

EXAMINING THE ROLE OF TOURISM EXHIBITION IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mohammad Rahim Esfidani

Tehran University
Assistant professor
E-mail: esfidani@ut.ac.ir

Mansoureh Vahabzadeh

Tehran University
Student of Executive Master of Business Administration
E-mail: Vahabzadeh64@ut.ac.ir

Maryam Tajalli

Tehran University
Student of Executive Master of Business Administration
E-mail: Maryam.Tajalli@ut.ac.ir

Abstract

Tourism industry is one of the important sources of gaining income all over the world and at the same time, it is an effective factor in cultural exchanges between countries. Tourism has been known as a unique opportunity by many offers and they consider the significant and remarkable growth of tourism in the part fifty years as an indicator of this phenomenon's great social and economy important. Today, in modern tourism view, on there the title of sustainable development of tourism, government are trying to meet tourists' local people while reply to cultural, economic identity, healthy environment, economic needs, and economic balance.

Meanwhile, the researcher believe that tourism exhibition can be assumed as one of the solution for sustainable development because when countries attend exhibition not only they introduce their capacity, abilities, facilities and their tourism condition and amenities but also they tend to create a mutual relationship between three factors including tourist, the people of their area and the quality of destination and besides attracting tourist who are compatible with their own country's social, economic and cultural condition and satisfying them, they prevent from on informed tours and achieves the maximum advantages of this industry.

Therefore, in this research, through applying quantitative methods, the researcher intent to address the role of tourism exhibitions in sustainable development of this industry.

Key Words: *tourism, exhibitions, sustainable development*

JEL Classification: Q56, L83

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, tourism industry is one of the important sources of gaining income all over the world and at the same time it is an effective factor in cultural exchanges between countries. Tourism industry holds special position as the most widespread service industry in the world (Alvani, piroozbakht, 2006: 1).

Many of the regions that have advanced in the tourism planning process have made an effort to include tourism in their general development plans, involve the different stakeholders in managing the process, and design promotional programs and materials (Ines Sanchez, Eugenia Jaramillo-Hurtado, 2010: 154).

By the time, the idea the improved quality of life cannot exist without economic growth and development was revealed. Also, the protection and planned management of environment should live in order to prevent it's irretrievably devastation. Thus, in 1989 we can find concept of sustainable development in the world literature and it describes this type of development. Soon, it found out its implementation in the tourism area. Thus, the sustainable development of tourism implies the satisfaction of tourist needs and the needs of local population at the same time, without diminishing the possibilities for the same development in the future (Bucar, Renko, 2008: 1656-1657).

Tourism development, especially in less developed countries, is an effective factor to confront with poverty which increases income of different social classes, flourishes economy, decreases unemployment, and consequently promotes the quality of people's life and increases social welfare (Alvani, Piroozbakht, 2006: 6).

For tourism development to have sustainable outcomes, business operations must be sustainable. Sustainable development for business means adapting business strategies and activities that meet the needs of the enterprise and its stakeholders today while protecting, sustaining, and enhancing the human and natural resources that will be needed in the future (Firth, 2010: 16).

Since marketing is considered as one of the main parts of business operations and with regard to previous subject matter, marketing can affect sustainable

development of tourism. Marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others (Firth, 2010: 16) and exhibition can be crucial components of a firm's marketing mix. They are events that bring together, in a single location, a group of suppliers, distributors and related services who set up physical exhibits of their products and services from a given industry or discipline (Herbig et al, 1997: 368).

With due attention to the importance of the role of tourism industry in sustainable development of countries and effective output of exhibitions as one of main parts of marketing mix, examining the role of tourism exhibitions in sustainable development of tourism industry will be dealt with in the present research.

2. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Specifically, sustainable development, defined as development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Garcia-Falcon, Medina-Munoz, 1999: 337). The notion of sustainable tourism follows naturally from the above discussion on sustainable development. The dominant perception of sustainable tourism refers to a tourism/environment system in balance at destination areas (Garcia-Falcon, Medina –Munoz, 1999: 338).

