject of corporate identity has attracted interest among marketing academics and practitioners over the last three decades. Following the work of practitioners, such as Bernstein (1984) and Olins (1990) and academics such as Topalian (1984) and Gray and Balmer (1998), among others, knowledge and understanding of the concept has grown considerably. Nevertheless, despite the increasing number of studies published in this area, defining corporate identity is a challenging task given that it is difficult to conceptualise (Dolphin 2004). This is confirmed by Davies (2003) who argues that because the study of corporate identity is relatively new, some of its terminology has yet to be standardised. It is therefore the aim of this section to review viewpoints in the literature regarding what is actually meant by the term corporate identity, in an attempt to clarify the concept.

The review of the relevant literature has indicated that throughout the years definitions offered for the term corporate identity by marketing academics and practitioners can broadly be merged into three dominant views. These are the graphic design paradigm, the integrated communications paradigm, and the interdisciplinary paradigm. Referring to the first view, a number of authors define the term corporate identity in a way that appears synonymous with tangible imagery. The following quote captures the essence of this view:

> "Corporate identity is the outward manifestation of the organisation ... It includes the corporate logo, but it also includes the house style use on its letterheads and corporate publications, interior and exterior design of buildings, staff uniforms and vehicle livery, and packaging and products". (Blythe 2000: 112)

This view of corporate identity as a visual means of identification is mainly based on the assumption that visual elements are memorable and their recognition level can be very high (Balmer and Wilson 1998). For example, McDonald's golden arches are recognised worldwide. From a similar perspective, Baines et al. (2004) note that the most splendid liveries of modern companies have been those of airlines and that livery is one of the most effective ways of establishing corporate identity.

The second dominant view believes that organisations should be focusing on the way in which they reveal a consistent identity through a planned communication scheme. By adopting Van Riel and Balmer's (1997) perspective, consistency in communication should be used by organisations in order to develop a coherent sense of self and deliver it to their stakeholders. This view is shared by Markwick and Fill (1995) who note that these planned communications should be orchestrated so that consistent messages about the organisation are delivered to specific target audiences. According to Gray and Balmer (1998), the methods of these communications should be defined in the broadest possible sense because stakeholders are influenced in many ways. Thus, they may include almost everything, from the way telephones are answered to the design of corporate buildings and their interior layout. For instance, even the corridor lampshades in a Hilton hotel conform to the Hilton corporate identity scheme, as do the serviettes on most airlines.

Within the broad purview of writings in the third dominant view, authors typically seek to transfer the attention of researchers on corporate identity from concern for visual representation and communication alone to a more balanced consideration of the concept. At issue is the proposition that the use of visual cues alone can be misleading and, in order to understand an organisation at a deeper level, other cues must also be taken into consideration (Van Riel and Balmer 1997). The perspective is well expressed in a statement by Markwick and Fill (1995: 397):

> "Corporate identity is projected to stakeholders using a variety of cues ... Some of these cues will constitute the organisation's visual identity. Other cues will focus on behaviour, the actions of the organisation and other forms of communication".

Howard (1998: 141) also adopts a similar perspective and uses the term corporate identity to "encompass all the ways a company identifies itself". In a similar vein, Van Riel (1995) observes that corporate identity refers to the self-presentation of an organisation and thus consists of the cues that it offers via its symbols, communications, and other signals. However, at the same time, unintentional or emergent messages are also being transmitted (Van Riel 1995). For example, within the context of the hospitality industry, a service that fails to deliver the expected quality could counteract the impact of any planned cues. In this regard, it is the totality of these identity cues that an organisation uses either deliberately or accidentally to present itself that serves as the theoretical ideal unit of inquiry for the interdisciplinary paradigm researcher.

As the discussion above suggests, corporate identity is the reality of the corporation. It refers to the organisation's presentation of itself to its various stakeholders and thus consists of the cues that it offers via its symbols, communications and other signals (Balmer 1998). This is not the same as corporate "image", which involves the knowledge, feelings and beliefs about an organisation that exist in the thoughts of its audiences based on these cues (Hatch and Schultz 1997). Image, therefore, exists in the mind of each stakeholder and for this it cannot be managed directly. Rather, management seeking to influence the images held of their organisation can only achieve this through the management of corporate identity (Markwick and Fill 1995). By communicating coordinated identity cues, images may be altered in the minds of recipients.

A substantial amount of academic research has been completed into how organisations manage their identities. Investigations have focused both on corporate policies relating to corporate identity management and on the corporate communications strategies employed by organisations engaged in identity management (e.g. Topalian 1984; Olins 1990; Markwick and Fill 1995; Van Riel 1995; McMillan and Joshi 1997; Van Riel and Balmer 1997; Balmer 1998; Balmer and Wilson 1998). In contrast, research into how identity issues are seen by the marketing and PR executives which service the corporate sector has been sparse: a disturbing fact as general marketing and PR work recognises that PR is a critical link between the corporate identity of an organisation and its various stakeholders. Adcock *et* al. (2001: 327), for instance, suggest that "improving public awareness of the company's corporate identity" is a major aspect of PR activities. According to Rossiter and Percy (1998), moreover, other communication activities are less widely and less broadly applicable than corporate identity and PR, which are activities that all companies undertake, whether in a planned way or not. Hutton et al. (2001) also qualify this point when they observe that if the building of corporate identity is to emerge as a significant business function, it should rest on a foundation of what is traditionally termed PR. Graff (1981: 17), considering the idea of identity, called it "a phenomenon of public relations". From the particular perspective of hospitality management. Herstein et al. (2007) argue that PR activities are a crucial corporate identity communication channel and provide supporting evidence from a case study of the largest hotel management company in Israel. PR. therefore. is seen as a necessary element of corporate identity communication.

The study

The data presented here involve the examination of the views of the MDs of five-star hotel properties in Athens. The sampling frame thus excludes smaller hotels from the lower star categories. even though they represent the majority of the industry. Desk research prior to design of the study found that those hotels made minimal use of corporate identity management. Moreover. they typically did not maintain an autonomous marketing department but left marketing as the responsibility of the general manager or. in the case of those with 20 beds or fewer. the owner. The findings reported here thus reflect the practice of a numerically small but operationally important subset of the sampling universe.

Given the paucity of prior research in the area. an exploratory investigation was deemed appropriate. Exploratory studies are suitable for "making probes for circumscription, description and interpretation of less well understood topics" (Johnson 1998: 139) and where relatively little is known about a subject (Churchill 1991). Accordingly. the aim of the study was to establish frameworks for future analysis. rather than to specify and test particular hypotheses *per se*.

In the absence of a validated instrument for exploring perceptions of corporate identity and related PR activities. the researchers had to develop one anew. For the purpose of this case. the advice of Churchill (1979) was followed. by first defining the domain of the constructs to be measured on the basis of relevant work. as reported mainly by Olins (1990). Van Riel and Balmer (1997). Adcock et al. (2001) and Baines et al. (2004). Having done so, a preliminary semi-structured interview schedule was developed. which benefited from the use of both open and closed questions. This enabled the researchers to frame a clear vision of the boundaries to the investigated topic without constraining respondents from developing their ideas on the raised issues. Semi-structured interviews were considered the most appropriate. as they are regarded as a significant data component of exploratory inquiry (Carson et al. 2001) and in addition they provide a well-suited method for smaller-scale exploratory research (Williams 2003).

The interview schedule was pre-tested by consultation with a panel of academic experts in the PR and hospitality fields plus executives in three leading

Greek marketing consultancies, one of which specialised in tourism and hospitality marketing. The results indicated the need for only minor amendments. The eventual interview schedule comprised three sections. The first part collected some basic information concerning the hotels' marketing department and the extent to which they undertook dedicated corporate identity work. The second section queried the use of PR activities for communicating corporate identity. The final section gathered respondents' views on the role of corporate identity within their own organisations and explored their perceptions and opinions regarding corporate identity generally.

Potential respondents were selected from the Attica Hotel Association Directory (2007). The directory contains reliable data on more than 200 hotels, located in the city of Athens, Athens suburbs, Athens coast, Piraeus and the rest of Attica prefecture. The sampling frame extracted from the directory comprised 16 hotels situated in the city-centre of Athens, classified as five-star. These organisations were contacted by telephone to explain the research project and determine whether their MDs would be prepared to participate in the study. Fifteen of the sixteen MDs agreed to participate in the study. Face-to-face interviews were conducted under the condition of confidentiality and thus no data on individual hotels or MDs are reported.

Findings

One-third of the hotels' marketing departments spent less than 10 per cent of their time on identity management; six departments spent between 11 per cent and twenty per cent on the activity. Only three departments devoted more than half of their time to identity matters, and just two departments had a separate person solely employed on corporate identity management.

All respondents claimed to use a number of PR activities for the communication of corporate identity. The commonest activity reported by all respondents was the use of audiovisual material. Audiovisual materials, such as videos, are sent to prospective customers to highlight the services and amenities offered by the hotels. Eight respondents recorded their involvement in press releases, press relations and sponsorship activities. Generally, press releases are used to convey informative messages to target audiences about individual services and products. Press relations are undertaken by placing newsworthy information into the media to attract attention to the hotels' services. Another related common practice is to invite members of the press to stay at the hotel for a night, to dine in the restaurant, and enjoy the facilities of the hotel. The purpose of this is to cultivate good relations with media correspondents and consequently get favourable coverage in the press. Sponsorship mostly takes the form of financial support for sport and cultural events. Four MDs reported conducting PR activities using the Internet. These include product and service information, and press releases. The least reported activity (two respondents) was counseling as directed at issues of environmental conservation, i.e. the actions taken to protect the environment.

Commenting on the major stakeholders targeted by these PR activities, all respondents indicated that these are holidaymakers and corporate customers. This customer orientation is also mirrored in the PR objectives of respondent hotels, as these encapsulate the basic philosophy underpinning corporate identity communication. These were defined by all respondents as informing potential customers about the hotel's identity; persuading customers to think or act in ways that benefit the organisation; and keeping existing customers aware of the organisation's identity. Interestingly, these objectives represent three distinct orientations of PR practice as exemplified by Hutton (1999): information, persuasion, and reminder.

Responses to section 3 indicated a division of opinion on whether Greek hotels are generally uninterested in identity management. Seven respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this proposition, eight respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Nevertheless, a clear majority (ten respondents) agreed/ strongly agreed that the Greek hotel industry will increasingly turn its attention to corporate identity management in the future. There was general consensus that corporate identity is as vital an ingredient of business as accounting, marketing etc., with nine respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing with the proposition. However, only five respondents reported switches of PR expenditures towards identity at the expense of other PR activities. Opinions differed regarding whether managing corporate identity is basically the same as managing corporate image. Seven respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this proposition, while six respondents held the opposite view. It was the case nonetheless that the majority of respondents distinguished corporate identity work from other PR activities.

A clear majority of twelve MDs either disagreed or strongly disagreed that their department is generally uninterested in corporate identity. On the other hand, respondents were less complimentary about their departments' ability to undertake effectively corporate identity work. Only four respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposition that their department lacks the expertise necessary to communicate effectively the hotel's corporate identity. However, the majority of MDs indicated that they were reluctant to employ extra staff to implement corporate identity communications more effectively. Likewise, a majority of respondents believed that their department is so committed to enhancing other marketing activities, that identity work takes a back seat (ten respondents in favour of this proposition, four against and one having no firm opinion).

Conclusions

The results suggest that five-star city hotels in Athens have, to a certain extent, taken on board the concept and practice of corporate identity communication as part of their PR work. There was widespread support for the propositions that corporate identity communication is a vital ingredient of business, distinct from other PR activities, and that the Greek hotel industry will increasingly turn its attention to corporate identity management in the future. On the other hand, the responses indicated a number of barriers to the adoption of corporate identity. These concern a lack of expertise within marketing departments, deep attachment to the enhancement of other marketing activities at the expense of identity work, and a reluctance to employ extra staff to implement identity communications more effectively.

In general, this work is primarily based on the use of audiovisual material, and to a lesser extent on press releases, press relations and sponsorship activities. These are mostly directed at individual services and products. However, PR activities do not only aim to position a company's products and services in the market. PR activities which are directed at company recognition and familiarity rather than individual products/services, contribute to communication of a company's identity (Karaosmanoglu and Melewar 2006). In this connection, there is a question regarding the dissemination of essential identity cues of respondent hotels to the communication process, and consequently of the effectiveness of PR to achieve exposure of a favourable corporate identity. Also taking into account the particular emphasis placed on audiovisual material, this evidence suggests that corporate identity is perhaps narrowly conceived by respondents, with undue emphasis being accorded to tangible imagery (i.e. graphic design paradigm).

Another implication of the present study is that the investigated hotels are calling for market-centric PR. This is evident throughout the study's findings. In all hotels, the PR function is handled by the marketing department; PR activities are aimed at customers; and customers were identified as the hotels' major stakeholders. In this context, PR becomes a communication tool that will work in synergy with others to achieve previously defined marketing objectives. When seen from this perspective, PR activities are related to marketing objectives in regard of sales volume and customer satisfaction (Lages and Simkin 2003). PR, however, is concerned with a much wider range of communication objectives, not necessarily directed towards sales transactions (Brassington and Pettitt 2000). For example, Herstein et al. (2007) point out that an organisation's PR system as a source of corporate identity communication, plays a major role in directing employees' perception of the organisation's business policies and social values. The increased interest attracted by the subject of corporate identity among marketing academics and practitioners may perhaps encourage marketers to consider the longer-term corporate input possible from PR.

One final conclusion from the themes emerging in this study is that there is frequent misunderstanding between study respondents of the terms identity and image. This, of course, is not a surprising finding. As Dolphin (2004: 78) has argued, "confusion has raged over the last 40 years as to whether image and identity are synonymous, or whether they differ starkly". In this connection, there is a useful role for the academic community to spread contemporary academic interpretations of and approaches towards identity management among senior PR practitioners. Further research is required into the mechanisms whereby academic developments relating to corporate identity are disseminated to PR executives "in the field".

Over and above these, however, the wider significance of this research is that it is one of only a small number of inquiries into the use of PR as a source of corporate identity communication. At a time when academics and practitioners alike have an increasing awareness of the value of corporate identity, this study will interest all those concerned with corporate identity, organisational communications, and hospitality scholars and practitioners of PR in particular. The authors hope that this article has made a contribution to the general discussion regarding corporate identity and PR.

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Interplay of Nature and Heritage for the Comminities Around the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg World Heritage Park

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Abstract : Many a tourist has a grand and insatiable dream about visiting the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg National Park [UDNP], where nature has carved a theatre majestic features and humanity a tapestry of rock art. At this place the tourist hopes to experience and derive satisfaction what nature and heritage have to offer in South Africa. This paper explores the existing relationships between natural and cultural attributes within Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg National Park, how these relationships are planned for and managed by the parks authorities, as well as how local communities perceive the meaning and importance of these attributes. The paper seeks to ensure that the intrinsic value of the parks, wild life, land and natural features of KwaZulu-Natal are sensitively protected as a source of spiritual and long-term sustenance for local communities and future generations.

The findings of the paper indicate that a majority of the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg communities understand the importance of ecotourism as a human activity. They also show that not all the communities participate actively in promoting sustainable ecotourism development in the area. Finally, that existing ecotourism management practices are perceived as not adequately promoting sustainable ecotourism development principles for all stakeholders.

Keywords: geopark, geo-science park, outdoor recreation, tourism, perceptions, cultural and heritage park, community perspectives, tourism management and tourism prospects.

Introduction

The advent of the new democratic order in South Africa in 1994, brought about many and varied changes in the country. One of these high-profiled changes was the recognition of SA as a country endowed with natural beauty and pristine environments. In this regard, South Africa qualified for world heritage site status after rejoining the United Nations in 1994. Currently SA has eight World Heritage Sites two of which are located in KwaZulu-Natal. These World Heritage Sites are the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg National Park [UDNP] [2000] and the Greater St Lucia

Wetland Park [1999]. The remaining six World Heritage Sites are: Robben Island [1999]; Fossil Hominid Sites of Sterkfontein also known as the "Cradle of Mankind" [1999]; Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape [2003]; the Cape Floral Region Protected Areas [2004]; Vredefort Dome [2005]; and Swartkrans, Kromdraai and Environs [2005].

These World Heritage Sites are currently drawing a lot of attention from both local and international tourists and scientists, and have subsequently become 'not-to-be-missed" tourist attractions. In South Africa, like elsewhere in the world, tourism is one of the fast growing industries which involves commodified consumption of all tangible and intangible assets that the society values. The World Heritage Sites, unlike other areas are protected by law. South Africa is the second country in the world to adopt into its national law (the World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999) the World Heritage Convention (WHC) policies which ensures the protection of the South African sites and their associated world heritage values. In order for these sites, more specifically the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg Heritage Park, to retain their world heritage status, the protection and maintenance of their ecological integrity and ensuring their sustainable use, are of paramount importance (Wurz and van der Merwe 2005; MacLeod 2005).

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are five-fold: (a) To describe the natural features of the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg Heritage Park as well as related tourism practices in the area. (b) To reveal the extent to which the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg communities understand the importance of ecotourism as a human activity in the study area. (c) To determine the degree to which the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg communities participate in activities that promote sustainable ecotourism development in the area. (d) To assess whether the perceived ecotourism management practices are in line with accepted sustainable ecotourism development principles. (e) To investigate the perceived value of the cultural heritage of the San people as an important ecotourism attribute of the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg.

The broad intention of this paper is to establish the existing relationships between natural and cultural attributes within Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg National Park [UDNP], how these relationships are planned for and managed by the parks authorities, as well as how local communities perceive the meaning and importance of these attributes. In support of this notion Derwent and Porter (2003) argued that the policies of Ezemvelo-Wildlife KwaZulu-Natal, which is an organisation responsible for managing all natural parks and conservancies, seek "to ensure that the intrinsic value of the parks, wild life, land and seascapes of KwaZulu-Natal are sensitively protected as a source of spiritual and long-term sustenance for future generations". The policies are also seen as seeking to ensure the sustainable conservation of biodiversity in partnership with people of KwaZulu-Natal. Furthermore these policies advocate that for sustainable tourism development to thrive in the area, all stakeholders should be viewed as equally important, hence the inclusion of local people and traditional leaders in the parks boards and councils (McKercher and Du Cros, 2002; Derwent and Porter, 2003).

Characteristics of Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg

The Ukhahlamba-Drakensburg geosciences-park bears double-barrel name combining Zulu and Afrikaans languages. The Zulu name *Ukhahlamba* refers to the mountains as "barrier of spears" suggesting a shield that blocks a barrage of spears. Figuratively, it suggest a barrier against attacks by warring invaders, very similar the historical role or function of the Great Wall of China.

The Afrikaans name *Drakensberg* means "Dragons Mountains" suggesting the range of mountains similar to a huge dragon traversing the landscape. The Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg [Refer to Figure 1] cover an area of about 243 000 ha and rise up to a height of 3, 482 metres above sea level. The mountain range has a number of peaks with various names and descriptions, some notable peaks include Mafadi at 3,450m, Makoaneng at 3,416m, Njesuthi at 3,408m, Champagne Castle at 3,377m, Giant's Castle at 3,315m, Cleft Peak 3280m, Mount Aux Sources at 3 282m, Windsor Castle 3068m, and Ben Macdhui at 3,001 m above sea level.

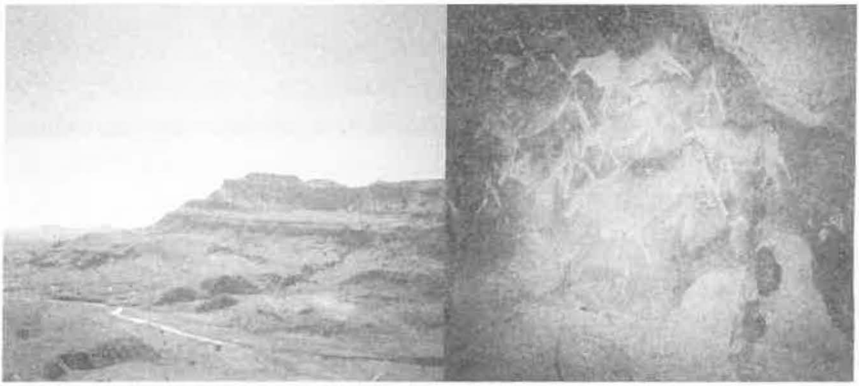
It has been argued that the geology of Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg can be related to the remnants of the original African plateau. The mountains are capped by a layer of basalt up to 1,500 metres thick, with sandstone formation lower down, resulting in a combination of steep-sided blocks and pinnacles. More towards the north the mountains have rugged and broken quartzite formations, which pose a challenge to rock climbers and hikers. The sandstone formations give the

FIGURE 1: LOCATION OF UKHAHLAMBA-DRAKENSBER PARK

[Source: Tourism KwaZulu-Natal (2005)]

Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg mountains their numerous caves, which have been associated with the San people also called Bushmen.

FIGURE 2 PART OF UKHAHLAMBA-DRAKENSBERG & THE ROCK ART



The physiographic attributes of the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg Natural Park or geo-science park, lend itself to what has come to be known as the stone-age rock-paintings. This geo-science park has a collection of 800 year-old rock art found in 600 sites with more than 35 000 individual images [Refer to Figure 2]. The popularity of this rock art has made Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg one of the popular tourist destinations for both domestic and international tourists. Archaeological remains such as rock art are "incredibly fragile" and may suffer irreparable damage if exposed to irresponsible visitation (Wurz and Van der Merwe, 2005).

The notion of describing these Neolithic rock paintings as important attributes of the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geo-science park or geopark is a worthy one, since they introduce a human dimension in the description and meaning of the natural park. Accordingly, Tanabe (2007) sees or prefers to see the term 'geopark' as referring not only to the geology of a natural park, but mainly to the geo-science and nature-based attributes of a park, hence the term 'geo-science park' or a much wider meaning 'natural park'. The term geopark seems to be open to several interpretations.

Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg as an Ecotourism Resource

Without doubt Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg has been described as an important ecotourism resource, which is underpinned by two philosophies, that is, biocentric (promotes ecological process to operate as freely as possible – protect the integrity of the ecosystems) or anthropocentric (use and enjoy – maximisation of direct human use) in nature (Cooper *et al.* 2000). A general definition of ecotourism suggested by Ceballo-Lascurain (1996) states that it is by its nature environmentally responsible, enlightening travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features both past and present) that promotes conservation, has low visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations. In supporting a relationship between nature and culture, Hall and Lew (1998: 44): aver that ecotourism is "Purposeful travel to natural areas, to understand the culture and natural history of the environment; taking care not to alter the integrity of the ecosystem, while producing economic opportunities that make conservation of natural resources beneficial to local people".

Tourism development in the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg is promoted by resource managers, wildlife officials, service providers and the local communities. Some of these stakeholders own a variety of hotels and resorts appearing on the slopes of the geopark. According to Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife (EKZNW, 2006: 12): "Standing on top of the world in the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg Park you are surrounded by craggy peaks, sandstone cliffs, cascading water falls, crystal streams, rocky paths, caves and sweeping grasslands....This is one of South Africa's premier ecotourism destinations".

The park offers tourists many facilities and activities [Refer to Table 1] as well as the best access to the San people's rock art and thousands of the massive eland antelopes can be seen as they forage the grasslands. Many of the tourists visiting the geopark are attracted by the splendour of the beautiful environment as well as the many outdoor recreation facilities and activities available in the area. Table 1 shows a plethora of activities occurring in the 240 000ha of cliffs, valleys, caves and rivers

Tourists have indicated that they participate in the following activities: mountain climbing, hiking, authentic rock art viewing, museum rock are viewing, trout fishing, walking on trails, nature appreciation and mountain driving. Many of the tourist destinations have facilities such as caves, camps, accommodation, restaurants, and curio shops. It is worthy of mentioning that very few of destinations have facilities and trails for disabled persons, as well as local community

TABLE 1: RESOURCES, FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES IN THE UDNP

NAME OF RESOURCE ON MOUNTAIN	Caves	Rock art sites	Camping/Caravn	Accommodation.	Trail-Mount-Hut	Conference centre	Local craft market	Restaurant	Interpretive centre	Swimming [river/ pool]	Trails for Disabled	Birding	Mountain climbing	Fishing	Picnicking	Self-guided trails/walks	Overnight hikes/walks	Vehicle drives/tours
Royal Natal Park	-	-	□	□	-	-	□	□	□	□	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Injisuthi Camp	□	□	□	□	-	-	-	□	-	-	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Cathedral Peak	□	□	□	□	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Didima Camp	-	-	□	□	-	□	□	□	□	□	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Monk's Cowl	□	□	□	□	-	-	□	□	-	-	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	-
Giant's Castle	□	□	□	□	□	□	-	□	□	□	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Highmoor Camp	□	□	□	□	-	-	-	□	-	-	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	-
Kamberg Camp	-	-	□	□	-	-	-	□	□	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Lotheni Camp	-	-	□	□	-	-	-	□	□	-	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	-
Sani's Pass	□	□	□	□	□	-	-	□	-	-	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Cobham Camp	□	□	□	□	□	-	-	□	-	-	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	-
Garden Castle	□	□	□	□	□	-	-	□	□	-	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Bushman's nek	□	□	□	□	-	-	-	□	-	-	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Sehlabathebe Park	-	□	□	□	-	-	-	□	-	-	-	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

[Source: EKZNW, (2006)]

crafts and markets. The latter suggests the paucity of community involvement in small entrepreneurial activities in the area. On the whole, many of the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg peaks offer challenging mountaineering. While the major summits have all been conquered, a number of minor pinnacles have yet to be ascended. Hiking is also a popular activity, the navigation on long hikes is often aided by GPS receivers, and current maps distributed by Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife.

