

Analysis on the Education in Tourism and Hospitality in The Sphere of Latin America and Spain

by Daniel Celis Sosa

Madrid

Editorial Sintesis

2017

ISBN 978-849077482-3

Review DOI 10.1108/IJCHM-10-2017-0617

Unlike other disciplines in the calibre of sociology or anthropology, tourism revolves around two contrasting waves, which theorise its object of study from opposite angles. While some scholars emphasise on tourism as an industry, which considerably contributes to the domestic trade balance, other voices define the activity as an all-pervading social institution discursively-embedded with the expansion of democracy in the USA and Europe. In consequence, tourism management historically unfolded resources to implement the best practice for destinations while tourism-as-an-institution struggled to explain the roots of touring and escapement. Far from being closed, this dichotomy has been persistent to date.

In the middle of this mayhem, Daniel Celis Sosa presents a more than innovative book, which examines the graduate and postgraduate market in tourism and hospitality fields. It is important not to lose sight of this investigation that is part of his PhD dissertation and was deservedly awarded FITUR 2017 by the AECIT, the most prominent institutions of experts in tourism and hospitality in Spain (Asociacion Espanola de Expertos Cientificos en Turismo).

With the benefit of hindsight, he starts from the premise that education plays a crucial role in the training of future practitioners, policy-makers and desk-staff, which ensures the smooth functioning of industry. With a focus on Latin America and Spain, Celis Sosa shrewdly dissects the specialised literature to create an inventory of tourism education options as well as the most characteristic student profiles. As a titanic job, Celis Sosa launches to study the intersection of tourism in the educational marketplace in which competition is the guiding principle of improvement. Still furthermore, the gravitation of each doctorate or post graduate degree can be analysed to the costs and prices candidates are willing to pay. The introductory chapter invites readers to reflect on the importance of education in tourism and hospitality, describing the main goals and limitations of the applied research. As Celis Sosa puts it, the present book continues with the original worries expressed in other studies, which understand that the efficacy and efficiency of tourism industry to overcome those obstacles in a new millennium depend on how professionals are educated. In so doing, a combination between qualitative and quantitative methodologies is strongly recommended. Celis Sosa toys with the belief that the penetration of tourism-related education can be quantitatively measured while further qualitative analysis provides the nature of syllabuses and educational content. In dialogue with the seminal work published by [Airey and Tribe \(2006\)](#) ten years ago, Celis Sosa argues convincingly that tourism courses and programs are growing considerably in Latin America over the recent



years though governments' lack trained human resources that optimise the decision-making process. For some reason, the private sector devotes considerable resources to build new cradles for the industry while scientific research is glossed over. As this backdrop, the second chapter discusses critically the different publications and works that ranked the best universities in hospitality and tourism worldwide. Dr Celis Sosa enumerates the factors that determine the success of tourism education within a region as follows:

- Those factors intrinsically intertwined to the students as motivation, financial resources, support of environment and vocational prospects.
- Those factors oriented to draw the syllabuses or the content of programmes. At this stage, students valorise often the possibilities to get a rapid and stable job as well as career advancement.
- Other contextual factors, which indirectly condition the motivations of students such as language, cultural incompatibilities or material asymmetries. For example, some British students positively valorise the odds to study in other English-speaking countries while other sources are undermined.

The third chapter scrutinises on questions of methodology and sampling, following the recommendations of Airey and Tribe (2006). The rest of the book describes the main outcomes and findings of this fascinating investigation. To some extent, although tourism industry is valorised by social imaginary as a factor of economic development, less attention was given to education as well as the influence of scientific research in Latin America. There is a manifest divergence between the needs of the sector and what educational establishments offer. Another additional problem is the constant cut-off and lack of financial aid for applied research in all Latin American universities. Almost 70 per cent of the degrees in tourism and hospitality are issued by private universities, in which case Celis Sosa notes, it poses a serious challenge for state establishments while it interrogates the future of the public sector in view that the best cradles are often recruited by the industry. Another interesting point to discuss seems to be that a high proportion of graduates are educated in an economic-centric paradigm with less attachment for applied research. The analysed data suggests that students who join tourism courses in Latin America have no intention to become professional researchers but only to be managers of their own projects. This results in the rise of tuition fees or prices of college tuition which creates a gap between the public and the private university. Without a doubt, this pungent investigation describes a situation which today concerns part of the academy, which means the advance of formal education oriented to management instead of scientific research. Equally important, Celis Sosa shows amply the limitations and problems of Latin American nations to escape to the advocacy platform of tourism (paragraphing Jafari). Synonymous with development, tourism is valorised only by its effects in local economies while this leads very well towards an oversimplification of its social and cultural nature. With an ample handling of dataset and tables, the author not only gives an interesting snapshot on the future of tourism, but he also validates the assumptions made by Airey and Tribe (2006). Written in polished prose and dotted with substantial evidence, this reviewer not only recommends the present project but also retains some concerns on the role of education in resolving the current epistemological crisis in tourism and hospitality.

Maximiliano Emanuel Korstanje

Department of Economics, University of Palermo, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Reference

Airey, D. and Tribe, J. (2006), *An International Handbook of Tourism Education*, Routledge, Oxford.

Further reading

Jafari, J. (2001), "The scientification of tourism", in Smith, V. and Elmsford, B.M. (Eds), *Hosts and Guests Revisited: Tourism Issues of the 21st Century*, Cognizant Communication, pp. 28-41.

About the author

Maximiliano Emanuel Korstanje is a cultural theorist dedicated to the study of mobilities and terrorism born in Buenos Aires, Argentina on 29 October, 1976. His development is framed within the subfield of critical terrorism studies. He serves as Senior Lecturer at Department Economics, University of Palermo, Argentina. Korstanje was Visiting Fellow at CERS University of Leeds, United Kingdom and Visiting Lecturer at University of la Habana, Cuba. Formally, he is part of Tourism Crisis Management Institute, University of Florida; US Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Studies; University of Leeds Hospitality Social Network; Critical Tourism Studies Asia-Pacific; Red de Investigación Turística RIT and The International Society for Philosopher, hosted in Sheffield, England. While considered as a prolific writer in his field, Korstanje has published more than 950 pieces regarding mobilities, tourism, risk perception, globalisation and terrorism. Hence, his biography is included in the index Marquis Who is in the World since 2009. In 2017, AMIT (Mexican Academy for this study of Tourism), which is the most salient academic institution in tourism research of Mexico, awards Korstanje as Foreign Faculty Member. Maximiliano Emanuel Korstanje can be contacted at: maxikorstanje@hotmail.com