Achieving sustainable tourism development “requires a vision which encompasses a larger time and space context than that traditionally used in community planning and decision making” (W.Burr, 1995: 3).

World Tourism Organization (WTO) defines Sustainable tourism development as meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for future. It is envisaged as leading to 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 system (C.Harrison et al, 2003: 295).

Besides its economic impact, the tourism activity in an area affects the environment (construction of buildings, infrastructure, etc.) and the everyday life of the local population, namely the crowds caused by tourists or changes in the traditional life – style of the local population (Bucar, Renko, 2008: 1656).

What is interpreted from these different concepts of sustainable development is comprehensive and local attention toward development so that it encompasses all of the social, economic, and environmental models.

Sustainability in environmental aspect of tourism means making optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity (Yan, Zoll: 24). Sustainable cultural tourism development requires tourists respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter cultural understanding and tolerance (Yan, Zoll :26). Therefore, tourism is not an entirely neutral process and will have positive and negative effects on society (Shah Eshraghi, 2011: 59) and with respect to the economic sustainability of tourism we address to the most recent definition of WTO in this field: ensuring viable, long-term economic operation, providing socio-economic benefits to all stockholders that are fairly distributed , including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities , and contributing to poverty alleviation (Yan, Zoll: 26).

The economic development debate is not an isolated and independent part. This concept naturally and traditionally brings to mind the economic manners, however nature and necessities of today's societies seek a systematic and collective point of view to develop general targets (Sari Alghalam, 2002: 51). Acknowledging that the emphasis has traditionally been on issues relating to economic sustainability the Board of Directors of the CTO (Caribbean Tourism Organization): "... has mandated that environmental and socio-cultural consideration be given a higher priority" (C.Harrison et al, 2003: 295). However, on the whole, different aspects of sustainable development (environmental, social, cultural, and economic) do not compete with one another, but besides being parallel and having co-evolution, they are regarded equally important (Rokn Aldin Eftekhari et al, 2011: 8).

3. TOURISM EXHIBITIONS

In the early 1960s, Professor Jerome Mc Carthy suggested a marketing mix which included four main factors "product, price, place, promotion". Every factor includes many activities. The fourth factor in marketing mix - promotion- holds all communication tools which can send a message to the audience. These tools can be divided into five groups, advertising, sales promotion, public relations, sales person, and direct marketing. The proportion of sales promotion has now reached 70% which is one of the pivots of promotion and exhibitions are one of the effective tools to promote (Katler, 2011, Rezaee Nejad: 173-195). Trade shows consume, on average, 16% to 20% of the marketing budget for business marketing organizations (Tanner, 1996: 80).

IMC (Integrated Marketing Communications), if handled very well, can reflect a unique combination of elements depending on the promotional situation (A.Pitta et al, 2006: 157). As marketers seek ways to get consumer's attention ,outside events have been shown to be effective (A.Pitta et al, 2006: 157).

Exhibit marketing is the most cost effective means of reaching customers and prospects. It reduces the buying cycle and it allows companies to reach hidden buyers (A.Pitta et al, 2006: 159). The ISBA (Incorporated Society of British Advertisers, 1991) lists the following four main marketing objectives for exhibitions: illustrating and lunch new products, develop markets, produce sales leads and orders, enhance corporate status and image. Keynote expands on this as follows: develop interest, intensify exhibitors and visitors awareness, generate immediate sales, recruit sales representatives, meet people, look at the competition and break even (Blythe, 1996: 20-22, Blythe, 1999: 704).

Success is then more likely when companies have a well thought out marketing and promotional strategy (A.Pitta et al, 2006: 159). If exhibitions are correctly performed and held, along with strategy and purposeful programming, they will be very likely to succeed and attract customers of target market. Given that the exhibitions are held at local, national or international level, they should be planned and performed in a way that is suitable for these levels.

