Tourism and Leisure
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Current Issues and Perspectives of Development

A Festschrift in Honor of Prof. Dr. Peter Keller
Preface

20 years of AIEST presidency (1994 - 2014): In fact, 20 important years, in which tourism has become an important topic in economy, politics, society and science. Not at least this was the result of Prof. Dr. Peter Keller, who pointed out on different occasions in the framework of its presidency of the AIEST, that only an adequate interplay of business, science, practice and policy copes with tourism needs. It leaps to the eye, that Prof. Dr. Peter Keller emphasized constantly the possibilities of interfaces between politics and science, on one hand as a political actor and manager of the Tourism Department of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) of Switzerland, on the other hand as a professor at the University of Lausanne. Moreover, it was Prof. Dr. Peter Keller, who put the basic issues and problems of the tourism industry in a nutshell and presented these in a macroeconomic context; furthermore he showed a high involvement in the Switzerland tourism promotion.

Prof. Dr. Peter Keller has always been an ambassador of sustainable tourism policy and science. Sustainable, because it was always one of his concerns to establish the interfaces and links. So he brought up questions of a possible interdisciplinary research and the associated problems and perspectives in tourism sciences. Prof. Dr. Peter Keller has advanced tourism as an economic, political and social phenomenon worldwide and in particular on a European level. He always utilized the AIEST annual conferences of the past 20 years to formulate relevant issues and to bring interesting representatives of the areas mentioned together and to discuss current as well as future problems.

The present Festschrift is meant to show this very commendable work. The invitation to the AIEST members to participate in the Festschrift as a tribute of Prof. Dr. Peter Keller with a self-selected topic, has found widespread support. The wide range of topics, that have been proposed and selected to be presented in the Festschrift, also reflects the broad range of activities of Prof. Dr. Peter Keller:

In the first part "Tourism Research: Selected Issues" there are two basic contributions on selected topics in the development of tourism as a science.

The second part "Tourism Policy and Development" ties in with the first part and documents in particular in the article by Prof. Hansruedi Müller the pioneering role of Prof. Dr. Peter Keller in connection with issues of sustainability and tourism policy. The second part has an economic focus and provides a mirror image of topics, which Prof. Dr. Peter Keller liked to discuss in the framework of his activities: Innovation and tourism policy or the linking of tourism and regional development. In this context, the economic policy project "Innotour"
also represents a pioneering effort with international status, which is a role model.

The third part "Destination Research Management and Governance" addresses key issues in destination research within recent years; as part of his scientific and political activity Prof. Dr. Peter Keller has been greatly involved into this context. The importance of the tourism organization, destination management and marketing was indeed one of his eminent discussion and operation areas. In the fourth part of the Festschrift "Experience: Customer Value and Involvement" questions are set forth, which affect in particular the customer and market perspective. As an economist, it was a concern to Prof. Dr. Peter Keller, to accentuate especially the view of markets.

In the fifth part "Selected Topics in Tourism Research", various contributions are summarized, which are of great importance for the current tourism discussion. These have consciously not been attached by the editors to the aforementioned four parts; they illustrate through their originality the diversity of tourism science problems in the context of business and politics.

Prof. Dr. Peter Keller has gained tremendous achievements for the European and international tourism discussion. The present Festschrift can represent this merit only partially, but sees itself as a big thank-you to a large tourism researcher and policymaker with expertise for the practically feasible from the scientific community, paying particular attention to the AIEST members.

The editors Eichstaett, Ingolstadt and Vienna in June 2014
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Part 1:

Tourism Research:
Future Challenges
Can Tourism Qualify for Interdisciplinary Research?  
A European View

Harald Pechlaner and Michael Volgger

Prof. Dr. Harald Pechlaner  
Catholic University Eichstaett-Ingolstadt  
harald.pechlaner@ku.de  

Michael Volgger  
European Academy of Bozen/Bolzano (EURAC)  
michael.volgger@eurac.edu

1 Introduction

This paper adopts a political perspective on the disciplinary status of research on tourism and postulates that in "declaring" itself to be on the way towards becoming "a discipline", tourism research could significantly gain and uphold the recognition by policy and industry. This will not call into question the fact that methodological and content criteria ought to be considered and respected, however. Declarations should endeavour to be accepted not only within by the members of the tourism community but also externally. It should clarify that "becoming an academic discipline" is a scenario that could provide a number of opportunities for tourism research. Academic disciplines as distinct segments of knowledge have always contained a political aspect with political implications and it is this dimension that we intend to emphasize. As such, this paper will deliberately seek to identify any institutional developments and requirements that would be helpful in maintaining the ambition of tourism research as an academic discipline alive, as well as some of the possible consequences. The paper begins by discussing theories and concepts which reflect some insights from the European debate, and will then proceed to discuss case studies from Germany and Australia. We now open our investigation as to whether tourism is an appropriate subject for interdisciplinary research.

