A REFORMULATION OF THE 3 SS MODEL FOR COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM: TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL

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This article posits a 7S's model to expand from the 3S's model of Sun, Sea, and Sand as anchors for tourism development. It extends the discussion by arguing that within the 7 S's model Government/community relationship must be elevated to take a new meaning – with Government as a facilitator and the community providing the decision-making platforms in a reconfigured bottom-up approach in the interest of holistic development. Thus, the 3S's model is expanded to include Safari, Surfing, Shopping and Ski-ing to form a 7S's model including Sun, Sea and Sand. The model is based on the soundness of leveraging on indigenous knowledge, community ownership of tourism resources, re-formulation of fitting and apt legislation and identity definition to achieve ecological, economic, social and cultural sustainabilities without which tourism cannot properly thrive. Based on this, the article argues that the tourism sector is particularly well positioned to enhance holistic development especially within particular historical-geographic contexts.

Keywords: Sun, sea, sand, tourism, sustainability, community, development, model

Introduction

Neo-liberalism and the trajectory of tourism that has ensued from it in developing countries reflects a contemporary tourism steeped in the 3Ss tourism model, namely, Sea, Sand and Sun. The 3Ss model, therefore, focuses on tourism resources of sea, sand and sun which one could argue is a model highly compatible with the needs of the neo-liberal milieu of which mass tourism is a main feature. The appropriation of always 'more Sun', 'more Sand' and 'more Sea' resources, that is, mostly in the coastal areas with holiday resorts and similar establishments by private companies, reinforce and embed the need for 'more' geographic space in the neo-liberal framework. Within the neoliberal framework, as a consequent, there is a quest for the search of more Ss in the pursuit of profit. Thus, in line with that line of thought, a re-formulated Ss model is proposed to include more comprehensive issues significant in the development of developing countries linked to Community Based Tourism (CBT) approaches.

Literature Review

The 3Ss model regards the predominant importance given to tourism resources over other tourism issues to promote the industry. The 3Ss belong to mass packages

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tourism. "At the symbolic level, tourism is largely based on the references to larger, abstract themes. Mass tourism uses themes such as 'sun', 'sea', 'sand' and 'sex'" (Brouwer, 1998) and "It [the global tourist industry] is dominated by a number of major flows of international tourists, and these are primarily driven by 'sun, sea and sand'" (Amelung and Viner, 2006). The relationship between mass tourism and the 3Ss is historically recognised such that the sun, sea and sand are regarded as a staple of tourism packages (Petrovic and O'Neal, 2001) and in spite of the efforts by smaller 'alternative tour operators', the industry is a 'mass event' under the influence and dominance of large TNCs (Scheyvens, 2002). Mass tourism has enjoyed prolonged increase despite usual economic downturns with most projections positive going into the future (Mowforth and Munt, 1998). It has also been argued that to exploit the change in market attitude big companies in the industry have embraced the "eco" label for purposes of mass tourism projects (Honey, 1999).

Within a developing countries context it has been noted that the tourism industry has been extensively marketed by travel agents and tour operators, large hotel chains and international tourism organizations in the Caribbeans with a promise of the "four S's: sun, sea, sand, and sex" (Barberia, 2007). Thus, developing countries are not unfamiliar to the sun, sea, sand (3Ss) model.

The 3Ss model has, thus, its root in the beginning of tourism development and it is strictly associated with mass tourism by the modernization/neo-liberal perspective where emphasis is put on quantitative/numerical data to show the validity of tourism development with the GDP/GNP issues, but without consideration of wider concerns such as the empowerment of poor people and what Zapata (2012) terms the 'positive impacts on the revalorisation of local traditions' and for Turner (2012), democracy and material benefits.

It is possible to divide the motif of the 3Ss model depending on three interlinked perspectives. One is the tourists perspective, the second the industry perspective and the third the country perspective. The 3Ss are surely not the only attractions for tourists. Tourists on holiday look for relaxation and the 3Ss stereotype the image of rest and tranquillity. In the case of Africa, especially Southern Africa, the three Ss can be completed with the forth Safari 'S' and have the chance to greatly increase this attractive phenomenon.

