Book review

Sustainability in the Hospitality Industry: Principles of Sustainable Operations, Sloan, P., Legrand, W. & Chen, J. 2013 (2nd Ed.), London: Routledge ISBN 978-0750679688, pp.371

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Sustainability is gaining credence in the hospitality and tourism industry as a way to address some of the grand contemporary issues confronting society in relation to the environment, unsteady economy and society. Sloan, Legrand and Chen contribute to the argument that sustainability is recognised as a response to the Capitalistic system that has promoted unsustainable consumer behaviour. The result of our current economic system has led to the over-exploitation of resources, climate change, obesity epidemic, questionable treatment of human beings and food security concerns. The authors further purport the repercussions of Western consumption practices when referring to the emerging middle classes in the BRIC economies and their mimicry of the West; representative in a 'Meat-Sweet Diet' and over consumptive urges (p. 136).

Sustainability in the Hospitality Industry: Principles of Sustainable Operations echoes the sentiments of contemporary research, suggesting that indeed sustainability concerns are a direct result of the irresponsibility of mankind. The text responds to this criticism and provides a timely example that sustainability cannot be achieved, if key players in the industry do not adjust their practices. Sloan, Legrand and Chen follow Clarke's (1997) line of thinking in regard to scaling, as such the hospitality industry should be designed and implemented with sustainability as the end goal because of their connections with suppliers and consumers. Thus, the hospitality industry has an opportunity to create and sustain positive change in communities and their environments. Design and implementation summarises the contents of the book in terms

of resource conservation, security, efficiency and management, eco-design, green marketing, certifications and eco-labels, consumer typology and behaviour, and corporate social enterprises.

Typically with discussions on the topic of sustainability a great deal of time is used to address the question 'whose responsibility is it'? This text avoids debates on sustainability as a concept and gets right to the point. Many forward thinking actions implemented by the hospitality industry are highlighted in this text. Action oriented plans were discussed in terms of how to tailor offerings to concerned consumers including meat reducers (p. 172), how to sell the sustainability message to entire hospitality organisations, encouraging leadership such as a Recycling Program Manager (p. 83) and transparency (Chapter 1), as well as communicating and developing educational strategies (p. 239) to both front line staff and consumers.

A significant focus on the environmental component of the sustainability model occupied the focus of this text. Accordingly, a number of eco-labels and certifications were discussed in depth specifically the Green Key and Accor's PLANET 21 program. Discussions on the social and human component of sustainability were limited. Specifically, fair trade received a tenuous discussion in Chapter 8 and 9, and there was no mention of the Fair Trade Tourism certification initially implemented in South Africa in 2002 (initially referred to Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa); now providing accreditation for responsible tourism and hospitality businesses in Southern Africa (refer to Boluk, 2011 for example). The Fair Hotels Scheme (Boluk, 2013) that emerged in 2010 on the island of Ireland similarly received no mention.

The readability of the text is suited for an undergraduate student. The text is significantly enriched by the myriad of international examples and case studies that were typically positioned throughout the text usually at the end of each chapter to illustrate the theory in practice. An exceptional geographic coverage was drawn on representing the global south which is still often underrepresented in academic writing, as well as the north. However, it was a surprise that examples were not drawn from countries in Scandinavia (such as Sweden and Denmark characterised by their strong social welfare systems) as they have been recognised as taking the lead on sustainability issues. This may be a consequence of their conservative nature and/or poor reporting on such responsibility. A few case studies which stood out include the Straw Wars Campaign in London, England (Chapter 4) and the 'Sleep Green' campaign in Austria

and Germany (Chapter 11) which demonstrate how one might take responsibility and in the best case a light the reader's inner activist. The discussion in Chapter 5 on Water Conservation stands out as water issues have received limited attention in the literature to date. The case study on the severity of the water crisis in Bali provides further insight.

A few case studies were highlighted throughout the text including Inkaterra, authentic ecotourism experiences in Peru (Chapter 2) and a successful social entrepreneurship model (Chapter 12), Soneva Resorts in regard to decarbonizing business (Chapter 3), turning waste to wealth (Chapter 4) and creating clean water (Chapter 5). Fairmont Hotels were also emphasised several times throughout in relation to their provision of local cuisine (Chapter 8), their green partnership program (Chapter 9) and the Green Key eco-rating (Chapter 14). In addition to the case studies additional resources were provided at the end of each chapter including helpful exercises encouraging a number of interesting discussion points and a list of further resources.

The authors identify a number of reasons why the hospitality industry embraces sustainability in their operation creating a competitive position, due to institutional pressure, an ethical imperative, 'feel good' factor and/or enhanced employee morale (p. 327). Further to the industry significance of such discussions the epilogue makes a compelling case for incorporating sustainability curriculum into university programs. The notion that Hospitality and Tourism curriculum must adapt with the times is the vision of key networks such as Tourism Education Futures Initiative (TEFI) (refer to Sheldon et al., 2007) and the ambitions of many young and enthusiastic academics who are motivated to inspire change. Effectively Sloan, Legrand, and Chen (2013) establish that it is imperative for our students, our future leaders, to learn about the consequences of their decision making behaviour and business ethics, if we are going to work towards a more sustainable future.

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