

Book Review: A Research Agenda for Tourism and Development

Davies, Nick

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Book review

A Research Agenda for Tourism and Development

*Edited by Sharpley R. and Harrison D. (Eds), 2019
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Development and tourism have had a deeply meaningful, intertwined and changing relationship in the past, and this book pitches frameworks for future research based on the evolution of several key research foci. The book has a global outlook, addressing tourism research as a concept over international boundaries.

There is a helpful mix of scene-setting and higher-level thinking on future questions for tourism research to address, making this book suitable for undergraduates to understand issues and the development of tourism theory, research students and academics working on tourism and development-related areas and scholars of other disciplines such as human geography and social sciences with an interest in development and the role tourism plays. In some senses, single chapters or parts of chapters might be more useful for individuals if they are of particular interest. For example, Clausen's chapter 4 critiques the role of NGOs in tourism development provides a much needed exploration of the purpose and effectiveness in promoting equitable tourism. The research frameworks provided at the end of each chapter are viable areas for scholars developing study ideas.

The authors have each provided previous seminal work in the field of sustainable tourism. The editors, Profs David Harrison and Richard Sharpley, have decades of being at the forefront

of research in this area. Richard Sharpley's book, *Tourism development and the environment: Beyond sustainability?* was the first to question if tourism could ever truly be sustainable and acts as a core text for students and scholars in understanding the role development plays in tourism and vice versa. David Harrison's foundations in sociology and anthropology underpinned a body of work on development and tourism in less developed countries and island states, which are crucial to our understanding of how the power dynamics and evolution of thinking around tourism development have been shaped the research agenda in recent years.

The introductory chapter concentrates on the growth of tourism policy and the accompanying research agenda, touching on the main forms of alternative tourism which have grown. Following this, each chapter focusses on a particular societal need relating to tourism and development. In this sense, readers with a particular interest in one of these themes will be directed to a specific and usually rounded discussion on that theme. Examples include chapter 5, by Scarth and Novelli, which tackles the under-researched area of how to meaningfully measure the impact of the traveller donation within host communities; and Sharpley's chapter 8, which overlays the seminal research on tourism motivation from the 70s to 80s with more recent research, demonstrating the evolution of thinking in this area. Sharpley reflects on the attitude behaviour gaps but asks the important question "why" we need to understand more about the psychological holiday tourists subconsciously feel they need from

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responsibility. This is reflective of the novel questions which are being asked at the end of each chapter.

A particular strength running through the book is the way it ties tourism research to global policy (Dredge, in chapter 2 in particular). The historical research direction is already well documented, but the book incorporates new ways of thinking including using the contemporary SDG framework, and importantly the research and policy directions required for the future. Concepts covered such as poverty are difficult to define and contested in a tourism research context. Therein, this is a good synopsis for newcomers from other disciplines but one which provides new arguments. In chapter 9 by Aramberri, the evolution of mass tourism is revisited in the context of economic societal impacts. This discussion takes a new approach using cases to conceptualise the phenomena as potentially inclusive and sustainable.

Bearing in mind the increasing importance of sustainable tourism, and the rhetoric about transforming the industry in a post-COVID world (a subject which is interesting to tourism academics, but worryingly unimportant in some policy areas), this book is timely. It cannot cover

every aspect in 11 chapters but inspires debate in some of the key areas of concern. For those who are reading multiple chapters, there is some duplication of ideas (which is needed to develop the narrative of individual chapters) such as tourism poverty and development dynamics. However, the order of chapters is logical, and the editors have ensured that concepts are generally built upon through the course of the book.

In summary, this is a much needed book and one which can be recommended to scholars at all levels to understand and develop new knowledge on tourism key research areas. Hopefully, this book will generate a new tranche of tourism research studies based on the questions suggested against each issue discussed over the next 5–10 years.

The eBook version is priced from £22/\$31 from Google Play, ebooks.com and other eBook vendors, whereas in print, the book can be ordered from the Edward Elgar Publishing website.

Nick Davies

Nick Davies is based at the Glasgow School for Business and Society, Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow, UK.