Methodology

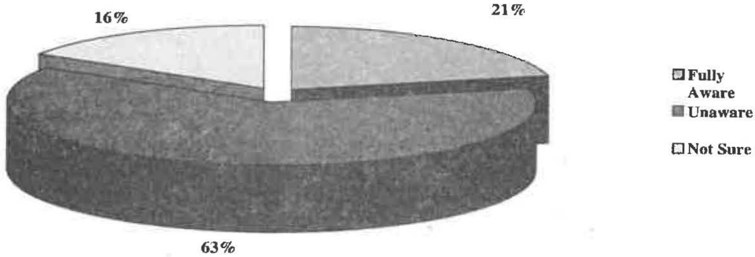
This paper reports on the findings of ongoing research that is conducted at various sections of the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg National Park [UDNP]. In establishing the empirical basis of this study, data were collected at three sections of the UDNP known as Northern, Central and Southern Drakensberg: The actual area of sampling were around Didima [Northern], Giant's Castle [Central] and Kamberg [Southern]. The categories of individuals interviewed included the tourism and wildlife officials, tour operators, tourists and local communities. A stratified random sample size of 400 respondents was targeted or aimed at. Finally, a sample of 322 respondents categorised into four groups was surveyed using a person-to-person interview schedule.

The sample-size of respondents was as follows: 13 tourism and wildlife officials, 9 tour operators, 96 tourists and 204 local community members. The data was mainly collected during the summer season of the year. The collected data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences [SPSS] computer programme. These data sought to reveal the understanding and management of existing relationships between natural and cultural attributes are perceived by the communities and other stakeholders.

Understanding the Importance of Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg

The respondents in the geo-science park were asked to reveal their understanding of the importance of ecotourism as a human activity in the study area. On the whole (Refer to Figure 3), a majority [63%] of the respondents, mainly the local community members, indicated that they were not conversant with meaning of ecotourism. On the other hand, only 21 percent of the respondents showed good understanding of the concept, whereas 16 percent were not sure of the meaning.

FIGURE 3 UNDERSTANDING WHAT TOURISM MEANS



A significantly large percentage of the negative response [63%] may be accounted for in that the local community is not sufficiently educated, informed and involved in tourism activities and facilities in the geopark. This is notwithstanding that the geopark area is endowed with natural facilities. It should be noted that more than half of the total number of wildlife officials, tour operators and tourists interviewed, were conversant with the term of ecotourism. Indeed, the communities around the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geopark see it as a resource for their survival through tourism development. The Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife as the custodian of geopark, has concentrated its effort on promoting ecotourism development that is seen as a sustainable form of tourism. This promotion encompasses conservation of cultural and heritage assets mainly the rock art and the history and heritage of the Sans within the geopark.

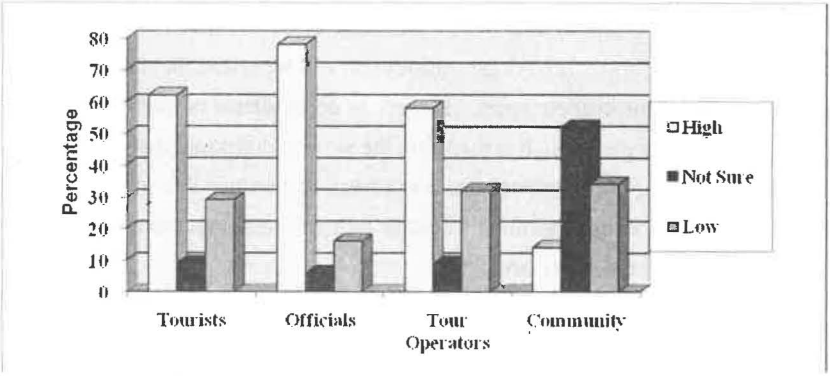
In this paper the term 'local community', refers to what Lubbe (2003), regards as people living in relative proximity to the tourist destination, product or activity, and who should benefit from activities. It could be argued that if tourism is wisely planned, the communities can enjoy the advantages while experiencing ownership of and control over the development. In this regard, the perceptions of local community members would assist in identifying the expectations of communities residing next to the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg as a tourist destination. The paper supports the view of Gartner (1996) who contends that members of the community should form tourist organisations that will represent them in all matters pertaining to tourism in their areas. There was no evidence of such community involvement around geopark. It is therefore the view of this paper that the community's understanding of the importance ecotourism and sustainable tourism development, would mark the beginning of better tourism planning, management and delivery systems in the study area.

Stakeholder Participation in Ecotourism Development

The official policy of the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg World Heritage Site seeks to promote sustainable ecotourism development. Sustainable ecotourism as a strategy for sustainable development and conservation of physical and socio-cultural environments demands that the local community should be involved in planning, development and management of the geo-science park. (WTO 2004). Good management policies should contribute to the well being of local communities. It should be noted, however, that participation of the indigenous communities in the ecotourism development activities in the geo-science park has been very contentious. This is because the park has lost most of its indigenous communities, the San community in particular. The San people have been displaced and some are now found in faraway places, and their history has been reconstructed and commodified.

This study also sought to establish the degree to which the local communities participate in activities that promote ecotourism development. In this regard tourists, officials, tour operators and communities were asked to give their views regarding the level of participation in the activities of the natural park, which were described earlier in the paper. The responses are depicted in Figure 4 and show that about 62 percent of the tourists respondents reflected a high level of participation in sustainable ecotourism development activities, whereas 29 percent has a low participation level.

FIGURE 4 LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION OF STAKEHOLDERS IN SUSTAINABLE ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES



At this point it is important to point out that opinions regarding the level of participation are limited to that part (section) of the geopark which the tourists are visiting or in terms of the particular day on which they are visiting the destination. Tourists, therefore, do not compare their level of participation on the basis of the benefits to the local hosting communities and do not seem to have a general overview of the level of participation within the entire Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg World Heritage Site or geopark.

Not surprisingly, 78 percent of the officials felt that their participation in ecotourism development activities were high and positive, since it was their mandate to promote sustainable tourism development in the area. The tour operators on the other hand, perceived their participation in ecotourism development activities to be high [59%] as against 32 percent who perceived them as low. The majority of tour operators [59%] were interpreting their business involvement in geopark as equivalent to tourism development, whereas this was not necessarily so. A significant number [32%] of the tour operators were not convinced of any sustainable development being achieved. Finally and importantly, the local communities at three sections of the geopark, were non-committal (52%) by indicating that they were 'not sure' about their level of participation in sustainable development activities in the geopark. A further 32 percent indicated a low participation rate. The main reason for these negative responses were that many of the local communities were not well educated about and adequately exposed to participation in tourism planning, management and development of ecotourism activities in the geo-science park.

In an effort to reveal the relationship between educational qualifications and the level of participation in ecotourism development, the cross-tabulation analysis was performed. With the chi-square analysis of: x2=8.706; df=3 and Asymp Sign.= 0.033, the critical value of the chi-square was 7.82 under the level of confidence 0.05. The calculated level of significance was 0.033 and was less than 0.05. The calculated chi-square value x2=8.706 was higher than the tabled chi-square value of 7.82. The findings indicated that there was a moderate, yet significant relationship between educational qualification and the level of participation. Furthermore, that the relationship between these two variables was not a matter of chance. This relationship was revealed by [11%] of the official respondents with technical diplomas who felt that the geopark was not well participated in as compared to [11%] of the tour operators respondents with similar qualifications who felt that the geopark was well participated in. The relationship may be attributed to the fact that the respondents with technical diplomas may have a better understanding of the concept of participation in tourism activities.

Therefore, in concluding this section, the overriding question which is: 'what causes the lack of participation of the local communities in this destination?' needed to be addressed. Accordingly, Lubbe (2003) argues that host communities avoid participating in destinations, where the infrastructure and services are not owned by them and there are opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. Furthermore, destinations have a great deal of flexibility and innovative opportunities for creating tourist flow and augment existing attractions. Arguably if the facilities in the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geopark accommodate host community participation, it is logical to conclude that innovative strategies have not yet been adequately put in place in this destination. There is therefore, a dire need for an innovative development of the tourist destination of the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geopark.

To achieve this innovative development of the rock art features within the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geopark, sustainability ought to:

* Contribute significantly to the conservation of the history and cultural heritage;
* Include local and indigenous community in the planning, development and operation of tourism activities.
* Contribute meaningfully to the well being of the local communities
* Interpret correctly the significance and meaning of the natural and cultural heritage of the destination for visitors' educational and experiential benefit and
* Be meaningful to self guided tourists as well as to organized tours.

Sustainable tourism development requires that all stakeholders are equally important (McKercher and Du Cros, 2002).

Perceived Ecotourism Management Practices

The Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geopark community's perception of existing ecotourism management principle in relation to tourism practices can be viewed utilising two approaches. First, there are views of the previously disadvantaged communities, which largely comprise residents with no formal education, no profession and who are employed as labourers in the agricultural and timber plantation sectors. Their perception of ecotourism management principle seems be to that there is a degree of disparity in ecotourism practice in the study area, because it is a playground of those people who can afford holidaying at hotels, guest houses, game parks, horse-rides, fishing, canoeing and mountain-hiking.

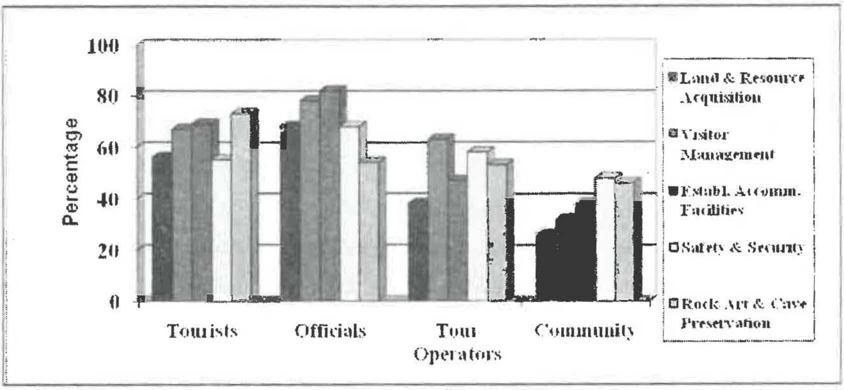
Secondly, there are views of the previously advantaged communities, which tend to be well educated, resourced and privileged, possibly from the previous *apartheid* dispensation in South Africa. This group tends to be the commercial and entrepreneurial leaders of the tourism industry and hold tourism-officer positions and tour-operator businesses. Their perception of ecotourism management principle seems to be underscored by the existence of abundant business opportunities and therefore the need to 'protect' the natural resources in the geopark. To a large degree, the tourists as visitors may be regarded as comprising a privileged group, which has financial resources to visit and enjoy the outdoor recreation resources available at the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geopark.

Notwithstanding the tourist attractions, have to respond to the changing market trends, competition and sustainable management approaches. It is for these reasons therefore, that the respondents (tourists, officials, tour operators and community members) were requested to furnish their perceived ecotourism management practices and development needs which they consider appropriate for the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geopark. In this regard, Figure 4 depicts the responses obtained from the various stakeholders.

In order to investigate whether or not development and management practices of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife authorities were understood and appreciated by the stakeholders, the respondents were asked to indicate their views. As shown in Figure 5 stakeholder perception were to be based on practices such as, land and resource acquisition, visitor management, establishment of accommodation facilities, development of game areas, safety and security of tourists, and rock-art and cave preservation. The responses of the subjects, comprising the tourists, officials, tour operators and communities are reflected in Figure 5.

The analysis of development and management principles within the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geopark were perceived by tourists, officials, tour operators and community members to differ noticeably among these stakeholders. As indicated in Figure 5, the majority of tourists [56%] and officials [68%] felt that

FIGURE 5 PERCEIVED BENEFICIAL STATE OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



[n = 322. Some of the subjects gave more than one response for each statement]

land and resource acquisition well established, whereas the tour operators [38%] and communities [26%] thought this was less beneficial at the time of investigation. Possible reasons are that the tourists appreciate what they see since they are visitors and officials are supporting government policy in their responses. The tour operators and community members think there is room for improvement because the state owns most the land and natural resources.

With regard to the practice of visitor management, the majority of tourists [67%], officials [78%] and tour operators [63%] generally regarded this practice as well managed and bearing good outcomes. Conversely, the local communities [32%] were not happy with the practice as it exists, mainly because the visitors were not channelled to their areas of operation, where they would be able to make money by serving the tourists. These perceptions did not vary markedly in the three areas of Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg.

The proposed plan of establishing accommodation facilities as a management principle in the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geopark, were positively viewed by tourists [58%] and officials [76%]. On the other hand, the tour operators [44%] and communities [42%] thought this practice was less beneficial to the stakeholders. The possible reason for this view is that most of the existing accommodation facilities are owned by big business and not by local tour operators or community members.

Notwithstanding that lapses in safety and security, which have been regarded as a threat to tourism development in many parts of South Africa, the respondents around the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geopark were sounded out on the state of ecotourism management practices in the area. In this regard, the majority of tourists [55%], officials [68%] and tour operators [58%] felt that safety and security practices were reasonably well managed. On the contrary, 46 percent of the local communities were not happy with the practice as it exists, mainly because communities are the ones that experience the lapses in safety and security. It has been argued that lapses in safety and security are increasing because of high levels of unemployment is KwaZulu-Natal.

In conclusion, the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg geopark has management strategies for both the park and the visitors to the facility. The site management strategies are meant to protect the socio cultural and the physical environment especially the rock art found in the caves in 600 sites. Protecting the rock art is different from protecting other types of environments because rock art is highly sensitive and delicate. Ecotourism management practices emphasise the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems (WTO 2004).

Even though this world heritage site has embraced ecotourism as a strategy for job creation and poverty alleviation, it has unique problems to contend with. Ukhahlamba Drakensberg has to deal with the conservation of the delicate rock art that is currently suffering from overexposure to tourists and the natural corrosion which is leading to gradual fading away of some of the paintings as well as the inclusion of local communities in decision-making processes.

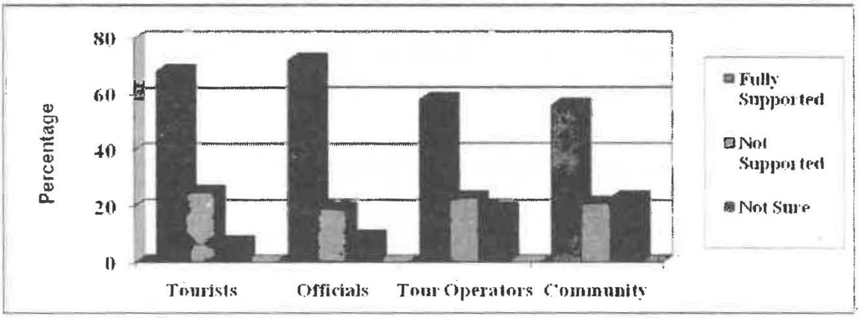
San Culture as an Ecotourism Attribute

The San people who were the original communities that inhabited the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geopark. These people were responsible for the rock art that has become the main attraction and an ecotourism resource of the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg World Heritage Site. These rock paintings made over a period of at least 4 000 years are found in the caves and rock shelters throughout UDNP. It is unfortunate that the San people, have since been displaced and their history has been reconstructed and commodified. Their existence is depicted by a collection of 800 year-old rock art which are largely undisturbed on the cave walls. With about 600 sites with more than 35 000 individual images, this rock art is the largest collection and the most densely painted area on the African continent (Derwent and Porter 2003). The paintings and the history of the San people have led to the popularity of this geopark and have made it one of the significant ecotourism destinations for tourists. Some members of the local communities have advocated for the promotion San rock-art heritage.

Stakeholders in the geopark were asked to reveal their views about the value of San cultural heritage as an ecotourism attribute. On the whole the responses indicated in Figure 6 show that the majority of all stakeholders: tourists [68%], officials [72%], tour operators [58%] and the communities [56%], fully supported the utilisation of San culture as a tourist attraction. The main reason for this support was that all stakeholders seem to benefit from the San culture as well as that it was incorporated in the development planning of the geo-science park.

Interestingly, only the local communities were somewhat less supportive [21%] and unsure [23%] of the capability of the San culture to stimulate tourist interests into the geopark. Possible reason for this notion may be that since some of the community members were related to the San, they therefore did not see the novelty in the San cultural heritage.

FIGURE 6: PERCEIVED SAN CULTURE AS AN ECOTOURISM ATTRIBUTE AND TOURIST ATTRACTION



[n = 322. Some of the subjects gave more than one response for each sub-variable]

Related to the responses shown in Figure 6, the stakeholders indicate that the support and acceptance of San culture as a tourist attraction was encouraged by some expectations. Some of these include: high level of unemployment, exposure to tourism projects, labour intensive activities, male dominated sector, women empowerment, and other unspecified reasons. Many stakeholders selected the statement "high level of unemployment" because they expected San culture to increase tourists visiting the geopark, thus creating more jobs. The response was also supported because some respondents had been unemployed for a very long time in the area.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding that the declaration of the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg National Park as a World Heritage Site has assured more popularity and economic viability of the geo-science park, it has come to be recognised that its strongest attribute is that the park is both a natural attraction and cultural heritage. The sensitive relationship between natural and cultural attributes within the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg geopark, has to be planned, developed and managed in a sustainable manner so that the resource could continue to benefit the communities of KwaZulu-Natal for a very long time to come.

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Tourism Development in Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest) National Park-an Ecotourism

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Abstract : Tourism in the Sagarmatha National Park (SNP) has emerged from a small-scale extreme adventure market to market driven mass tourism largely characterized by economic motivation. Tourism development over the past five decades has posed great challenges to the proper management of the park and to the inclusion of local people in decision-making; and has moreover resulted in a lower satisfaction level amongst tourists. This paper looks at tourism development in the park and has three major objectives. (a) to document the tourism trend/patterns in Sagarmatha National Park (SNP); (b) to analyse the participation & contribution of local people to tourism in the SNP; and (c) to document the actual contribution of tourism to the park. The research was conducted from an ecotourism perspective. The natural and cultural resources the park possesses present a platform for ecotourism development not only in the mountain region of Nepal but to the larger area of the HinduKush Himalayan Region and beyond if they are managed properly.
Keywords: tourism, ecotourism, sustainable tourism, SNP

Introduction

Regular Visitors like the late Sir Edmund Hillary have recommended that Sagarmatha National park (Mt. Everest) be closed for a number of years in order to give it some rest. According to Sir Edmund:

> "*changes can happen in a relatively short period. In forty years, I have seen the transformation of the remote Khumbu area on the southern slope of Mt. Everest. In 1951, the Khumbu was a place of great beauty, with 3000 tough and hardy Sherpas living a remarkably full and cooperative life despite their rigorous environment. Now it has become largely a tourist area with 12,000 foreigners streaming in each year, leaving their litter and tempting the Sherpas to break their traditional forestry customs and sell hundreds of loads of firewood for luxury fires"* (Hillary in Kemf, 1993, as cited in Shrestha (1995).

Showing due respect towards the late Sir Edmund Hillary for his deep sympathy and solidarity towards Everest (Sagarmatha) and the people residing in the region, this paper has been prepared to assess and suggest an alternative approach to tourism in this Region. It is based on research conducted in 2002-2004 and up-dated in 2007.

Tourism-economy linkages constitute the major justification for promoting tourism in the mountains of Nepal (Sharma, 1998). These linkages can be in terms of direct employment and income generation in hospitality and travel trade and, indirectly, in stimulating various sectors of the economy (including agriculture, horticulture and livestock, transport and communication, cottage industries) whose products or services cater to tourists' demands. It is arguable that tourism not only brings economic benefits to an area but also brings considerable socio-cultural and environmental hazards. So, while the complete transformation of the lifestyle and economy of the local Sherpa people in the Sagarmatha region is largely due to mountaineering and trekking tourism (Sharma, 1998), overall the economic impact resulting from direct employment in areas visited by tourists has tended to be rather small. It is fact that the tourism leakages are at maximum towards the outside while the linkages are at minimum towards the local economy. Also, the level of visitor satisfaction has been declining at an alarming rate.

Many researchers strongly state that the sustainability of mountain tourism in the Hind Kush Himalayas hinges pretty much on the extent to which tourism can contribute to three objectives: improvement in the livelihoods of the population (and by implication poverty alleviation), environmental regeneration, and the empowerment of local communities (Kamal, 2000). Even though the issues relating to mountain tourism in different areas require a broad spectrum of diverse answers, it is indeed true that mountain community development and mountain tourism development must be integral components of any local development activity (Kamal, 2000). In expressing concern over the problems of the Sagarmatha region, several researchers have maintained that specific environmental and socio-cultural problems may diminish future benefits from tourism. As illustration, the Everest region has been labelled "the world's highest junkyard", and the trail to the Everest base camp as "the garbage trail" (Nepal, 2003). His findings suggest that there is presently 17 metric tons of garbage per kilometer of tourist trail, and owing to heavy visitor traffic trail conditions are also deteriorating overall with over 12 percent of the trails being severely degraded and requiring urgent restoration and maintenance.

An Ecotourism Model

The aim of our study was to suggest an alternative approach to unplanned and uncontrolled tourism development in the mountainous regions of Nepal based on the notion of sustainability. The best approach in this context appears to be the application of a community based ecotourism model (Blamey, 1997). Ecotourism, as defined by *Ceballos-Lascurain* in 1987 is "tourism that involves travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated areas with the specific objectives of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas" (as cited in Weaver, 2001; Cooper & Erfurt, 2003). The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people". Conceptually then, ecotourism is interpreted as: (1) nature based, (2) environmental education, and (3) sustainable management (Cooper & Erfurt, 2003).

The importance of this concept is justified by the five fundamental functions that underpin it, namely: (i) protection of natural areas; (ii) education; (iii) generation of money; (iv) quality tourism; and (v) local participation. The concept of ecotourism thus focuses on the prime aspect of activities in natural areas; involving appreciating the environment and local society and culture, conserving and protecting these areas through local participation, communities earning from tourism as well as the equal distribution of such benefits to locals, and the giving of considerable satisfaction and education to the tourist as well. Ecotourism therefore is important for ensuring sustainable tourism development around the world.

Though tourism research has been undertaken in the Mountain regions of Nepal, only a few studies have focused on an ecotourism model for the Sagarmatha National Park (SNP). The research work of S.K Nepal, Dr. Pitamber Sharma, Kamal Banskota and Paul Rogers have contributed in identifying the issues of the Himalayan mountain areas and Sagarmatha, but the study of Rogers (1997) informs that researchers have not completely focused on ecotourism in Nepal. His study identified that tourism offers unparalleled socio-economic opportunity to the local area and to the economic viability of the country's protected areas. In saying so he strongly suggested that the current form of tourism lacks many of the environmental standards of ecotourism; and was critical of the level of institutional support provided by the government, identifying that there is no such ecotourism strategy by government for the region.

Tourism Development, Trends and Impacts in the SNP

Global tourism development - including the trend towards adventure and trekking tourism from the 1960s onwards, and the opening of Nepal for this type of tourism – has provided the impetus for an upswing in tourism in that country. Moreover, improvements in civil aviation (both within and outside the country), and the construction of several major highways have significantly changed travel patterns within Nepal. Mountain villages rarely visited by outsiders in the past have suddenly become accessible to large number of potential tourists. Initial visits induced growth in services and facilities, and soon remote places such as Namche Bazaar in Khumbu were on the global tourism map. In 1961 only 4000 foreign tourists visited Nepal, most of whom only visited Kathmandu and its environs. In the late 1980s tourism had however become the most important source of foreign exchange for Nepal due to the boom in trekking tourism. By the 1990s Nepal had become the most popular Himalayan destination for foreign tourists, and it has remained so despite recent global events and political problems (Nepal et. al, 2002).

Mountaineering started in the Everest region in the early 1950s, but it was only in the late 1960s trekking tourism started to show robust growth. From a mere 20 trekkers in 1964, the region now receives more than 20,000 trekkers a year (Nepal, 2003). Statistically, the number of tourists has more than doubled every decade, from zero tourists in 1949 to approximately 200 people in 1964, 600 in 1971, 5000 in 1980, 10000 in 1991, and 25,000 in 2001 (Rogers, 2007). The growing number of tourists has necessarily brought about significant development in the region. Khumbu region witnesses more tourists than locals in the high season. It has been reported by Nepal (2003) that tourists may exceed the locals by a factor of five. Further, the number of lodges increased from 7 in the year 1973 to 225 by the end of 1997. Nepal (2003) also reports that total accommodation capacity in the lodges has been close to 4000 beds per night in recent years.

Rogers and Aitchison (1998) have distinguished 4 types of tourism in the SNP, namely - general trekking; trekking-peak tourism; mountaineering; and cultural tourism. They note that the four are not mutually exclusive, but differ in terms of their significance and the issues that arise for resource managers. Increased trekking and mountaineering tourism has also resulted in more lodges along the trekking trails and in the expansion of the village settlements along the trails in the Khumbu region (Nepal et al, 2002). Changes in settlements and in housing designs are clearly visible in Khumbu as a result of such tourism development. Nepal et al (2002) state that such changes provide motives for people to abandon their houses in the center of the villages and construct more spacious buildings, usually lodges. on the periphery primarily due to the higher economic benefits and justification propelled by the increased number of trekkers. This can be clearly seen in villages like Namche Bazaar, Lukla, and Khumjung, to name a few. The first lodge in Khumbu was constructed in 1971. By 1980, there were a total of 17 lodges in Khumbu, a figure which rose to 225 by 1997, representing a 13-fold increase between 1980 and 1997/98. Lodges have been built in more and more villages in Khumbu; for example, 12 villages had lodges in 1980 but 38 villages and settlements had them by 1997 (Nepal et. al, 2002). The lodge and visitor development in Khumbu is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Lodge and Visitor Development in Khumbu

Year	Number of lodges	Number of Tourists	Number of Settlements with Lodges
1980	5836	17	12
1990	7950	75	29
1997/98	18,200	225	38

Source: Nepal et. al, 2002.