The industry, on the other side, is obviously eager to exploit as much possible the 3Ss features, wherever they are. Developing countries embedded in the global hegemonic structure have an exploitative *dis*-advantaged position thanks, for example, to neo-liberal policies focusing on foreign private investments. Thirdly, developing countries are in search, and in need, of finance to develop. Thus they see in tourism a still not very exploited economic sector and, aware of the possession of the 3Ss, they seek to increase their market share to, it is supposed, increase their foreign exchange budget.

Within the contemporary neo-liberal policies milieu it is possible summarise the conjunction between tourism industry and developing countries government policies within three points. First in Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) tourism was used as a vehicle for the promotion of investment opportunities for TNC[s] (Mowforth and Munt 1998), such that poor, indebted countries pursuing SAP under the aegis of the IMF and WB were obligated to earn foreign exchange through tourism (Scheyvens 2002). Secondly the General Agreement on Trade in Service (GATS) "opens up signatory countries to 100 per cent foreign investment in tourism and services and disallows any protectionist measure" (Honey 1999). Finally tourism policies in developing countries have followed "technocrats' models of tourism master planning [and] constituted one component amongst a cluster of tourism-related policies which aim to promote a particular kind of tourism rooted in a Western economic rationality" (Bianchi 2002). Another main, and consequential, reason is the weaker regulation, such in labour and environment, that developing countries pursue in the competitive milieu to attract investments.

The outcome result of these three interlinked perspectives is the tendency to increase dependency and inequality and as a result, the original 3Ss model is supported and supportive of the global hegemonic structures.

Materials and Method

This article makes use of already available literature on tourism. It makes use of books, academic journal articles and related material to gather the most relevant information to argue for an expanded model beyond the 3S's model for a model suited for community based tourism in order to harness and spread the benefits to the wider community. To that end, both old and new literature was used for its relevance to the topic under discussion.

Results and Discussion

Towards a 'new' Ss Model: This article posits a more comprehensive reformulation of the Ss model with the hope to facilitate development that is sustainable and proper for developing countries in pursuit of holistic development.

Firstly, the new model (see figure 1 below) is characterised by three main categories delimiting the spheres of resources, planning and policies. This is based on the understanding that for tourism to flourish, there is need for resources; while planning is essential for the coordination of the sector and deployment of resources and, possibly, facilitate long-term visioning; and policies are necessary for the guiding the sector to achieve sustainability. Furthermore, resources provide the base upon which planning and policies should orchestrate the tourism development process towards the desired end. The term orchestrate is used on purpose to emphasise how the tourism industry, more than many other industries, is an ensemble of numerous sub-sectors working together to foster tourism development.

(An orchestra is a group of numerous musical instruments). There is a dire need to appropriately 'conduct' the coordination of the different sectors for proper performance.

Secondly, within the new model there are two 'preconditions' which are necessary. On the resources side, there is need for a workforce with the necessary competences, skills and capabilities at all levels. Tourism, like any other economic sector, needs qualified and competent people to perform optimally. Unfortunately, the majority of African countries are deficient in tourism experts. For example, in South Africa, which has experienced, an extraordinary tourism growth in the post-apartheid decade, including after the 2010 World Cup event, the academic postgraduate research outputs in tourism are minimal when using this as a crude barometer to determine the quantum of tourism experts in the country.

The diagram (Figure 1 below) shows that Government/community relationship are elevated to take a new meaning – with Government as a facilitator and the community providing the decision-making platforms in a reconfigured bottom-up approach in the interest of holistic development. The 3S's model is expanded to include Safari, Surfing, Shopping and Ski-ing to form a 7S's model including Sun, Sea and Sand. The model leverages on indigenous knowledge, community ownership, fitting legislation and identity definition to achieve ecological, economic, social and cultural sustainabilities without which it cannot properly thrive (These preconditions and sustainabilities are elaborated below).

For instance, Visser, (2004) observes that between 1971 to 2002 there were 161 Master and PhD researches of whom only 16 were at PhD level and claims that this fact "has an impact in terms of what it is that we actually get to know about the South African system".

