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Stakeholder collaboration in tourist destinations; A systematic literature review

This study systematically reviewed studies about tourism stakeholder collaboration in tourist destinations published in seven high-ranking journals, which are Tourism Management (TM-19), Current Issues in Tourism (CIT-7), Annals of Tourism Research (ATR-6), Journal of Ecotourism (JE-2), Journal of Sustainable Tourism (JST-11), Journal of Travel Research (JTR-3), Journal of Tourism Planning and Development (JTPD-11). Using a systematic quantitative literature review method, six criteria were used to assess the published papers, including research methods, locations, main tourism stakeholders, identification of tourism stakeholders, tourism settings, and issues addressed in the papers. Fifty-nine (n=59) articles were reviewed; most of the studies used the qualitative research method. The criteria to include tourism stakeholders in these studies are based on many aspects such as literature review, available documents of destinations, local sources, tourism stakeholder's knowledge, and experiences. Furthermore, some studies included the tourism stakeholders based on their positions, power, and their dependence on destinations for livelihood; however, tourism stakeholders could be chosen purposively in several studies. This study demonstrates the trend of the most recent studies focused on tourism stakeholder's collaboration in developed countries, and this issue should be studied more in developing countries in future studies.

Keywords: stakeholder collaboration, systematic, identification, literature review

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Introduction

Tourism is complex, and multiple stakeholders influence and are affected by tourism development. This means that stakeholders need to work together to solve the problem, realize goals, and create new opportunities (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). The dependency on resources and interdependence among stakeholders means that there are potential mutual benefits among stakeholders to collaborate. There are potential mutual or collective benefits for stakeholders in collaborative processes where the participants can learn from each other, develop the new policies, and respond to a changing environment (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). Many studies have researched stakeholders' perceptions and collaborations; however, a systematic review of literature about the study of stakeholder collaboration in tourist destinations is long overdue. This study systematically investigates and synthesizes the extant literature relating to stakeholder collaboration in recent studies to identify who the main tourism stakeholders are, how current studies identify tourism stakeholders in their studies. This study also investigates what methods were used in prior research. The tourism settings, geographical location in current studies are also considered.

The significance of this review is twofold: First, this study provides an overview of the development of studies about stakeholders' perceptions of tourism development and collaboration in destinations. Second, this review helps to recognize who mainly tourism stakeholders are, so policymakers and managers could segment strategies to develop destinations. By mapping what is known, this review also provides useful information about how to identify tourism stakeholders in future research and how to improve collaboration among stakeholders in tourist destinations. The aims of this paper are to review the literature on:

- 1. Who are the key tourism stakeholders in tourism destinations?
- 2. How to identify the tourism stakeholders as respondents in reviewed papers?



3. What main issues addressed in the published studies?

Methodology

A systematic quantitative literature review was used to survey literature and select papers to quantify existing research and identify gaps. This method was also used to assess different combinations of locations, subjects, variables, and responses, which the researchers have examined. Systematic quantitative is structured, and a process of collecting; analyzing the literature follows a series of clear steps (Pickering & Byrne, 2014). Moreover, the systematic and quantitative approach helps to map the landscape and boundary of knowledge by counting and charting what is known to shed light on what is yet to be known (Pickering, Grignon, Steven, Guitart, & Byrne, 2015).

In this study, to answer the above research questions, the keywords "tourism stakeholders" and "stakeholder's collaboration" were used to search via the Murdoch University library website (https://www.murdoch.edu.au/library/resources-collections/databases), searching criteria was chosen with only journal articles, language is English, discipline in tourism. The results came up with more than 400 articles in many journals (10 web pages). The researcher then scanned each web page, selected the articles with the keywords of "tourism stakeholders" and "collaboration" in the title, were peer-reviewed, and published in 7 high-ranking journals in tourism. The journals included A*, A, and B ranked journals (https://abdc.edu.au/research/abdc-journal-list/), and high impact factor in tourism discipline the most influential ones (see Table 1). In addition, several researchers have stated the importance of journal ranking, and a highly ranked research journal is an indicator of research performance (Law, Ye, Chen, & Leung, 2009; Schmidgall, Woods, & Hardigree, 2007).