A discipline can be defined as "a distinctive body of knowledge with an organized set of rules and conceptual structure for advancing knowledge" (Tribe, 2000, p. 810). Through this, we arrive at one of the main questions, namely that
of specifying the conditions for tourism to become an approved discipline. As this cannot be easily answered – which in itself could already serve as a partial response – the authors re-state some ideas that could prove useful when setting out a direction for the theoretical development of tourism as an object of scientific research. Though these ideas could trigger disagreement (not entirely sub-consciously), they may at least prompt discussions about the scenarios of tourism sciences or tourism disciplines and tourism as an object of academic research. However, the question of whether there are predetermined conditions connecting the formal study of tourism with other forms of scientific research activity must firstly be addressed.

Disciplines are organised bodies of knowledge, involving the creation and transfer of knowledge. Concepts with their own internal logic are linked to beliefs and even to values with predetermined rules constituting the backbone of the discipline as a pool of knowledge. Rules require discipline, which in turn can only prevail where there are prerequisite conditions, such as quality, reliability, validity, etc. Discipline can only prevail where there is a "dominant logic" (Prahalad/Bettis, 1986; Bettis/Prahalad, 1995), as the fulcrum or rather a culture pertaining to a group of researchers with a common research interest or objective. Research cultures may be considered and interpreted differently depending upon the research discipline. However, the adoption of new research topics also permit the emergence of new research cultures that cannot completely ignore the cultural background of the researcher. This will generally facilitate digitalisation and the chances of conveying comprehensive discussion whilst developing global research cultures.

2 Discipline requires discipline, or also: Discipline begets discipline.

Assuming that scientific disciplines are also characterised by a dominant logic in respect to their concepts and theories, there also exists a consensus concerning the methods for creating knowledge and ideas in the theoretical and methodological fields of application (Donald, 1986). This necessitates an appropriate discipline for personal self-control and is particularly needed by those who feel they belong to a group operating in a similar field of research. This seems to be a fundamental institutional pre-condition, in order to attain the goal of establishing a recognised scientific discipline. One could say that the disciplinary self-control of the many might contribute to transforming an interest and field of research into a recognized discipline.

The question could be asked: why would they want to do that? Certainly, a unified effort towards the creation of a discipline might be advantageous for researchers interested in the phenomenon of tourism, provided it were possible to raise the reputation of all those concerned. By focusing on the subject of a scien-
tific work as well as the theories and methods for the development along with an elaboration of problems and solutions within the community, they could contribute to a new self-awareness. A self-awareness, under certain circumstances, could also constitute the basis for a nascent discipline. From this institutional perspective, the remaining question that needs to be clarified is how a community might be developed and whether the motivation of the individual researcher is sufficient to arouse their interest in contributing to this community.

There could be other factors accelerating the development of a discipline that do not directly relate to the research environment. These include the increasing economic importance of tourism, together with the consequent critical discussions and debates. Offering solutions to related problems might seemingly fuel tourism research and enhance its reputation. At this point the question arises as to where tourism research should look to find its methodology. Does tourism research utilise the methodology of the traditional scientific disciplines or even of inter-disciplinary fields? One would tend to assume that researchers would make use of the prevailing accepted methodologies with which they are already familiar. By way of a quick response, a new object of study will most likely be analyzed and resolved using already established disciplinary methods and resources. Existing research seems to suggest that established disciplines with their theories and methods do indeed have a significant impact on the subject of tourism.

Much has been already been written and intense discussion has taken place on the question of whether or not tourism now actually qualifies as an independent discipline (see e.g. Goeldner, 1988; Tribe, 1997, 2006; Leiper, 2000; Jafari, 2001; Airey, 2008, 2013, Volgger/Pechlaner, 2014). At times the impression exists that this is desired in order to demonstrate more self-confidence vis-à-vis the "mother disciplines". On the topic of institutional criteria for an independent discipline, a principal theme relates to establishing institutions for research and education, scientific societies and professional academic journals and publication series (Jennings, 2010). Many support a close relationship between research and teaching as a condition for the establishment of a discipline (Tribe, 1997). A close connection between research and teaching is supported by the fact that the researcher can put his research to educational use. On the other hand, it can also be developed when teachers are able to resort to a body of knowledge that can be regarded as independent and relevant for utilisation. Integrating authentic tourism literature into teaching seems often easier than taking it as a basis for further research. This could be due to the researchers’ belief that theories and methods can only be found in the established disciplines. On the other hand, it may also be that in the eyes of some researchers tourism research has as yet to prove distinct and suitable theories as well as their empirical substantiation according to the standards of the scientific community.
According to Leiper (2000) and Goeldner (1988), the disciplinary status of tourism has always been supported by tourism researchers increasingly relying on data taken from tourism journals. This in turn reduces their reliance on the theories and methodologies of other disciplines. Another group of researchers adopts the position that tourism is first of all an object of study and at least at this moment cannot be considered a fully developed discipline (i.e. Echtner/Jamal, 1997; Airey, 2008, 2013, Volgger/Pechlaner, 2014; Pechlaner/Reuter, 2012; Keller, 2011; Bender, 2004) – however, without denying its potential development towards an independent discipline. There is nevertheless, a broad spectrum of consensus purporting that tourism no longer necessitates coupling to one specific *mother discipline* but rather strives for adhering to inter-disciplinary criteria. Peter Keller, in particular, has taken part in such debates within the AIEST, repeatedly raising questions about the future of tourism and its disciplinary orientation.