Nepal et al. (2002) also report that lodge construction in the main tourist centers has decreased in recent years while it has increased in locations between these centers and in the peripheral areas. They state that such a push into new areas is the direct result of the expansion of thriving trekking and mountaineering businesses. In accordance with this development, several temporary settlements or herding villages have become permanent. However, the number of visitors has increased much less rapidly than the number of lodges and overnight capacity, i.e. by a factor of 3.1 at Everest. This has led to a marked decline in the visitor/lodge ratio, which decreased from 343 to 81 visitors per lodge in Khumbu. The visitor/bed ratio (number of visitors per bed) has been as low as 4.4 in Khumbu (Nepal et. al, 2002). This pattern conveys a sense of increasing competition between the individual lodges and locations. Lodge owners in the Khumbu region are becoming more service oriented by increasing lodge quality in a bid to improve the service so as to keep intact their market presence whilst maintaining visitor numbers. Overall, the combined effect of increasing competition and the need for modernization has increased financial pressure on the lodge sector in recent years (Nepal et. al, 2002). Such intensified development has induced significant economic growth at the local level, thereby providing employment and income to a sizable and increasing number of people in an increasing number of places.

Impacts

Even though tourism has been remarkably integrated into the local economy, such development has come at a cost in terms of environmental and social changes. Research clearly shows that such changes have transformed the natural and cultural setting and heritages of the Himalaya. Research also highlights the increasing income disparities in the park and adjoining areas and shows that there has been considerable deforestation in some locations, such as tourist centres and high altitude areas (Nepal et. al, 2002; Rogers, 1997; Rogers, 2007; Sharma, 1995; Shrestha, 1995; Stevens, 1993, 2003). It is further reported that accumulations of garbage and trail degradation are additional impacts resulting from high visitor numbers.

With regards to the impacts of tourism on the region, Rogers (1997) and Sharma (1998) report economic effects to be the most significant of all. Trekking and mountaineering tourism being labor intensive activities has provided unparalleled opportunities for employment and income generation to the locals in this area. Tourism related income growth has allowed literally thousands of households from across the district, especially those in Khumbu and Pharak, to benefit from improved standards of living. He reports that households are able to buy more food, better clothes, afford repairs to houses, and employ domestics to assist with arduous or mundane activities, purchase material goods and participate in international travel. However, Rogers (1997) also notes that many of the jobs are low-paid positions that frequently exploit the most vulnerable. Also, in parts of SNP, many households have abandoned their traditional cropping practice of buckwheat and barley to cultivate more potatoes, which readily find cash markets (Stevens, 1993; MacLellan et al, 2000). Nevertheless, the region still faces the problem of food deficits and the need for economic generation activity for the poorest households owing to poor harvests and heavily inflated prices for imported goods (Rogers & Aitchison, 1998). A study by ICIMOD in the year 1995 (cited in MacLellan et al, 2000) affirmed the above arguments and stated that households along the trekking routes have begun cultivating fruit and other high-value crops. This study further states that such changes in the cropping pattern are positive as long as they earn a relatively higher income than traditional cultivating practices and do not harm the local environment.

Previous studies (MacLellan et al, 2000) shed light on the negative impact of tourism in the region. These studies show that tourism has changed employment patterns in mountain areas, with increased demand for tour support staff, such as jobs for porters, cooks, kitchen boys and guides. In the other hand, they argue that not all of these employment benefits accrue to the total population. In fact, outsiders have been exploiting this opportunity for long time. With regard to employment generation, different patterns seem to be generated by group and individual trekkers. Studies in the past found that an average group size (group tourists) ranges from six to ten trekkers, and the average numbers support staff hired ranges from about two to four per trekker as opposed to between 0.5 to 1.5 persons per trekker for free independent travelers. Clearly, in terms of direct employment generation, group trekkers have a greater impact on employment than Free Independent Travellers (FITs) (MacLellan et al, 2000).

Most importantly, the high number of locally owned lodges, restaurants and trekking agency businesses show tourism's contribution to the success of the local economy. Although there has been considerable reporting of problems related to 'leakage', there have been significant levels of income generation, and tourism has become integrated into the local economy. The most remarkable change brought about by tourism induced development in the region is the introduction of helicopter flights to Lukla and Syangboche. This has had a profound effect in restructuring the local economy, an impact that has critically altered business and employment opportunities in the region (Rogers, 1997). Rogers (1997) also notes that tourism has provided more employment opportunities for men than women and has caused marked inflation. However, his study showed that households in this area are clearly disadvantaged despite the stated benefits of tourism development.

From a *socio-cultural perspective* tourism has also allowed important advances in human development opportunities. Few tourism studies have provided a measured assessment as to how tourism should improve the life circumstances of host populations. Rogers (1997) states that tourism development in the region is associated with significant advances in educational opportunities and attainment, health-care provision (which has led to improved family planning), water and electricity supply and access to material goods and mobility. Nevertheless, the negative side of such development is emerging and has increasingly generated marked imbalances in the supply of these services. Tourism development has not only encouraged a widening of the gap between the rich and the poor, but has also affected the strategic importance of particular settlements within the district. This in turn has isolated the least wealthy in the less-impacted villages from both the social benefits of tourism development and from local decision-making processes.

With regard to local culture, local people are very much aware of outside interest in the Sherpa people. Despite claims that Sherpas are losing their culture, local people retain their strong association with their cultural (religious) traditions and have been able to direct tourist interest towards the maintenance and development of old and new monasteries in the region. In terms of lifestyle, it is apparent that women and the least wealthy are more in touch with 'traditional' ways of life, while many males and the new social elites have adopted new work patterns and acquired new lifestyles to suit the demands of the tourism economy. Other ethnic groups in the region have been relatively unaffected by tourism activity (Rogers, 1997).

Although the impacts on Sherpa society have been visually negative, such changes seem to be more like normal processes of social change rather than being socially devastating. These changes and process have been welcomed by the Sherpa themselves (Sharma, 1995; MacLellan et al, 2000). Generally though, the impact of tourism on culture, traditions and values is difficult to assess. Besides the tourists-locals interactions and exposures, such impacts could be because local people increasingly travel for education, trade or other purposes, which brings in new ideas and behaviors that affect cultural practices (MacLellan et al, 2000). This report notes that such changes in the local economies and employment patterns must also be considered in their social and cultural contexts. For example, the trend of adult members leaving home for prolonged periods for tourism employment has also affected Sherpa society, and has caused family break-ups in some cases. Also, in addition, a study by Kunwar (1999) states that the Sherpas have become overly westernized, and that their religious faith has diminished. Furthermore, it is argued that most families prefer their children to enter the new system of public education rather than join the Monastery as monks (MacLellan et al, 2000).

Turning now to impacts on the environment, some of the most obvious and frequently cited impacts of tourism on the mountain areas of Nepal, particularly in the Everest region, have been on the physical environment. Unplanned development leading to new and haphazard construction of buildings (lodges, resorts, stalls, park headquarters etc) along the trails; littering at low as well as high altitudes; pollution of water sources; and deforestation are some of the most visible environmental impacts of tourism in the SNP. The construction of new buildings is a visible sign of land-use impacts in many of the protected areas frequented by tourists (MacLellan et al, 2000). Aside from park headquarters and other buildings, construction of lodges and stalls has occurred extensively in the SNP, both inside and outside the park area to cater to the needs of tourists. Environmental impact such as littering at high altitudes in the mountains has received a great deal of attention in the international press. Such litter includes non-biodegradable rubbish such as plastics, glass bottles, tinfoil and batteries, which are improperly deposited or discarded along trails, at campsites, outsides trekking lodges and at base camps by tourists, trekking staff, porters, trekking lodge staff and local residents. Inadequately covered toilet pits and scattered toilet paper around campsites and trails are another serious problem (MacLellan et al, 2000). Nepal (2003) mentions that the emphasis on such problems is required to mitigate challenges associated with it. He states that, in one study it was estimated that an average trekking group of 15 people generates about 15 kg of non-biodegradable, non-flammable garbage in 10 trekking days and this provides an idea of the amount of litter deposited in and garbage that must be cleared from protected areas. Since then several projects have been initiated to address this issue. For example, the Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee (SPCC) collected 145 tonnes of burnable and 45 tonnes of non-burnable garbage between July 1995 and 1996. In 1995, SPCC collected nearly 2 tonnes of disposal and 1.5 tonnes of non-disposable garbage from mountaineering expeditions alone in the Everest region (Nepal, 2003). As such, the Nepalese Himalayas have been regarded as 'the highest junkyard on earth' (MacLellan et al, 2000). The problem of garbage in Nepal has also been mentioned by Sir Edmund Hillary as "the world's biggest junkyard" (Sharma, 1995).

Similarly, the pollution of water resources is one of the heightened problems of the Everest Region. Some of the causes of such pollution are: setting toilets closer to streams and drinking water sources; usage of chemical soaps for bathing; and the washing of dishes and clothes in streams are of increasing concern. Water pollution is exacerbated by disposing of human waste directly into rivers and streams, customarily done by local people and the operators equally (MacLellan et al, 2000). Also, degrading forests and the increasing deforestation has added to the vulnerability of the mountain environs (MacLellan et al, 2000). Such problems are often associated with the demand for firewood by tourism and associated activities. While the demand for firewood seems to differ for FITs and group tourists, this difference in consumption has arisen because group tourists are self-supported in food, shelter and fuel for cooking, as required by the law of Nepal while traveling in protected areas, whereas individual trekkers are not. The rule is equally applied for mountaineering teams (MacLellan et al, 2000). But these studies state that such enforcement has not been effective enough to make this policy an overwhelming success. Individual trekkers on the other hand mostly depend on local lodges or hotels, tea-houses, and locals for food and accommodation and do not seem to care if they pollute the environment.

Methodology

The study that this paper is based on was jointly funded and supported by Government of Nepal - Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) {under - Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation} and Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program (TRPAP).0The research topics were: (1) Identification of local residents, visitors and tour operators needs and wants, and (2) Distribution of tourism benefits to local stakeholders - how the benefits can be disseminated equally amongst local communities. The methodology adopted for the survey and the procedure for data analysis are now described.

Initial primary data were collected during a two weeks intensive field visit during October 2003, updated in 2007. During the initial field visit, questionnaire surveys, direct observation, photographic documentation, key informant surveys were carried out. Surveys were divided into three parts – for the tourists, for local residents, and the third for the lodge operators. The questionnaire for tourists was designed in English and administered randomly to the tourists. Altogether 144 tourists were surveyed. The questionnaire for local people was prepared in Nepali so as to collect as much information as possible. For this, the team went door to door as it was the best option to carry out the survey. A total of 21 local people were surveyed. Questionnaires for the lodge operators were also made in English and administered randomly along the trail. Altogether, 30 lodge operators were surveyed. During the survey the survey team found difficult to separate local people and lodge operators, as many locals had their own lodge and residence in the same building. These surveys were updated in 2007.

Finally, to validate information the study team made a photographic documentation of relevant information such as garbage disposal and trail degradation during both visits. A key informant survey was also carried out to acquire specific information related to tourism and the SNP. Key informants were from DNPWC, SPCC, employees at the Monasteries and Thame School teachers. For the purpose of carrying out a rigorous review of the 2003 survey a literature review (both published and unpublished data), and a review of recent government and NGO reports and other related documents was also done in 2007. Also, use of the World Wide Web (WWW) was one of the main means for collecting secondary data on the activities of the tour groups in 2007.

Discussion

The findings of the survey and the follow up analysis are presented below.

Tourism Patterns

The general trend of SNP visitation shows that male visitors exceed the number of females. Similarly, this research also shows the same trend where male visitors outnumbered female visitors; of the total number of respondents (n = 144) for both surveys 70% were males and 30% females. The major age group of the respondents was 25-44 years, and the average length of stay of tourists traveling to SNP for trekking and mountaineering, etc., was found to be 19 days. The research indicated that the prime interests of tourists traveling to SNP were - trekking (52%) followed by mountaineering (20%), 16% for observing local people and culture, and exploring flora and fauna (5 percent). Thus, few visitors came to SNP with the purpose of research and study of the environment in 2003 or 2007.

More than 78 percent of visitors graded the SNP as one of the best tourist destinations in the world. Similarly, the initial survey showed that more than 56% said that they were highly satisfied, followed by 41 percent of visitors who were satisfied with the products and services presented to them in terms of value for money. The reasons for tourists visiting SNP are understood by local residents. The survey indicates that a major portion of the local residents were aware about the prime attraction of SNP, as 71% of them said that tourists visit the region to see Mt. Everest and other mountains. Responses of locals regarding the purpose of tourists visiting SNP is shown in Figure 1 below and is based on 2003 and 2007 data.

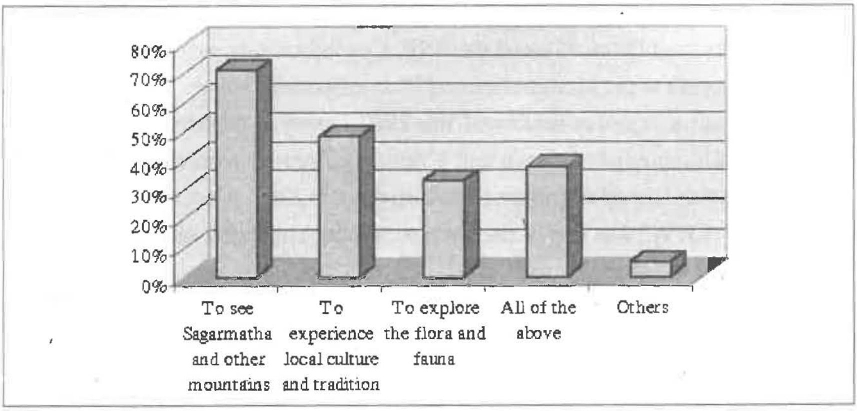


Figure 1 : Purpose of Tourists visiting SNP as recognized by the locals (source: Authors)

Responses from the locals were that 48% viewed Sherpa culture and their festivals as tourist attractions whereas 33% said that tourists also come to explore the Himalayan flora and fauna. 38 percent of the residents said that tourists visit SNP to explore and experience *all* its attractions from Mt. Everest to other mountains, Sherpa cultures, lifestyles, and flora and fauna. Again, a very few of them said that visitors also come for the purpose of research, survey and study. The findings show that the locals are aware of the importance of environment and culture as the driving attraction for visitors.

Regarding the availability of the choices of food along the trail, the majority of the tourists (97%) said that they had sufficient choice for food, including both Nepali as well as western cuisines in the menu. More than 97% of the visitors had an opportunity to taste the local food and moreover the majority (97%) responded that they liked the local food. The survey of the lodge operators also to some extent supported these above results. This survey shows that all of the lodges serve regular Nepali cuisines i.e. Daal (lentils), Bhat (rice), Tarkari (vegetable curry) followed by local Sherpa food. Also, 70% of the lodges served Western cuisines to visitors in 2007. Importantly for economic impact, 80% of the local food supplies are purchased locally (from Namche) and the remainder come from Kathmandu and other places. The majority of the respondents further said that had they had more choices and ranges of local food, then to a greater extent they would *prefer* local food. However, the responses from the lodge operators varied in the sense that lodge operators said that only 44% of visitors preferred local food, whereas 97% of the visitors said that they liked local food, especially Aloo momo, Aloo chapatti (Aloo pancake served with Yak butter) and other Nepali food.

The surveys also indicated that the distribution channels selling trips to the SNP are widely located inside as well as outside the country in the form of retail-travel agents, tour operators, trekking agencies, and other sales-outlet such as trade fairs, internet etc. The sales outlets through which trips are purchased are shown in Figure 2 below.

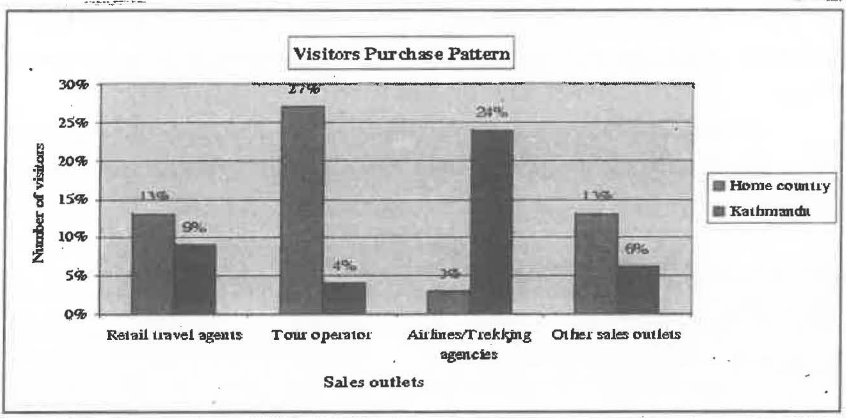


Figure 2: Sales outlet and purchase pattern of visitors to SNP (source: Authors)

Trekking arrangements

Informal discussions with tourists revealed that they prefer to choose tea-house trekking, as rooms are more comfortable than tents in terms of warmth, safety from wild animals, and altitude sickness (Table 2). However, some campers said that sleeping in tents gives them a perfect sense of adventure and they want to experience basic service rather than luxury in the mountainous environment.

Table 2: Distribution of Trekking Arrangements

Types of Trekking Arrangement	Number of Respondents
Organized Camping trekking through a professional agency	45 (32)
Organized tea-house trekking through a professional agency	54 (39)
Self-arranged trekking with a guide	22 (16)
Independent trekking without a guide	18 (13)
Total	139 (100)

Notes: Figures in brackets indicate percentage; Number of missing observation: 5

The results (Table 2) show that the ratio of camping trekkers to the tea-house trekkers is 1: 1.2, which does not indicate a significant difference between the types of treks. However, during the later observation and informal discussions with the locals and lodge operators in 2007, the growth of lodges in SNP is rapidly increasing while the number of campsites remains low. Visitors verbally complained that this has disturbed the view of scenic landscapes and hindered their stay in beautiful campsites. In addition to this they stated that slowly the beautiful campsites and landscapes are being converted into a concrete jungle. This increase in the number of lodges has been rapid, and supply now highly exceeds the demand for beds.

It was found during the survey that the respondents had sufficient information about Immigration/permits, trekking/expedition provisions and requirements, and health and medical advice. Table 3 summarizes the findings.

Table 3: Availability of Information (source: Authors)

Information about	Yes	No
Immigration / Permit Requirement	105 (91.30)	010 (8.70)
Trekking / Expedition provisions and requirements	95 (97.16)	010 (20.83)
Health and Medical Advice	85 (77.27)	025 (22.72)
Local Customs Do's and Don'ts	73 (57.84)	054 (42.51)

But the results also show that more than 42% of the respondents did not have information about local custom Do's and Don'ts. This indicates that there is a high chance of impact on the local cultures and also host-guest conflicts in the long run from the way tourism to the SNP is currently managed.

Visitor Flows

Regarding visitor flows the responses show a sharp contradiction where the locals want increases in the number of tourists while on the other hand the tourists were of a strong view that these need to be restricted. Usually, unrestricted flow of visitors leads to congestion along the trail and leads to several undesired problems such as soil-trampling effect and a feeling of loss in the visitor's experiential enhancement. For these reasons 82 percent of the total respondents (tourists) felt that there were too many visitors in the SNP, and that the number of visitors needed to be controlled. However, 76% of the local residents said that tourism has stimulated the development of SNP: thus to acquire more benefit, it is necessary to increase the number of tourists to SNP. The basic concern of many residents here was to increase income levels. A small number (5%) of the residents did say that besides bringing benefits to SNP, tourism has also caused negative impacts in the region in terms of pollution; therefore, the number of tourists should not be increased from the present level.

Tourism as a Development Tool in the SNP

The survey of local people showed that 95% of the residents have realized some benefits from tourism. It was learnt from the informal discussions with locals that they consider tourism as a development tool for their village and region as on account of tourism their income has risen they have the opportunity to indulge themselves in business and tourism services as porters and guides and they could even sell their agricultural products to the hotels and lodges. Also, many residents said that infrastructure in terms of increased accessibility, health care centers, schools, bridges; electricity in the region has developed because of tourism. However, the 5 percent of the villagers who disagreed with the former group believed that development has taken place due to the efforts of major international non-governmental organizations, followed by government. This indicates that they were still not aware of the fact that tourism has brought exposure to SNP and has raised interest in the developing agencies. They also said that tourism has not been able to raise their economic standard.

The majority of previous research shows that there have been changes in the local indigenous Sherpa culture through tourism. This study also found a similar result, where 96% of the visitors felt that tourism has to an extent influenced the Sherpa culture (see Figure 3).

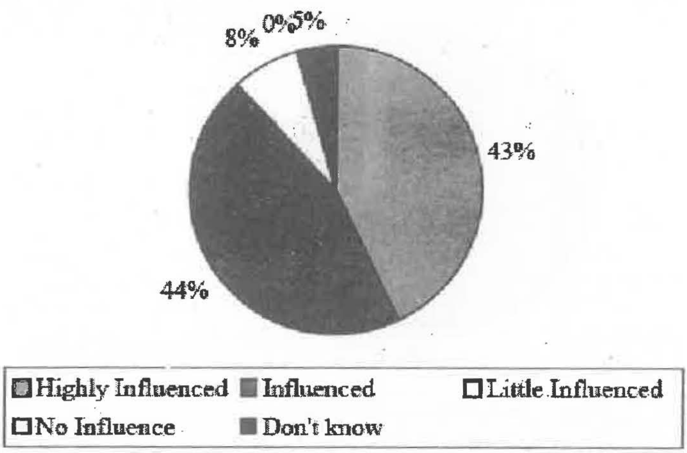


Figure 3: Influence on local culture

During informal discussions with the tourists and the locals it was found that tourists did not expect modern houses with modern amenities and were actually expecting to see the traditional architecture, and the Sherpas' traditional lifestyle. But locals also said that they are still following their traditions and still respecting their cultural values even if their housing standards were now higher. Their festivals and religion have not changed. They (locals) also argued that "no-one/no-object is static in this world, every object is dynamic" and so are the cultures; however the change has been slower and in pace with the changing times. Local also said that anyway they only wore their traditional dresses and ornaments during special ceremonies such as festivals, marriage ceremony and not every day as it is difficult to work wearing traditional attire. They further said that it is not right to claim that Sherpa culture has degraded on the basis of a few Sherpas living in modern houses and wearing western style clothes (trousers and jackets), as that is related only to comfort and every human seeks comfort in life. Further they added that dramatic unacceptable changes in culture have not emerged. In summary, the claimed impact on Sherpa culture is not as pronounced as some observers suggest.

The locals also made it clear how tourism has helped in the conservation programs of the cultural and religious sites. It may be seen from the survey that 95% of the local residents were happy with existing conservation programs to preserve the historical monasteries, sites, artifacts and monuments in the SNP (see Figure 4 below). They said that these are well maintained and preserved.

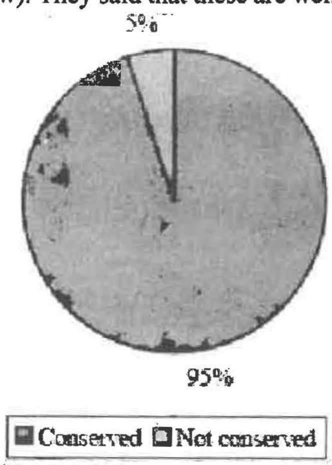


Figure 4: Local people's opinion regarding conservation of monasteries and religious sites

The important finding of the research was the awareness amongst the local communities regarding their culture, historical sites and artifacts. It was noticed in one place (Thamo) on the way to Thame that a donation box was placed on the side of a trail, which was easily visible to the trekkers/visitors and a nun was standing beside the box to inform the visitors and seek their contributions in terms of monetary help in order to renovate the monastery (2007 trip).

Economic Benefits to local people from Tourism

More than half of the local respondents to both surveys (in the Khumjung valley, mostly farmers by occupation - 57%) said that tourism has provided employment opportunities to the locals such as hotel services, guides and porter services. However, the remaining 43% of the residents who have not yet been able to generate direct benefits from tourism said that tourism has not yet been able to create enough employment opportunities for the locals (Figure 5 below). They said that they still have to go to Kathmandu or other places for employment. Certain groups also said that as the basic economic activity in SNP is tourism, and there is a lack of other projects and other economic activities, thus limiting the employment opportunity in other fields. In addition to this, they said that this is also one of the reasons that numbers of youngsters are moving out the region. However, it can be seen that a significant number of people are able to realize the employment opportunities generated from tourism, but the data also indicates that though tourists have been coming to SNP for five decades, some local people are still unaware of its multiplier effect.

