Key Stakeholder's Perspective Towards Sustainable Tourism Development

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ABSTRACT

As one of the world's most important economic drivers, the tourism sector is the world's largest industry. In order to keep up with the rising number of tourists in the area, the city has undergone a massive amount of construction. It is important to keep in mind that these developments have both positive and negative effects. Due to the detrimental impact of tourism growth, sustainable development is required. During this study, important tourism stakeholders were interviewed about their views on sustainable tourism development in the select location. In order to collect data, the qualitative approach was used.The main stakeholders' perceptions on sustainable tourism development were gathered using semi-structured interview checklist. Key stakeholders' perceptions of positive and negative impacts in the selected areas varied according to the results of the in-depth interview. As a consequence of the study, relevant authorities be able to better understand the attitudes and awareness of key stakeholders, which will provide vital information for sustainable tourism growth.

Introduction

Tourism's deteriorating impacts are becoming a major problem, and they must be dealt with. So that tourism activities have less of an impact on a location, the term "sustainable tourism" has been coined (Sharpley, 2003). As a result, all future development must be centred on sustainable development (UNWTO, 2002).

"Sustainable tourism" was coined as a way to maintain tourism's viability in an area indefinitely while protecting the environment, preserving indigenous culture, and enhancing economic benefits (Swarbrooke and Horner, 2004). According to the triple bottom line, sustainable development is sepa-rated into three parts. It encompasses the economic, social, and environmental spheres of life. These three things are inextricably linked, especially in the long run. (Hitchcock and Willard (2009)

To measure this, tourism industry must look at the environmental impact of the activities as well as its facilities and final goods. The goal is to prevent ecological harm, limit the use of natural resources, and promote natural variety. While pursuing environmental sustainability, it will have a cost-reduction effect on the economic portion of sustainability in the long run. The company's revenues will increase as a result of incorporating environmental sustainability into its operations. As part of the local economy, a sustainable hospitality firm utilises local

employment and business connections to help the local economy grow. This brings us to the social aspect. In the present and the future, the goal is to make a positive difference in the lives of locals and visitors alike. Human rights, labour rights, and working conditions are all part of this while encouraging social and cultural diversity. Employees, communities, and other stakeholders are all involved.

To ensure tourism's long-term viability, stakeholders' support is very crucial. There may be detrimental socio-cultural consequences from a lack of stakeholder interaction and community participation in tourist development.Using stakeholder analysis, you may gain a better knowledge of environmental issues, as well a better control on viewpoints, interests of stakeholders at different levels of the system (Grimble and Willard, 1997). As a result, the host community believes that these experts' decisions are not based on the community's interests and opinions (Beierle& Konisky,2000). It is also possible to avert big disputes amongst stakeholder groups by including the stakeholders in the process (Healey,1998).

Based on the above , the main aim of this study to understand the perception of main stakeholders about STD at selected sites, which is further focused on building knowledge about key-stakeholders' with respect to tourism development.

Review of Literature

Sustainable tourism can be defined as the sustained growth of tourist arrivals and the ongoing development of tourism infrastructure, sustainable development refers to development which 'meets the needs ofthepresent without compromisingthe ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED, 1987: 43). the international community's shift toward a 'greeneconomy' has "accelerated signicantly," with increased recogni-tion of issues that impact the environment (Lipman and Vorster,2011, p. 77). However, the signicance placed on such matters has not been consistent across nations.

Tourism Industry's Key Stakeholders

There are different types of stakeholders involved in tourism development at adestination like trade bodies, DMOs, houseboat owners and shikaras, NGOs, Governmental bodies. These all stakeholders by one way or the other contribute towards the destination upliftment and its promotion.There must be some

sort of stakeholder analysis carried out by industry, in order to understand what a destination is required for the better experience of travellers as well as for the stakeholders. Identifying and grouping significant stakeholders is part of the stakeholder analysis process.

Key Stakeholders and Sustainable Tourism Development

According to Bramwell and Lane (2000), collaborative tourist planning has the potential to advance the basic objectives of sustainable development on four fronts: The importance of diverse natural, man-made and human resources within communities;2) A more integrated and comprehensive approach to policy creation may result from the engagement of stakeholders with a variety of disciplines and interests, 3. A multi-stakeholder strategy should enhance awareness of tourist effect among all stakeholders and may result in fair sharing of costs and benefits; and 4) With the engagement of stakeholders in policy development, we can increase the level of democracy in decision making, empower the participants, as well as enhance their capability.

Sustainable tourism can only be developed and implemented with the support and active participation of the community. Without their cooperation, it is virtually impossible to create sustainable tourism. In addition to Gunn (1994), the perception of different stakeholder varies from one to other as some stakeholders are directly involved in tourism development processes than others. However, the main participants of this study are tourism stakeholders who are more directly impacted by tourist development procedures than others (Bae. 2013), which includes governments officials, tourists, local residents, hoteliers, tourism academicians and Houseboat owners in selected destinations.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the involvement of stakeholders in general, and to provide implementing agencies with specic environmental practices that are important to tourism industry.

