Preface

In recent years, the growth of travel, tourism and hospitality has been faster than the growth of the wider economy and other significant sectors such as financial services, health care, and automotive (WTTC, 2015). Worldwide, tourism is the third largest economic activity in direct earnings (i.e. tour operators, hotels, travel agencies etc.) after petroleum and automotive industries, and, by far, it is the largest economic activity considering its indirect earnings (i.e. restaurants, events, indirect tourism consumption in local stores and shops etc.). In several countries, tourism acts as a developmental engine through the creation of direct and indirect employment (there are 235 million jobs in the tourism industry worldwide, accounting for one in every twelve jobs all over the world, approximately), and foreign exchange earnings. For instance, it is the only industry that several countries (i.e. Barbados, Dubai, Mauritius, Monte Carlo, San Marino, Seychelles, etc.) almost solely rely on for economic development (UNWTO, 2016). In addition, it contributes to approximately 5% of the world’s GDP; and 6% of the world’s exports in services, whilst it is the fourth largest export sector after fuels, chemicals and automotive products (UNWTO, 2016).

This rapid growth coupled with the dynamism within the industry due, for example, to the development of information technology, the sharing economy, as well as the spread of terrorism, just to mention a few, makes it fundamental to the tourism industry to be able to quickly adapt to this changing environment. Not only this rapid development within tourism and hospitality is linked to macro and micro-environmental factors, but it is also influenced by the multidisciplinary nature of the industry which can be studied from different perspectives such as economics, sociology, anthropology, marketing, management and geography. Hence, gaining a full understanding of the changes happening in tourism and hospitality is complicated but, at the same time, it is required in order to educate the tourism and hospitality operators of the future.

The dynamic character of the industry and the coexistence of a wide spectrum of different fields and disciplines, create the necessity of a holistic approach to tourism and hospitality operations, education, and research. For instance, the considerable influence of new trends and issues in tourism creates the necessity of a more flexible approach to education and training that, on the one hand is able to sufficiently assess the potential challenges of the new era and, on the other hand, help businesses to adapt in order to survive in the modern market place. Indeed, it is only through innovation and new ways of thinking that businesses can survive and develop (Sok & O’Cass, 2011). Thus, perspectives and research from different scientific fields and disciplines are considerably important for the understanding of the evolutionary travel, tourism and hospitality process.

In the light of the changing environment in which tourism and hospitality businesses are operating, this book aims at: 1) highlighting some of the challenges faced by the travel, tourism and hospitality industries; 2) bridging the gap between academic research and industry practice; 3) providing a core
inter-disciplinary body of knowledge that can support the continuation of academic and applied research, and the understanding of current tourism and hospitality industry operations.

The “Global Dynamics in Travel, Tourism, and Hospitality” edited book provides quality research in contemporary aspects with a substantial business focus. It serves as a basis for academics to develop their research; as a guide for business managers to engage in innovative techniques and evaluate the current challenges and applications; and as a useful handbook for students seeking to enhance their understanding on specific aspects in travel, tourism and hospitality field.

This edited book is divided in three sections. The first section focuses on travel dynamics because the travel and transport industry is, by definition, one of the tourism key components. According to Reilly et al. (2010) tourists should eventually travel to and from the destinations they select, whilst this reality creates the need for extensive energy / fuel consumption, let alone when long-haul automobile or air travel transportation is involved.

The second part deals with global dynamics in the wider tourism field. During the last decades, the tourism industry has continued to rapidly expand and has become one of the highest-growth industries worldwide (Liu & Chou, 2016). This is because from a financial point of view the development of tourism can shape and transform not only localities and regions but even define national economies; and, at the same time, tourism impacts socially, culturally, and environmentally all destinations (Pappas, 2014).

The final section of the edited book concerns the dynamics within the hospitality industry. The hotel and accommodation industry is the largest sub-sector of tourism economy, and is also a significant ingredient of the tourism experience (Davidson et al., 2010). As Chen (2016) suggests, the development and evolution of the inbound tourism market is most likely to have a considerable effect on the hotel industry in terms of increase of the hotel occupancy rate and sales revenue. Thus, the developments and trends within the hospitality industry need to be further highlighted and analysed.

**OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK**

Chapter 1 presents the results of a study aimed at understanding the impact of culture on travellers’ online information search behavior. The research focused on Chinese and British travellers since these two groups are culturally different according to the Hofstede’s categorization. Results show that the behavior of these two groups presents some differences that can be attributable to cultural differences.