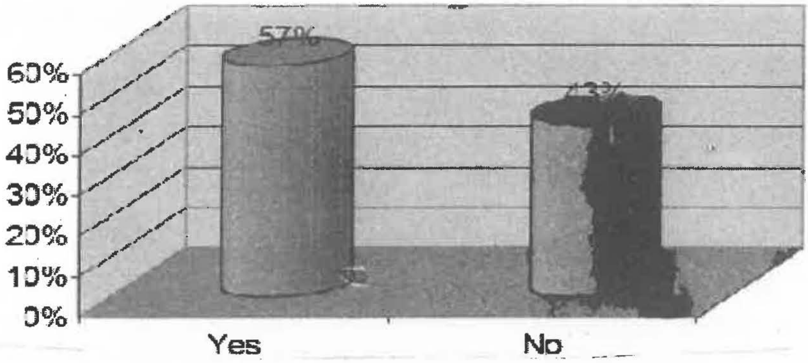


Figure 5: Local opinion on employment opportunity by tourism

The local people responses on the impacts of tourism in SNP are summarized in Table 4. It can be seen from the responses that a majority of the residents consider tourism as an important sector to improve environment, preserve culture and boost the economy. Local people also supported the views of the tourists: 86% of the local residents are satisfied with current waste management techniques whereas 14% said that there is no good facility for m naging the waste. The satisfied residents said that the Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee (SPCC) has been doing good work and has also helped to control pollution in SNP. SPCC workers come regularly to collect the garbage and waste, thus, they do not need to worry about dumping the waste. On the other hand, people said that SPCC people do not come on time to collect the waste. It was also mentioned that though rubbish bins are kept on trails, litter is still found on trails. Although 86% of the residents said that waste management is easy and adoptable, it was found in a few villages that litter or garbage as not placed in specified rubbish bins or pits but rather inside the corners of huge stones. This situation was mostly found in Khumjung and Khunde.

Table4:Local people views on impacts of tourism in the park (source:the Authors)

Local people response regarding	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No response)
Environment	76%	19%	5%
Culture	62%	28%	10%
Behaviour of locals	57%	38%	5%
Lifestyle of locals	57%	38%	5%

The survey shows that the SPCC collects waste/garbage from the lodge operators. The analysis of the services is divided into four categories- waste disposal, non-biodegradable waste management, awareness about biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste, adequacy of garbage disposal. They have been summarized and described below:

* **Waste disposal – alternative use or recycling?**

The data indicates that 60% of the lodges use toilet sewage/waste as manure in the fields whereas the remaining ones said they burn the garbage and/or dump it in the pits. The uncontrolled burning of garbage in the long run could cause serious problems to the local environment hence proper measures such as centralized incinerators need to be adopted to check such activities.

* **Non-biodegradable waste management**

75% of the lodges dump plastic bottles and other non-biodegradable wastes at the specified places designated by SPCC, however it was noted during the field visits that haphazard disposal of non-biodegradable wastes was done in some places. Though SPCC, TRPAP and SNP are doing good work by designating specific places and placing trash-cans for disposing garbage, it could be said that waste management practices are not fully adopted by the villagers and that close monitoring is required.

* **Awareness about biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste**

The surveys showed that only 35% of the lodge operators are aware of biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste. One of the reasons for the lack of awareness could be as SPCC collects the wastes from lodges and in some villages the operators dispose the wastes at the specified places where they do not need to categorize the waste and it is later segregated by SPCC, they are unaware. Thus, the lodge operators must be made aware of the need to segregate biodegradable and non-biodegradable wastes to be environmentally sensitive and reduce the sale of bottled water or other drinks.

* **Adequacy of garbage disposal**

85% of the lodge operators have adequate arrangements for garbage disposal and waste management and 80% find the process easy to adopt. However, the remaining lodges say that there are not adequate and easy to adopt. The difference in the view could be because the lodge operators have to pay money to SPCC for collecting waste (2000 rupees per annum or USD 30 approx.).

It was also found from the survey that 95% of the lodges use kerosene for cooking purposes, and it was also found that more than one source of alternative energy such as LPG, hydro electricity, solar energy and even guitha (locally made fuel from yak dung) were available. However, 80% of the lodges have not stopped also using fuel wood for cooking purposes. Thus, though SNP opens the forest only twice in year for 15 days each, they collect enough fuel wood stock during this time. It was noted in every lodge and house that they store a good amount of fuel wood, which would be enough for many months. Therefore, there is still no control on fuel wood consumption. Previously, it was collected on daily basis and now a bulk or stack is collected at a single time. The survey further shows that 85 percent of the lodge operators are however aware of energy saving measures even if they do not use them. The surveys also indicated that 70% of the lodges do not use locally available construction materials except mud and stones. It was observed during the field visit that many houses have tin roofs. And almost all of the houses had wooden walls and floors. When we inquired about the construction materials, we were informed that basically roofs, irons etc. are sourced from Jiri and Kathmandu and woods from the nearby villages of Solu Khumbu. Thus, it could be said that though SNP is conserving forests, the immediate impacts of lodge construction are found in the nearby villages located outside the SNP. Also, it was observed that there is no architecture code for building lodges.

Plans and policies established by the Government to develop the SNP

The survey shows that 43% of the residents who are aware of the governmental plans and policies, especially related with tourism, agreed with the policies as the right course for development, whereas 33% did not agree (refer to Figure 6). These respondents said that the government has not yet made any precise plan for the development of the SNP. A few residents also complained that the decision of the government to increase the royalty for climbing Mt. Everest was not correct as it decreased the number of Everest climbers, ultimately affecting their business and job opportunities. And 24% of the residents were unaware of the existence of any SNP development plan, and few also said that government does not have any role in the development of the SNP.

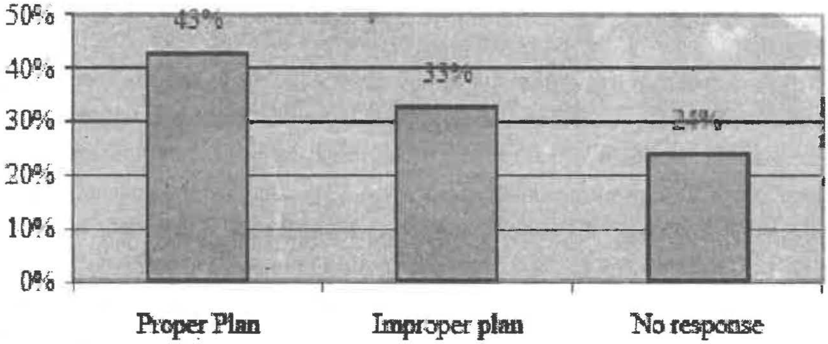


Figure 6: Local opinions regarding the SNP development plan (source: Authors)

On the other hand, 71% of the residents said that there is direct local involvement in any tourism development programs and policy formulation for improvising and expanding tourism services. Only 19% of the residents said that locals are not at all involved in any such program (refer to Figure 7). There was no response from 10 percent of the residents. The residents who said that there is direct involvement in tourism programs and policy formulation were however allied with the community user group's programs and not with governmental programs. This is a voluntary initiative taken by the locals to upgrade tourism service standards so as to attract more tourists for their own benefits. Amongst the 19% of the residents who claimed no participation in any such program, some related this question to activities with governmental actions and thus said community has not been involved in any such activity, whereas some residents were farmers, therefore they claimed there was no participation.

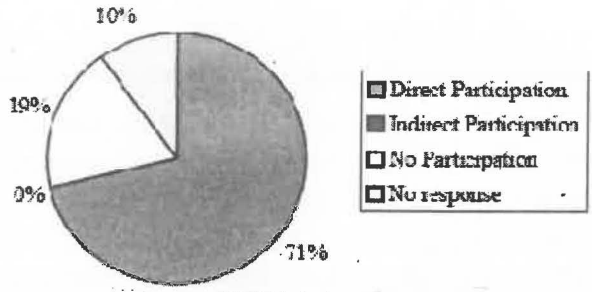


Figure 7: Local people participation in tourism policy and plan formulation (source: Authors)

A major portion of the population were unaware of the National Park Entrance Fee charged to visitors to SNP, thus, there was no response regarding this from 43% of the residents. Only 14% of the residents said that the fee collected is used to develop infrastructure for the betterment of tourism services and upgraded facilities for the locals. However, it was also found that a major portion of the population were unaware of the government's involvement in tourism development in SNP; thus 43% of the residents said that the income from the park entrance fee is taken elsewhere rather than utilized back in SNP. During informal discussions, the residents also suggested that transparency was needed in the government's development works. This pessimistic perception of local residents towards the government's actions and plans could be because the exposure to SNP was brought by foreign nationals and the initial development projects such as establishment of schools, healthcare centers etc., including the recently accessed electricity were introduced by foreign developing agencies such as the *Himalayan Trust* and *Eco-Himal*. People are still under the impression that development projects in the SNP are funded and managed by an international agency and therefore that the Nepali government plays an inactive role in the development process.

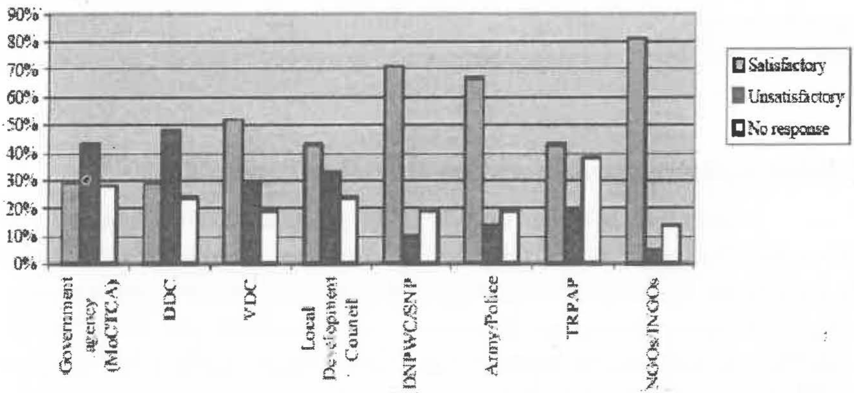
Organizations	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	No response
Government Agency	29%	43%	28%
DDC	29%	48%	23%
VDC	52%	29%	19%
Local development council	43%	33%	24%
DNPWC	71%	10%	19%
Army/Police	67%	14%	19%
TRPAP	43%	19%	38%
Other INGOs	81%	5%	4%

Table 5: Performance standard of various organizations (source: Authors)

As a result Table 5 shows that the majority of the residents (81%) were satisfied with the performance of other non-governmental organizations, especially the Himalayan Trust, a New Zealand government funded trust and Eco-Himal, an Austrian government funded developing agency, both of which have contributed to uplift the social and economic standard of the local residents of SNP by establishing schools, health care centers, hospitals in Khunde and the Khumbu Bijuli Company, including providing scholarships for residents/students to study abroad. At present, the schools are run by the Nepalese government and the Khumbu Bijuli Company is newly established by user groups. They also said that Himalayan Trust and Eco-Himal used to organize training campaigns for the local residents and lodge operators where they conducted training for lodge management, cleanliness and sanitation, cook training and porters training. Similarly, most of the residents were happy with the performance of the SPCC in managing waste, controlling pollution and supplying fuels to the residents such as kerosene and LPG. However, 5 percent of the residents said that they were not satisfied with the performance of non-governmental organizations and 14 percent of the residents did not respond.

The original survey showed that the residents are satisfied with the works of Sagarmatha National Park (SNP)/Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) and the follow up in 2007 showed that this had not changed; 71% of the residents said that SNP is doing good work by conserving forests, maintaining trails, conserving environment and thus helping locals (Figure 8). However, 10 percent of the residents said that they are unsatisfied with the work of SNP, as SNP is not utilizing the income to develop the villages properly. Similarly, they have restricted the villagers in their use of forest resources – fuel wood and timber, but have not provided any alternatives for them. But 19% of the residents said that they are not aware of what SNP/DNPWC is doing.

Figure 8: Opinion of locals regarding performance of various organizations in SNP development



Regarding the performance of the Government's Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Project (TRPAP), 43% of the residents were satisfied with its progress, 19% were dissatisfied, and 38% of the residents were unaware of its ongoing work. The satisfied residents said that in-spite of TRPAP being a new organization working for SNP's development; it has been doing good works by running some training campaigns in the agriculture and lodge development fields. Also, it is helping to control pollution by designating specific places on trails and villages for garbage disposal. However, the unsatisfied residents criticized TRPAP's works saying that it has been duplicating work by repeating that of the SPCC, i.e. putting rubbish bins on the trails when they could have invested in some other project or activity. They also said that though TRPAP has conducted training programs for the local residents, these are not effective as they are run only as a seminar where demonstration is not conducted and only verbal briefings are given.

Similarly, 52% of the residents are satisfied with the works of the Village

Development Committees (VDCs). They said that VDCs have been assisting the residents by helping in development projects. Regarding the local development council, which was interpreted as a User-group committee by the locals, 43% of the residents are satisfied with its works. The individual user-group in individual villages have been working for fulfilling the requirements of the villages by providing electricity, water, upgrading and maintaining trails, providing loans, conserving monasteries etc. With respect to the works of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, it was found that 29% of the locals are satisfied whereas 43% said that they were not satisfied with the Ministry's work on the policy of increased royalties for travel to Mt. Everest. They also said that Ministry has not been involved in most of the activities and they had been done by either non-governmental organizations or user-group committees. Though the SNP has been conserving forests, government organizations have not been very helpful to the locals.

Visitor opinions on information & facilities and services

Visitors were asked to comment on the existing products and services in the region. They were asked to give their opinions about the information provided to them by the various governmental as well as non-governmental organizations. They were surveyed about the air-services, accommodation services, trekking / expedition agency services and other facilities & services available in the region. Table 6 summarizes these findings.

Information Sourc	Adequacy		Authenticity	
	Adequate	Authentic	Inadequate	Unauthentic
Information from trekking agent/tour operator	54.83	1.93	41.93	1.29
Information from NTB	38.96	32.46	22.07	6.49
Information from DNPWC/ TRPAP	35.13	33.78	24.32	6.75
Information from local information centres	28.98	26.08	30.43	14.49

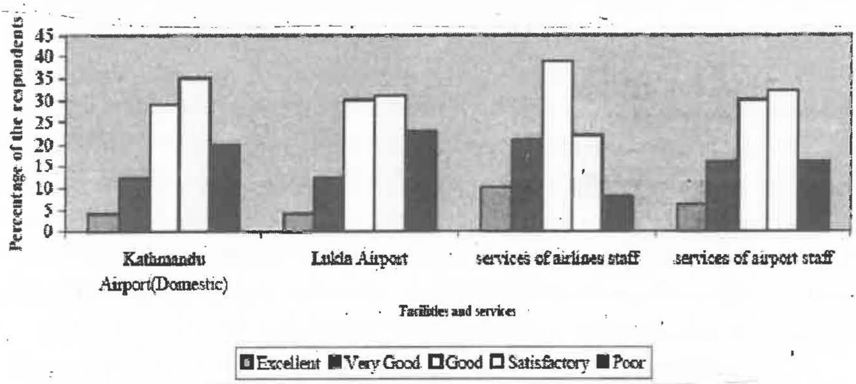
Table 6: Information Sources (source: Authors)

The data shows that although NTB, DNPWC, TRPAP have been functioning well the responses indicate a larger gap in their performance, with half of the respondents not having adequate information about the SNP. The research clearly shows the needs of the tourists must be addressed by the concerned bodies. Further, it shows that the local information center needs to be strengthened for this purpose as well.

Facilities/services

Out of all visitors only 40% thought the air service to Lukla sufficient, 23% said that it was not. The majority of the respondents said that facilities at the domestic airport (Kathmandu) and at lodges were satisfactory. However, 20% of respondents said the airport has poor facilities, and there was concern over toilet facilities, hot water facilities and heating facilities. Similarly, the majority of the respondents viewed facilities at Lukla Airport to be satisfactory. However, during the discussions the majority of the respondents suggested that the skill and attitude of the airlines staff at the airport could be improved through training to ensure better services to the visitors. The findings have been summarized in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Facilities at the airport (source: Authors)



The Attitude and Behaviour of Officials, Employees and Locals

A significant number of visitors were highly satisfied with the services/ attitude of guides and local people as they graded them as highly positive. Regarding the services of airline staff, the majority of tourists said that their behavior was positive. However, some visitors commented that airline staffs need to be trained as there was no one available at the counter when they sought information regarding flight timings. Some also commented that staffs (airlines) were not so positive with guides. In addition, most of the visitors have graded the attitude and behavior of government officials to be unsatisfactory and suggested that they must be able to give information to tourists at the time required.

Conclusions

The purpose of the original study was to examine the role of international visitors in the process of development of the SNP. Particular emphasis was given to how tourism relates to employment, income distribution, the generation of foreign exchange, and regional development, along with assessment of its impact on the society/culture and environment of the SNP. These matters were re-examined in the 2007 research. In this paper an attempt has been made to synthesize the findings in the hope that this will contribute to the overall development of sustainable ecotourism in Nepal and in the Sagarmatha National Park. Mountain protected areas such as the SNP, due to inaccessibility, diversity, fragility, marginality and 'niche' values are more vulnerable to the impacts of mass tourism. The scenario of tourism development in SNP, particularly the negative issues addressed by this research and others, has implications not only for the local people, lodge operators and to the tourist visiting this park, but has a greater impact to the overall development of Nepal. Tourism to the SNP has been increasing (leaving aside the present political problems of the country). This increase in numbers has increased the revenues of government (either in the form of permit fees or as expedition fees from the tourists), and has provided greater economic benefits to certain locals as well. However, environmental quality has been compromised and unplanned development of tourism in such areas has had devastating impacts. Therefore, the principles of tourism development in such protected areas should be towards conservation focused, environmentally friendly and community-based tourism contributing to the social and economic well being of the residents of the protected areas.

The evident problems of deforestation, land and trail degradation, pollution of environment, garbage management, deteriorating beautiful landscapes due to the cluster construction of lodges, the loss of the traditional housing pattern, and the import of modern architecture shadowing the traditional ones, are some of the results due to the compromise in quality with quantity. Similarly, there are impacts on the local economy such as economic leakage, seasonal unemployment, and skewed tourism benefit distributions widening the gap between rich and poor. There are equal impacts in socio-cultural terms such as erosion of traditional values, declining local traditional cultural practices and some disintegration of the socio-cultural fabric. Local participation in the development of SNP has also been lacking, which in the long run clearly indicates the failure of development projects in the region.

There are various forms of tourism which address the development of quality tourism. Among them *Ecotourism* seems to be the best available option for future tourism development in the SNP area. This approach seeks balance between the need of visitors, local communities and environment, therefore Ecotourism has been recommended as a model of sustainability in the SNP. The following recommendations are made to ensure optimum benefits to the local people, environment and the local economy leading to sustainable ecotourism development in the Sagarmatha National Park (SNP):

1. Awareness is the key aspect in the success of any ecotourism project. It is therefore strongly recommended that several education programs be launched, not only to the tourists but to the local people and operators as well. Awareness education for visitors to SNP needs to be started from the Lukla entry point itself. Each and every visitor should get one brochure with clear, adequate guidelines for behaviour;
2. Tourists should be made aware about the sensitivity the area possesses even before the entry point at Lukla. This responsibility lies on the agencies abroad and at Kathmandu so as to make sure that travel to SNP is 'responsible travel'. Further, such awareness would not only benefit the local environment and the local people, but also enhance visitor satisfaction;
3. Greater community participation in the development projects is recommended for sustainable ecotourism development in the SNP. The formation and strengthening of the Community User Group, Lodge Management Committee, Conservation Committee, Alternative Energy Management Committee, Youth groups, and Religious and Cultural ceremonies performing groups are needed to foster sustainable ecotourism development in the park;
4. The dependency of the local people and operators on the forest, despite it only being opened twice a year by DNPWC/SNP, has serious implications for the fragile and sensitive mountainous environment that the park possesses. Expansion in the use of electricity has been minimal. So, it is recommended that the concerned authorities initiate actions that act as incentives for local people and operators in the maximum utilization of electricity

while minimizing the use of wood for cooking and heating purposes as far as possible;

5. Wastes, garbage, litter etc., are key issues in any of the academic articles on the SNP. These aspects are not only the concerns of scientists and tourism researchers but are well reflected in views of the tourists who travel to the park. Proper management of the waste is an important aspect of a clean and healthy environment. For this purpose the SPCC and other related agencies need to be strengthened either financially and/or in terms of human resources;

6. Quality is the key element associated with sustainable travel. Charging high prices does not necessarily relate to 'quality', but to an extent helps in managing such a protected area financially. Furthermore, providing quality services by charging more normally enhances the visitor's level of satisfaction. During the surveys it was found that tourists expressed willingness to pay a high entry fee for better services. This clearly shows that there is a greater chance of developing 'quality' tourism in SNP. The unrestricted flow of tourists to the park can be addressed with several strategies: a 'high season-high price' and 'low season low price' strategy; charging fees by analyzing the visitor density to an area; and/or charging extras for special attractions and/or the fragility of any site or area, which would help the planners, managers, and authorities in the proper management of the area;

7. It is strongly recommended that the authorities explore new areas/trails in SNP so as to divert the flow of tourists from one particular area to another. In this way the benefits would also be distributed throughout the region, helping in regional development;

8. There has been haphazard and random growth in the lodges (usually clustered and disturbing the natural views) due to unplanned development of tourism in the park. This has severely affected the quality of the services at the lodges as well (due to negative competition). No proper design relating to traditional architecture has been adhered to in the Park. Further, there is no uniformity in construction as well. So, it is strongly recommended that government and other concerned organs should lay down proper guidelines, plans, rules and regulation in the uniformity of construction, services provided to the tourists and regarding operational practices as well;

9. The lodge operators lack skills, whether relating to the cooking, lodge management, energy uses, or languages, etc. Skilled manpower can provide

timely, efficient services to the tourists, which in turn directly relates to tourist satisfaction. This study clearly shows the problems. Concerned bodies/agencies should identify training needs as per these priorities and provide them. The timely continuity of such programs is a must so as to keep pace with the changing times and development scenarios of tourism to Nepal;

10. The majority of the visitors complained about the acculturation of the local indigenous culture and further said that they didn't find any place where they could see, learn and appreciate local traditional cultures and tradition. However, the locals were *not* in agreement with the views of the tourists. They claimed that they still have their culture, which however can be seen during the festivals and ceremonies only. Therefore it is recommended that museum or other facilities to be built or established where the visitors can enjoy, appreciate and learn the local culture and tradition outside of the festival season. Further, the performance of local traditional cultures and dances will add value to the resources of the park;

11. There are greater opportunities for the development of small-scale enterprises to supply tourism, ranging from dairy production to poultry, small-cottage industries, which will substantially benefit the local community. Therefore, the appropriate provisions of soft-loans, training and development in these aspects is recommended as they will to a great extent help in the maximum retention of earnings from tourism which otherwise flows out of the local economy to meet import costs;

12. Lastly, an integrated holistic approach to planning in the SNP is strongly suggested, involving the major stakeholders such as local communities and local entrepreneurs/operators, park authorities, the tourism industry, various NGOs and INGOs, financial institutions, and national tourism organizations such as NTB, to ensure that ecotourism development in Sagarmatha National Park (SNP) is sustainable.

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Modern Trend in Higher Education: Enhancing and Assessing Student Learning through the Internet

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Abstract : Technology, and more specifically information technology, has radically changed the way organisational members communicate internally and externally over the last five years, Barrett (2002). Information technology does assist and provides universities quicker access to reach the students and other potential customers. Information technology is an invaluable tool in support of teaching and learning, it helps the lecturers to communicate with students and provide them with up to date information on time.

This paper will examine literature on the internet, internet teaching and learning and website design to better understand how relationship between a university and students can be enhanced using the internet..

Keywords: Technology, communication, Higher education, website design, e-learning, internet, Teaching and learning.

Introduction

The whole issue of internet technology is of major interest to the higher education institutions. The new millennium has provided some of the most exciting technological advancements, which has transformed the way higher education institutions are managed, organised and developed. The technology is a phenomenon, and it is dramatically changing the way universities do business with their customers.

In a climate of increased competition, reduced funding, possible drop in university applications, one way of increasing student numbers would be by enhancing student experiences on the internet. It is widely accepted that relationship marketing enhances by positive experience and the Internet is a key relationship building tool.

Technology will essentially bring about a great need for fully automated environments whereby management, planning and everyday administration will be the domain of the technician. Universities will find themselves with students that require further funding to manage and implement procedures to enable managerial functionalities to operate better and efficiently in the given environment.

The current interest in the information technology, from individuals and to organisations, is phenomenal. As a communication tool for the organisation, the Internet, in particular the web, offers great opportunities to students and some forward thinking companies. Briggs (1997) reinforces this by stating that it is not only web sites that are increasing, but also there are more and more people using these sites. Until recent years the telephone was the only method readily available for spontaneous communication. However, with the introduction of information technology to events and tourism, it has changed the image of the consumer and business environment Barrett (2002).

Moreover, it has been widely accepted that the last decade has witnessed the explosive growth in computer, telecommunications and information technology. New technologies such as the Internet, The World Wide Web, digital television, interactive kiosks and videophones are doing with the need for visiting shops. With all the technological advances, the way business is conducted has been altered dramatically. The internet has been described as the most important innovation since the development of the printing press, which may radically transform not just the way individuals go about conducting their business with each other, but also the very essence of what it means to be a human society.

This paper considers the changing nature of information technology and the implications for the higher education institutions. The last decade has witnessed a growing interest in the development of higher education and increasing numbers of students. The paper will also consider the gaps in the research in this sector, in particular, as to how the internet can be used to enhance university student relationship higher educations institutions

Growth of Internet Technology in 21st Century

Technology, and more specifically information technology, has radically changed the way organisational members communicate internally and externally over the last five years, Barrett (2002). Information technology does assist and provides organisations quicker access to reach the local community and other potential customers. Information technology is an invaluable tool in support of community-oriented events, it helps the event manager to communicate with employees and provide them with up to date information on time.

The current interest in the information technology, from individuals and to organisations, is phenomenal. As a communication tool for the organisation, the Internet, in particular the web, offers great opportunities to community organisations and some forward thinking companies.

Briggs (1997) reinforces this by stating that it is not only web sites that are increasing, but also there are more and more people using these sites. In Britain current figures shows over and above 10 million home users in the UK.

> **"Usage is growing at least 10-15% per month, making the Internet the fastest growing communication medium ever"**
>
> (Briggs, 1997, p.27).

