New Tourism Research

186 p. Penang, Universiti Sains Malaysia: Sustainable Tourism Research Cluster

by Badaruddin Mohamed & Mohd Rezza Petra b Azlan, Universiti Sains Malaysia

It is always a pleasure to review a tourism research text as it is certainly fascinating to deal with some of the most poignant issues in tourism studies. This book contains eleven papers selected from the second Regional Conference on Tourism Research held in 2011. These papers are categorised into three main topics, which are Tourism Planning, New Tourism and Hospitality. Topics chosen for this book add interesting new angles to research in tourism. It was a very enjoyable yet challenging read, as it deals with some difficult, pressing and global issues relating to the tourism industry. This interesting compilation set out to strengthen what is still an emerging field of study, and is aimed at gathering contributions from across a range of social science disciplines of the industry. Such a range of contributions can be confusing especially if it is weighted out with uneven quality and focus, but on a positive note, undeniably, the work is thoroughly researched and very well written. It is a big challenge in all edited works especially to weave a coherent storyline through sets of papers (especially in the case of conference papers). In this context, the editors were successful, perhaps with the exception of a couple of papers, which do not fit quite comfortably well as the rest. The geographical spread of the papers is fairly wide, covering Japan, Australia, Iran, Philippines, Malaysia, as well as Thailand. The first three countries garnered the most attention as the main writers of the book are from these countries, thus many cases were based on case studies from these countries.

The first chapter of this book, ‘Tourism Planning’, consists of six articles discussing several aspects of planning, management and tourism development. Selected papers in this chapter have been successfully edited by the authors and can serve as useful references for tourism research in the future. One article that attracted our attention was the fifth paper of this chapter entitled ‘Enhancing Barangay Participation in Local Tourism in Vigan City.’ The writing style and presentation are of high quality in terms of their content, methodology, research, and style that is comprehensible to students, researchers, operators and even general readers of tourism.

The second chapter, entitled ‘New Tourism’, contains three selected papers concerning special interest tourism such as art tourism, medical tourism and event tourism. In the second article in this chapter, the authors raised the issue of a conceptual framework and strategies towards Malaysia’s intention to shift towards a service-based economy. Although it is stated that there is a lack of academic research concerning medical tourists’ satisfaction in Malaysia and Asia, authors of this article succeeded in convincing us of the potential of this sector by relating various case studies from both developed and developing countries of Asia such as

---

1 Correspondence: Badaruddin Mohamed & Mohd Rezza Petra b Azlan; Email: badad@usm.my; razakabbas@gmail.com
Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, India, Philippine and Thailand. Besides illustrating the achievement of these countries, this article also recommended a realistic theoretical framework based on actual situation.

Chapter three, entitled ‘Hospitality’ comprises two articles, authored by two writers from Malaysia and Thailand. Both articles discussed the issue of boutique hotels, the potentials and its direction in cultural tourism. The second article, which featured a case study of the district of Chiang Mai, Thailand successfully illustrated the whole scenario, with a good literature review and further convinced the readers with photos of products and attractions of these boutique hotels and their cultural images. The authors also succeeded in defining boutique hotels and s constructing a beautiful research study text in a complacent style of writing.

In conclusion, the editors have made a brave attempt to document a diverse collection of case studies on tourism and hospitality. These set of papers reveal the positive and best practices methods that can be adopted to move towards beneficial and sustainable tourism strategies and approaches. As the title suggests, this book also sets out to explore various issues reflecting the current tourism trends in every part of the world and to ensure further international awareness about the industry and issues or problems relating to tourism. The scenarios portrayed in these papers, albeit from many countries, would still be a good reference for future research in the segments of tourism emphasised by the book.