The researcher reviewed these articles based on criteria; reported original empirical research; was written in English; indicated who was involved in the interview or survey. The publications were quantitatively assessed to provide a structural overview of the published research, including research methods, who the tourism stakeholders were, the geographical spread of studies, how to identify tourism stakeholders. The selected articles were assessed on how each paper included tourism stakeholders in its survey and interview. After scanning, 59 journal articles met with these criteria mentioned above.



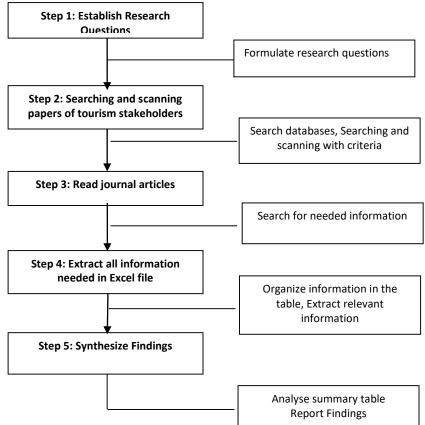


Figure 1. Systematic review Process

Source: Adapted from Pickering and Byrne (2014) and Yang, Khoo-Lattimore, and Arcodia (2017)

Table 1: Distribution of sample

	Journal Name	Ranking (2019)	Impact factor (Year)	Number of articles	%
1	Tourism Management	A*	7.432 (2019)	19	32.20
2	Annals of Tourism Research	A*	5.908 (2019)	6	10.17
3	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	A*	3.986 (2019)	11	18.64
4	Journal of Travel Research	A*	4.564 (2017)	3	5.08
5	Current Issues in Tourism	A	4.147 (2019)	7	11.86
6	Journal of Ecotourism	В	0.88 (2015)	2	3.39
7	Journal of Tourism Planning and Development	В	0.95 (2015)	11	18.64
	Total			59	100

Source: (https://abdc.edu.au/research/abdc-journal-list/)



Data Analysis

In this study, after finished choosing the articles, these were screened and read carefully by the researcher, all needed information which includes author (year), method/sources of data, location of study, tourism stakeholders, how to identify tourism stakeholders, tourism settings, and issues needed to addressed put into Excel spreadsheet. For each type of information, the theme was identified by careful reading and rereading of the articles. For instance, to get information about the location of the study, the researcher read the research method section in articles. To identify the core issues addressed in each article, the researcher screened the abstract, introduction and listed out the issues that the paper addressed. Then, the above studies, which had the same addressed issues, are grouped into one topic.

Results

There has been an overall increase in the number of research papers during the studied period on tourism stakeholder collaboration. This corresponds with the increasing interest by researchers to include more stakeholders such as government officials, tourists, and tourism businesses in their studies, not a single resident. In the 1990s, only a few publications were reviewed in this research, accounting for five papers dealing with stakeholder collaboration. The year of published papers ranged from 1990 to 2018, with outputs peaking from 2011-2015 with 23 papers. During a short period time from 2016 to 2018, there were 19 published papers.

Table 2 summarizes geographical locations and tourism settings considered in published papers. Most of the studies had fieldwork in Europe and Asia, accounting for (30.51%) and (22.03%) respectively, followed by Oceania (16.95%). This implies that countries where tourism developed, had more studies about stakeholder collaboration. Only 4 (6.78%) studies were



conducted in North America. There were 16.95% and 15.25%, respectively, of studies that focused on nature-based tourism and ecotourism in tourism settings.