Barrett (2002, p.1) states that information technology has out grown in last 5 years beyond imagination of individual organisations.

> **"The developments in information and communication technology have leapt beyond what was thought possible five years ago and astonishing advances in this epochal human creation of the 21st century are continuing. Information and communication technology has profoundly affected every major industry and area of human activity including government, security, health, banking, transportation, entertainment, manufacturing, commerce, aviation and economics."**

Renshaw (1992, p.1) identifies the channel of communication as a crucial aspect of any successful business.

> **"All industries which produce goods and service need a way of ensuring that their products reach the consumers. In marketing terms this is known as the "distribution framework" or the channel of distribution".**

Technology will essentially bring about a great need for fully automated environments whereby management, planning and everyday administration will be the domain of the technician. We shall find ourselves with community events that require further funding to manage and implement procedures to enable managerial functionalities to operate better and efficiently in the given environment.

Appreciation for Internet Technology by HE

A lack of recognition of the potential benefits of using the information technology at higher education level is also highlighted as a barrier to progress for students.

> **"Information from the United States suggests that even where people are able to afford access to ICT, particularly the Internet, they will often choose not to use it because they do not perceive that the content or the functionality is meaningful for them".**
>
> http://www.med.govt.nz/pbt/infotech/ictinclusion/ictinclusion-04.html

This is particularly true for students coming from deprived communities, but can extend also to other groups in society. The students from deprived communities are not using the Internet. In the UK the internet is significantly under represented within the ethnic minority communities. By not using the information technology to enhance their learning and knowledge, such groups are missing out on access to information, knowledge, products and services that could enhance their well being and increase their ability to make a greater economic contribution.

The Government must make a greater effort to spread its message to students from ethnic minority and other deprived communities. Communication can be improved dramatically in one step, if the government invested time and money into ensuring that ethnic communities are aware of the benefits of information technology. This would send a clear signal to the ethnic minority community that the government was taking account of their specific needs and concerns.

Castells (1998) highlights the inequality of access to the information technology, which can be found within industrialised countries and less industrially developed countries. Castell (1998, p.162) believes disadvantaged communities are:

"Socially and culturally out of communication with the universe of mainstream society"

In addition, Information Technology has become a powerful tool for enhancing student learning. These developments on innovative technology in community environments have posed the challenging impact in information technology. The utilisation of Information technology, as a part of company's corporate strategy, enhanced customer service and substantial competitive advantages (Boone & Kutz, 1999). Moreover, students need to adopt the information technology as a major communication tool for the future in order to compete and have the competitive edge.

Internet Teaching and Learning

Electronic learning is a generic term for all mechanisms employed to aid learning and disseminate information through an electronic medium. The term e-learning within this paper involves using the Internet as a communication medium. Such a tool has been used extensively with the HE sector as a means to assist in the learning process and at the same time assist with geographic differences associated with distance learning. Whilst not intended to be a replacement for traditional classroom methods, electronic learning does offer alternative teaching methods which must not be disregarded and treated as futuristic, non operational and inappropriate. Throughout the HE sector it is clear that electronic learning does offer all educational stakeholders opportunities, to not only engage with HE environment, but also offers potential resource and cost savings which themselves can be passed on to the student community. In addition to the aforementioned savings, electronic learning does enable HE institutions the potential to further facilitate student retention and therefore impact positively upon student development.

Common e-learning tools used via the internet include discussion boards, e-mail, chat rooms, video streaming and document transfer. In fact, Bonk (2004) lists thirty different technologies currently used to disseminate e-learning. But what ever e-learning strategy is employed to facilitate student learning they need to be employed in such away that all students are fully embracing of such an approach and that e-learning is not simply employed to replace traditional teaching methods.

Expansion of Higher Education System in the UK

The expansion in UK HE provision has greatly increased over recent years, to such an extent that projected Government figures identify an increase in participation rates. Such patterns of growth are themselves in part fuelled by Government support, for the development of an experiential FE / HE culture, which advocates the merits of education and vocationalism to all, irrespective of social class and ethnic origin. According to UCAS figures for 2002-2006 there has been a sustained demand for HE places. (figure 1).

The numbers of applications, applicants and accepted applicants.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Choices	1,978.659	2,046,131	2,098,710	2.285.596	2.215.434
Applicants	461.365	476,467	486.028	522,155	506,304
Accepted applicants	368,115	374.307	377,544	405.369	390.890
Main scheme	304.096	308.435	317.496	342.765	325.072
Extra		2,463	2.621	3,391	3,262
Clearing	39,757	38,666	34,862	37.197	38.032
Direct entrants	24,262	24,743	22,565	22.016	24,524
Choices to acceptances ratio	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.6	5.7
Applicants to acceptances ratio	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
Average choices per applicant	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.4

Figure 1. Source: http://www.ucas.com/figures/ucasdata/summary/index.html

Whilst participation rates in HE are themselves predicted to rise, user makeup and consumption patterns are themselves fundamentally different from students of the early 1960 and 1970s. Such differences include the increased propensity for students to study closer to home and the utilisation of part time attendance modes, all of which combine to create a new breed of student fundamentally different from the past. In addition to the above the student fraternity is becoming increasingly more demanding in terms of quality of provision and expectations; this it-self is in part due to the direct costs associated with study placed upon the student.

Indeed, whilst many HE providers have raised teaching and learning provision in terms of ICT support and educational infrastructure, so to have prospective students who are more educationally astute when differentiating between HE providers. These newly created and increasingly educated user types, have themselves accelerated demand to such an extent that HE providers are having to continually benchmark their own provision with competitor institutions, with increasing importance being placed upon providing an innovation and rewarding educational experience and at the same time attracting student numbers, in sufficiently large numbers.

Student Experience in Higher Education

The debate of regarding students as *customers* (or consumers) has been evident in the education and marketing literature for several years. (Driscoll and Wicks 1998; Comm and Labay 1996; Conway *et al.* 1994). Over three decades ago Kotler (1971, 1972) and later Kotler and Andreassen (1987) believed that when universities face falling demand they should focus on the customer (i.e. the student) and remarket the product (i.e. education). Conway *et al.* (1994) from their literature review on the role of students in HE concluded that the student is perceived as the customer and the product is seen as the course/programme. However, from their own exploratory research of eighty-three HE institutions mission statements they discovered that only half the institutions implied a customer orientation in their planning and only one institution clearly identified the dual role of the student as a product and as a customer. As a result the authors warned that many UK HE institutions were ill-prepared to respond to the increasingly competitive environment in which they have been placed.

In an apposing view Driscoll and Wicks (1998: 59) argue against the use of marketing oriented practices in HE and the use of customer to refer to students. A customer orientation assumes that customers are aware of their needs, and can communicate them to producers or use them as a basis for selecting among competing products. Students do not necessarily possess self-serving tendencies and university faculties are not always best able to know students educational needs. On a similar point Brookes (2003) stated that the marriage of the ideas of consumerism and education seems strange for many academics for they believe that ideas are priceless and that they are free. Thus to make ideas buyable is a new concept and, for most academics theoretically uncomfortable.

The students can not be treated as *consumers* in the truest sense as in a commercial meaning. For example, in a restaurant a new meal could be given if you are not entirely happy with the one already served but it would be inappropriate to alter grades just because the students may not be satisfied with the grade awarded. However, as students are contributing to their fees resulting in a financial transaction taking place then universities may have to consider adopting some consumer oriented practices to enhance their learning experience. For example, designing courses with student job prospects in mind, improving communication with the students and being sympathetic to their individual needs. E-learning can offer students the flexibility to learn in their own time, the availability of notes and assessment in electronic format to be downloaded at their own convenience, and a platform to communicate with staff and colleagues in real time. All in all, providing a level of service which meets the needs of the customer and produces customer satisfaction. Therefore, we hypothesize that in order to develop relationship with the students in an e-learning environment a customer oriented approach is needed which positively impacts the service quality provided.

Parties involved in a relationship must have positive experiences in order to reach the required overall level of satisfaction over a period of time and develop the relationship further. Negative experiences may, of course, hinder the relationship, or even lead to customer defection. Furthermore, one tends to remember best the last experience. Thus one positive experience may be sufficient to alter perceptions of more than one preceding negative experience, and vice versa. This suggests the important influence experience can have on customer satisfaction and, the more satisfied the customer, the more durable the relationship. Storbacka *et al.* (1994) believes that customer satisfaction can be experienced at both an episodic and at a more general relationship level.

Therefore it follows that e-learning students must have positive episodic experiences during their course of study in order to develop the relationship with the university. Unfortunately, according to Bonk (2004) currently most online learning tools focus on recording and facilitating student enrolments and reporting progress and completions, not on engaging learners in rich, interactive experiences. Bonk and Dennen (2003) state that there is a need for motivationally engaging content. They continue by pointing out that there is a need to know how to build effective interaction, collaboration, and engagement with online technologies.

Bonk and Dennen (2003) further note that in traditional classrooms, effective instructors create a supportive but challenging environment, project enthusiasm and intensity, provide choice, create short-term goals and offer immediate feedback on performance. Instructors may also create a positive and psychologically safe learning environment. In order to enhance the student's online-learning experience Bonk (2004: 4) suggest that instructors might emulate off-line strategies by having students use or manipulate real world content. Using a problem based learning approach; they may create final products for a real-world entity or solve real world problems. During such a project students could interact with experts and community leaders online or engage in online conflict with their peers in debate or role-activities. Their completed assignments might be displayed in online-gallery or studio. The hope is that students will receive immediate, genuine, and specific feedback on their work from their peers, instructors, and external examiners.

Antecedent of student Experience

Trust

Trust as a concept crosses several disciplines including ideas from economics, marketing, sociology, psychology, organisation behaviour, strategy, information systems and decision sciences. (Mukherjee and Nath 2003).

Trust is generally ill defined, (Egan 2004), but is often taken to mean "an acceptance of vulnerability to another's possible, but not expected , ill will or lack of good will" (Blois 1997:58). Trust is therefore, a psychological state comprising of an intention to accept this vulnerability based upon the positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of others or confidence in exchange partner's reliability and integrity. This implies that it is generally expected that the *word of another can be relied upon.* Trust is built upon experience, satisfaction and empathy. A high level of trust is likely to engender a more positive attitude, which in turn is likely to increase the level of customer orientation. (Conway and Swift 2000).

Shared values

Shared value is the extent to which partners have beliefs in common about what behaviours, goals and policies which are important or unimportant, appropriate or inappropriate, and right or wrong (Morgan and Hunt 1994). In the context of e-learning shared values symbolises the extent to which the university and students share common beliefs on values such as ethics, security and privacy.

Ethics in e-learning is an important part of shared values. Ethical values determine the chances of university providing incomplete course information or divulging confidential personal information about students or selling student information to other organisations. Ethical values also determine that students do not use university's ICT systems to download or view material which is inappropriate and obscene. Mechanism such as the Data Protection Act and the university's own rules and regulations can build trust by addressing security and privacy concerns.

In order to build trust with students in an e-learning context measures such as quoting the data protection act on the website, establishing secure links, password checks and providing accurate and up to-date information could be employed. We hypothesise that in e-learning, where there is a perception of shared values, such perception will lead to increased trust.

Communication

Communication is a vital component in the establishment of relationships, yet it is a variable that is often assumed or taken for granted and consequently overlooked as a component of relationship development. This is unfortunate, as all other components are experienced through the medium of communication (Conway and Swift 2000).

Selnes (1998) agrees that communication is not only an important element in its own right, but also has the propensity to influence levels of trust between buyer and seller. Similarly, Sin *et al.* (2002), assert that communication, especially timely communication, fosters trust by assisting in solving disputes and aligning perceptions and expectations.

The communication is considered as a multidimensional construct. The variables that constitute communication are openness, speed of response, and quality of information.

Trust is negotiated through openness in communication and is specific to the individual students and their relationship with the university. Research conducted by Gefen and Straub (2001) discovered that man-machine communication, or at least the belief that the electronic systems has characteristics of social presence, is critical to building online customer trust. The extent to which a Web site can enhance social communication in terms of openness, speed of response, and quality of information will influence the ability of the site to address needs for online customers who in turn will respond to it. Methods to increase a website's social presence include real-time interaction on web-forums and chat rooms, fast online response using email and personalisation of messages.

Flexible Learning Approaches

The obvious solution for higher education institutions is to develop clear and flexible learning approaches to meet the cultural needs of students. It is important, therefore, the higher education institutions have understanding of the needs of students, and know how to use teaching methods and strategies to meet the needs of students. Student's progression in higher education courses will depend to a great extent upon their lecturers' knowledge, skills and understanding of how to support their learning needs. To support their learning needs, it is important to understand the cultural differences of students, in part second language competence and the sensitivities of the willingness of students to approach tutors and peers in the progression of their studies, and perhaps through the cultural expectations of 'rote' learning.

In addition, for international student it can take up to one full academic year to learn and adjust to the environment to achieve advanced language, academic, and cultural coping skills. During the first 6 months the student is learning different culture experience in terms individual learning, adjusting to the new city, and assimilating culture information at an incredibly rapid pace. During the second part of the year the student is applying and using what he has learned and develop new methods and techniques to understand the different culture. Moreover, it is also the time when international students realise that they are in different environment and have made lifelong friends to exchange culture experiences.

However, more fundamentally international students have been taught and socialised in different culture, which should be understood and assimilated into learning strategies in 'host' institutions. For example, the women in South East Asia and Middle East are normally taught in single sex school compare to European countries. In addition, within the cultural tradition of some countries students are socialised to show greater 'respect' and deference to their lecturer and generally not show disrespect towards their adults and lecturers.

Moreover, understanding the differences between the systems of education in the international students' country of origin and that in the UK is a major step towards understanding the problems that the student may experience in the classroom. For example, in Asia, Africa and Middle East, the teaching is very much centred around the lecturer, as teaching materials is limited. On the other hand the assessment might be exclusively based on end of year exams. During the year assessments are not common practice in some countries, particularly in Africa and South East Asia.

Summary

The paper has discussed information technology developments within the higher education sector has witnessed the explosive growth in computer, telecommunications and information technology in the last decade. This includes new technologies such as the Internet, The World Wide Web, digital television, interactive kiosks and videophones.

The availability of chats, bulletin board system as well as voice and video conferencing facilities on the Internet will also provide the chance for universities to have online meetings or conferences with their students, no matter geographically where they are. As a result, understanding and implementation of these variables will enable universities to enhance student commitment during and after their courses.

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Analysis of the Economic Impact of Tips on Servers in the Restaurant Industry

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Abstract : Debate is ongoing about the impact of diners' tipping behavior on the restaurant industry. Some researchers have postulated that tipping is a social norm, with the amount of the tip closely related to the size of the bill. Others have suggested that since the size of tips is critical to servers' income, they act to financially motivate servers to provide good service. In our study of this issue, we analyzed financial data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the National Restaurant Association (NRA). Data analysis indicated that the size of tips is financially critical to servers' income. Based on social exchange theory, in order to receive larger tips, servers try to provide better service. Some studies have postulated that since the size of tips is critical to servers' income, they function to improve service

Keywords: Tipping, restaurant, social norm, and social exchange theory

Introduction

Tipping is a long-time custom in the restaurant industry. Practically all diners take tipping for granted (Lynn, 2000), and the tip amount is typically steady due to standards for size and frequency. In the United States alone, tips totaled approximately $26 billion annually (Azar, 2007). According to the National Restaurant Association (2005), total sales in the restaurant industry have been increasing steadily since the 1970s. Since tip size varies with restaurant sales, the extent of tip revenue has been growing side-by-side with the fast increase in restaurant sales. Clearly, the extent of tipping in the restaurant industry significantly affects customers, employers, and servers.

Previous studies have suggested two reasons for tipping: (1) social norm, and (2) appraisal of service quality. Many researchers have agreed that tipping is a social norm, with not leaving a tip widely acknowledged as being a social faux pas (Azar, 2004; Kerr, Domazlicky, Kerr, & Knittel, 2006; Seligman, 1998). The amount of tips as influenced by social norms relates to total bill size (Lin, 2007), and the relationship between service quality and tip size are not strongly significant (Kerr, Domazlicky, Kerr, & Knittel, 2006). Several researchers believe that the relationship between service quality and tip sizes is tenuous at best (Lynn, 2001). Second, other researchers have postulated that the size of the tips left by diners is influenced by their appraisal of service quality (Bodvarsson & Gibson, 1997; Lynn & McCall, 2000; Conlin, Lynn, & O'Donoghue, 2003). Lynn and McCall (2000) stated that diners consider equitable exchange relationships when making tipping decisions. Diners leave a larger tip when they receive good service; consequently, servers try to provide better service in order to receive a larger tip. This logic has one assumption: tips have a critical financial impact on servers. If the size of tips is small and makes very little difference in overall salary, there is little motivation to provide good service. In this case, it is difficult to say that there is a high correlation between service quality and size of tip. Integrating from previous studies, it is important to determine the financial impact of tips on servers in the restaurant industry. In other words, what is the proportion of tips in servers' overall wages?

This question can moderate two streams of tipping research. If tips' financial impact on servers is small enough to ignore, servers will not heavily rely on tips. Therefore, the relationship between service quality and size of tips is not strong. Consequently, diners' tipping behavior should be closer to the social norm. In contrast, if tips' financial impact on servers is large enough, the second stream of research is more favorable.

The purpose of this research was to investigate the financial impact of tips on servers in the restaurant industry.

Literature Review

Theoretical Background

Fernandez (2004) stated that tips play an important financial role in servers' pay, so low tipping can lead to a high turnover rate. Tips often represent 100% of servers' take-home salary because taxes reduce their hourly pay (Lynn, 2003). In this regard, tips are the primary incentive for servers to deliver quality service (Lynn, 2003). Therefore, in order to receive large tips, servers try to provide good service to diners.

The theoretical background of this rationale is social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). According to this theory, negotiated exchanges occur between parties. Social exchange theory suggests that all human relationships are formed by the use of a subjective cost-benefit analysis and a comparison of alternatives. In the restaurant industry, servers provide good service to diners and diners provide suitable reward via tips; in this way, a social exchange relationship exists. This theoretical statement was empirically demonstrated by the following later studies.

Speer (1997) stated that a large number of diners in the United States leave tips in order to reward servers for good service. In the restaurant industry, there are negotiated exchanges between service providers and diners: the servers provide good service, and the diners pay the proper amount of tips (Bodvarsson & Gibson, 1997; Lynn & McCall, 2000; Conlin, Lynn, & O'Donoghue, 2003). Noll and Arnold's 2004 study showed that tips are an important part of the server's pay, as well as an important financial motivation. For example, servers' responses to a survey revealed that they believe that African Americans do not tip as much as do white Americans, and this pre-perception causes servers to convey negative attitudes and poor service to the former group of customers. Lynn and Haysbert (2003) also stated that many waiters and waitresses deliver poor service to ethnic minorities because they believe that the ethnic minorities are poor tippers. From an economic perspective, the servers' poor service and attitude towards African Americans and other ethnic minorities may be considered rational because the servers as an economic subject cannot maximize their gains from these particular racial and ethnic groups. These studies provide circumstantial evidence that servers are motivated to earn larger tips because tips are financially important portions of their salaries. Consequently, this economic motive makes servers act in a particular way.

Baaren (2005) mentioned that tips are an important part of servers' pay, so he investigated ways to increase tips. His study found that repetition is a good method of increasing tip size. When servers repeated customers' orders verbatim, customers left bigger tips because diners believed that the servers were behaving more prosocially. Also, diners felt they wer engaging in a positive interaction. In other words, diners believed they received better service. Strohmetz and Rind (2001) investigated methods to increase servers' financial satisfaction using tips. They concluded that providing suggestions to diners regarding levels and size of tips stabilized the amounts received, thereby increasing servers' financial satisfaction.

Many researchers have tried to explain why people leave tips and to investigate the financial impact of tips on servers. However, most studies have focused on a few cases or a limited number of samples in the restaurant industry. No previous study has analyzed the entire restaurant industry based on objective data gained from public organizations. Therefore this study sought to explore the economic impact of tipping on servers using macro-industry data.

Research Questions

Tips have a huge impact on servers because almost all servers depend on tips to supplement their income (Noll & Arnold, 2004). However, what financial impact do tips have on servers? Some researchers conducted interviews or distributed questionnaires on annual average tip size in the industry, but no previous study has used macro-industry data to show the impact of tips on servers. Therefore, this study examined every available bit of statistical data in order to estimate the impact of tips on servers more objectively and to answer the research questions: what financial impact does the tip have on the server?

Methodology

This study used the historical research method to examine and interpret data from previous studies in this subject area. This secondary data were gathered to estimate the tip's economic impact on servers and to discuss its psychological impact. The primary data were collected from government archives and other restaurant organizations, such as the U.S. Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the National Restaurant Association (NRA) and other government agencies. Other secondary data were derived from restaurant industry statistics, such as total sales, number of employees, average hourly wage rate, and occupation classification in the restaurant industry.

In collecting data, efforts were made to select those related only to the restaurant industry where tipping is frequent and the effect of tipping can be traced clearly to certain occupations, such as wait-staffs and bartenders.

Results

Total Sales

The data for sales in the full-service restaurants and bars/taverns were collected mainly from the *Statistical Abstract of the U.S. Census Bureau* from 1990 to 2004. Accurate sales data were important to this study because they provided the basis for measuring the exact amount of tips for each group, and allowed determination of the tip's effect on the server's annual income.

Number of Employees and Wage Level

The data were taken from the National Industry-Specific Occupational

Employment and Wage Estimates of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Table 1 offers a summary of the number of wait staffs employed by full-service restaurants and bars/taverns and their respective wages.

Table 1. Employment and Wage Overview

	FULL SERVICE RESTAURANT				BARS AND TAVERNS			
	WAITERS / WAITRESSES		BARTENDERS		WAITERS / WAITRESSES		BARTENDERS	
	NUMBERS	ANNUAL WAGES	NUMBERS	ANNUAL WAGES	NUMBERS	ANNUAL WAGES	NUMBERS	ANNUAL WAGES
1999*	1,363,702	13,220	151,522	14,320	71,461	13,220	116,937	14,320
2000*	1,402,920	13,270	155,880	14,110	72,380	13,270	86,040	14,110
2001*	1,426,680	15,110	158,520	16,370	73,700	15,110	120,600	16,370
2002	1,455,900	15,590	160,420	17,230	85,440	14,530	140,710	15,910
2003	1,533,700	15,690	169,430	17,460	78,860	14,630	153,450	15,810

(Data Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, *National Industry-Specific Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates*)

For the purpose of this study, the aggregate data were examined with respect to restaurant categories, such as full-service restaurants, and bars/taverns, and further separated into data pertaining to waiters/waitresses and bartenders, so that the entire amount of the tip was distributed among employees. With regard to the aggregate occupation data available, the occupations of wait staffs and bartenders were selected from the list of occupations and data from the National Industry-Specific Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, since these occupations directly benefit from the receipt of tips.

The data about industry employment and wages are available from 1999 to 2003 from the database for the National Industry-Specific Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates. Data from the year 2002 on were classified using a new classification system—the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)—and provide an exact match between each type of business and its employment and wages..

Between 1999 and 2001, the relevant data were classified by Standard

Industry Classification (SIC) code. This classification was a more general one than the NAICS—neither included classifications such as full-service restaurants, limited service restaurants, special service restaurants, and bars /taverns, nor provided information on the distribution of tips because employment and wage data were not available for each group. As a result, the data for occupation and wages from 1999 to 2001 had to be estimated and adjusted to answer the question posed in this study—the new classification system would have resulted in time-series breaks.

The data prior to 1999 could not be used for this investigation because it described only the "eating and drinking places" components of the restaurant and bar industry. The data for 2002 and 2003 were more accurate and were examined in detail to determine industry trends. The data for 2004 were not yet available.

Estimation of Average Hourly Wage Rate

The data for average hourly wage level of wait staffs and bartenders were collected from the National Industry-Specific Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The data for hourly wage rate for full-service restaurants and drinking places from 1999 to 2003 are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Average Hourly Wage Rate

	EATING & DRINKING PLACES			
	WAITER / WAITRESS		BARTENDER	
	FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANT	DRINKING PLACES	FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANT	DRINKING PLACES
1999	6.36		6.88	
2000	6.98		7.70	
2001	7.26		7.87	
2002	7.49	6.99	8.28	7.65
2003	7.55	7.04	8.39	7.60

(Data Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, *National Industry-Specific Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates*)

In Table 2, hourly wage data from 1999 to 2001 were available only for one category: eating and drinking places. From 2002 on, data were available for each group for hourly wage levels of waiters/waitresses and bartenders in full-service restaurants and drinking places.

Estimation of Tips

Total tips received by each type of group was computed by multiplying 10% and 15% into the total for sales in each year. For the purpose of this study, tip size was calculated as 10% and 15% of total bill amount to determine the impact of tipping on a server's annual income. The average tip was 15%. As shown in Table 3, tip amount increased as industry sales increased. Since the National Restaurant Association has forecasted that sales in the restaurant industry will increase continuously, the trend will most likely continue beyond 2005.