Methodology

Considering the specific objectives of the study, the exploratory nature of the research was applied based on the qualitative approach. In this study, a self- semi-structured interview questions based on literature scanning were used for the data collection and the data has been collected from 13 respon-

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dents. In which key tourism stakeholders of Kashmir valley like people from Directorate of tourism Kashmir (DTK) and Jammu & Kashmir tourism development corporation (JKTDC) were interviewed. Which further involve tourism professionals, Govt agencies, hoteliers, travel agents, tour operators and locals including shikarawalas& houseboat owners, were interviewed as they are direct linked towards sustainable tourism development of a region after employing the purposive sampling. The qualitative data was tape recorded and then transcribed into English and the thematic Analysis was applied to generate themes for the better understanding.

Results and Discussion

The different stakeholders were of different opinion. One of the respondent from Director Tourism Kashmir (DTK) is of the view:

Contextualizing Sustainable Tourism

The different stakeholders were of the view that we should conserve our environment for our future generations as well. Although the perceptions of different stakeholders are different but in one way or the way, they are sensitive towards degradation of natural environment. The notion of sustainability is not much known to locals very clearly. Thus different stakeholders have different perception regarding various decisions taken by govt. Also, some of the stakeholders are of the view that the employees working in the core tourism departments of state are non-tourism professionals as a result the policies framed are not so effective. As reported by one of the respondent;

"...sustainable tourism development is the development which implies theoptimum utilization of both natural and cultural resources but at the same timefocuses on the development of the tourism. Our department organizes variousprogrammes related to awareness from time to time..."

According to a travel agent

"...Sustainable tourism development means that we should conserve our natural environment.Every individual has to play a role in order to conserve our environment."

According to a Tourist

"...sustainable tourism means effective utilization of resources. I think in my perceptionit is the need of

the hour as we can clearly see the degradation of Dal lake etc.Although development is necessary but we have to think about future as well"

According to a local resident

"...we haven't heard the concept before in this manner, that sustainability is related to tourism as well but yes if it involves the conservation and preservation of our natural as well as cultural heritage, it is good"

Sustainable Planning

Planning means deciding in advance what to do, how to do, when to do, and where to do. Planning is very important process for making the tourism development sustainable and long run. Despite the fact that the government is preparing for the protection and conservation of natural and cultural resources, some stakeholders believe that the government's policies and efforts are not being implemented properly. As part of the planning process, several stakeholders were asked about their roles, as well as the role of the government in ensuring sustainable tourist development. According to the interviewee...

According to a respondent from DTK

"...off course planning is necessary in order to achieve the sustainability , no doubt theGovt is framing various policies from time to time in order to protect our environment.Only the Govt is not responsible in achieving sustainability, all the stakeholders have totake responsibility in conserving the environment".

Sustainable Policy

Also the various stakeholders like hoteliers have implemented various initiatives at their level for optimum utilization of resources. However local population is of the view that Govt policies are not upto mark and there is lack of actual implementation of the policies of Govt.
One of the nearby residents, possibly a houseboat owner, spoke up.

"...we are the actual owners of Dal lake and we know everything about Dal as we are the actual stakeholders of the Dal lake. But when the LAWDA was formed, we were not taken into decision making process as a result there was huge resistance from the local population"

According to the respondent

"…the Govt is doing its work. We do have a team of experts that are needed in planning or framing any strategy or policy. As there is well known proverb `**too many cooks spoil the taste**`, it is not possible to bring all the stakeholders in the decision making process but yes wherever needed, we do involve the experts of the field in the decision making process…"

Sustainable Tourism Policy Making

The keystakeholdes were in the opinion that there must be a policy for it, so that resources can be protected from the depletion. A diverse group of stakeholders can help policymakers build more integrated and comprehensive approaches to policy making. There is need of collaboration between the different stakeholders for effective policy implementation. Participation of stakeholders in policy-making might further democratize decision-making, empower participants, and contribute to capacity building and skills learning among participants, according to a new study. The respondent from the DTK is of the view.

"…decision is an important part and every decision is taken a consensual way. Talking about coordination, no doubt there may be loop holes but that doesn't mean the decisions are taken without planning and without consulting expertise in the field. Loop holes do exist everywhere but coordination with stakeholders is must …"

Another respondent from the local community is of the view

"…I don't think the decisions are taken in a consensual way. Every Govt comes with different planning and there is not a stable strategy adopted by the Govt in achieving the sustainable tourism development"

The tourism professionals are well aware about the subject matter of tourism as a result can devise the policy for the sustainable tourism development in a better way. Well qualified professional staff can devise the effective policies for tourism development.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The different stakeholders were of the view that we should conserve our environment for our future generations as well. Awareness must be given to people in order to achieve the sustainability. Although the perceptions of different stakeholders are different but in one way or the other, they are sensitive towards degradation of natural environment. The notion of sustainability is not much know to locals very clearly.

There is lack of communication between Govt and other stakeholders like local community. Also there is lack of communication between different departments and Govt does not take into account the research already been done on the subject concerned Also, some of the stakeholders are of the view that the employees working in the core tourism departments of state are non tourism professionals as a result the policies framed are not so effective.

Suggestions and Recommendations

It is necessary to make people aware of the importance of sustainability in order to accomplish it. Every stakeholder must be taught and trained in order to make the transition to a sustainable tourist industry more possible.

In addition, the study found that there is a lack of coordination between numerous stakeholders, and that necessary efforts must be done to bridge the communication gap among them.

Working together can result in a creative synergy, which might lead to innovation and efficiency. Aside from that, government officials should include important stakeholders in the decision-making process.

Stakeholders should act responsibly as well in order to achieve the goals of sustainable tourism. Also, the numerous measures launched by the government should be effectively executed on the ground, so that our resources are saved.

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