Reference should be made to the increasing *body of knowledge* relating to tourism and hospitality. It should also be noted that the *tourism sector* has a recognisably stronger leaning towards research than the *hospitality sector*, which is more industrially oriented. Nevertheless, many tourism researchers would probably agree that reliance on the theories and methodologies of other disciplines should continue, as the current *body of knowledge* must be seen as insufficiently integrated (Keller, 2011), lacking independent corroboration with many researchers whom still consider it necessary to publish in the most widely-read journals. In the context of research, it has therefore been necessary for authors to openly cite one of the more established disciplines and publish in their specialist journals when making their findings. This could also obstruct interdisciplinary links in publishing that could simultaneously inhibit innovation. Thanks to the established review processes, new intellectual development is based on previous assumptions and existing theories and therefore the link to prevailing knowledge is sometimes prevalent.

The current state of tourism research is perhaps best encapsulated in a multi-disciplinary approach. Traditional disciplines are rarely called into question and there is a general acceptance of a so-called basic "parallel co-operation" (Pechlaner/Reuter, 2012). Researchers from different disciplines may jointly determine research issues, even if theories and methodologies remain pertinent to established disciplines. Yet even this practice is not quite that straightforward. It should be reiterated that there is considerable temptation for research groups within the same discipline to downgrade multi and interdisciplinary associations into mere disciplinary interest groups, or to form subgroups with an insular disciplinary view.

In academic debates on tourism, fluctuations in the multi and inter-disciplinary fields can be observed with the latter tending to minimise the distinction be-
Can Tourism Qualify for Interdisciplinary Research? A European View

between established disciplines whilst attempting to promote an integrated approach – especially with regards to methodologies. The development of new theories and methodologies is the often proclaimed objective, despite the fact that such attempts may fail already in the attempt of defining shared concepts. Schummer (2004) utilises the example of nanotechnology when citing examples of when borrowing from other disciplines may be desirable.

In some cases, the trans-disciplinary approach could be a way to supersede prevailing notions, leaving aside disciplinary boundaries whilst at the same time attempting a new approach. Trans-disciplinarity refers to researchers undertaking integrated and problem-oriented research. In this context one of the major obstacles is a lack of appropriate terminology, which entails the risk of superficiality. In contrast, extra disciplinary study prioritises the creation of knowledge outside existing boundaries (Tribe, 1997) and the point of departure is explicitly determined by the problems and the commitment to finding solutions. As such, theory remains strictly tied to the practice. Whether a new discipline can be created as the result of a trans-disciplinary approach or whether it is actually avoided makes for an excellent topic of debate (Buckler, 2004). Moreover, within this context a post-disciplinary approach comes into play, focusing mainly on academic issues, while the trans-disciplinary discussion remains oriented towards the practical level (Tribe, 1997). Issues of mobility or customer value along with increasing debates within the tourism industry (on topics such as crises, tourist safety, tourist health, demographic change, climate change and resilience) may call for a conscious abandoning of the traditional schemes of perceived disciplinary boundaries (Volgger/Pechlaner, 2014).

Whilst broadly surveying these definitions, it becomes increasingly clear that tourism could be somehow connected to almost all concepts of ways to cross or overcome traditional disciplinary boundaries. However, the multi-disciplinary approach points to what is probably the most likely positioning of tourism research at this juncture. To date, there has been little integration of tourism research results in the general body of knowledge, since a coherent path towards that has not yet been developed. Consequently, there has hardly been any movement towards a real inter-disciplinary approach, something Keller refers to as "multi-disciplinary trap". This is also supported by an increasing number of journals in the field of hospitality, leisure and tourism that most often represent inter-disciplinary approaches in aspirational terms. In reality, the tendency is more towards multi-disciplinary and is scarcely capable of promoting inter-disciplinary co-operation due to established networks (of reviewers) or networks dedicated to the culture of specific disciplines.

Inter-disciplinary research applied with discipline is necessary in freeing science from a "multi-disciplinary trap", which would partially inhibit the generation of new knowledge, as Keller has stated. Inter-disciplinary research applied with
discipline can serve as a balance between new and established knowledge as well as innovative and embedded knowledge. When inter-disciplinary research is applied with discipline, then it may pave the way to the development of an independent discipline, by virtue of its having reached its own maturity.

3 Discipline requires referencing to the fundamental questions

An inter-disciplinary perspective could potentially be the first step towards the development of a discipline – but is such a development needed and would it prove useful? Perhaps we shouldn’t be too optimistic about the real prospects for tourism research and instead be prepared to take a more practical approach, capable of leading to a further development in the "disciplines of the phenomenon of tourism". According to the authors, tourism research should increasingly tackle the fundamental questions governing tourism on an ongoing basis.