Chapter 2 focuses on slum tourism – i.e. the organized visits to places of poverty – and the businesses offering this type of service. In particular, the chapter analyses how new technologies and the Internet in particular are used by businesses offering slum tourism tours. By applying the eMICA model the author analysed the website of *Reality Tours and Travel*, an Indian tour operator offering slum tours.

Chapter 3 analyses the European aviation sector by focusing on the three pillars making it up, namely the airlines, the airports and the providers of air navigation services. In particular, the chapter illustrates the institutional changes affecting the three aforementioned areas and shows how all the three pillars are essential elements in the tourism development of destinations.

Chapter 4 investigates the case of a Sicilian tour operator that offers responsible travel to tourists who wish to visit Sicily without giving money to the Sicilian mafia. By adopting the lenses of Service-Dominant Logic the author analysed how experiences are co-created in a multi-stakeholder environment. In so doing the interactions between the tour operator, its service providers and visitors had been studied.
Chapter 5 investigates for the first time whether holidays have negative effects on marriages and consequently increase the number of divorces. Through official statistics on the number of marriages and divorces in Argentina and through qualitative data the author sheds light on a new perspective: i.e. holidays could not only bring about positive effects to individuals, but they could also be the cause of break-ups.

Chapter 6 focuses on east Timor tourism. More specifically, the chapter attempts to discuss the prospects of tourism development in post-conflict contexts. After an analysis of the historical process of tourism development in East Timor, and of the role of tourism in the political and economic agenda of the country; the author highlights and analyzes the impact of international cooperation on tourism development in East Timor.

Chapter 7 focuses on innovation, internationalisation and networking within tourism with the aim of understanding the role that women play in those areas. A qualitative research based on focus groups was carried out. The research involved tourism leaders working in the seven administrative regions of Portugal. Results shows that gender roles attributed to women limit their contribution to growth strategies of tourism businesses.

Chapter 8 synthesizes Augmented Reality as an emerging and potential technology of digital tourism marketing and management. The aim of this chapter is to understand innovation from both, tourism product and services consumption perspective. Results outline that technology consumption is gradually reshaping and getting supported by the availability and accessibility of electronic formats such as Augmented Reality.

Chapter 9 identifies specific innovation anchors and reveals that innovation, in the future, can take further advantage. More specifically, this article identifies ten innovation anchors, e.g. critical trends that can guide the long-term innovation activity and lead to fundamentally new products, services, delivery mechanisms, organizational models, means of collaboration etc.

Chapter 10 draws upon empirical research carried out in the wake of the Asian tsunami, with the aim of examining the role of a mega natural disaster upon tourism development and planning. More specifically, it examines the influence of a natural disaster upon destination redevelopment, and draws upon examples of other natural disasters that have affected the tourism industry in recent times.

Chapter 11 provides empirical evidence on the impact of the recent financial crisis on the British travellers. This research provides, on the one hand, a better understanding of tourist behaviour and demand patterns during periods of economic recession; and on the other hand, it offers evidence based insights to public policy makers and managers regarding the actions and initiatives they could initiate to fend off the negative effects of the crisis.

Chapter 12 critically discusses the main opportunities and limitations that epistemology faces today in tourism field, as well as the problems quantitative-oriented paradigms show. More specifically, (1) it debates on the needs of achieving a scientific definition of tourism, and (2) it departs towards a theory that triggers a review of John Tribe’s contributions to the epistemology of tourism.

Chapter 13 analyses the global productivity challenge faced by hotels and provides a conceptual discussion on the productivity measurement used in the hospitality industry. By adopting a microeconomic perspective, the chapter provides a standard theoretical framework that identifies the sources of productivity improvement.
Chapter 14 analyses the point of view of executives in five stars international hotels in order to investigate the role of hotel personnel during the service provision. Through a quantitative method the author investigated the impact of physical attractiveness, self-confidence, and professional competence on service attitude. This chapter shows that service attitude is affected by the other three variables, which represents areas on which hotel managers should pay attention.

Chapter 15 explores how three, four and five star hotels located in Galicia (Northwest region of Spain) and in the Northern Region of Portugal apply social responsibility. The study focused on three different areas of social responsibility, namely environmental, economic and social dimensions. Results show that, although the two regions are similar from a cultural point of view, hoteliers’ behavior shows differences with regards to economic and social dimensions.

Chapter 16 aims to bridge the gap toward the practical and theoretical issues in tourism and hospitality management. More specifically it examines the relevant literature in an effort to describe the implementation of major theoretical applications in practice, since this aspect significantly impacts on the understanding of appropriate knowledge to both, practitioners and researchers.

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REFERENCES