Table 3. Estimation of Tips

	FULL SERVICE RESTAURANT			BARS AND TAVERNS		
	SALES	10% TIPS	15% TIPS	SALES	10% TIPS	15% TIPS
1990	77,811,000,000	7,781,100,000	11,671,650,000	9,533,000,000	953,300,000	1,429,950,000
1991	78,355,000,000	7,835,500,000	11,753,250,000	9,442,000,000	944,200,000	1,416,300,000
1992	83,561,000,000	8,356,100,000	12,534,150,000	10,203,000,000	1,020,300,000	1,530,450,000
1993	87,011,000,000	8,701,100,000	13,051,650,000	10,162,000,000	1,016,200,000	1,524,300,000
1994	91,457,000,000	9,145,700,000	13,718,550,000	9,928,000,000	992,800,000	1,489,200,000
1995	96,396,000,000	9,639,600,000	14,459,400,000	9,948,000,000	994,800,000	1,492,200,000
1996	100,830,000,000	10,083,000,000	15,124,500,000	10,276,000,000	1,027,600,000	1,541,400,000
1997	110,276,000,000	11,027,600,000	16,541,400,000	11,066,000,000	1,106,600,000	1,659,900,000
1998	117,774,000,000	11,777,400,000	17,666,100,000	11,498,000,000	1,149,800,000	1,724,700,000
1999	125,430,000,000	12,543,000,000	18,814,500,000	11,912,000,000	1,191,200,000	1,786,800,000
2000	133,834,000,000	13,383,400,000	20,075,100,000	12,413,000,000	1,241,300,000	1,861,950,000
2001	139,990,000,000	13,999,000,000	20,998,500,000	12,673,000,000	1,267,300,000	1,900,950,000
2002	146,149,000,000	14,614,900,000	21,922,350,000	13,270,000,000	1,327,000,000	1,990,500,000
2003	150,976,000,000	15,097,600,000	22,646,400,000	13,418,000,000	1,341,800,000	2,012,700,000
2004	157,921,000,000	15,792,100,000	23,688,150,000	13,848,000,000	1,384,800,000	2,077,200,000

(Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *the Statistical Abstract of the United States*)

Data Analysis

Data analysis was divided into two parts—analyses for full-service restaurants, and for bars and taverns—in order to see how tip size affects each employee's income level. Of employees in each group, waiters/waitresses and bartenders are considered the main recipients of tips, and the tip's impact on annual income is analyzed using measured numbers. Therefore, the analysis of the tip's impact on employees in full-service restaurants and bars/taverns at different tipping rates is shown by way of tables and charts (see Appendix). Emphasis was placed on the tip's impact on the server's annual income level with the change in the tipping rate.

Full-Service Restaurant

Assuming that there is no tip-pooling with non-tipped workers, and that annual wages do not include the tip as a part of the wage, the analysis showed that the tip's economic impact on the waiter/waitress and the bartender is apparently huge when the wage level of the server is taken into consideration.

At a 10% tipping rate, tips average about 37.6% of real income for waiters/waitresses for 1999–2003. When this rate is increased to 15%, tips average about 47.4% in the same period. Clearly, then, tips do have a significant impact on the economic means of servers even in the worst-case scenario of a 10% tipping rate. These figures are summarized in Table 4:

Table 4. Impact of Tips on Waiters/Waitresses, Different Tipping Rates

	10% TIPPING				15% TIPPING			
	TIP PER EMPLOYEES	ANNUAL WAGES	REAL INCOME	TIP/REAL INCOME	TIP PER EMPLOYEES	ANNUAL WAGES	REAL INCOME	TIP/REAL INCOME
1999	8,278	13,220	21,498	39%	12,417	13,220	25,637	48%
2000	8,586	13,270	21,856	39%	12,879	13,270	26,149	49%
2001	8,831	15,110	23,941	37%	13,247	15,110	28,357	47%
2002	9,042	15,590	24,632	37%	13,563	15,590	29,153	47%
2003	8,865	15,690	24,555	36%	13,297	15,690	28,987	46%

With regard to bartenders, tips average about 35.6% of their income at a tipping rate of 10%. Again, when this rate increases to 15%, tips contribute 45.2%

to total income in the period under investigation, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Impact of Tips on Bartenders, Different Tipping Rates

	10% TIPPING				15% TIPPING			
	TIP PER EMPLOYEES	ANNUAL WAGES	REAL INCOME	TIP/REAL INCOME	TIP PER EMPLOYEES	ANNUAL WAGES	REAL INCOME	TIP/REAL INCOME
1999	8,278	14,320	22,598	37%	12,417	14,320	26,737	46%
2000	8,586	14,110	22,696	38%	12,879	14,110	26,989	48%
2001	8,831	16,370	25,201	35%	13,247	16,370	29,617	45%
2002	9,042	17,230	26,272	34%	13,563	17,230	30,793	44%
2003	8,865	17,460	26,325	34%	13,297	17,460	30,757	43%

Drinking Places

Assuming that tip pooling does not occur with non-tipped workers, and that annual wages do not include tips, the tip's impact on servers in the drinking places follows the same pattern as that in full-service restaurants; tips account for a greater percentage of servers' real income as the tipping rate increases (Table 6). Also, the ratio of tips in real income is almost 10% lower than in full-service restaurants.

Table 6. Impact of Tips on Waiters/Waitresses, Different Tipping Rates

	10% TIPPING				15% TIPPING			
	TIP PER EMPLOYEES	ANNUAL WAGES	REAL INCOME	TIP/REAL INCOME	TIP PER EMPLOYEES	ANNUAL WAGES	REAL INCOME	TIP/REAL INCOME
1999	6,323	13,220	19,543	32%	9,484	13,220	22,704	42%
2000	7,836	13,270	21,106	37%	11,753	13,270	25,023	47%
2001	6,522	15,110	21,632	30%	9,784	15,110	24,894	39%
2002	5,868	14,530	20,398	29%	8,802	14,530	23,332	38%
2003	5,776	14,630	20,406	28%	8,664	14,630	23,294	37%

With regard to bartenders who worked at drinking places during the period under investigation, tips averaged about 29.8% of income at the 10% tipping rate and 38.6% at the 15% tipping rate. Table 7 shows the figures for the individual years and at different tipping rates.

Table 7. Impact of Tips on Bartenders, Different Tipping Rates

	10% TIPPING				15% TIPPING			
	TIP PER EMPLOYEES	ANNUAL WAGES	REAL INCOME	TIP/REAL INCOME	TIP PER EMPLOYEES	ANNUAL WAGES	REAL INCOME	TIP/REAL INCOME
1999	6,323	14,320	20,643	31%	9,484	14,320	23,804	40%
2000	7,836	14,110	21,946	36%	11,753	14,110	25,863	45%
2001	6,522	16,370	22,892	28%	9,784	16,370	26,154	37%
2002	5,868	15,910	21,778	27%	8,802	15,910	24,712	36%
2003	5,776	15,810	21,586	27%	8,664	15,810	24,474	35%

Discussion

The Economic Impact of Tips on the Server

Many research papers have been written on customers' tipping behaviors and efforts to discover economic reasons for them. However, an actual determination of the economic motives of servers in regard to tipping has not received much attention from researchers. Large numbers of employees, full- and part-time, in the restaurant industry depend on tips as a major component of their income (Noll & Arnold, 2004). In many cases, tips usually account for a considerable percentage of income. It is useful, then, to quantify this percentage in order to determine tips' effects on servers in the restaurant industry. The analysis showed that tips play a critical role in the server's real income in each type of group, and that the impact increases as the tipping rate increases. The following discussion contains inferences that can be drawn from the data in Tables 1–7.

First, when the tipping rate is 10%, tips account for 34–39% of real income for full-time restaurant employees, and the percentage jumps to 43–49% when the tipping rate is 15%, which amounts to almost half of their real income. In the case of bars and taverns, tips' contribution to real income is 27–37% at a 10% tipping rate, and 35–47% at a 15% tipping rate, indicating slightly lower percentages than in full-service restaurants. This fact implies that tipping plays a greater role at full-service restaurants, probably because of the nature of the service provided and the value of the individual customer's order, which combine to affect tip calculation by diners. In bars and taverns where the size of the individual order is smaller, the value of the tip and its frequency decrease. Therefore, tips' impact on servers in full-service restaurants is greater than that on servers in bars/taverns.

Second, the tip accounts for a considerable part of the employee's real income level in dining establishments such that the greater the role, the greater the increase in the tipping rate. This means that tipping has been positioned as the main and critical component of many workers' income, and that its economic impact becomes more significant for employers as the hourly wage rate has increased, but at a slow pace.

In addition, most tipped employees are part-time workers, and their hourly wage has not increased dramatically since 1998. According to the Job Bank (2008), median hourly earnings of wait staffs were \$6.80 with the middle 50% earning between \$6.13 and \$8.00, the lowest 10% earning less than \$5.70, and the highest 10% earning more than \$11.00/hour. "For most wait staffs, higher incomes are primarily the result of receiving more in tips rather than higher hourly wages" (Job Bank, 2008). Therefore, tips have been positioned as an important source of additional income. As a result, they provide a strong economic motive for every tipped part-time worker in both full-service restaurants and bars/taverns.

In conclusion, this study suggests that the size of tips is a financially critical part of a server's income. According to social exchange theory, servers seek to provide better service in order to receive more tips. Many studies postulate that tipping behavior is close to being a social norm. According to macro-restaurant industry data analysis, however, tips should be regarded as a reward for good service and indicates an appraisal of service by diners.

Limitations

In analyzing the data, this study makes some important assumptions. The first assumption is that tip pooling does not include other non-tipped workers, and that employees' annual wages do not include tips. If these assumptions had not been made, then the numbers shown in Tables 1–7 would have been different. Furthermore, for the purpose of this study, wait staffs and bartenders were considered the direct recipients of tips. The reality, however, is that many different types of employees receive tips in different occupations. Thus, the numbers shown in the analyses could be higher than the real ones. Despite this minor difference between real and estimated numbers, this study provided invaluable insight into the impact of tip size on the server's real income level as the tipping rate increases.

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Tourism in the Consumer Society: Anthropologic Subsidies to the Static Subsystem Figuration

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Abstract: Tourism is one of the most emblematic aspects of the industrialized societies, acting as a multidimensional system equipped with diffused limits, as much as goods or a social phenomenon, being at the same time a theoretical and a methodological challenge to anthropology. Starting with this premise, the objective of the present work is to discuss an aspect that is not very much considered in the discussions about the process of choosing a touristic destination as well as the construction of the static subsystem image: the cultural dispositions of the emitter society that shape the image of the destination and deflagrate all the process of travelling and "making tourism". Thus, this work also tries to establish a critique and to offer an alternative to the hegemonic analyses regarding this subject which most of the time underestimate the cultural attributes of the emitter society, needing to get close to the symbolic dimension of the travel, the tourism and the act of figuring the destination.
Keywords: Tourism, Consumption, Touristic Destination Image

> *La lecture de multiples ouvrages et écrits sur le tourisme révèle un profond décalage entre la prolixité des commentaires et l'indigence de la pensée: de fait, tout le monde écrit sur le tourisme et, ce faisant, se pique de le penser.*
> *MIT, Équipe. Tourismes 1. Lieux Communs. Paris: Éditions Belin, 2002. P. 7.*

Introduction

The purpose of this section is to delineate, from within the general scene of the consumption in the complex societies, some of the main core elements of tourism seen as a type of a particular imagetic production, part of a symbolically and economically bigger universe; and, specially, to discuss the relation between the choice of a touristic destination and the configuration of its image, considering an aspect that is frequently forgotten by the notorious intrerpretations about the subject: the making of a "package" of cultural attributes easily reproducible for the consumption of the image and the influence that the cultural agendas of the emitter society have on this replication process of the other's exotism.

2. The consumptions of simulacra in the turbo-capitalism

The massification of tourism and the "need" to travel have their origins coincidentally in the period of what some authors called the late capitalism, turbo-capitalism, postindustrialism or postmodernity, whose historical-ontological ballast is synthetized by Ferry as followed:

> "From Tocqueville to Arendt and Heidegger, from Weber to Leo Strauss and Dumont, the deepest analyses concerning modernity say what means, *negatively*, the rising of the individualism, in terms of the erosion of the universe of traditions: the disappearence of the orders and the bodies of the Old Regime, the disenchantment of the world, the end of the theological-political, the passage from an organic community (Gemeinschaft) to a contractualist society (Gesellschaft), of the restricted world to an infinite universe, the obsolescence of the great cosmologies, of the objective and hierarchic visions of rights and politics, the oblivion of the Being in the advent of the technique..." (Ferry, 1994, 18 [*italicized* by the author]).

This *momentum* would be marked by new kinds of experiences in the esthetic field (Jameson, 1996, 1998 and 2006) and by more flexible and ephemeral patterns of sociability, of maintenance of identitary relations and ways of consumption and, in macro-processual terms, by the dissolution of the great foundational and totalizational narratives – such as science, the State-Nations or the progress – in fragmented fictional discourses (Lyotard, 1993; Hall, 2001; Harris, 2004).

According to many authors, these changes would be developed in the core of the new ways of capitalist accumulation and in the new uses of space and time, and also of a substantial alteration of these when facing new technologies, mainly the ones related to transportation and the mass media (Harvey, 1994, 256).

One of the most importants elements of this distinct phase of late capitalism would be the hypertrophy of the market, not only as an institution, but as an arena endowed with a great capacity of engulfing other aspects of the society, in a process that many authors call an increasing economicization of the "modern" institutions.

Along with the mercantilization of traditional institutions and cultural intermediaries (Lyotard, 1993; Sodré, 1994; Bourdieu, 1998) it becomes clear that the social life would not anymore be ruled by the production of goods, but by incessant cycles of signals consumption (buying, selling, appropriation, discard) [1]

[1] *For a critique of the idea of banality of consumption, see Hilton, 2006.*

Pessimistic and nihilistic traces are frequent in *Brave New World*'s description of the postindustrial world, in general putting the subject-consumer as part of an amorphous mass, heterogeneous and viscous: the "society of the individuals" by Norbert Elias (1994).[2] The authors that refer to the age of consumption as a reverberation of the postmodern condition (Lyotard, 1993; Harvey, 1994) tend to paint a very obscure picture which, according to Mike Featherstone (1995,.75), would be the expression of the centrallity of a "nostalgic moan" [3].

Beyond the intelectual sphere, this desire of returning to a past that was not lived (Ortiz, 1994), in a world increasingly estheticized and inflated by the consumption of images and simulacra (Mendes, 2007; Vásquez Rocca, 2007), will have important repercussions in the touristic arena.

According to a perspective from a sort of capitalism semiotics inaugurated by Baudrillard (1968), this signals or goods-signals would have their meaning fixated by relative positions in an auto-referenced system of signals.

And not only would they deslocate from their original function meaning – or from their *value of use*, as in the classic marxist theory – but they would be their own communicational mediator *par excellence* in this world superinvested by the image, the consumption, the advertisement and the media.

Finally, according to more pessimistic visions, we all would be confined in a kind of chamber of mirrors far beyound the real: a hyperreal world formed by simulacra (Mendes, 2007) and that, according to Vásquez Rocca,

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[2] *Although, it must be considered that this vision of the consumer as a passive subject is not unique nor consensual. For a critique of this model, see, for example, Campbell, 2001; Slater, 2001 e Miller, 2002.*

[3] *This Nostalgia will evoke emergencies that are so unequal as the preservation of the socialist utopia or a certain religious renascence (Featherestone, 1995, 75). For a critique of the concept of postmodernity and of some of the principal authors on the subject, specially Jameson, see Featherestone, 1989. For a greater debate about it, see Morley, 1998 and Jameson, 2006.*

"desguises itself behind the profusion and the orgy of the images. Our world is publicitary in its essence [...] The task of the modern occident was the mercatilization of the world, giving it away to the goods orientation, its presence in the cosmopolitan scene, its presence in images, its semiological organization [...] Even the banal estheticizes itself, culturalizes itself, museumizes itself. [...] The system works prior to the surplus value of the goods, much more than to the esthetic surplus value of the signal." (Vásquez Rocca, 2007, 55 and 58).

Status and life style independents of gain ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ Postmodern society without reference groups ➡ a, b and c independents	From the second half of the Twentieth Century

Status and life style relatively dependents on gain ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ Highly segmented market, personalization of consumption, custumized and referenced products by the urban sub-cultures (prominence of "ethnic" or "tribal" goods in a forest of products massively offered) ➡ a, b and c relatively independents	Begining of the Twenty-first Century

Chart 1. Source: Roque Pinto.

It is necessary to question if the individualist model would apply to the emergent societies, specially Latin America and more specifically to the brazilian context, considering its hyper-socialized nature of its character (Pais, 1996) and the great social inequality that permeates the country (Chauí, 2000), what makes the hierarchies and the prestige groups have great importance in the making of the social universe.

Regarding the latinamerican context, there is no need for a rigorous ethnography to verify, for example, the impact of the *American Way of Life* image, idealized by the Hollywood movie industry and massively replicated since the end of the Second World War, also to verify the importance of the soap-operas[5].

There is no sociological indicator that could show the decrease of the reference groups, even those mediated by a screen. Still less an indicator that shows the end of hierarchies. (Turner, 1989; Shils, 1992).

On the contrary, when it comes to face-to-face relations, with the inflation of new goods (Featherstone, 1995, 38) on one side, and an economic and social pressure that tends to reduce the traditional social distances on the other side, it is more and more noteworthy the importance of the phenotype or the positional possessions as social demarcators (Pinto, 2000 and 2005).

[5] *To know how complex this phenomenon is, it is worthwhile indicating a sort "retro-colonizer" process from the brazilian soap-operas broadcasted in Portugal: from the vocabulary to fashion, from attitude towards sexuality (chiefly feminine) to regularity of time, these television programs have been influencing the portuguese urban habitus since the decade of 1970. In this context it would be interesting to say how much the brazilian soap-opera Gabriela, Cravo e Canela (Gabriela Clove and Cinnamon) represented, in 1977, the emblem of the political opening of the post-Salazar era in Portugal (Cunha, 2003).*

In other words, it is proper to question if (1) the "postmodern" methodological model, marked by the social disordering and by a radical individualism, would have an empirical ballast to support its theoretical and descriptional premises and, in case this model resists this first question, if (2) it could be extensive to other social contexts, thinking here specially of the developing societies of Latin America.

Anyway, an important element of contemporaineity, highlighted by many authors of several theoretical afilliations, refers to the fact that, paradoxically, at the moment in which modernity seemed to be at last accomplishing its rationalizator program (Weber, 1969 and 1994), that is when it appears something believed to be already vanished (Carretero Pasín, 2006, 13): a certain re-fascination of the world, now by other forms of sociability and new technological ballasts. An extreme example of this process is presented by Marc Augé in an essay about Eurodisney:

> " In Disneyland what is offered as spectacle is the spectacle itself: the cenography reproduces what was already decoration and fiction, namely, the house of Pinochio and the space ship of *War of Galaxies*. Not only we enter the screen, with an inverse movement of that presented in *The Purple Rose of Cairo*, but we also find another screen behind the screen. Thus, a visit to Disneyland turns out to be tourism squared, the quintessence of tourism: whatever we have just visited it does not exist. There we can have the experience of pure freedom, without object, without reason, without anything that might be under dispute. In that place we don't reencounter neither the United States nor our childhood; we only find the absolute gratuity of a game of images in which everyone who is around, and that we are never going to see again, can insert whatever he or she wants. Disneyland is today's world, with its worst and its best things: the emptiness and the experience of freedom" (Augé, 1998, 31-2).

Regarding this matter, Colin Campbell has an exciting proposal, inverting the scheme that relates consumption with romantism, that is, the use of extraquotidian imagetic elements, that inspire greatness or passion, as a sort of password to instigate the desire to consume.

According to Campbell, the link between consumism and romantism does not refrain from the evocation by the first one for the second one via propaganda – what is approximately the hegemonic thinking regarding the subject. It is very much the contrary, because his hypothesis is that the romantic ingredient would have a much more important role and would be wrapped up in the social tissue in such a way that it would become fundamental in the development of modern consumism, inclusively being crucial for the "consumption revolution" which preceded the Industrial Revolution.

With the assumption of this perspective, the utilitarist paradigm of the growing rationalization of the world is relativized in behalf of an hedonist model of human conduct, in which the "goal" would be the pleasure itself, and not the satisfaction of it (Campbell, 2001). Or, according to Campbell's own words:

> "The modern hedonism is signed by a concern with the 'pleasure', idealized as a potential quality of every experience [and not with the 'pleasures' as events/discreet units]. But, in order to extract it from life, the individual has to substitute true excitement for an illusive one and, through the criation and manipulation of illusions, he constructs its own pleasant enviroment. This illusory kind of hedonism, autonomous and modern, manifests itself usually as a disposition to daydream and to fantasize [...] Thus, it is supposed that not only the modern comsumption must be understood by these terms, but also the romantic love and the modern phenomenon of the fashion dynamics must be as well faced as dependent of an autonomous and auto-illusory hedonism" (Op. Cit, 284-5).

According to this, it is possible to find out in the equation consumption-image, fixated by a sort of hedonist semantics with a romantic basis, the key to the comprehension of the phenomena characterized as eminently contemporary such as fashion and consumism. And, mainly, tourism, because more than any other product wrapped up in the capitalist voracity, it is dependent on the maipulation of the extraordinay and the daydream.

Nevertheless, it is important to remember that regarding tourism it is not possible to buy prevously what is mostly desired: the experience and the memories. In tourism the imaginary has its price, not only in terms of money (what the tourist really pays), but also by a sort of co-participation quota, of complicity, to make the "dream" or the "business" (it will depend on the perspective) come true.

As a consequence, the tourist-consumer is urged to play a leading role in the construction of the very product he or she is consuming, what is developed through the course of the reproduction and the adaptation, based on a spiral of expectation-demand-consume-reminescence-expectation. In the end there will be a virtualized project in all its process of construction and consumption. A symbiotic virtualization with its own society which it is wrapped up in.

3. The architects of Neverland: the choice of the touristic destination in the consumer society

In a first approach of the touristic system it is possible to segment it, as a methodological strategy, in four very well determined fields: the **dynamic** aspect, concerning the dislocation of the tourist; the **static** aspect, that would be the touristic destination itself; the **theleological** aspect, concerning the motivations of the tourist; and the **consequential** aspect, concerning the impacts caused by the touristic activities (Santana Talavera, 1997, 2003 and 2007).

In the studies about tourism, the destination – or static subsystem – is presented as a privileged theme of investigation and it is where most of the analyses about it are concentrated. Not only because it is where the enjoyment of the "product" happens, representing the laboratory of the social scientist *par excellence*, but also because it is the referent of all the symbolism that conforms the *touristic destination* in the larger context of the society, that is, a physical space that is activated for the tourism through sensorial stimulation and imaginary manipulation [6]

Meanwhile, the imbricated spiral of the touristic cycle does not start in the static subsystem, but in the emitter society: the resolution to travel deflagrates a series of decisions, such as the choice of the destination, the transpotation, the time of the stay and the kind of accomodation (Mathieson and Wall, 1992, 31). And all this enchainment of reflexive actions begins with the capture of the touristic image by the potential traveller.

In fact, the perception of the potential tourist about the destination is a condicioning factor to the deflagration of the act of "making tourism" (Baloglu and Mc Cleary, 1999, 875; Santana Talavera, 2007): according to Gutherie and Gale (1991, 555 *apud* Gallarza, Gil and Calderón, 2002, 57), "images are more important than tangible resources, once the perceptions, more than the reality, are what motivates the consumers to act or not".

According to Baloglu and McCleary (1999, 869), "the period when the formation of the initial image occurs, before the trip, is the most important phase in the selection process of the destination by the tourist".

Among all the changings of the tourism in the last fifty years – technological and imagetically speaking –, nothing seems to be more volatile than the destination image. It is paradoxal that something so inconstant and fugacious is the principal element of fixity in the mind's eye of the tourist and the potential travellers.

[6] *Due to the fact that the touristic place can be – in spite of tourism itself – an imaginary projection of a "real" space lived in the quotidian concreteness by the local residents, the system can be changed fast, going easily from dynamic to static: that is the reason for the existence of touristic areas that are both emitters and receptors.*

Besides, the intangibility of the touristic service makes difficult a precise evaluation of the image, taking into account that this depends on elements present in a previous selection before the tourist's first visit (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991; Gallarza, Gil and Calderón, 2002), and the classificatory systems developed in the very society from which the tourist come from.

An additional problem, in the perspective of the investigation, is that all the apparatus, mounted behind the curtains of the receptive society and based on politics, economy and on the marketing focused on the formation of the destination image, entails itself to other areas out of its control, such as the interests of the touristic agencies, the local and foreign investors and the air companies, besides, the geopolitical, enviromental and macroeconomic variations.

Although most of the time the touristic scene is mistaken for the destination, the touristic system is not only that. Institutions, individuals and agencies act with more or less capacity of intervention in the system, not only in the receptor society but in the emitter society as well. And it is from the amount of the relations between these subjects that the webs of significants, referring to this or that destination, will emerge (see chart 2).

TOURISTIC SYSTEM		
	DIRECT PARTICIPANTS	INDIRECT PARTICIPANTS
Origin Societies	Travel Agents	Populational groups near the tourist (relatives, friends, neighbours, etc.)
	Entrepreneurs of the area	Entrepreneurs of other areas
		State
	Workers of the area	Non-Governmental groups (conservacionists and other ones associated to the local development)
	Potential tourists	
Destination	Population residing in the destination area (locals and foreigners with permanent residence)	Non-Governmental groups (conservacionists and other ones associated to the local development)
	Politicians and public administrators	Politicians and public administrators
	Workers of the area - foreigners	Commerce agents (destination providers)
	Foreign Entrepreneurs	State
	Workers of the area – locals	Nearby residents – offlimits of the touristic area
	Local Entrepreneurs	
	Tourists	

Chart 2. Based on Santana Talavera, 2007

Burns (2002) identifies three primary factors of tourism: demand for travels, *brokers* (intermediates associated to the transportation system, tour operators, providers, etc.) and the touristic destinations. Each one of these factors is composed by a series of elements with complex characteristics that would escape a unidimensional definition.