"We know the meaning of a hotel, but we don’t know what is hospitality": an apt characterisation by a tourism researcher (Pechlaner/Volgger, forthcoming). The acceptance of tourism as an independent field of research in its own right can only develop if we are able to link specific questions of that field with the fundamental questions concerning science and the creation of knowledge in general. Tourism research can only grow if it consistently provides new answers to the questions of what tourism, hospitality, vacation or travel may be by focusing on specific examples. However, this must be done without ever losing sight of its meta-connections and fundamentals. Only then will tourism become acknowledged as an independent field of research in its own right, dealing not so much with its development as a discipline, but rather with the approach in finding solutions to pressing issues as well the support of its claim for excellence in research and education. If this were to happen, it would also have the end-result of enhancing the reputation of a dedicated scientific community which was specifically focused on tourism.

It is of primary importance to organise empirical research on tourism in such a way that the resulting insights can be absorbed into a central body of knowledge. An essential criterion for its evaluation is the contribution made to strengthening this body of knowledge. Efforts must be made to consistently test the basic assumptions governing the phenomenon of tourism, repeatedly modifying and extending them where necessary. In such conditions, it becomes difficult to separate applied research from basic research (Pavitt, 1991), as "the aim of research – and particularly that of applied research – is to help to find ways of improving the human condition for future generations" (Keller, 2011, p. 3).

One of the main underlying issues is that the increasing differentiation of the various research objectives and questions – particularly in journals – could foster an orientation in tourism research focusing on these specific issues and their
attempted solutions. At the same time, the basic and highly important challenges that include a definition of what is fundamental, might be vanishing. In this context, research questions tend to be predominantly based on already existing knowledge rather than a renewed orientation towards tourism practitioners. As such, there is a constant conflict with respect to the "relevant" issues, characterized by a highly dynamic structure. Could it be that the research objectives and the provided responses on the one hand and the specific problems in practice with their corresponding attempts at solutions on the other hand are actually shifting apart? Are we seeing an increasing gap between the tourism academia and the tourism practice? May we possibly be observing the creation of a "disciplinary gap" between research and practice?

This also leads to on-going debates with regards to the fundamental assumptions, showing that tourism corresponds to a "pre-paradigmatic science" whilst there are currently no agreements on essential definitions, theories and methods (Kuhn, 1977; Bieger, 2004). The reason for this could be that tourism allows many diverse disciplinary perspectives to be adopted. Additionally, although it is considered an applied field (Keller, 2011) because of its close proximity to the industry, sometimes its orientation towards practical issues dissipates. Universities and research policy define the rules governing an academic career, often without considering that some of these rules do not provide incentives to tackle practical issues (e.g. by somehow overestimating the importance of journals or not taking into account other modes of communication permitting closer interaction with industry practice). Moreover, many universities promote communication with the industry whilst at the same time obstructing transfer of knowledge between research and teaching. As a result, there is insufficient scope available for consistent research. Even more problematic and partly contradictory is the on-going practice linking university financing exclusively to research outcomes. This results in publication rankings that are biased against an interdisciplinary approach, simply because the research community and its mechanisms of evaluation favour specialist journals linked with a disciplinary background.

4 Discipline requires dedication to the relevant questions in practice

It could be argued that the proximity of tourism to industry practice might be of higher importance than its development towards an academic discipline. Given the insight that "there is nothing as practical as a good theory" (Lewin, 1951), the advancement of tourism as a discipline requires it to be practically relevant. In turn, by ignoring sound theories the tourism practice will in turn, weaken itself. It is vital to develop the basic research questions out of a practice and out of a profound comprehension of practice. This also means however, tourism
practice needs to be willing to resolve their problems by resorting to and relying on established theories and methods of the tourism disciplines.

As a result, this situation brings a reciprocal aspect in the relation between tourism practice and tourism research; tourism practice can bring relevance within this relation, while tourism research can bring a controlled and systematic approach within the analysis of ongoing issues. As long as the reciprocal component is not ignored, a strong focus of tourism research on the key issues of the tourism industry will not necessarily be equated with a strong dependence on the tourism industry. It is not possible for a field of study or even a discipline to develop if it is strongly dependent on the influences and concepts of particular interest groups and stakeholders. This also applies to tourism. As an interviewed tourism researcher stated: "We should lead the industry and not be led by industry" (Pechlaner / Volgger, forthcoming).

Within this context, it is necessary to discuss how the relationship between disciplinary and inter-disciplinarity research relates to the development of a research field. Undoubtedly there will be no decisive answer. However, tourism is currently a field of research that due to the definitions previously discussed, displays some basic principles of a discipline, or at least of a mature research field (Xiao and Smith, 2006; Airey, 2008). The fundamentals of a discipline are provided by the self-conceptualisation of the researchers allocated to a research area, as well as by the acceptance of a research area amongst other research disciplines. As such, tourism has made excellent progress towards making itself an independent discipline. A vital weakness however, is the sometimes occurring lack of theoretical foundation of applied research projects. Another deficiency is the lack of an equally important critical appraisal of the relevant theoretical apparatus (Jennings, 2010). Thus, there is still a long road ahead before tourism could ever become a recognised discipline, however.