Table 2: Geographical Locations and Tourism Settings

	Year of Publications	No. of Studies	Percentage
1	1990-1995	1	1.69
2	1996-2000	4	6.78
3	2001-2005	4	6.78
4	2006-2010	8	13.56
5	2011-2015	23	38.98
6	2016-2018	19	32.20
	Total	59	100
	Geographical Location	No. of Studies	%
1	Europe	18	30.51
2	North America	4	6.78
3	Central & South America	4	6.78
4	Africa	5	8.47
5	Asia	13	22.03
6	Oceania	10	16.95
7	Not specified	5	8.47
	Total	59	100
	Tourism Setting		
1	Ecotourism	9	15.25
2	Event tourism	1	1.69
3	Agri tourism	1	1.69
4	Ski tourism	4	6.78
5	Wildlife tourism	1	1.69
6	International tourism	3	5.08
7	Hotel	2	3.39
8	Rural tourism	2	3.39
9	Coastal tourism	5	8.47
10	Nature-based tourism	10	16.95
11	Marine tourism	1	1.69
12	Urban tourism	2	3.39
13	Surfing tourism	2	3.39
14	Air tourism	1	1.69
15	Craft beer tourism	1	1.69
16	Golf tourism	1	1.69
17	Not specified	13	22.03
	Total	59	100

With 59 articles reviewed, tourism stakeholders mostly are local residents, local authorities, managers, CEO, tour operators, accommodation providers, and tourists (Table 3). On



the other hand, tourism stakeholders could also be students, farmers, and employees, etc. 20 out of 59 reviewed papers included local residents in their studies, accounting for 35.59%, closely followed by local authorities making up 33.90%. Managers are also considered important stakeholders who are included in 10 studies. Only two studies included educators, students, and farmers as stakeholders. In conclusion, residents and authorities are key tourism stakeholders in any tourism setting since residents are the key stakeholders in tourism development (Duarte Alonso & Nyanjom, 2017).

Table 3: Tourism stakeholders in research studies

Tourism stakeholders	No. of studies	Cumulative Percentage
Local residents	21	35.59
Tourists	7	11.86
Accommodation Providers	4	6.78
Tour Operator	5	8.47
Travel Agent	3	5.08
Local authorities	20	33.90
Managers	7	11.86
Owners	6	10.17
CEO	2	3.39
Employees	3	5.08
Educators	2	1.69
Students	2	1.69
Farmers	2	3.39
Other interested organizations	3	5.08
Not specified	3	5.08

Criteria to involve tourism stakeholders in studies

As presented in Table 4, seven criteria were used to identify stakeholders in the 59 reviewed studies. Based on ability, knowledge, interest, and experiences were the most criteria to identify tourism stakeholders, accounting for (25.42%), followed by reviewing literature and document source (23.73%). Tourism stakeholders also identify by their impact or dependence on destinations



for livelihood, making up (13.56%). Few researchers involve tourism stakeholders in their research by organizing the event, meetings, workshop (5.08%). Based on attributes of stakeholders suggested by Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997), this study classifies tourism stakeholders falling into three legitimate groups Power, Interest, and Urgency.

Table 4: Criteria to involve tourism stakeholders in studies

No.	Attribute of stakeholders	How to identify tourism stakeholders	Identification Typology	No. of Studies	%
1	Legitimate	Literature review and document source	Discretionary stakeholders	14	23.73
2		Based on ability, knowledge, interest, and experiences	Dominant stakeholders	15	25.42
3	Urgency	Dependent/Impact on the destination for livelihood	Dependent stakeholders	8	13.56
4	Legitimate	Consultation with staffs/experts	Discretionary stakeholders	4	6.78
5	Legitimate	Statistical sampling	Discretionary stakeholders	7	11.86
6	Legitimate	Organizing event, meetings, workshop	Discretionary stakeholders	3	5.08
7		Not specified		8	13.56
Total			59	100	

The methodology used by published studies on tourism stakeholders

The research methods of reviewed studies are presented in Table 5. Most of the studies (83.05%) reviewed have used a qualitative method, with only five quantitative studies representing only 8.47%. Semi-structured interviews were the most common way to obtain data from tourism stakeholders. A reason for this, the semi-structured interview technique provides rich data, and participants can be assessed more easily than other interview choices (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). In addition, the informant felt comfortable when speaking out other people listening. However, there are only five studies that applied mixed research methods, accounting for 8.47%. On the other hand, all five articles that applied mixed-method do not contain in-depth information about the paradigms underpinning mixed-method. Future research should apply the mixed research



method since it provides a broader and more complete range of research problems and supports stronger evidence for conclusion through convergence and confirmation of findings.

