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Tourist and recreation design in Asia (on an example of Taiwan)

В статье рассматриваются вопросы устойчивого развития туристско-рекреационного дизайна на Тайване. Представлен обзор литературы по этой проблеме и современные тенденции, такие как деятельность в сфере культурного и природного туризма, волонтерский туризм и борьба с нищетой, расширение городских зеленых насаждений. Делается вывод о том, что туристская деятельность должна осуществляться экологически, социально и экономически устойчиво.

Ключевые слова: туристско-рекреационный дизайн, культурно-природная туристическая деятельность, волонтерский туризм и борьба с бедностью, развитие городских зеленых насаждений

The paper deals with the issues of sustainable developent in tourist and recreation design in Taiwan. The literature on the problem is reviewed, and the current trends such as cultural and nature tourism activity, voluntary tourism and poverty alleviation, urban greenspace enhancement are presented. It is concluded that tourism activities needs to be done in a way that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

Keywords: tourism and recreation design, cultural and nature tourism activity, voluntary tourism and poverty alleviation, urban greenspace enhancement

Introduction

The Asia-Pacific region is the fastest growing tourist destination in the world. Travel and tourism sectors will surpass the rest of the economy in terms of tourism revenues for many Asian countries. Tourism growth complements the existing development trends in Asian countries – national income and living standards increase without harming the environment and threatening the integrity of the regional culture. There is growing activity in the field of recreational development – from wildlife to wild lands, from nature tourism to city parks, from urban and cultural tourism to voluntary tourism. Asian cities have the highest population density in the world. These cities are moving from developing to developed cities and are facing growing energy needs and associated pollution. Cities around the world are struggling to solve environmental problems associated with environmental pollution, and seeking the way to support this fight and the quality of life with sustainable methods from an environmental, social and economic point of view through the development of multifunctional city parks.

Literature Review

According to the Manfredo meta-analysis, there are four levels of demand for recreation [2]: settings, activities, recreation experience outcomes, enduring staff and social benefits. These core ideas have emerged from the spectra of recreational opportunities that are used for planning recreational activities – mainly for wild lands and rural areas. Such activities include hiking, camping, skiing, hunting, fishing and water recreation. There are recreational opportunities for urban areas as well.

Based on this system of recreational planning, six different studies of the demand for recreation can be carried out:

• describing and comparing experience preferences of participants in specific recreational activities;

• empirically derived "experience types" whose similarity is based on commonalities in desired experience setting and activity preferences;

• establishing the relationship among experience setting and activity preferences;

• establishing the relationship between non-leisure conditions and experience preferences;

• establishing the relationship between experience preferences and basic subject characteristics such as personality traits and values;

• development and testing of recreational scales.

Such researches are useful for planning outdoor related recreation, including wilderness, recreational ecotourism, water recreation and even city park planning, but they don't take into account other types of leisure activities among certain demographic groups. For example, there is a problem of young people spent more time on social networks, play video games, and not having time for outdoor activities.

Within leisure science, there is an issue of culture and self-constructual influences on leisure preferences. For example, North Americans and Western Europeans are more likely to value uniqueness, self-affirmation, or express their inner qualities when compared to people in Asia or from Asia, Africa, or Southern Europe. Most likely, they have interdependent self-constructs: value affiliation, embedding, maintaining harmony, self-restraint and the promotion of other goals. Collectivism and individualism should be taken into account when studying culture and recreation, planning and managing leisure and service programs for ethical populations.

Three main types of rest restrictions have been identified by G. Chick, E. Dong (2003) [1]. These are intrapersonal constraints, interpersonal constraints, and structural constraints. Intrapersonal constraints involve psychological conditions that are internal to the individual such as personality factors, attitudes, or more temporary psychological conditions such as mood. Interpersonal constraints are those that arise out of interaction with others such as family members, friends and co-workers and neighbours. Structural constraints include such factors as the lack of opportunities or the cost of activities that result from external conditions in the environment. So, mod-

els created in North America may not be applicable in Asian countries, as certain areas of Asia are being modernized in accordance with the whole of Asia, reaching a per capita GDP that competes with Western countries. Besides, even if Asians are influenced by Western ideas, they may not embrace western values.

Research results [3] show that there are three types of rest restrictions; intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural exist for societies outside of North America, Japan, and China. Based on the studies, it was revealed that personal and interpersonal restrictions are also influenced by culture, and intrapersonal and interpersonal restrictions must obey culture in any hierarchical model. In the framework of these studies, differences were found both in preferences and in the opinions of tourists.

One might suggest to assess cultural and social factors before calibrating existing patterns of demand for recreational activities in urban recreational areas in Asia. Special care should be taken with the age, class, and demographic factors, as some researchers have already identified shifts in environmental attitudes among some Asian populations as income levels rise and traditional values fade.

Leisure, Recreation and Tourism Activity Demand in Taiwan vs. Sustainability

As income and development levels for many Asian countries increase, there is an increasing demand for recreation/tourism activity, which in turn will place increasing stress on environmental carrying capacity and indigenous cultural resources.

As for mass destination and resort tourism, one of the fastest growing phenomena that exists throughout the world is mass tourism destination activity. It could be Dubai, Honolulu, Orlando, Hong Kong or even Taipei. Although this activity produces lots of revenue and employment for the destination – it is unsustainable given the resource demands of housing, water, energy, food. This activity also impacts resident use of urban parks. The resource impacts are extreme, for example, for many coastal zone locations around the world.

<u>Cultural and nature tourism activity</u> is also a rapidly growing sector in the tourism economy. There is an incredible potential to link these two activities throughout Asia and these activities can also be linked to biodiversity protection. There is a suggestion that stronger contextualization is needed to better enable Asian populations to understand the value of protecting natural areas.

<u>Voluntary tourism and poverty alleviation</u>. A relatively new tourism activity is volunteerism either to assist ecologically or to assist local communities from a socio-economic perspective. Examples are archeological digs, wildlife habitat protection projects or post disaster assistance housing projects – where individuals sign up to do these projects for altruistic motives. Such projects can be seen in other regions of the world where the goal is the fight against poverty through ecotourism and other resource-dependent activities.

Urban Greenspace enhancement. One of the real challenges for many urban areas such as Taipei is reclaiming forgotten open space remnants into multifunctional greenways useful for protecting water quality, mitigating urban runoff, providing urban wildlife habitat, carbon storage through urban trees, climate temperature amelioration, and even food and fiber production. Such green systems also enhance urban tourism as well as provide recreation and leisure services for inner city residents.

Taiwan has a rich history of urban park development beginning with Memorial Park in Taipei City among others. Such park development is attributed by some as a sign of Taipei Taiwan's globalization. There are also Taiwan researchers who are investigating urban parks for social-psychological restorative effects as well as urban ecosystem microclimate functions. The challenge is meeting recreational/health needs and maintaining urban ecosystems functions when considering both park maintenance and future design.

Conclusion

Modification of current leisure activity demands modelling and needs to take into consideration that Asian population is sensitive to local culture and social factors. Planning for infrastructure for leisure/recreation and tourism activities needs to be done in a way that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable. For Asian urban areas such environmental planning and design can be done in order to restore environmental functions of the past, and to improve human health and well-being within a relatively high-density environment.

The latter is where you can learn from Asian designers for addressing compact urban design issues while incorporating urban Greenspace within high-density urban contexts.

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