As we have already noted, however, completely renouncing to the disciplinary aspiration could bring forward the possibility of tourism falling into the "multi-disciplinary trap" (Keller, 2011). The question is: will clinging to mother-disciplines adequately reflect the unique phenomenon of tourism? In any case, there is sufficient recognition amongst researchers to say that the area of tourism must be viewed from several different angles and needs to draw upon a number of mother-disciplines (Jafari/ Ritchie, 1981). It could however be a good prerequisite for the aspiring inter-disciplinarity, when there is an increasing conviction that dynamic interactions across disciplinary boundaries are necessary to find better answers to the research questions (Darbellay/ Stock, 2012). The previously-discussed post-disciplinarity could also raise crucial questions in this regard. This would make it possible to consciously and critically question the development of disciplines and their function for knowledge acquisition, dissemination and utilisation. Undoubtedly, disciplines sometimes implicate an "artificial divi-
sion of academic labor" (Goodwin, 2004, p. 65) which can inhibit the development of an ambitious research field. This would especially be the case with regards to the rigorous confrontation with tourism practitioners as well as those knowledgeable in the political, social and cultural oeuvre. It would also affect the consistent recognition of relevant issues, which are not yet recognized within established disciplines requiring ongoing development and research.

An inter-disciplinary understanding is necessary order to understand other theories and methods with respect and humility, as well as to recognise their potential for integration with established sets (see also Lohmann et al, 2013). A post-disciplinary understanding helps to realize basic assumptions and to overcome arguments of delimitation towards others, which hinder harnessing the potential provided by new and uncommon points of view. As the practice and industry both have the tendency to see problems mainly from their economic or operational perspective, it becomes even more important to complement the economic view of tourism with alternate perspectives. This could be particularly difficult for researchers with economic backgrounds, because it is sometimes too easy for researchers with economic and management background and tourism practitioners to find consent on determined issues; as the basic patterns of thought and unspoken assumptions are similar. It may be questioned as to whether or not this is sufficient to meet the tourism phenomenon to its fullest extent.

5 Examples for the further development of tourism research

It appears beneficial for the development of tourism as an academic subject to position itself in-between inter and post-disciplinary approaches. It is for this reason that we believe that the issue of tourism as an academic discipline and its disciplinary development whilst significant, is only of secondary importance. What appears to be of greater importance is the question of how industry and practice can become successfully involved in tourism research without prejudicing independence of research Their involvement appears to be of primary importance particularly when formulating research problems. It must however be achieved without business and politics dominating academics which would leave little room for inter and post-disciplinary development. The authors have become aware, through many discussions with persons involved in the tourism industry, that while they can easily list relevant problems, they have rarely managed to pose the problems in a systematic manner within their broader context. It is in this area that research can play an active role and offer added value.

Bringing business and academia together can, however, lead to various misunderstandings. For instance, they can occur when multidisciplinary and - where applicable - interdisciplinary approaches ask for a broader perspective that goes beyond pure business issues. This broad perspective often entails interacting
with more than one researcher, resulting in increased transaction costs, which could provide a (too) easy argument against proceeding in this manner. Asymmetries can easily appear when bringing business and academics together, partly as a result of differences in the perception of relevant research questions partly because of differences in the perception of suitable methods. Professionalism and humility is required of both sides when this occurs. On the one hand, tourism practitioners should recognize the value of high quality tourism research and respect its needs, whilst on the other hand researchers must strive to impress this need on a promising field of research for practice and industry.

The TUI Think Tank has formulated the need as follows: "Leisure and tourism are among the most important growth markets of the future. We, therefore, need a differentiated perspective of new products, social changes and global challenges. This can be achieved through efficient research into tourism to identify problems and contribute to their solution" (http://www.tui-group.com/de/innovation/think_tank/trends_reisemarkt/tourismuswissenschaft_videostatement). There can be no doubt that the tourism industry expects research to be efficient and relevant. In addition, we believe that research must further the knowledge of theories and methods that are as free as possible of ulterior motives: "Research and therefore also tourism research must be free and independent from ideological, political and economic lobbying as much as possible. It is not always possible to measure its value and its utility" (Keller, 2011, p. 3).

