

Book review

Richard Sharpley and David Harrison (eds), *A Research Agenda for Tourism and Development* (Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA, USA 2019) 256 pp.

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This edited volume is a part of the *Elgar Research Agendas* series. As such it aims to establish a research agenda to advance an understanding of the relationship between tourism and development. The contributors adopt multi-disciplinary and contextualized perspectives in the light of transformations in the global political economy landscape and newly arising challenges in the global development agenda. As tourism has been denoted as an agent of development worldwide (UNWTO/UNDP 2017), this volume raises important questions, identifies significant gaps in knowledge, and suggests potential themes and avenues of research to contribute to the growing literature on the relationship between tourism and development, both of which are dynamic concepts undergoing constant flux, evolution and transformation.

The book's contribution is more profound amidst transformations that tourism is going through because of the external shock of the COVID-19 pandemic, considering shifts in the global development agenda and related collective aspirations for rebuilding tourism in a 'safe, equitable and climate friendly manner' (Guterres 2020). Although the disruption caused by the pandemic could not be foreseen at the time the book was written, the multi-perspective and contextualized research agenda developed throughout the chapters offers valuable guidance for future research on tourism's transformation and its impact on global development.

A critical inquiry into the potential role of tourism as an agent of development unifies the authors of the chapters. An understanding of sustainable development (the 'One Health' perspective described in Chapter 7), which takes into account the dynamics and interconnectedness of 'environment, animal health and human health' (p. 133), is implicitly shared. In fact, all the authors exhibit a strong commitment to sustainable development when critically identifying research needs in tourism academics. Development, defined broader than economic growth, is associated with concepts such as wellbeing, quality of life, empowerment, equity and justice. In that vein, the authors' contributions move beyond neoliberal conceptions of development and policy making by drawing attention to factors influencing underlying dynamics – such as ideologies, power relations (Chapter 2), the interests of various actors (Chapters 3 and 4) and moral values (Chapters 5 and 8) – and express a need for research that critically questions the ideological assumptions behind tourism development worldwide.

The book consists of 11 chapters. In their introduction the editors, Sharpley and Harrison, set the background for the following chapters. They review the extant research to summarize the factors supporting the global consensus on tourism as an

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agent of development, evolution of development theory and various conceptual approaches in the tourism and development nexus. The introduction is an invaluable chapter both for setting the research agenda and presenting a unifying background for the diverse and diffuse perspectives on tourism and development studies.

While Dredge in Chapter 2 adopts a policy perspective, Akwasi Adu-Ampong in Chapter 3 utilizes a political economy approach and a governance perspective to conceptualize the relationship between tourism and development. In Chapter 4, Clausen reviews various perspectives in the literature to critically reflect on the role of NGOs in tourism-related development. Clausen hereby questions the ethical basis of NGO interventions in host communities to carve out a research agenda for the accountability, monitoring and evaluation of NGOs as major stakeholders in shaping developmental outcomes of tourism development. In Chapter 5, Scarth and Novelli shift research attention to another stakeholder, namely the 'tourist'. Tourists are assessed as potential contributors to development through travel donations or travel-related philanthropy. This chapter, therefore, conceptualizes this under-researched area, which it sees as an alternative to institutionalized aid to less-developed regions.

In Chapter 6, focusing on pro-poor tourism (PPT), Harrison and Pratt review macroeconomic evidence on the relationships between tourism development, poverty alleviation and income inequality to guide comparative research on the role of different tourism types for reducing poverty. Jamal, Budke and Barbadas-Briebesca take up community-based tourism (CBT) in Chapter 7, using a case study to suggest a holistic and contextually situated pluralistic approach for further studies on CBT and development. In Chapter 8 Sharpley directs attention to the role of the tourist by investigating the relationship between tourism consumption and development. Aramberri in Chapter 9 then takes a historical perspective to travel and mass tourism: three illustrative examples hereby direct research on the evolution of mass tourism and combine these with implications on the global workforce. In Chapter 10, the global tourism workforce is taken by Mooney and Baum as an important stakeholder in setting a critical research agenda for the tourism development relationship at the macro and meso levels. In the last chapter, Telfer returns to the evolution of development paradigms that was taken up in the introduction to identify research areas on recent challenges for tourism and their development implications.

The divide between research and practice, especially in policy-making practice, together with a need for empirical studies, is also emphasized in most of the chapters. While distinguishing between sustainable tourism and development through tourism (Sharpley 2020), the contributors agree that empirical studies rarely relate to tangible, short- and long-term impacts (for example, poverty alleviation, social progress, environmental conservation), the unintended results of tourism development or the diverse types of value creation beyond economic value (that is, social, cultural, political, environmental). For a more nuanced understanding of and guidance on the challenges of tourism development various chapters echo the need to both contextualize tourism and development studies and position such conceptualizations in the political and socio-economic processes shaping the developmental outcomes. However, the suggested research agenda does not specifically address developing and less-developed country contexts. In addition to this limitation, there are some minor issues (for example, typographical errors, table contents, index).

The book serves as a valuable guide for graduate students and scholars from different disciplines and contexts to contribute to comprehensive knowledge and understanding on tourism and development by situating tourism in a broader global development agenda, and contributes to efforts for better rebuilding tourism.

It includes chapters by the editors and the research team they have built over the years engaging with challenges of development through tourism. The book also presents an opportunity to celebrate the theoretical contributions of David Harrison, who passed away in 2021 and who bridged the anthropology of tourism and sociology of development for contextualizing the field of tourism studies (Yelvington 2020). His long and distinguished academic career will continue to guide the research agenda in tourism and development.

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