Table 5: Methodological approaches and sources of data

Research Methods and Approaches	No. of Studies	%
Quantitative	5	8.47
Survey	5	8.47
Qualitative	49	83.05
General Qualitative Method (interview)	43	87.76
Mixed of Qualitative Methods	6	12.24
Mix Methods	5	8.47

Table 6 indicates results from content analysis. After screening and reading all 59 published articles, 18 issues addressed in the reviewed papers emerged. Most of the papers focused on stakeholder's perspectives about tourism plans, solutions, or strategies in the tourism setting, accounting for 22.03%. Eight published papers addressed stakeholder's collaboration and cooperation in tourism settings. Few studies concentrated on stakeholders' perspectives about tourism impacts and tourism development, making up 8.47 and 6.78%, respectively. The results above imply that, in tourism destinations, stakeholder's perspectives are very important to set up plans, solutions, and strategies. Moreover, stakeholder collaboration and cooperation in tourism settings emerged as urgent studies in response to industry issues.



Table 6: Issues needed to address in the published studies

No.	Issues addressed in the published studies	Number of articles	Percentage
1	Stakeholder's perspectives about tourism plans, solutions or strategies in tourism settings	13	22.03
2	Stakeholder's engagement, relevant and involvement in tourism settings	6	10.17
3	Stakeholder's collaboration and cooperation in tourism settings	8	13.56
4	Stakeholder's perspectives about impacts of tourism	5	8.47
5	Stakeholder's power in destinations	2	3.39
6	Applying stakeholder's theory in destinations, network planning and management	3	5.08
7	Analyzing tourism stakeholders affecting to sustainable tourism	1	1.69
8	Stakeholder's perspective about sustainable tourism	6	10.17
9	Stakeholder perspective about features, tools and requirements of destination competitiveness	3	5.08
10	Stakeholder's perspective about tourism development in destinations	4	6.78
11	Examine outcome of collaborative planning exercise in destination	1	1.69
12	Developing stakeholder map to identify duty bearer and holders	1	1.69
13	Future eDestination marketing from tourism stakeholder network perspective	1	1.69
14	Stakeholders perception about ecotourism	1	1.69
15	Investigate perceived potential of craft beer tourism	1	1.69
16	Interaction among stakeholders during the conceptualization of a large collaborative project	1	1.69
17	Collaborative tourism marketing and the effects of social relations on DMO performance	1	1.69
18	Stakeholder perspective about LCC contributing to tourism development	1	1.69
	Total	59	100

Discussion

Overview of research characteristics

The study has reviewed journal articles about stakeholder collaboration in tourist destinations between 1990 and 2018. The growing interest of academics in this topic is demonstrated by the increase in the number of publications from 2011 to 2018. During the 1970s, the studies focused



on examining the views and opinions of only residents about tourism development. From the 1970s onwards, the attention turned to the negative, positive social, cultural, and environmental impacts of tourism on the destination (Sánchez Cañizares, Castillo Canalejo, & Núñez Tabales, 2016). Previous studies mostly focus on the local residents' attitudes and participation in tourism development; since 2011, many studies have shifted to include more tourism stakeholders in destinations.

The location of reviewed studies is in Europe and Asia, representing 30.51 and 22.03%, respectively. Within seven high-ranking journals, Tourism Management Journal (30.91%) is the most frequent publication journal. The key tourism stakeholders in the reviewed studies are local residents, accounting for 35.59%, followed by local authorities representing 33.90%. Ecotourism and nature-based tourism are the main tourism settings. 14 out of 59 studies included tourism stakeholders in the studies based on their ability, knowledge, interest, and experiences, making up 25.42%. Qualitative methods dominate the study of tourism stakeholders, contributing to 83.05%, in which semi-structured interview is the main way to collect data from tourism stakeholders. Most of the studies address tourism issues in terms of plans, solutions, and strategies of destinations. Stakeholder collaboration and cooperation also emerge as urgent issues of tourism destinations in recent studies.