In a Five-point Declaration of the TUI Think Tank entitled "Tourism and Academia" which was based on a round table discussion "Tourismuswissenschaft – Quo vadis?" (Tourism research – Quo vadis?) held in Hanover on 19 January 2012, the discussants underlined that the tourism industry must become more scientific: "Unlike the overall economic and social importance of tourism, the scientific approach to the fundamentals of tourism is under represented. The innovation and strategy needed for success can above all be created by industry through effective research." An additional conclusion of the Five-point Declaration is the need to not only increase research into tourism, but also the teaching – particularly as universities in German-speaking countries in Europe have eliminated chairs of tourism and specialised tourism institutes. Although universities of applied sciences have placed emphasis on tourism as a teaching subject in turn, they do not promote research to the same extent. The Five-point Declaration expands on this by stating: "Although university research into tourism was once relatively independent, it is now being wound down or subordinated to other academic fields as a result of policy changes. Tourism has consequently lost its unique selling proposition" whilst also explaining: "research projects need a solid funding base in order to engage in long-term projects".

An additional point expressed is that: "Tourism research is and must remain multidisciplinary. The subject of tourism is primarily treated as a part of busi-
ness administration studies or geography but is embedded in an inter or multi-disciplinary research field that includes aspects of geography, economics, sociology, psychology, education, cultural anthropology, law, architecture and landscape ecology. This creates many points of contact between disciplines that must be used for the transfer of knowledge from other disciplines to tourism and the acceptance of tourism research by the academic community. This example illustrates that a large tour operator, for example, is sensitive to issues on the interface between academics and the tourism and leisure industry.

The last of the five points explains that: "A new partnership between the tourism industry and academia. ... A new partnership between the industry and academia should emerge that is multidisciplinary and has an international bias, one that is based on new networks and discussion platforms, and one that facilitates a continuous flow of information between the tourism industry and academia that goes beyond pure market research."

The importance of establishing a dialogue between tourism industry and tourism academics cannot be overstated. Both groups must be aware of the fact that they need to combine forces for applied research into tourism. Tourism research can offer a contextualisation of problem solving and increase awareness of tourism by society, which can be of benefit to tourism industry. In turn, cooperation with industry can motivate tourism researchers to continuously question the premises and assumptions of tourism that – as described above – can serve as a keystone to the expansion of knowledge.

The TUI Think Tank's five points make it apparent that the role of tertiary education policy cannot be understated and that politics are key to the promotion of research into tourism and of the promotion of tourism as an academic discipline. One of the cornerstones for the above debate was the resolution of the German Society of Tourism Research (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Tourismuswissenschaft – DGT, 2011) to include tourism as a subject in tertiary education. In particular, the effects of educational reform on tourism studies and research were explained as follows: "As part of its work in connection with the efforts to consolidate tertiary education policy, the German Society of Tourism Research has attempted to underline that tourism research and studies are to a great extent dependent on interdisciplinary activities. The goal of the German Society of Tourism Research is to assure that this interdisciplinary approach is not lost as a result of many universities' withdrawal from the field of tourism and leisure."

Whereas the focus of the TUI Think Tank is the relationship between industry and academia, the focus for the German Society of Tourism Research differs. As the representative of tourism researchers in German speaking Europe, it provides context to the role of politicians with regards to tertiary education policy and tourism research - making its development possible. The role of research, the training of tourism students and the internationalisation of education are of
central importance in this connection. Politicians in Germany have become actively involved in these initiatives. A hearing was held on 7 March 2012 by the German Bundestag's Tourism Committee on Tourism entitled "Tourism and Academia - Education, Research and Know-how transfer" (Deutscher Bundestag, 2012). The need for society's awareness of tourism to be considerably strengthened was cited as the prime challenge for the promotion of tourism studies. The role of politicians in this connection is to place greater emphasis on the tourism industry and its growing economic importance. A further aspect is that tourism was practically disregarded as far as economic and academic funding programs were concerned. The focus is on established disciplines and new politically relevant subjects, such as environmental protection and the promotion of research into climate change. This could be a possible explanation for the fact that climate change research is often conducted by tourism academics. Although this should not be discouraged, there is no direct connection with tourism. A third point described as a weakness was political governance. At Federal level in Germany, it is possible to underscore the importance of the role of policy in the development of tourism studies. However, these measures need to be primarily implemented by the Länder, which means that there is no single national political representative involved.

Another round table discussion was held in 2013 in the German Bundestag at the initiative of the professors of tourism of the Leuphana University of Lüneburg, alongside the Catholic University of Eichstaett-Ingolstadt and the German Society of Tourism Research: "A Dialogue with Academics, Industry and Politics" (Conrady et al., 2013) was undertaken. This was the first time it was possible for politicians to bring representatives of three relevant stakeholder groups together at one table to explain their positions and to discuss the roles and responsibilities of stakeholder groups. The objective was to sharpen focus on the position of tourism. The subjects of the round table discussion were recommended policies for the consolidation of tourism as an academic subject, education and the promotion of research. The underlying theme of the discussion was that politicians of differing levels are able to play a leading role in the bringing together of industry and academia. It is particularly possible for them to strengthen tourism as an academic field and to promote an increased interdisciplinary approach to tourism research as recommended by the TUI Think Tank for a new partnership between the tourism industry and related studies. This can provide an important interface between tourism studies and the tourist industry. The importance of politics in the debate and governance of tourism was also a topic of the round table discussions in the German Bundestag. The division of roles between industry, academia and politics was then discussed, with the following subjects being simply a list of suggested topics:

Industry

Experience: Transfer from industry to academia
Academia
Interest in knowledge and learning
Discussion on methods
Focus on interdisciplinary approach
Transfer competences: Improvement of transfer of know-how
Establishment of a graduate school

Policy
Resources: Establishment of a research promotion fund
Ground rules: Competition for resources
Coordination: Political governance on differentiated spheres of political influence

6 Academia – politics – industry: three key components for the success of the development of tourism studies

An example was discussed at the round table in the Bundestag in Berlin that has been able to provide the ground for the development of tourism as a result of the alliance between academia and industry. The Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre – the STCRC initiative of the Australian Federal Government, combined at least several of the conditions discussed together in the above contribution for the promotion of tourism and tourism research.

The STCRC was established in 1997 as part of the Australian Government’s Cooperative Research Centres Program. In the fourteen years of its existence, the STCRC became one of the largest tourism research programmes in the world (STCRC, 2005). It was originally led by a number of universities (Griffith, Southern Cross, James Cook and Northern Territory Universities), the Tourism Council Australia (the official representative of industry), the Australian Federation of Travel Agents and the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation.

During its first seven years, the programme was funded by the government's (Australian Research Council) contribution of two million Australian Dollars per year with an equal amount having been provided to the programme by industry. "STCRC has 16 university research ‘supplier’ core partners and 18 private sector and government tourism industry ‘user’ core partners – a total of 34 – significantly more than most other CRC’s" (STCRC, 2005, p. 5). "Under the Federal Government’s unique CRC program, research was conducted cooperatively between industry, government and universities to deliver cutting edge innovations to support Australia’s competitive advantages" (STCRC, n.y.). The STCRC has provided postgraduate research education programmes, scholar-
ships in industry designed projects and the development of education and training products.

An important aspect in this connection was the co-operation between industry and academia under the auspices of the government which placed great emphasis on applied research. A misunderstanding – which became apparent when the programme was established – was that the industry was interested in consulting, whereas the government wanted to place greater emphasis on the promotion of applied research. The programme's key objective was "innovation driving a dynamic, internationally competitive and sustainable tourism industry" (STCRC, n.y.) which have resulted in the emergence of three fields of research since 2002: sustainable destinations, sustainable enterprises and sustainable resources. A further objective of the programme was to foster external development and dissemination: "Collaboration with industry and government partners, spin-off enterprises, licensing of its intellectual property, business tools, kits, manuals and expert systems, conferences, workshops and seminars, published reports, summary sheets and extension flyers, internet-based information services, training products, courses and programs, and international consulting services" (STCRC, n.y.).

The STCRC was principally a very successful programme which suffered from a number of weaknesses which were, in all likelihood, responsible for the programme's discontinuation. Based on interviews with former supporters and researchers (Pechlaner/Volgger, forthcoming) it was possible to identify some reasons the STCRC was discontinued. This was primarily because of the divergence of the objectives of industry and government, as discussed above. The dividing line between consulting and applied research was not clearly defined or regulated. A further difficulty was the fact that industry, the involved universities and the government wanted to draw direct benefit from the programme. Having contributed an equal amount to the programme's funding as government, industry expected to be compensated by the award of consulting contracts of more or less the same amount. A further problem was that Australia did not manage to formulate a uniform national research programme but, instead, permitted the single states to have an extensive influence on the development of research in accordance with their individual interests. This was exacerbated by the employment of numerous coordinators at the universities as a result of the direct interest and pressure of the universities to obtain projects in exchange for the funds they had invested. This meant that short-term financial and technical resource considerations dominated the projects and this proved to be an insurmountable hurdle.

One of the positive points was that the combination of industry, academia and government provided focus. The programme initially, prior to the establishment of the STCRC, focused on eco-tourism. Once the STCRC was established its
focus became destinations, enterprises and resources. In the second part of the programme from 2002, much more emphasis was placed on the involvement of academic disciplines. In conclusion, one of the benefits was the development of a partnership approach and the strengthening of research and related publications as well as targeted promotion of a new generation of academics. The programme's weaknesses were doubtlessly the lack of influence on industry and politics as well as insufficient dissemination of information. The primary cause of its failure, however, was the short-sightedness of all of the programme's stakeholders - in particular the representatives of industry, who were more focused on immediate benefits than the other participants. This resulted in a loss of focus on the general underlying issues faced by tourism, due to the fact specific reports were written on even more specific topics. The main objective of the second part of the STCRC was the development of a research programme that had been lacking up to that point and this was regarded as a critical aspect by the states.

