13 The Demise of Tourism?

Introduction

This chapter investigates the possibility that the tourism industry, as we currently know it, will significantly change and perhaps will not exist in the future. Some topics will be discussed in the realm of plausible futures, meaning that they may not happen, however it's a possibility and in the event it does occur, the tourism industry should be prepared. The topics discussed in this chapter include having an understanding of the reliance of natural resources in the travel, hospitality and event sectors; global population growth; food security; the impact of war on tourism; and the moral considerations associated with certain tourist experiences. Pandemics including Covid-19 are mentioned in Chapters 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11 and 14. The case study focuses on food security and the dangers of depleting the quantity of food around the globe, along with the availability of quality nutritional food. It also explores the changes in the types of food supplied to the tourism, hospitality and event sectors, and provokes consideration of the disparity between the wealthy and populations born into poverty.

Plausible futures

Plausible futures fit within the realm of future studies that is considered an under-researched area in tourism (Frost *et al.*, 2014). Authors such as Amelung and Viner (2006), Walton (2008), Bergman *et al.* (2010), Yeoman (2013) and Postma *et al*. (2017) have all undertaken research in this area. Walton (2008) suggested a plausible future is the possibility of something occurring but it may not happen. Strickland (2012) and Yeoman (2012) described it as a plurality of futures which is not necessarily a predicted trend, making it an ideal structure for discussing global events and concepts of the future. This approach gives structure to the discussion and allows the authors the ability to explore ideas that seem possible, however, they may be rejected in the future. The reasons

for not coming to fruition may be due to cost, changing technologies, absolute need to find other solutions, best practises, public opinion, government intervention and environmental concerns. Although no solutions are deliberately given here, the direction of future research is suggested for scenario planning as discussed in Chapter 12.

Pandemics including Covid-19 are mentioned though out this book due to its devastating impacts on THE, international travel, global economies, health systems and mortality rates.

Natural resources in the THE sectors

When evaluating natural resources required for the tourism, hospitality and events sectors, studies have been heavily reliant on demand and supply factors in terms of visitors, commercial businesses, governments and non-government entities (Clawson and Knetsch, 1963). For instance, in evaluating nature-based tourism, Priskin (2001) suggested 'physical recreation characteristics, level of development, management, intensity of use and anticipated behavioural classes' would usually be evaluated (Priskin, 2001: 640). From this research, a further four categories regarding natural resources have been identified: 'attraction diversity; accessibility; supporting infrastructure and the level of environmental degradation' (Priskin, 2001: 642). With the current debate regarding climate change, it is useful to have a discussion focussing on the actual natural resources required by today's tourism sector and what resources may be required in the future.

There are examples of natural tourism based on sand and sea; however, natural resources are generally categorised as minerals, fuels and agricultural resources (Acar, 2017). To give perspective of the sheer number of available natural resources, the Mineralogical Society of America (2019) suggested there are over 3800 minerals identified worldwide with between 30-50 additional minerals added annually. To capitalise on these riches, Acar (2017: 2) argued that some countries have benefited economically by taking advantage of these resources such as Australia, Canada, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Norway and Botswana for oil, gas and coal. However, these mining industries do not overtly affect tourism sectors although there is evidence that this is changing. The following paragraphs investigate in more detail.

Minerals

Minerals do not tend to affect the tourism sectors unless an attraction is created. For example, Sovereign Hill in Ballarat is 'Australia's foremost outdoor museum. Sovereign Hill re-creates Ballarat's first ten years after

the discovery of gold in 1851, when thousands of international adventurers rushed to the Australian goldfields in search of fortune' (Sovereign Hill, 2020). Not only is Sovereign Hill a major attraction, tourists are still able to pan for gold (a natural resource). In South Africa, the Cango Caves have been a popular tourist being 'situated in a limestone ridge parallel to the well-known Swartberg Mountains, you will find the finest dripstone caverns, with their vast halls and towering formations' (South Cape Tourism, 2020). This is a way to exploit natural resources in a controlled way. Museums located world-wide may also display collections of precious gemstones and/or mineral rocks for tourists to view. However, it appears, unless the natural resources are adapted into an attraction, they tend not to be of interest to the tourism industry. Note, construction of facilities using natural resources such as cement is not considered in this context although they may form part of the attraction.

Fuels

Fuels, on the other hand, affect the tourism industry immensely. Gossling (2000) suggests fossil fuels used in the tourism sector can be identified within two categories; energy consumption needed for travel, and energy consumption within a destination.

Energy consumption for travel refers to fuels required for all types of travel options including airplanes, trains, cars, buses, jet skis, scooters, motorcycles, hydrofoils, and other mechanical transport options. It does not include fuel for living creatures such as food for horses or humans riding a pushbike.

Energy consumption within a destination includes operation of tourist facilities such as hotels, attractions and restaurants. Within these facilities, electricity, water and climate control for example all need natural resources to power them.

Currently, the main forms of fuels are sourced from coal, natural gas, hydro, nuclear power, wind power, solar power and oil. There are other fuel alternatives including ethanol, hydrogen, propane, biodiesel, methanal, P-series fuels (blend of ethanol, natural gas liquids and methyl tetrahydrofuran), wave power, geothermal, radiant power and biomass fuels (Carrette *et al.*, 2000). Only some of these fuels are 100% renewable and it is becoming more socially conscious to transfer to renewable energies for future generations. In response, some governments are trying to balance the cost, source of fuel and environmental implications (climate change) regarding the type of fuel available. There is no global consensus on the preferred fuel source, however many people in the global community would prefer to invest in fuels that have no carbon emissions and do not contribute to climate change. It is