Identification of tourism stakeholders

Literature review and available documents

Tourism stakeholders are included in the reviewed studies by literature review or analyzing related documents in destinations. According to Randle and Hoye (2016), stakeholder groups were identified in their study by reviewing the literature. In line with Todd, Leask, and Ensor (2017),



using secondary data to categorize potential stakeholders by examining a selection of published documents, which are annual reports, programmes, marketing communications materials, and the Fringe website after literature reviewed. Support by the study of Adu-Ampong (2017), documentary and archival records which included government policies on tourism and policy documents of the institutions involved in the tourism sector of the Central Region of Ghana were employed to have respondents. Furthermore, local residents, entrepreneurs achieved by a commercial source, and a list of tourists who had contacted the Johnston County Visitors Bureau and the Martin County Visitor Bureau during 2003 were used to generate tourists' population (Byrd et al., 2009). Yuksel, Yuksel, and Bramwell (1999) reviewed local sources, and four broad stakeholder groups were identified as directly affected by the plan for Pamukkale in Turkey. Moreover, Carlisle, Kunc, Jones, and Tiffin (2013) uses document analysis such as the minutes of the Gambia Tourism Authority (GTA) marketing, training, and quality control committees to include multi-stakeholders in their study. However, Kuvan and Akan (2012) take stakeholders in their research from an electorate list of community members who are eligible to vote in national and municipal elections. Gil Arroyo, Barbieri, and Rozier Rich (2013) targeted stakeholders from the Missouri Department of Agriculture and the North Carolina Agritourism Networking Association. In summary, many above studies, including tourism stakeholders based on existing literature reviews and available documents. By doing this way, some latent tourism stakeholders are taking part in tourism could be omitted in their studies since these stakeholders could be legitimate stakeholders, which reduces their importance of power and urgency (Mitchell et al., 1997).



Ability, knowledge, and experiences of tourism stakeholders

Tourism stakeholders are being selected by their abilities, knowledge, and experiences in reviewed studies. For instance, an organization's representatives in a managerial role or knowledgeable about tourist destinations are chosen as respondents (Tkaczynski, Rundle-Thiele, & Beaumont, 2009). Furthermore, stakeholders could be chosen as having a certain level of awareness that would be considered higher than normal for the given phenomenon studied, and stakeholders possessed in-depth knowledge of the tourism industry (Aqueveque & Bianchi, 2017; Bornhorst, Brent Ritchie, & Sheehan, 2010). In agreement with Beritelli and Laesser (2011), they involved respondents in their study by criteria such as stakeholder's knowledge, stakeholder's influences. Stakeholders were chosen in their study based on the role, activities, and practical experiences in tourism settings (Farmaki & Papatheodorou, 2015; Martin & Assenov, 2014). On the other hand, the criteria of deciding whether stakeholders were active or passive were based on their ability to affect the three aspects of sustainable tourism development, namely economic, environmental and social objectives and through involvement with tourism (Lyon, Hunter-Jones, & Warnaby, 2017). Tourism stakeholders having abilities, knowledge, and experiences in tourism settings are identified as dominant stakeholders. These stakeholders have legitimate claims and the ability to act upon these claims by the power they hold (Currie, Seaton, & Wesley, 2009).

Another way to include tourism stakeholders in the studies is to get consultation or recommendations from staff/experts. Inclusion of different stakeholder groups is by consultation with experts such as tourism professors. For instance, Özdemir, Yilmaz, Yalçin, and Alvarez (2015) consulted with two tourism professors, experts in the topic, and very knowledgeable about Istanbul to include tourism stakeholders. However, Towner and Milne (2017) identified participants via conservations with prominent community members. On the other hand, the



interviewees in Haukeland's (2011) work were selected through recommendations from the management staff.

How to improve collaboration among tourism stakeholders

Destinations differ from each other to improve stakeholder collaboration, and research should be conducted to identify the presence of conditions of current collaboration in the area. This may highlight some problems taking place at destinations as a result of unsuccessful stakeholder collaboration attempts and allow for the necessary action to take place and allowing for research that will help improve the effectiveness of stakeholder collaboration (Jamal & Getz, 1995; McComb, Boyd, & Boluk, 2017). Furthermore, Aas, Ladkin, and Fletcher (2005) reveal that collaboration among stakeholders could be improved when the idea of formally discussing development issues across different groups has been established and may raise the knowledge and understanding of each other's views and challenges, which in turn may lead to wider collaboration and formulation of alliances in the future. This is essential if the relationship between heritage conservation and tourism is to develop to be beneficial for all the stakeholders concerned.