> The shortage of suitably qualified and experienced personnel afflicts all aspects of the tourism sector in almost all SADC countries. Mauritius is a notable exception, although even here, the country recognises the need for external help in drawing up a long-term approach to tourism though the recent European Union-funded Tourism Development Plan, and much of the operational expertise comes from offshore. (Cleverdon, 2002).

This quote underlines the need to improve the human capital to be able to have a competent and capable local workforce at all levels of the tourism sector. Otherwise, African countries will continue to follow the ideological framework of the western oriented donor dependent agency. That is, "unless Africa takes concrete steps to develop its own 'home-grown' personnel, it will be increasingly forced to rely on international help to support its tourism development efforts – a situation surely against the broad principles of self-reliance and self-sustainability and the view that African future should be in Africa's hands" (Dieke, 2001).

A second precondition is the need to establish a safe/secure environment for the tourists. It is a matter of fact that tourists prefer to travel to safe and secure places. It is possible to divide the security/safety issues in two main groups: on one
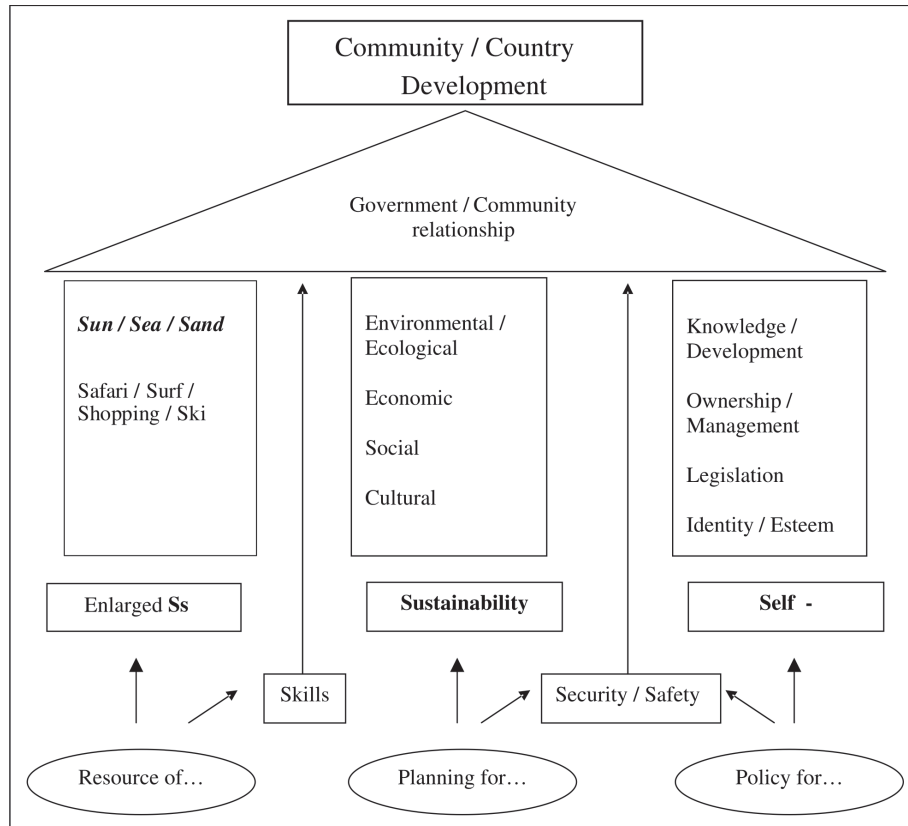
Figure 1: The proposed and enlarged 7S's model of: Sun, Sea, Sand, Safari, Surfing, Shopping and Ski-ing.

side the issues dependent on people 'behaviors'; on the other side the factor influenced by natural/biological circumstances.

The first category includes the situations, actions and activities of man that discourage individuals to travel to certain locations. These include, for example, acts of criminality, war, terrorism, coups and similar circumstances. Thus, political stability is commonly recognised as a precondition to attract tourists. Security must be interpreted, not just within, but also between, countries. In the second category, the natural/biological, are circumstances outside the control of people. These include, for example, weather conditions (such as hurricanes) and diseases (such as AIDS, malaria and yellow fever). Skills and safety/security preconditions are a precursor for self-reliance.