Of primary importance for the authors is the fact that the programme had many favourable aspects and the fact it combined government, industry and academia into a single initiative was fundamentally correct. What was lacking, however, were clear external guidelines as the programme progressed and uniform objectives for all participants. There is now, post-CRC, a lack of sufficient research funding which is partially responsible for the vacuum and this is a very challenging situation for researchers. It can clearly be seen that it would be sensible to establish national terms of reference as a first step to create a framework for Länder, single states or regions. This means that overall coordination should be provided at national level in order to avoid overlaps and to facilitate the transfer of knowledge. In conclusion, although "sustainability" was the theme of all projects, the overall programme did not achieve to become sustainable.

7 Summary and outlook

An inter-disciplinary approach must necessarily be accompanied by the requisite rigour. It is more of a priority not to lose sight of inter-disciplinary cooperation as an end in itself than to transform tourism into a recognized discipline per se. This must be the true challenge since the different points of convergence in the relationship between the varied stakeholders (i.e. those connected to tourism as the subject of research) do not necessarily contribute to a concerted development in this direction.

Tourism industry, which is enormously important for the prosperous development of tourism studies and disciplines, is primarily focussed on the short-term, such as finding solutions to contingent problems. Such solutions may be produced most easily by coupling with economic and management disciplines,
which therefore today represent the strongest group in applied tourism research. The tourism industry has good reasons for its behaviour, which however has the effect of delaying the development of a profound inter-disciplinary approach in tourism research. On the other hand, tourism research is strongly dependent on tourism business and industry, as close coordination on relevant issues may serve as a pre-requisite for the establishment of a relevant theoretical platform. Tourism research should thus seek to formulate its precepts in conjunction with industry and other stakeholders in the tourism sector.

A further issue is that higher education is increasingly coming under financial pressure as authorities formulate budgets exclusively on the basis of performance criteria and accreditations. When it comes to instruction, it is increasingly up to the student (as the client) to evaluate the tutorial quality, affecting subsequent decisions as to the subsequent syllabuses. Regarding the evaluation of research, it is increasingly left to the academic journals to serve as the measure of research quality, determining the level of excellence in research. The grading of excellence is what might be published in A and A + journals, with less outstanding work being relegated to B, C or even D-level journals. That begs the question as to how the rankings are determined – a question that cannot be treated here.

Pressure on tourism research and tourism studies is no doubt felt as the result of a policy that increasingly exposes the study of education to the private sector. Researchers react to these developments and alter their behaviour accordingly. As the result, tourism studies are moving away from the central issues affecting the economy, since it neither adopts the same rating criteria nor does it reference itself to the same communication channels (journals) with respect to the industry. All this contributes to a failure to promote inter-disciplinary and post-disciplinary research on tourism; partly as the journals (which base themselves on review processes), are rather less biased towards innovation (both theoretically and methodologically), than in the application of already established theories and methods derived from the mother disciplines. The further tourism studies and the industry diverge from each other, the further the goal of research to establish itself as a starting point for inter-disciplinary behaviour recedes into the background.

It would be desirable to move away from this "multi-disciplinary trap" by seeking cooperation with the tourism industry, without being subordinated to profit-driven considerations. As was demonstrated by a few cases in Germany and Australia, governments can certainly play an important role by exerting a moderating influence in bringing industry and academia together on key issues. However, in the opinion of the authors, the moderating role of politics is even more crucial when it comes to enabling an interplay between post and inter-disciplinary approaches. This might be more important than ensuring that the
"tourism as a discipline in its own right" discourse is overly emphasised. Without doubt, not every single aspect of tourism is suitable for inter-disciplinary research. Yet, inter-disciplinary research is well-positioned to study the phenomenon of tourism as a whole in a way that conforms to the characteristics of that phenomenon. A multidisciplinary approach is insufficient. Unfortunately, it is rarely able to produce new, distinct and independent research findings, and quickly degenerates into a "multidisciplinary trap" (Keller, 2011). But new and distinct insights are the basis for the further development and growth in tourism studies and its numerous applications.

**Literature**


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Can Tourism Qualify for Interdisciplinary Research? A European View


STCRC – Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (n.y.), An unofficial description of STCRC.


Challenging ‘Common Knowledge’ in Tourism – A Partial Polemic

Pietro Beritelli, Thomas Bieger, Christian Laesser and Andreas Wittmer

Prof. Dr. Pietro Beritelli
University of St. Gallen
pietro.beritelli@unisg.ch

Prof. Dr. Thomas Bieger
University of St. Gallen
thomas.bieger@unisg.ch

Prof. Dr. Christian Laesser
University of St. Gallen
christian.laesser@unisg.ch

Dr. Andreas Wittmer
University of St. Gallen
andreas.wittmer@unisg.ch

Abstract
Tourism research as well as practice is very heterogeneous, due to its different cultural roots and dominant business patterns. Despite this heterogeneity, dominant intellectual avenues in a number of domains have emerged. As a result, we today are essentially stuck in a sort of trenches. In our paper, we try to identify some of those intellectual trenches and call for/propose ways to get out of them. They include, among others, topics related to consumer behaviour, destination management, and sustainable tourism. Although we try to provide evidence for our claims, we might appear polemic at times, as we intend to provide contentious arguments about sometimes very controversial topics.