Tourism exhibition is not only a place to offer tourism capacities and strengths of the country for the public, institutions, and linked organizations but also introduces the institutions and organizations which are administrators in the field of tourism to the public. Furthermore, tourism exhibition should lay the ground works to enter the country (BijaniAval, 2012: 3) tourism exhibitions are taken into account as one of the tourist attraction phenomena. Visitors and exhibitors are business tourists who generate significant direct and indirect economic benefits for the host destination (Jin et al, 2010: 553).

Development of tourism industry smooth the path to export markets promotion, share increase in international trading, and non-petroleum export growth (BijaniAval, 2012: 3). Permanent attendance of foreign participants occurs when tourism exhibitions are held at regular intervals that will lead to the promotion of qualitative level of exhibitions and it needs a closed cooperation of marketing experts and tourism industry activists (TaghiZadeh, 2012: 5).

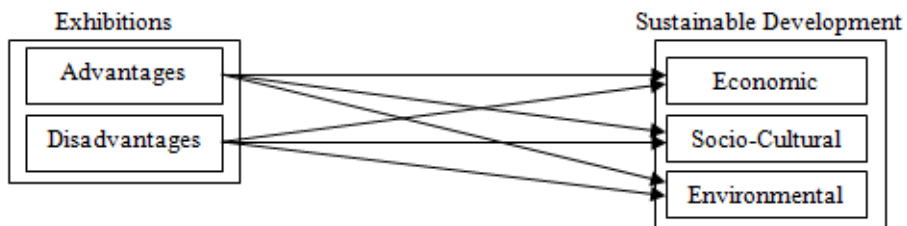
In addition to concentrating on gaining income and economic aspects for countries, tourism exhibitions are utilized to propagate culture, customs,

ceremonies, and religion and also to introduce historical, religious works, and intact nature of their environment.

4. CONCLUSION

What is under discussion in the sustainable development of tourism industry are the three economic, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects and tourism exhibitions will help to support these three pivots and besides development and promoting tourism, they prevent the three aspects from being damaged. With more review, on the other hand, it can be found out that such exhibitions can be harmful and destructive at the same time that they are useful and constructive, therefore, the destructive aspects of exhibition should be considered or reduced as far as possible.

Figure 1: The proposed model for the role of tourism exhibition in sustainable development of tourism industry



Source: Constructed by the authors according to literature review

First, we will review economic aspect of exhibitions in sustainable development of tourism industry. Because tourism exhibitions send their message to numerous enthusiasts through face to face communication, they can be effective. On the other part, the amount of costs which is allocated for exhibitions and how effective the costs will be, cannot be easily calculated. It is said that the most appropriate time for holding exhibitions with extreme effectiveness is 2-3 months before the pick season. Staging tourism exhibitions will be of benefit to many people, exhibitors, residents of the areas where exhibition are held, participants and visitors will all directly and indirectly be profited. People who live around the exhibition site will be employed and profited by producing services like hotels, restaurants, transportation, etc. Participants such as travel agencies, transportation companies, and so forth will introduce their brands. Also, they will offer their various programs. Visitors can be provided with cases fit for traveling with cheaper price. Moreover, holding exhibition causes the area to be promoted and highlighted in public's view.

The other aspect of sustainable development of tourism industry is socio-cultural. Various countries and regions can show their own dresses, food, language, ceremony, music, handicraft, history, religion, and all potential tourism attractions by holding exhibition or participating in it. It will upgrade understanding and culture tolerance between different cultures, which is of great value in globalization arena. On the other hand, culture and customs of the area can be damaged by tourism exhibition.

The third aspect of sustainable development of tourism industry is environmental. When a tourism exhibition is held in a certain place, repairing and cleaning of an area, setting construction projects, and introducing special attractions of that area which may be rare in the world are accomplished. Furthermore, visitors and other participants can practice comparative way and learn the best ways from others to deal with their own environment. But holding exhibition causes energy consumption, public peace disturbance, and pollution of the area and in these manner participants may destroy the environment.

Generally, holding tourism exhibitions has advantages and disadvantages which should be taken into account, but what is indisputable is that the advantages of tourism exhibition by correct programming for controlling and decreasing its disadvantages can lead to sustainable development of tourism industry.

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