Thus, the three categories are critical for the achievement of holistic development. These are:

- Resources of…
- Planning for…
- Policies for…

Resources presupposed y-under the 3S's model are necessary but not the only requirements to have a thriving tourism industry. It is true that Sun, Sea and Sand are very attractive for tourists and as a result, localities with these natural resources are surely well positioned to have a certain comparative advantage. Nevertheless because today's tourist looks to more than just the original 3S's and hence tourism literature has added other relevant Ss, namely, safari, surfing and shopping.

Safari is certainly very important in the African (especially Eastern/Southern African) context. A country such as Lesotho, for example, a land locked country has also a specific mountain landscape which is certainly very attractive for tourists. In such a mountainous environment hiking and horse mountain trails are possible options. In addition, in Lesotho, the development of Ski-ing heralds the 'new' S as a possible and lucrative tourist attraction. This implies that every locality has or can find (or invent) its own 'attractiveness' such that the strength emanating from the S's does not limit the possibilities that abound in tourism.

Planning: There exists the need for planning for sustainability. According to de Kadt, (1995) "making sustainability the focus of Alternative Tourism may possibly be the most productive way forward". Sustainability is a key requirement for long-term development. Certainly the word sustainability can be subjectively interpreted, it "is an ideological term" (Mowforth and Munt, 1998). Sustainability is embedded in the ideology of the New World Order and its allies through its 'new' consumerism tendency, to render more acceptable the reality of mass consumption (Mowforth and Munt, 1998). It is well embedded in the global hegemonic structure. Within the tourism sector "the term sustainability can be and has been hijacked by many to give moral rectitude and 'green' credential to tourists activities. And it is by no means just the tour operator and other profit-making companies standing to gain from the activity who have used the term for their own end" (Mowforth and Munt, 1998).

Given the foregoing, four main groups of sustainability are recognised to be necessary. None of which is more important than others and as such they need to work conjunctly. The four sustainabilities are linked to the notion of carrying capacity that is the calculation of the maximum number of tourists that an area can support without compromising the long-term sustainability of the issue being investigated. Here the four different sustainabilities are briefly analysed.

- Ecological/Environmental: Unfortunately this level of sustainability "is often the only way in which sustainability is publicly perceived" (Mowforth and Munt, 1998). It is, however, important to admit that ecological/ environmental sustainability is fundamental for the long term well-being

of people, including those not involved in tourism. According to Sofield (2003) develop must be configured in such a way as to maintain a balance between ecological processes, biological resources and biological diversity.

- Economic: Sofield (2003) argues that development must reflect economic efficiency and be "equitable within and between generations". Thus, economic sustainability must be considered in conjunction with the other factors. In other words, it is important that the economic aspect must not take priority over other sustainabilities in the interest of long-term prospects.

- Cultural: In the realm of culture, Sofield, (2003) argues that development must be in consonance with the culture as well as the values cherished by the people affected by it. In this regard, it is imperative to understand the host/guest relationships in order to properly formulate appropriate tourism policies/plans. To that end, each culture or tradition should be free to follow its own path of development with its own dynamics without external 'impositions'.

- Social: In the social realm, "Development must be designed to increase people's control over their lives and maintain and strengthen community identity" (Sofield, 2003). Any community, whether local or national, needs to be able "to absorb inputs, such as extra people, for short or long periods of time, and to continue to function either without the creation of social disharmony as a result of these inputs or by adapting its functions and relationships so that the disharmony created can be alleviated or mitigated" (Mowforth and Munt, 1998). Thus, tourism needs to be used to improve the social landscape rather than worsen it.

Policies: There is need to produce policies for self- development/self-reliance. The 'self-' is intended at community/country level and as a reflection of the personal level. Community is defined as "combining human alliances with local social systems in specifically defined locations" (Mayhen, 1997). The point is in "spreading the concept of working together co-operatively for the common good instead competitively for individual private gain" (Nyerere, 1974).