For example, the air companies, that are one of the most important elements in the international tourism, including as a defining responsible for the choice of the travel due to their prices, have their own operational and strategic agendas at medium and long terms, and it, most of the time, does not coincide with the interests of the travel agents and hotelkeepers.

The same dilemma is present in all the chain of the touristic system: from Entrepreneurs to politicians, from the resident population to the tourists, every knot in the productive web of tourism sustentation is only partially linked to the system, keeping important connections with other operational structures (except the travel agencies and the labour force of the area).

And these "alien" inputs – variations in the monetary exchange, a new productive arrangement of an air company, election plans of a very influent polititian, an ecological disaster, civil engeneering *lobby*, the appearance of a new informational technology, the appearance of the enology or the mountain tourism... – can affect the touristic system in an irreversible way, relegating a touristic area, once important, to the ostracism, or creating a sudden interest in a distant village that possibly, after the golden hordes, will never have its anterior social aspect back.

That is where the great instability of the touristic system comes from, as much as the difficulty to foresee its behavior in a long term. It is been necessary to adopt a multidisciplinary and transversal perspective in its studies (Santana Talavera, 1997, 2002 and 2007), conjugating several methods of investigation, mainly the qualitative tools of anthropological matrix (Barreto, 2003).

Inside the touristic cartography of imagined places, the *lost paradise* – a nice tropical piece of land bathed by a constant sun, surrounded by a sea of clear waters and adorned by happy and sensual people – has always occupied a privileged place in the imaginary of the industrial societies (Martín de la Rosa, 2003; Burns, 2002; Moreno Gil, Beerli Palacio and Martín Santana, 2004b; Dolnicar and Huybers, 2007).

It is the *ethos* of work before the promises of leisure, its opponent, as a complementary pole. The first, cold, formal and impersonal: the labour and the quotidian featured by the interpersonal asperity and by a tasteless routine. And the second, ardent, calm and voluptuous: the vacations, and the imaginary of sun, beach, sex and fun (Crick, 1992; Krippendorf, 2001).

In fact, the vision of the *lost paradise* (in its romanticized version) or the discovered paradise (in its imperialist and sexualized version) is constantly put into action for the capture of potential tourists, because the modality of sun and beach is the mass tourism *par excellence*, being the main reason for the dislocation of about 763.000.000 people that travelled in 2004(Prats, 2006, 73).

Nevertheless, from the decade of 1990 on the international tourism has been investing more and more in a careful assembly of customized images of the destinations (Mediano Serrano, 2002; Gallarza, Gil and Calderón, 2002; Beerli and Martin, 2004), adequating itself to a well defined target public, presenting more specific products indicated to emitter societies previously choosen by specialists (Pike, 2002; Lee, Lee and Lee, 2005; Ekinci and Hosany, 2006).

They are not cases of isolated actions just like the brazilian publicitary campaigns in the 1990's, made to the emissive argentine tourism[7]; or the Canary Island, with a merchandizing treatment that is strongly directed to the british and the german markets. Or even of Turkey's, which has increased its international receptiveness in more than 50% between the years of 2000 and 2005, focusing the western european public, enphasizing its history and specially the two empires that constituted it (the bizantine and the otoman), selling itself as a mosaic that would mix east and west.

This is the way the touristic places (and their respective images) segment themselves more and more for the two types of potential tourists, that is, of the expectations regarding the ways of experience that their visitors serch for, what is directly connected with preconceptions; and the stereotypes formed about the destinations from the society the tourists come from (Simmonica, 2001; López Lara, 2005).

The most disseminated idea of Brazil outside the country, represented by elements such as beach, sun, feijoada, carnival, caipirinha and, most of all, "beautiful, explosive and accessible women"[8], is related with a profile of a tourist that is

[7] *It is worth noting that in the 1990's, due to a low and favourable rate exchange to Argentina (with the argentine peso equivalent to the american dollar) Brazil experienced the arrival of great tourist hordes from that country, including towards the northeast region – until today the intertnational target public of Bahia, for example, are mostly from Argentina (Bahiatursa, 2000). Nowadays, with the rate exchange favourable to Brazil, what is seen is the opposite, the contrary flow, mainly towards Buenos Aires.*

[8] *That is the way a german tourist referred to his idea of Brazil in a bar in the south of Tenerife, in march of 2006. Actually his image corresponds to a stereotype (that reinforces the sexual appeal and logically the prostitution, besides the reinforcement of criminal practices as much as the children sexual tourism) one thing that the Ministry of Tourism in Brazil has tried to change, although there is no news regarding its success.*

clearly defined as male, single, with insignificant gains for his societies and who is not interested in the baroque architecture of Brazil or in visiting the museums of art.

Since the decade of 1970, thanks to the pioneer work of Hunt, "Image: a factor in tourism", the destination image formation (*Tourism Destination Image* or TDI) is been one of the most seriously investigated objects in the field of tourism: Gallarza, Saura and García (2002) say that until 1999, 65 articles about the subject had been published in important international magazines, and Pike (2002) counts 142 works between 1973 e 2000.

The many investigators that work with TDI are unanimous in affirmating that the destination image formation, besides the fact that it is defined from tangible and intangible elements (Santana Talavera, 1997 and 2007; Gandara, Bernier and Mielke, 2004), is necessarily multiple, relative and dynamic (Moreno Gil, Beerli Palacio and Martín Santana, 2004a and 2004b; López Bonilla and López Bonilla, 2007).

It is constituted by different sources such as television, internet, the official propaganda and the mouth-to-mouth "marketing", and its process of construction includes not only "the nature of the destination" itself, but also its management policies (Beerli and Martin, 2004).

In this way, choosing a destination would involve three very well defined dimensions: a *rational* evaluation based on the perceived attributes, marked by cognitives signs associated to the level of knowledge and to the stereotypes of the place; an *emotional* interpretation founded on an affective perspective; and a *global* focalization with a general valorization of the destination[9] (Moreno Gil, Beerli Palacio and Martín Santana, 2004a).

Two distinct focalizations are identified regarding the process of the destination image formation. The static focalization, which investigates the relation between the image and the behavior of the tourist, including more demarcated focuses, such as the tourist's satisfaction or the selection of the destination (Pardellas de Blas and Padín Fabeiro, 2004a). And the dynamic focalization, aiming the structure and the formation of the image itself. For Baloglu and McCleary (1999, 870), the formation of the image would be derived from personal issues as much as from external ones with regard to the individual:

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[9] *Many writers highlight the fact that the global image is influenced by elements present in the cognitive dimensions, such as "culture", social diffuseness, natural resources, general infrastructure, political and economical diffuseness, nocturnal leisure and shopping options.*

psychological → values, motivational, personality
- Personal issues (internal)
social → age, education, marital status, others

source of information → quantity e type
- Stimulation factors (external) ⇨ previous experience
distribution

Some authors suggest the isolation of some variables that would determine the formation and the perception of the touristic image from the tourist's own point of view. such as variety (quantity) of sources of information, types of sources, age, level of education and social-psychological motivation to travel. These elements would be some of the key-factors when deciding what tourist package to buy.

Although, it must be considered that the image of the touristic product is not separated from the territory in which it is located, that is, the geographic landmark will always be a present element in the tourist's mind (potential or actual), and it will be mixed up with the marketing discourse and with the previous experiences to make him/her compose his/her image of the destination[10]. Even so, although many destinations can offer similar services, in general they present distinct images and marks.(Gallarza, Saura, and García, 2002; López Bonilla and López Bonilla, 2007).

According to this way, the image of the touristic destination would gather, in the tourist's point of view, the functional and the psychological attributes of the place and its image-identity as a physical-enviromental correspondent (Valdés, 1997). It is in this context that is possible to think about the destination as a territorial macro-product (Borja Solé, Casanovas Pla and Bosch Camprubí, 2002), that is, a territorial entity perceived as a unity where it is possible to find out smaller and distinct destinations.

One example of this can be verified in the city of Ilhéus, in the south of Bahia, Brazil, where during the summer the tourists stay in hotels, bed and breakfasts or rented houses in Ilhéus due to its lower prices comparing to other cities in the surroundings, but in general they prefer to explore the vast littoral of the region, visiting places like Olivença, Canavieira and mainly Itacaré – and they choose Ilhéus exactly to have these choices at hand (Pinto, 2007).

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[10] *However "personal", this image will always be linked to a certain consensus with his/her travel mates or whoever has been to the destination. So, it is important not to forget that even this psychological guided perspective is also a result of a colective process.*

Once at the destination, the tourist will confront the image previously designed in his/her mind with what is being experienced. Some academic works indicate that the tourist's satisfaction is directly related to the proximity between the previous image and the experienced reality of the destination (Chon, 1990, 1991 e 1992b).

Thus, the management of the touristic destination must consider not only the territory demarcation as a distinctive mark, highlighting it as a unique place that conjugates determined attributes found only there, but also make this image correspond to what the tourist hopes to meet there.

According to López Bonilla (2007), the touristic product is made of generic products, that is, natural and artificial attractions; the expected product, the basic touristic assets and services, that is, its material infrastructure; and the improved project, that would be the additional "advantages", like the hospitality and the quality-price relation.

There is a scale of offerings going from the "native experience", based on a simulacro of authenticity sharing the quotidian of the autochthonus in the touristic package (Maoz, 2006), to the "enviromental bubble" (Crick, 1992; Urbain, 1993), with a minimum contact of the tourist with the "real" world, having the *resort* accomodations as an example.

In a general way, the investigators of TDI tend to use the "seven phases theory" (or the Gunn model) to describe the circuit through which is formed the destination image (Chon, 1990 e 1991; Gandara, Bernier and Mielke, 2004; Traverso Cortés, 2004):

1. Accumulation of mental images about vacation experiences → Original image
↓
2. Modification of these images by new ones → Induced image
↓
3. Decision to go on vacation
↓
4. Travel to the destination
↓
5. Participation in the destination → Modified image
↓
6. Travel back
↓
7. New accumulation of images based on the experiences

This scheme, as practically all the literature on TDI – whose investigators are mostly from areas like marketing, administration or economy –, is centered in the tourist who is characterized as a consumer, literally, a *Homo Economicus*, a rational and pragmatic individual that maximizes his/her benefits and minimizes his/her harms – or, as suggested by Jeremy Bentham and James Mill, a pleasure maximizer and a pain minimizer (Balbachevsky, 1993, 197).

In this perspective, which conforms with the ballast of the classic economy, the society would be the aggregation of autoconcentrated and independent consciences, with each and every individual looking for the accomplishment of his/her pleasures and impulses through endless utilitarian calculations.

This model has two main problems, situated in different and distinct levels: in first place, it underestimates the value of the social embarrassment and the cultural dispositions defined by the origin society of this individual-tourist-consumer. That is, the rational-consumist calculation happens in a bigger arena, where the social integrity of each individual is in dispute, in a world in which not everything can be bought (Douglas and Isherwood, 2004). Besides, inside an economy of *status*, the consumption shares the space with things that are not completely monetized, such as reputation, personal image, career, family, etc (Shils, 1992).

In second place, the hegemonic model of TDI practically does not consider the importance of other images of the touristic destination, which are conformed by several other factors in the touristic system, chiefly in the conception, formation and transmission process of the touristic image, and that also will contribute to form the destination imaginary.

Although it is recognized the great progress of the literature on the touristic image formation, from the point of view of the anthropology it is important to speak about what seems to be a mistake that grounds all the discussion about the subject: the omnipresence of a psychologizing *bias*, that not only underdimensions the importance of cultural attributes of the emitter society but also prints a hyposocialized vision of the touristic image formation, lacking the symbolic dimension of the trip, the tourism and the figure of the destination – what is necessarily a colective "work" (beyound the "emotional" singularity of the individual-tourist-consumer).

In fact, most of the studies about the production and reproduction of images of the touristic destinations consider the aspects of the rational choice and the emotional interpretation, starting from highly individualist and economicist premises.

These interpretations minimize the importance of the cultural background of the tourist, what is, by the way, the key-element to fixate the simbolism of the place where he or she intends to go, and whose reference will always be his or her origin society, according to its greater or smaller cultural distance with regard to the destination.

In other words, all the construction process of the destination's *identity* it is put aside, from the emitter society's point of view as well as from the receptor society's. It is not considered that both elaborate stereotypes and preconceptions by contrast, from each cultural agenda – having in mind, logically, all the social dynamics which involves this trade, that is, the larger informational and communicational flows, just like the modisms, with a greater or smaller visibility through media or else as they see themselves and the others in a global economic hierarchy[11].

In this way, each society gives to the area a symbolic unicity while territory, and this will define the relations between "us" and "them", most of the times gathering distinctive traces opposed to the tourist, but also regarding other destinations, mainly those that offer similar products.

Thus, consolidating the previous contribuions, nevertheless highlighting the deficiencies already indicated, an alternative model of the formation of the touristic destination image that contemplates a global image can be established, thinking in terms of a processual systemic focalization. And that, at the same time, can distinguish not only the conception, design and ativation processes which form the image built for sale, as well as the processes of perception and introjection of the image. (see Chart 3).

According to Santana Talavera (2007), "it is a matter of opening the schemes and models of investigation to a double slope of retrofed and interconnected processes that methodologically permit a study by stages, with valid indicators in each one of them."

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[11] *Two examples would be emblematic: one of them, already indicated, is the current inversion of the touristic flow involving Brazil and Argentina: with the end of the parity regarding the argentine peso with the american dollar and the increasing value of the brazilian money, Argentina went, in less than ten years, from an emitter society to a receptor one in the southamerican tourist circuit. A second example would be the current forged image by Portugal (of a urban, modern and current world), that is clearly "directed" to the european scenario, what many authors indicate as a strong influence of the brazilian television which has a great presence in Portugal since the decade of 1970 (Cunha, 2004).*

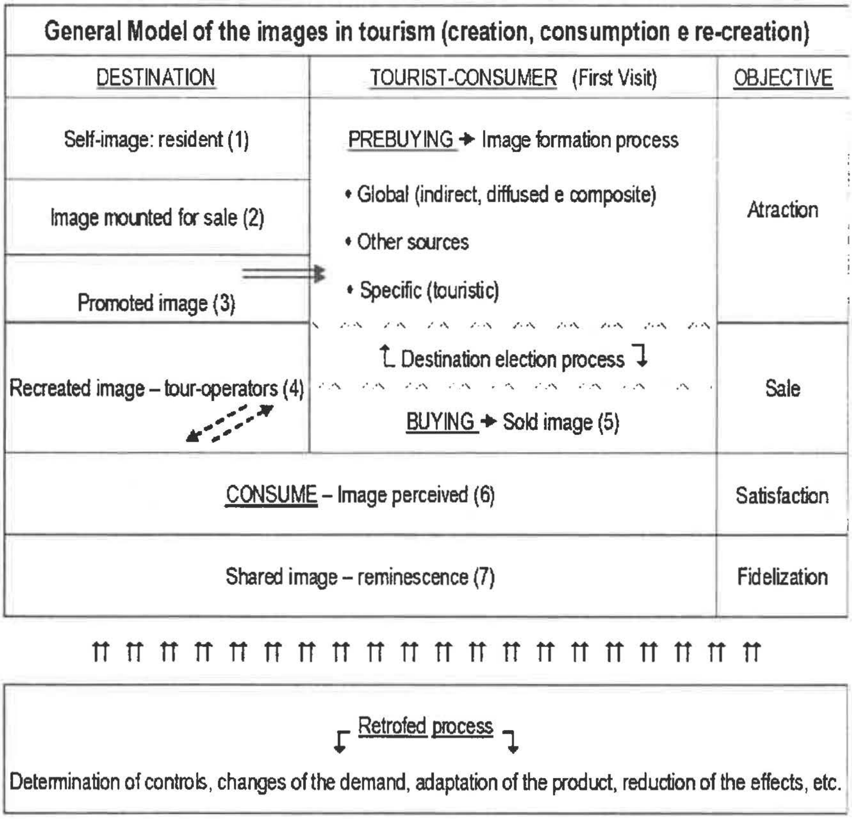

Chart 3. Based on Santana Talavera, 2007.

This model would be unfolded in seven distinct subprocesses, interrelated in its analysis and in its operationalization, whose partial results would form images referred not only to the perspective of those who elaborate them but as much as from the point of the process where they are created (and/or recreated).

Its advantage is to incorporate to the phases of creation, consumption and recreation of touristic image actors and points of view most of the times not considered in the TDI, such as those who elaborate the resident self-image or the several types of brokers (tour operators, marketing professionals, press...). It also correlates the several phases of the process with multiple views of the *place*, situating simultaneously the various agents involved in the system and not only the view of the tourist.

Herewith, when the contrasting images and even when the conflictive ones are situated, it is possible to have a more realistic perspective of the touristic image formation. A less homogeneous and hyposocialized panel, what brings it near to a model which is more suitable for the poliphony proper to the agitation of the social life.

Conclusion

Usually tourism – as positional consumption – is presented as a peculiar subsystem inside a system of greater classificatory schemes, economically and symbolically at the same time. And, like any goods in the consumer society, it is fragmented for the representation of prestige and status replicating a scale of travel costs, that is, the more expensive the travel is, the more it has to seem pretigious.

And the key element that makes visible the hierarchy of status in tourism is the image of the destination, because it deals directly with something so fugacious (and profitable) such as the production and the reproduction of images whose final objective is the enjoyment of the experiences (touristic) – or the "mental states", as said by marketing professionals.

In the context of this esthetics marked by the saturation of the image and by the discardable consumption (Saavedra, 2007), tourism would reflect a very relevant dimension and maybe it could be elected the "product" of the contemporaneity *par excellence.*

Although it has to be considered the reduced capacity of previsibility of the touristic system in a long run and the enormous diversity of its manifstations, we must have in mind that (1) it emerges from inside the capitalism in a defined space-time, for specific social and economical factors; that (2) the tourism is abstractly based on sociological and economical universal rules, that is, it is regulated by rules and *mores* (for all the subjects involved) and also by laws of market (offer, demand and regulation).

The maintenance of this perspective, and specially the comprehension of the touristic image formation – representing at the same time the way and the message of tourism – is vital to understand the touristic system and the dimension of its tentacles, in the emitter society as much as in the receptor society. And, mainly, in many "other" places that cannot be fixated geographically, like the imaginary of the tourists or the residents of the touristic destinations.

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The Lessons of the 'European Cities (Capitals) of Culture' Programme (1985- 2008)

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Abstract: The "European Capital Culture" programme was launched by the European Council of Ministers in 1985. Each city appointed *European Capital of Culture* for a one-year period is given the chance to showcase its cultural life and cultural identity within the European Union as well as worldwide. Over the past 23 years, 37 European cities have been nominated as *European Capitals of Culture.*

The paper seeks to analyze the different missions and objectives chosen by these cities, chiefly within the framework of a sociological and marketing-oriented approach. By way of conclusion, it will highlight both the positive and critical factors to be considered within a process aimed at developing cities of culture.

Key Words: Culture, European Identity, Cultural planning, Cities of Culture, Creativity

The public urban cultural policies in Europe and the first phase (1985–1989) of the European Cities (Capitals) of Culture Programme

Until the early 1970s the public cultural policies of the States that had until 1989 represented Western Europe were characterised by a definition of culture that solely considered those works that were defined as being "high culture." The main aim of the public initiatives of those years consisted in promoting the enjoyment of these works by means of an enlargement of access to a public audience that had until then been excluded, above all for economic, cultural and social reasons.

From the mid-1970s and until the 1980s there had been a dissemination of decentralisation policies, also cultural ones, and a growth of actions addressed to increasing citizens'political and social participation in the decision-making processes. It was a period known as the 'season of participation and access' that affected many sectors of public life. Public cultural initiatives were presented in a non-homogeneous way in the various European States that contested a definition of culture, which envisaged a rigid distinction between "high" e "low" culture. The cultural policy became an aspect of public social life with the objective of reconstructing the urban social context also by way of access to the culture that is increasingly open to disadvantaged categories. The cultural initiatives in that period were used by the public authorities also to enhance political consensus.

In those years the interest of the European Union grew in promoting its own cultural policy with a view to developing a European conscience or sentiment. In the absence of a perception of a European identity shared by all the citizens of the States of the European Union, the latter carried forward "symbolic measures devised as means for the creation or the reawakening of European identity" (Sassatelli 2005: 10). Among these, the creation of European symbols such as the flag, the anthem, the Europe Day (9^{th} May); the European Cities of Culture (renamed European Capitals of Culture in 2005) programme. The objectives of these European cultural policies were two-fold: spreading shared cultural symbols and, at the same time, respecting the cultural diversities.

The "European City Culture" programme was launched by the European Council of Ministers in 1985.

Each city nominated European City of Culture for a one-year period is given the opportunity to showcase its cultural life and cultural identity within the European Union. The original aim of the programme was wholly of a cultural nature (Sassatelli 2005): making the cultural production of the designated cities circulate and bringing to these cities the culture of the other European cities, thereby creating a global image of European culture through this circulation of products.

Over the last twenty-three years, thirty-seven European cities have been nominated European Cities of Capitals of Culture (ECOC).

The objectives of the ECOCs are inevitably affected by the more general characteristics of the European urban cultural policies of the period.

The cities nominated European Cities of Culture from 1985 to 1989 were: Athens (Greece); 1986: Florence (Italy); 1987: Amsterdam (Netherlands); 1988: West Berlin (West Germany); 1989: Paris (France)

These cities, already recognised throughout the world as hosting an important cultural heritage, have kept faith with the "cultural aims" indicated in the programme launching the initiative: exhibitions and shows that privileged the productions of European "high culture", with the aims of creating an image of European culture also to be promoted among an audience different from the traditional one. As can be seen, these are programmes still driven by a conception of culture that insists on the separation between *high* and *low* culture and that identifies European culture as the set of works of high culture realised in the continent over the centuries up to the present-day.

The public urban cultural policies in Europe from 1990 until today

From the end of the 1980s until the end of the 1990s objectives of economic development had prevailed along with the regeneration of the cities by means of investment policies, the use of marketing instruments and promotion of the image of the cities. The city manager was born. The definition of culture in this phase is characterised in an anthropological sense and thus comprises not only the artistic products but also costumes, traditions and ways of life that connote an whole population, or parts of it.

The positive aspects of the public policies of those years are essentially three in number (Bianchini 1993, 1999):

a. The reuse of buildings or whole decaying or abandoned neighbourhoods. The difficult economic situation that has affected many European cities, has obliged the public administrations to rethink the use of these buildings or whole parts of the city in terms of the new objectives. In many cases these have been the objectives of cultural development: the old manufacturing economy has been replaced by a more innovative cultural economy;

b. This change has brought about the birth of new companies and new professions oriented to culture. The number of workers created and the quantity of wealth produced has generally been unable to resolve the local economic crisis, but has allowed for the more immediate difficulties to be overcome and has provided some indications as to possible future decisions;

c. The set of these urban cultural policy decisions has allowed the various European cities to achieve an international city image whose identity is characterised by a cultural renaissance.

The phase that stretches from the end of the 1990s until now has at times been characterised by the presence of true and proper 'cultural planning strategies', that have been the subject of debate since the early 1990's (McNulty 1991, 1996; Mercer 1991; Bianchini 1996). It is a phase that seeks to overcome some of the limits of the urban cultural policies of the previous period. According to Colin Mercer, cultural planning is characterised by planning and the strategic and integrated use of cultural resources for urban and community development. Planning is understood here as the organisational cornerstone that gives rise to all the other functions of the public policies. From this choice there follows the need for cooperation and integration between the urban and architectural planning with the planning carried forward by the economists, with the result of increasing the social actors and the disciplines involved. Among the actors involved, besides the public sector, we have the private and the third sector. The interdisciplinary nature is broadened to the sociological, anthropological, ethnographic and historical approaches. The strategic role means that the cultural planning is part of a broader strategy of development of the territory with objectives that refer not only to the physical environment but also to the economic, industrial, social and tourist development. Integrated means that the possibility of a strategic use of the cultural resources must be thought of and planned right from the ideation phase of the project.

Another key concept of cultural planning is, according to Francesco Bianchini (2004: 7), a broad definition of 'cultural resources', which consists of the following elements:

"- arts and media activities and institutions;

- the youth culture, ethnic minority cultures and other 'communities of interest';

- the heritage, including archaeology, gastronomy, local dialects and rituals;

- local and external images and perceptions of a city, including the ways in which they change in the course of history and how they can be interpreted by different groups within the population -by, for example, children, particular ethnic communities, and the elderly-;

- the natural and built environment, including public and open spaces;

- the diversity and quality of leisure, cultural, eating, drinking and entertainment facilities and activities;

- local milieu and institutions for intellectual and scientific innovation, including Universities and private sector research centres;

- the repertoire of local products and skills in the crafts, manufacturing and services, including local food products, gastronomic and design traditions".

From a general standpoint, going beyond the indications of Rod Fisher (2002), we can subdivide the European public policies for culture according to seven prevalent orientations that do not mutually exclude one another:

- defensive policies: promotion of initiatives that protect and safeguard the cultural specificities of the given territory;

- social integration policies: broadening the possibilities for access to the cultural products to segments of the population that have so far been excluded, also affecting the type of cultural provision;

- policies that favour the central role of the creative professions and that aim at an increase in employment and the knowledge economy;

- image-making policies;
- policies for the reorganisation of the financing systems for culture in order to make the cultural initiatives more efficient and less onerous:
- marketing repositioning policies by placing the cultural resources at the heart of the development.