Collaboration could be enhanced through an inclusive new product development, which helps the DMO strengthen the relationship with tourism firms and participation of tourism firms in decision-making processes through committee working groups, annual conferences, and meetings (d'Angella & Go, 2009). In line with Graci (2013), monthly meetings, constant communication, and consultation included all stakeholders in joint decision-making and ensured that the process was dynamic, leading to its success. However, some incentives motivate stakeholders to attend regular meetings, particularly non-profit organizations that are often not paid to attend, also need to be developed. These incentives could be monetary-based or provide some in-kind contributions to their organization or group (Bramwell & Sharman, 1999).



Coordinating the various areas of public-private collaboration, from tourism promotion to disaster management, is done through its DMO, the Okinawa Convention and Visitors Bureau, which serves as the centre for facilitation and interaction between the prefecture, cities, and tourism businesses, including the hotel and transportation industry (Nguyen, Imamura, & Iuchi, 2017). However, Waayers, Lee, and Newsome (2012) showed that participants might need to have the same capacity to participate in the planning process, each stakeholder should sign a commitment statement that outlines their role and responsibilities and commitment to the planning process (e.g., only attend quarterly meetings or perhaps provide full-time assistance and coordination). Graci (2013) supports that it is necessary to establish goals and roles, and responsibilities to achieve these goals to enhance the collaboration of tourism stakeholders in Gili Trawangan, Indonesia. Consistent with Adu-Ampong (2017), to improve the collaboration of tourism stakeholders in the Central Region of Ghana, there is a need for a clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in the tourism sector. Moreover, there is a need to establish a formalized forum for regular interaction among stakeholders to have open communication to coordinate the development and implementation of tourism policies properly. Ass et al. (2005) indicated that participation in the planning process from the outset provides a measure of commitment and assists in planning for future meetings and workshops.

Another way is to increase the collaboration level by hiring an environmental coordinator responsible for the day-to-day tasks regarding the partnership. To overcome barriers to collaboration, Ladkin and Bertramini (2002) indicated that both the public and private sector had to develop strategic partnerships to accrue greater benefits from tourism; need a clear definition of public institutional roles regarding tourism decision making; need of indicators to measure the



results of collaborative efforts. Moreover, Tosun (2000) showed that a lack of knowledge of the benefits of tourism is a barrier to collaboration. Thus education programs would be beneficial.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was twofold. Firstly, to explore an overview of the development of academic research in tourism stakeholder's collaboration in destinations. Secondly, to investigate how recent studies identify the tourism stakeholders as its respondents. 59 peer-reviewed, high-ranked papers were assessed based on six criteria. The main results revealed that tourism stakeholders are included in recent studies based on their ability, knowledge, interest, and experience in destinations.

As suggested by the review findings, this study addressed the importance of stakeholder's perspectives about tourism plans, solutions, and strategies in tourism settings. However, in some developing countries, not all tourism stakeholders can participate in the tourism development process (Tosun, 2000). Qualitative research method dominates in tourism research, in which interview was mainly employed to explicit information from respondents, few studies applied mixed method. Therefore future studies should apply mixed research methods. Doing this helps researchers gain breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration, mixed-methods offset the weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative. Conducting mixed-methods also helps the researcher to triangulate the data and use several means of data to examine the same phenomenon (Creswell, 2003).

Future research should be deliberately considered to include tourism stakeholders as respondents in the study by available documents because some of them are not legitimate or underrepresented in tourism management. The collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders in tourism settings are growing in response to industry issues. From 2011 onwards, most of the



published studies focus on this issue. This study demonstrates the trend of studies in the tourism industry; with the most recent studies focused on tourism stakeholder's collaboration and cooperation in developed countries, more future studies should be conducted in developing countries.

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