We argue in this article that these concepts are central to promote holistic development. In this regard development is not be construed as isolation, but as a means to depend on each other as countries realising their capacities. In other words, it means to break away from dependency as succinctly put by Nyerere (1974: 99) properly explain the concept:

> The doctrine of self-reliance does not imply isolationism, either politically or economically. It means that we shall depend on ourselves, not on others. But this is not the same thing as saying we shall not trade with other people or co-operate with them when it is to mutual benefit.

This article argues that this process can be achieved working cooperatively, both within and between countries in the name of development.

Finally, this article argues that for this development strategy to take place, it should be self-generated as much as possible from within the country/community. Here, an outline of some 'Self' topics is proposed.

- Self-knowledge/development: Development must rely on indigenous knowledge. The use of indigenous knowledge allows greater community participation and thereby spreading the gains of development to a wider number of people, instead of just, say, the elite. Self-reliance should depend on local factors and actors as well as local knowledge for the evolution of an autonomous, geographic, historically specific development path. This does not mean the negation of external inputs, but means their selection and adaption to better fit the local reality.

- Self-ownership/management: Local people need to own and manage the tourism resources and facilities. One main obstacle to self-reliance in tourism (as may well be in other sectors of the economy) has been/is external dependency on both possession and management of tourism resources and facilities. Consequently, there is a need to formulate policies that foster local ownership of torurism resources and facilities. Moreover, the policy should favour the wider participation of people in the owning and management of tourism assets and avoiding the concentration of the benefits within the local elite. For this to happen, there is need for the development of community wide enterprises with the aim being to include as much as possible the largest number possible of community participants for cohesion and community gain (as opposed to individual gain).

- Self-legislation: Here the meaning of self-legislation has two different connotations. Firstly, there is need to develop policies autonomously and avoid external help that facilitates (and hides) intellectual dependency. Secondly, formulate legislation that does away with colonial legislative frameworks. Sofield (2003) wrote in relation to the Solomon Island but arguably this is valid in most African states and most developing countries in general – "Those laws and regulations owe their genesis to an imported colonial system which for the most part finds no echo in traditional resources skills and systems. These imported structures were often inadequately modified (or not changed at all) after independence and can thus continue to militate against village-based development" and, consequently, by extension, to community/country self-reliance. This article therefore argues that there is the need to re-formulate legislation in line with the local geographical-historical situation.

- Self-identity/esteem: These concepts are related to the understanding of cultural values within a certain community and their 'uniqueness'. That is, there is the need to make a community self-conscious of its values, attributes and capabilities. This will help to promote pride and dignity and can enhance community cohesion by working together. For example societies such as Eskimo, Maori and Navaho use "its special skills to their advantage, surpassing the efforts of the larger society other people could not or would not carve soapstone as well as they [the Eskimo] can. The same might be said of Navaho jewellery and Maori woodcarving" (Graburn in Sofield, 2003). Thus "Self-esteem of many community members is enhanced because of the recognition of the uniqueness and value of their culture, their natural resources and their traditional knowledge" (Scheyvens, 2002). This understanding should foster communities to protect their values and traditions.

Conclusion

The article argued that the tourism sector is particularly well positioned to enhance development especially within particular historical-geographic contexts anchored on its environmental, cultural and socio-economic sustainability. Thus this article is arguing for a form of tourism that is more 'redistributive'.

The model suggested in this article of the 7S's elevates the government/ community relationships above all interests for holistic development. The article argues that a public-community alliance should be re-modelled in a bottom up approach where decision making process comes from the 'bottom' of society and the 'up' segment of power acts as the facilitator of people resolutions. For real (tourism) development, the public sector can deliver basic infrastructure needed for a holistic development.

The need is to produce a "major transformation in thinking [with] the movement from participation to empowerment" (Rocha in Reid, 2003: 60) and in "spreading the concept of working together co-operatively for the common good instead competitively for individual private gain" (Nyerere, 1974: 102-103) in the institutional policy making milieu. It is proper to end this article with the words by Kropotkin, thus,

> I obviously do not deny the struggle for existence, but I maintain that the progressive development of the animal kingdom, and especially of mankind, is favoured much more by mutual support than by mutual struggle. (Kessler in Kropotkin, 1902).

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