The city marketing and the role of cultural planning in Europe from 1990 to today

By city (territorial) marketing we mean, traditionally, the application of marketing instruments for the valorisation of a certain territorial area, with the aim of improving the settlement conditions and the appeal of a locality in the eyes of investors and current or potential users. The development of city marketing is the consequence of the increased competitiveness between cities at the local, national and international levels. The operative objectives, diversified from one another yet integrated within a single planning project, are multiple. From the external point of view: attracting new economic and productive activities by offering new public services and offering efficient public services and infrastructures, attracting new tourist flows; promoting a positive image. The specific internal objectives to be reached are the satisfaction of the needs of the citizens and the productive activities of the territory to improve the quality of life, increasing the relationship of trust with the local authorities and creating a profound sense of belonging to the territory.

This distinction between internal marketing and external marketing is relevant from the operative standpoint; from the conceptual standpoint it is instead important to underline the integrations in order to be able to involve all of the stakeholders.

Since the mid-1980s the idea has spread in Europe that the assets and the cultural resources, understood in the broad and the anthropological sense, perform a primary function in the definition of the identity of a territory and the community which refers to that territory. The territory is not considered only to be the place where one lives, works, constructs social relations, but also the place towards which feelings of belonging can be experienced through a process of identification: the place as a territory of a choice of identity (Gelosi 2004). The territory and the cities are, however, such complex systems that the city marketing must innovate the instruments of traditional intervention taking account of those disciplines that are capable of analysing all of the different cultural dimensions. In this way it will be possible to identify the single local cultural resources that constitute the starting point for any cultural planning project that must in any case be realised according to a territorial and non-sectoral dimension. The traditional cultural policies are differentiated in relation to the different artistic sectors (from the theatre to dance, from literature to folklore), the most innovative ones place the cultural standpoint as the main standpoint in the definition of the development policies for the entire territory. Culture is no longer, therefore, one of the sectors of the development of a territory but the paradigm that orients the development of a territory in that even the economists agree on the fact that culture is not only a value, but also an important economic resource. Indeed, it is a resource that can perform a strategic role in the policy of city marketing because the local cultural resources are immaterial resources that offer an important competitive advantage in that they are not easily acquirable or imitable by the competing territories.

The role of the events in the construction of the (cultural) identity of a city

Once the identity of a territory has been defined it is necessary to predispose adequate instruments of communication addressed to different targets that are to be involved.

Over the last few years, the construction of an event is considered to be one of the most important instruments of communication of the identity of a territory. The relevance "at the social level of the events has increased thanks to the converge of some phenomena of a social, economic and technological order" (Grandi Miani 2006: 221).

In the first place, the free time available to the people has increased from a quantitative point of view acquiring, at the same time, new meanings, so far as to become a fully-fledged right, safeguarded by the law. Free time, in that it is time freed from working constrictions, is used to rest, to enjoy oneself and, in any case, to better fulfil oneself (Dumazedier 1967). The participation in the events constitutes, for an ever-increasing number of people, an important objective.

Ever since the end of the 1960s some scholars, anticipating subsequent events, have spoken of our society as the society of spectacle (Debord 1967) in that the logic of the spectacle has itself become the dominant and pervasive social logic. In the society in which the spectacle is not only the main product, but the one that imposes its own logic on the other products "it is not possible to produce or to sell a good being indifferent to the more global project of entertainment in which the consumer will place it" (Fabris 2003: 206).

The concomitant development of the mass-media technologies – starting from those of television – has made popular a particular type of event: the ones that for their spectacular characteristics are better adapted to being channelled, perhaps at the global level, by the means of mass communication. The media events are thus developed: political and sporting competitions, wars, "royal ceremonies" are the events that, owing to their character of extraordinariness, are better suited to becoming mass-mediated events (Dayan Katz 1992). The means of mass communication accentuate the spectacular nature that such ceremonies have already for themselves. This intervention is not pure channelling, but the reconstruction and narration of the event as a function of the demands and the rationales of the means of mass communication.

Set against this backdrop, marketing tends to tailor its own philosophy and its own instruments through the choices that accentuate both the experiential-emotive-individualistic component of the consumer culture and the relational, community and tribal component. The experiential marketing finds an important antecedent in the theorisation of Hirschmann and Holbrook (1982) of those "hedonic consumption" that accentuated the significance of the emotional, multi-sensorial and imaginative components of the experience of consumption.

It is, however, with Bernd Schmitt and Alex Simonson (1997) and with the increase in the research whose object is the consumers' daily experience, that the basic concepts characterising the experiential marketing are formalised: the perceptive-sensorial, emotional-sentimental, creative-cognitive, physical and relational involvement. The experience of consumption is thought of as being composed of a number of strategic experiential modules (i.e. sense, feel, think, act, relate) whose operative combination allows for the reconstruction of experiences that involve the consumers intensely and profoundly.

Subsequently, Pine and Gilmore (2000) tried to quantify the experience of the consumer credibly from the economic standpoint, starting from the awareness that the economy has by now entered the fourth era, characterised by enacting some 'experiences' in which the seller is the one 'who enacts' and the buyer is the 'guest'. The construction of the events perceived by the public addressees as unique and memorable experiences capable of mediating the relationship with the company or the institution is one of the ways for implementing existential marketing.

The phase of maturity of the European Cities (Capitals) of Culture Programme (1990 – 2008): the key mission

The European cities of culture in this period have been: Glasgow (United Kingdom): 1991: Dublin (Ireland): 1992: Madrid (Spain); 1993: Antwerp (Belgium); 1994: Lisbon (Portugal): 1995: Luxembourg (Luxembourg): 1996: Copenhagen (Denmark); 1997: Thessaloniki (Greece); 1998: Stockholm (Sweden); 1999: Weimar (Germany); 2000: Reykjavík (Iceland), Bergen (Norway), Helsinki (Finland), Brussels (Belgium), Prague (Czech Republic), Krakow (Poland), Santiago de Compostela (Galicia, Spain), Avignon (France), Bologna (Italy); 2001: Rotterdam (Netherlands), Porto (Portugal); 2002: Bruges (Belgium), Salamanca (Spain); 2003: Graz (Austria); 2004: Genoa (Italy), Lille (France); 2005: Cork (Ireland); 2006: Patras (Greece); 2007: Luxembourg (Luxembourg), Sibiu (Romania); 2008: Liverpool (United Kingdom), Stavanger (Norway).

Starting from the nomination of Glasgow, the objectives of the ECOC have got closer and closer to the objectives that have characterised the European urban cultural policies of the 1990s (D'Angelo Vespérini 1998, 2000; Muldy 1997, 2000; Ruffolo 2001; European Cultural Foundation 2004). On the one hand, the public cultural policies that are understood as instruments for economic growth: processes of regeneration of the cities are being promoted through strong investments. On the other hand, instruments of marketing are being used more and more along with the promotion of the image of cities in a context of the affirmation of city marketing. In some cases, there have been attempts that can be called 'cultural planning strategies' characterised by a centrality from the cultural point of view that is capable of orienting the whole of territorial planning.

More and more often the European cities have considered the nomination as European Cities of Culture as the chance to build a fully-fledged mega-cultural event.

The importance of the events as effective instruments for city marketing has been stated by many scholars, amongst whom Philip Kotler (2005), who has identified the events as one of the three instruments devoted to the communication and construction of the city image.

At the beginning of the 1990s Maurice Roche identified a close correlation between mega-events (characterised by a broad international fame obtained by means of the mass media) and the urban policies in their community dimension: "to be successful they need to involve as broad a spectrum of the community as possible. The process of deciding on mega-events (*via* local politics), staffing them (as volunteers), supporting them (as paying spectators) and reaping whatever rewards are to be had are "whole community' matters' both in principle and in many respects in practice also" (Roche 1992: 580).

The construction of the mega-events and the events of special interest has increased greatly over the past few years, to the extent that it has been possible to define a typology in relation to the targets they are addressed to and the mass media that amplify their effects. Among the mega-events we should recall large-scale sports events (Olympics); the mega exhibition event (Expo). Among the special events: sporting events (Auto GP, America's Cup, finals of international sports events); cultural (European Capital of Culture, Festival cinematographic); political (international summits, such as G8).

The cultural events perform a central role above all in the public policies for the culture that privilege the process of construction of the image of a territory or decide to reposition it as a function of the centrality of culture.

The abandonment on the part of the ECOCs of the original cultural key mission in favour of the plurality of other objectives that were peculiar to the European cities of the period has led to some crying out to betrayal (Richards 2000) in favour of the more instrumental objectives fostering a local city development that overlooks the symbolic European dimension. These charges can be answered by stating that the broadening of the concept of culture to an anthropological dimension allows us to transcend the idea of a European cultural identity that overlaps with the works of high culture in order to show the diversities and the specificities of all the aspects of the European cultural resources.

The European Cities (Capitals) of Culture Program: from the key mission to the major objectives

The objectives pursued by the ECOCs in these past thirty years are many and vary from city to city, as a function of the different situations in each territory and the vaster urban planning objectives.

Robert Palmer (2004: 44) subdivided them into objectives of high, medium and low priority.

The objectives that have been shared as having the highest priority by a large number of cities:

"- raising the international profile of the city and its region;

- running a program of cultural activities and arts events;

- long-term cultural development of the city/region;
- attracting visitors and enhancing feelings of pride and self-confidence;
- growing and expanding the local audience for culture;
- creative a festive atmosphere".

Objectives that have been judged to be of a medium priority:

"- making improvements to cultural infrastructure;
- developing relationships with other European cities/regions and promoting European cultural cooperation;;
- promoting creativity and innovations;
- developing the careers/talents of local artists".

Objectives considered by the majority of cities to be a lower priority:

"- Building social cohesion/community development;
- economic development;
- encouraging artistic and philosophical debate;
- improvements to non-cultural infrastructure;
- celebrating an anniversary or history of the city."

In view of the objectives of this paper, I think it is useful to pause to reflect on some problematic aspects of the ECOC programmes, above all in relation to the impact that the urban cultural policies have had in the past and in the medium to long-term period.

Cultural Programme

All the cities have promoted, during their nomination year, cultural programmes that have developed by means of setting up a large number of cultural events.

Problems relating to the setting up of the cultural programme

The characteristics that differentiate the various events refer to the following variables:

- **duration**: The duration goes from programmes that start after the start of the year and that therefore last less than twelve months, to programmes that start well before the year of nomination. Bologna (2000) had planned cultural events starting from 1998 with the logo *Bologna 2000.* Liverpool (2008) constructed an approach to 2008 which started with the planning of annual events that harked back to a final theme ("The World in One City") capable of framing each sub-theme: 2004, "Year of the Faith in One City"; 2005, "Sea Liverpool"; 2006, "Liverpool Performs"; 2007, "Year of Heritage";

- the role of the **local cultural and artistic organisations** in the choice and setting up of the cultural programme: it has not been easy to find a balance between the established cultural institutions and the independent groups and associations;

- the relationship between **artistic vision** and **the political interests** of the institutions that are in charge of the event. The problems or conflicts involved in this relationship often depend on the type of **governance** of the event. This ranges from autonomous bodies to bodies tied to the municipality, but what is critical is the weight that the political representations have in such bodies;

- the concept of **culture** adopted: usually an anthropological and interdisciplinary approach has been privileged;

- the **public targets** to whom the events are addressed: the city public, the surrounding territory, the national public, the international public. The city marketing actions and the tourism marketing adopted are also defined in regard to the reference target.

European Cities of Culture that have above all focussed on setting up cultural activities and artistic events.

The reasons for this choice have been of two kinds.

On the one hand, the cities that already had a recognised perception of cultural cities and that sought to reinforce that image by involving other audiences, with the aim of increasing the tourist inflow.

In 1992 the city of Madrid used this occasion to reinforce its image as an art city and to manage to reached those sectors of the public that at the time were already visiting Spain, but would only go to the seaside resorts situated in the islands and continental Spain. In 1993 Antwerp embarked upon a path for its international positioning as a city of culture: after about ten years it was internationally recognised as an important creative city. In 1999 Weimar, and Krakow and Prague in 2000 -the first cities of the ex-Soviet bloc nominated ECOC- used this occasion to reinforce their image at the international level as cultural cities and to reshape their own autonomous cultural identity as distinct from 40 years' Soviet influence.

On the other hand, those cities that in the European imaginary were not considered to be interesting cities from the cultural standpoint – or were only partially so – and that were promoting themselves as such through the events organised in the year of appointment as European Cities.

In 1991 the city of Dublin used the nomination to reposition itself: from being a city that was recognised solely for its musical and literary tradition to a city that aimed to be characterised as being open to contemporary cultural forms. In 1994 Lisbon took advantage of the nomination to implement an international repositioning operation concerning its own image which after long decades of dictatorship and isolation should place it within the collective imaginary of the art cities.

Infrastructures

In nearly all of the cities the setting up of cultural programmes has been joined by infrastructure projects. "The most common projects were improvements to public space and lighting, and improvements to cultural infrastructure, including refurbishments and restorations facilities and monuments, as well as the construction of new cultural buildings such as concert halls and museums." (Palmer 2004:16). In many cases, however, these were infrastructures that were started before the year of appointment but that, thanks to this appointment, obtained extra funding. Often the most important infrastructures were not completed during the year of appointment: the Contemporary Art Gallery - known as 'Mambo' – of the city of Bologna was inaugurated seven years afterwards.

European Cities of Culture that have focussed on infrastructures and new urban development

According to Palmer (2004: 16): "About a quarter of ECOC invested in minor capital improvements, while similar proportion carried out major programmes of urban development, such as developing cultural districts and parks".

Cities like Glasgow in 1990, Liverpool in 2008 and, with a lesser emphasis, Rotterdam in 2001, Porto in 2002 and Genoa in 2004, have carried through important infrastructural works within the scope of more comprehensive processes of urban restructuring with culture at the heart. Both Glasgow and Liverpool have gone through a deep-seated industrial crisis that has forced them to decide for sweeping urban transformations driven by planning that has put them at the heart of the development of the culture and creativity industry. For Glasgow the year of European City of Culture was the start of this repositioning, while for Liverpool it is an important moment to communicate at the international level a repositioning that had already started a number of years ago.

The European Dimension

The European dimension of the cultural programme has been variously interpreted by the different cities and has always represented more of a background element that a foreground factor. At times, exhibitions have been held of the cultural products coming from the whole of Europe; at times, European artists have been invited; at times, tourist promotion projects have been set up involving several cities. Even the year 2000, when the European cities nominated as ECOCs were actually as many as nine, the network that had been created between these nine cities did not bring about any important common initiative that were capable of surviving after the end had drawn to a close.

Local creativity

The shift from a marketing perspective to one of cultural planning is determined by privileging the territorial, non-sectoral dimension of culture, putting the cultural resources at the heart of policy-making. The fostering of creativity and the innovation of the cultural production has mainly been achieved through the commissioning of new works or the organisation of residential spaces for local or international artists. In some cases the official cultural activities have been supported by other (off) cultural activities, that are even more deeply-rooted in the territory. These initiatives fostering creativity have been chiefly addressed to the cultural productions rather than to the development of the local management competences that allow the less structured contexts to develop autonomously.

Long-terms effects and cooperation

It is hard to define the long-term effects in that it would be necessary to refer to research that, by using the same methodology, sets as its objective the medium and long-term implications of the ECOCs.

Event vs. Process

In the first place, we must consider that in relation to the devising and realisation of the year's initiatives, some cities have thought of them as a special event (comprising many subsidiary events) with a pre-established beginning and end, in order to attain specific objectives that will be exhausted by the year's end, even though they could have consequences also for the future, above all in relation to the repositioning of the city's image. Other cities have thought of this occasion as a process that often begins before the designated year and continuing well after its conclusion. In the former case the organisation of the initiatives has adopted its own marketing indications for the events, while in the latter case there has mainly been a move in the direction of a cultural urban planning rationale that involves many more institutions.

Long-term effects

From the research directed by Robert Palmer (2004: 133-134) three major impacts and six lesser impacts emerge.

The impact that I consider to be the most important is the one that involves the cities that have carried through important infrastructural works which are inserted within a project of urban renewal. The positive implications of this choice not only refer to the existence of new buildings or neighbourhoods, but also to the by-products that accrue: new opportunities for the creative professions and urban development hinging on culture.

Another important consequence is the international repositioning of the city and the surrounding territory with the ensuing increase in the tourist flow, also interested in the cultural resources.

Other important consequences have been:

- a greater identification and sharing by the citizens of a cultural identity of their own city;

- a greater competence in the organisation of cultural events by the local bodies.

These consequences, inherently positive, have ended up having to face an insurmountable problem: the non-continuity of the operative body and the funding the year after the appointment. Only in the cities where there has been a certain continuity have these consequences had an effective influence on the development of the territory and the credibility of its international repositioning.

Cooperation between the ECOC

The greater level of cooperation emerged in 2000, when owing to the year's exceptional nature, nine ECOCs were nominated. In this case a network starting in 1997 was set up, co-producing and promoting events capable of circulating between the nine cities and providing a coordinated image of the cultures of Europe. Albeit existing since 1990, the ECOC network (www.eccm-cultural-capitals.org/) is not considered to be effective, in particular because the people who had led the culture in the various cities over the years are not present and because the interests driving these cities were too different. What works best are the informal relations that constitute, from one time to the next, among the people in charge of the new ECOCs and some of the people in charge of the programmes of the cities that had been ECOCs in the previous years. What is lacking is a network that preserves the knowledge built up in order to be transferred to the other cities. In December 2006 was created the University Network of European

Capitals of Culture (UNeECC) which comprises over 40 members from 18 countries (www.uneecc.org). UNeECC is a unique academic network since its member universities are all located in cities which have been, are or will be ECOC. As such, UNeECC not only aspires to stimulate regular academic cooperation, i.e. education and research, among its members, but also aims at developing and reshaping the Universities' regional position. UNeECC seeks to foster collaboration between cities and Universities and is convinced that together 'town' and 'gown' will contribute to the success of the European Capitals of Culture. UNeECC is a network that is still too recent for us to be able to assess its efficacy properly.

The European Cities (Capitals) of Culture Program: lessons for the future

The lessons that can be drawn from the experience of the ECOCs in the past twenty-three years can be ranked on different levels. Some refer to issues internal to the European programme itself, while others can also be extended to profoundly different contexts.

European cultural identity

The original aim of the ECOCs of having the European identity emerge through the circulation of European cultural productions has been fulfilled, even if with results differing from those expected. What has emerged is indeed an identity that is made up of a multiplicity of cultural expressions differing from one another. European cultural unity is characterised by its own internal diversity and plurality.

Temporal dimension

Only the long-term temporal dimension guarantees the efficacy of the programme. This dimension presupposes:

- a planning of the event that starts years beforehand and that equips itself with funding and operative bodies suited to lasting into the future;
- an involvement of the territory's institutions that is not dependent upon the results of the election campaigns;
- an involvement of the local institutions, organisations and associations in the decision-making processes.

Knowledge society, creativity and cultural planning

The best results were obtained by those cities that have added the nomination as ECOC within an urban design that identifies creativity and the culture industry as the engines of the territory's development. Indeed, if we want to go ahead with the construction of cities that put creativity at the heart of the development, then the territory's planning in all its dimensions must recognise its pivotal importance from the cultural standpoint. All the urban, economic, social, city marketing and tourism project decisions must spin off from such a pivotal role.

The global involvement of the territory and the citizens

A development of the territory driven by creativity and the culture industry must pervade all the forms of a city's life and involve both the educational and the cultural institutions and the daily lives of the individual citizens. This social sharing of the territory's development objectives is fundamental for starting up decision-making processes having a participative nature.

Balancing

It is necessary to strike a balance between:

- the constraints set by the city administration and the demands for artistic autonomy;
- the desire and the right to have a leading role on the part of the local institutions and the cultural forces and the circulation of the transnational cultural products;
- the need to stimulate the territory's public and the promotion of initiatives towards national and international audiences.

Knowledge transfer

It is urgent to create (or reinforce if already existing) city networks that can:

- pool together instances of best practices;
- agree on the definition of the professional profiles needed in the artistic creation activities, the development of the cultural resources and cultural planning;
- organise, together with the local Universities, training courses that can foster the different skills required;
- contribute to creating virtual communities of competence within which the people operating in such sectors have the opportunity to freely and autonomously exchange ideas and opinions through the network.

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Book Review

Knowledge Sharing And Quality Assurance In Hospitality And Tourism

Editors Noel Scott and Eric Laws
Haworth Hospitality Press,
NewYork pp 1- 159

The Book consist of nine model Research papers **"Knowledge Sharing In Tourism & Hospitality, Noel Scott & Eric Law** "The research focus on increasing interest in the insight to be gained into the operation of tourism by using knowledge sharing theory as a lens to examining , firstly organization functioning and changing issues and secondly the ways in which industry cluster and network both at operational levels and at the scale of destinations. **"Transferring Tourism Knowledge : The Role Of Higher Education Institution Donald E, Hawkins** "the paper focuses mainly on the role of higher education in transferring knowledge can be defined as an understanding of something and the ability to use the understanding through study and experience.**"Benchmarking, Useable Knowledge And Tourist Attractions, Philip Pearce, Pierre Benckendorff"**The study seeks to apply an illustrative the benchmarking approach to tourist attraction .A large scale study survey study of Australian tourist attraction consider the value of 15 indicators and illustrate how they provide contras among different kinds of attraction .the research presented also provides example of easy acess graphical information as illustration of research findings and acts as an examplar of the knowledge communication process .Important distinctions are drawn between knowledge generated by analyst and knowledge fitting the needs of managers. **Response Quality Of E-Mail Enquiries- A Driver For Knowledge Management In Tourism Organization Anita Zehre & Herald Pechlaner" The** paper reports a two year mystery guest study of tourism organizations of an alpine destination in Europe .One problem that seems to be apparent is that employees in tourism organization remain for the short period of time resulting in an inefficient knowledge of management among employees .Another problem is that larger tourism organization have more money available for training programs and more capacities for responding the email inquiries .This leads to the conclusion that smaller tourism organization s should cooperate or even merge in order to work more professionally and to guarantee a higher quality standard "**The Fichsia Destination Quality Brand : Low On Quality Assurance , High On Knowledge Sharing, Megan Woods & Jim Deegan**" In an attempt to address this need ,a case study of the Fuchsia destination quality brand ,West Cork Ireland , was carried out. The finding revealed that Whilst the Fuchsia brand did not appear to function as a powerful signal of quality to the customer, it did provide the which fostered an environment conductive to knowledge sharing amongst the tourism service providers applying for brand membership. "**Understanding And Sharing Knowledge Of New Tourism Markets : The Example Of Australia 's Inbound Chinese Tourism Grace W. Pan, Noel Scott & Eric Laws**" This paper examines issues involving in the definition creation, and the use of knowledge about Chinese outbound market .It provides an initial view for the type of knowledge required by tourism manager in Australia ,some suggestion s about where this knowledge is available ,or how it may be produced , and identifies issues in sharing that knowledge between tourism industry members and between academician and the industry . "**Managing Knowledge In Tourism Planning And How To Assess Your Capability, Stephen Clark & Noel Scott** "The paper explore the themes of stratergic planning in a state tourism organization (STO) It concludes that research on knowledge management in the field of tourism is limited and there is limited practical limited account of the application of knowledge management principles in tourism planning .Further there is no apparent tool or instrument that allow s for the assessment of an STO's capability to implement knowledge management in planning initiatives. "**European Spa World : Chances For Project Sustainability Through Application Of Knowledge Management,Sonja Sibila Lebe**"The central point of the article examines different layers of Partnership within new destination and the problem these causes .The problem experienced in this project range from alack of common language to inclusion of different stake holders. "**The Tourism Intelligence Network : The Quebec Source For Information On Evolving Tourism Industry, Sophie Lemelin**" It states that the TIN is quite specific for Quebic tourism industry .The study is a great example of creating and sharing knowledge .The TIN renders tourism data, research and studies for industry more accessible .The TIN is based on the concept that knowledge is the public good .Share it, disseminate it and the Industry will experience a better cooperation as well as increase in its competitiveness.

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Book Review

Gay Tourism Culture and Context

Editors Gordon Waitt and Kevin Markwell
Haworth Hospitality Press,
NewYork pp 1- 307

The Book debates on the theme of Gay tourism by critically analyzing sexual politics and sexual diversity .it is lively and comprehensive .The readers will experience relationship and cultural implications. They will also be able to understand better how tourism industry promotes cities, resort, and nations as Gay destinations. The Book has Seven Chapters .**Chapter 1 Mapping the Terrain of Gay Tourism** considers gay tourism in the age of mobility, its theoretical framework and personal approach to the topic . **Chapter 2 Charting The Emergence Of Gay Tourism** discusses scripting and circulating ideas about homosexual destinations in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the emergence of City and Resort Destination 1920-1960. **Chapter 3 Selling Gay Paradise: Spatial And Social Disclosure Of Gay Tourism Travelogues** includes travel. text and representation of gay paradise, clarification of method ,mapping gay destinations and scripting sexuality ,Paradise of –Australia, Russia Federation, Hawaii, Mykons and Gay sexual Utopias and cultures of Gay Travel. **Chapter 4 Touring the Heterosexual Nations** explores national closets nationalism, citizenship, and sexuality ,marketing nations, encounters of Arabian state and Caribbean with gay tourism. **Chapter 5 Touring The Sexualized City** main theme is selling mapping and touring the city as gay tourism ,Non gay narratives of resistance to pitching, bounding and mapping city spaces as "Gay" ,Selling Gay to Non Gay Tourist, Implication of Non Gay tourist in Gay Village .**Chapter 6 Special Events and Festivals** emphasize on celebration ,party, playing and dancing etc. **Chapter 7 Conclusion** summarizes Gay tourism and the constitution of the Modern Gay identities, evolutionary Narrative of Gay Tourism ,Internationalization of gay identities, intersection with social difference. The positive aspect of the bock is it can be used for multidisciplinary areas such as sociology, culture studies, leisure and tourism etc.

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Guidelines for Contributors

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