

DEALING WITH PARADOX –HISTORICAL TOURISM IN A NON-TOURISTIC CITY: THE CASE OF SANTIPONCE vs. ITALICA (SPAIN)

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Abstract:

In this ongoing research, we focus our attention in the origin and state of art in the analysis of local tourist sector potentialities⁴ in the municipality of Santiponce (Sevilla). This research is a consequence of the obtained results in this village in a previous investigation about the relationship between tourist development and community satisfaction in order to design methodological frameworks able to develop research which results will allow to plan patrimony tourist strategies. These strategies have to consider the relationships between resident's perceptions of the tourist impact and their satisfaction. These aspects directly influence in the tourist policies intended to design and execute.

In general, Santiponce's resident live apart from tourism. As it happens in Europe, is normal to find small cities and villages, more or less close to big cities that form standardised tourist circuits, with one or several tourist resources of great interest, but, paradoxically, never have developed a relevant tourist activity and where tourism is a marginal proportion of its common economic activity.

Our research tries to analyse the paradox of this type of municipalities that, even having relevant patrimonial resources, do not develop an important tourist activity and, even, where tourism is not perceived as a development and welfare opportunity for the actual residents and, which is more important, for the future ones. This paradox exists in Santiponce, where we are developing an analysis model based on four sources of information: residents, experts' opinions, businessmen and tourists.

Key words: *tourist businesses, tourist development, cultural tourism, tourism planning, resident's satisfaction.*

⁴ Research developed by a work team (integrated in the Atlas Network, included in the special interest group called *ourism SME's Research Network*) formed by researchers from University of Sevilla settled in the Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales in that University and, concretely, in Departamento de Administración de Empresas y Marketing).

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the initial research (Casillas et al., 2004) it was considered that the patrimony management means to understand its safekeeping and safeguard mission without forgetting visitors attraction and the need of a co-ordinated management considering a social orientation of marketing which objective should be to offer a economic benefit to those who manage it and preserve in the long term the patrimony resources.

We started from the point that a patrimony resource must provide to the area with a social profitability and an improvement in the standard of living, that is, a management of the patrimony must consider at the same time community's, tourism's and conservation of patrimony needs.

Also it was highlighted the importance of designing methodological frameworks in order to develop researches which results allow to plan patrimony tourist strategies considering the relationship between resident's perceptions of the tourist impact and their satisfaction. These aspects directly influence in the planning and execution of tourist policies.

During the last years, the interest for tourist development in rural areas has experienced an intense increment. Tourism constitutes an specially attractive sector for economic development and welfare of a wide set of small municipalities that have seen how their models and traditional economical structures, based on agriculture, have caused a progressive flow from them to the cities, normally big industrial cities, and a deterioration of its competitive position in the actual global economy.

Tourism appears for these small rural cities as an opportunity, due to several reasons:

1. Tourism is an intensive sector in work force labour force and able to create employment. The services, a lot and very varied, that compound the tourist offer of a municipality are based, in a great percentage, in activities based on people and no so much in tangible assets and high cost technologies.
2. Tourism is a sector that can be developed through small and micro-businesses. Great volume of investment is not required in order to create certain types of tourist offer and, especially in the rural environment, to be “small” might be a value (for example, think in hotel establishments or restaurants).
3. Tourism, if correctly managed, is a very ecological activity, in the complete sense of the word. In comparison with other development alternatives, based on industrial installations of varied nature, tourist development may be done not only respecting and conserving natural resources but, even more, it facilitates its improvement, due to the fact that these resources are a part of the tourist offer to the visitors.
4. Tourism allows to conserve, to revitalize and to give value to ethnographical, historical, patrimony and cultural resources in small rural municipalities.

In spite of be small nowadays, many of these municipalities, especially in Europe, keeps a long and rich history. As a consequence, it is easy to find impressive patrimony, artistic and cultural jewels out of the big cities that conforms the common tourist circuits. Sometimes, even, it happens that this patrimony, rarely exploited have problems for its correct conservation.

The majority of the studies about the tourism in rural areas have focused its attention in the analysis of farms, small agriculture exploitations, etc. Nevertheless, the research has demonstrated much less interest about the type of tourism in the small cities, as cultural, historical, heritage, gastronomic, etc.

In this sense, and especially in Europe, is common to find small cities and villages, more or less close to big cities that conforms standardised tourist circuits, that have one or several tourist resources of great interest, but, paradoxically, never have developed a relevant tourist activity and in which tourist constitutes a marginal proportion of their common economic activity.

Sometimes, these municipalities continue making efforts in order to improve the competitiveness of its traditional sectors, which are in slope, that hardly could offer

growing expectations in the long term able to encourage and retain future generations of inhabitants of the municipality.

Some other times, economic activity of the municipality is based on one or very few industrial installation which property and management centre is far away, normally in other country and, as a consequence, suffering a growing risk of delocalization.

Santiponce village remains detached from tourism. It does not exist an appreciable tourist offer. Tourists are not perceived as potential clients and tourism is not perceived as an real opportunity for municipality development. With the aim to analyse the paradox in this type of villages that, even having patrimony resources of a great relevance, do not develop an appreciable tourism activity and, tourism is not even perceived as an opportunity for development and welfare for actual residents and, more important, for the future residents, we propose an analysis model based on four sources of information:

1. Residents.
2. Expert's opinion.
3. Businessmen.
4. Tourists.

2. ¿WHY SANTIPONCE?

We have chosen Santiponce because it has in its municipality the archaeological area of Itálica, which is the third Good of Cultural Interest more visited according with the data of cultural patrimony in Andalusia (year 2002). In Andalusia, 85% of the Goods of Cultural Interest are monuments and the rest are distributed among historical areas and sites, archaeological zones and historical gardens.

Sevilla, is the Andalusian capital with highest number of Goods of Cultural Interest (16%) followed by Jaén and Granada (above 15%). From the monumental archaeological sets and zones managed by Junta de Andalucía, Alhambra and Generalife have 2.16 millions of visitors, followed by Córdoba synagogue (300,000 visits) and archaeological set of Itálica, in Sevilla, with 200,000 visits.

- Basic Data and Demographical context of Santiponce.⁵

Santiponce is also close to Seville (7 kms), another focus of cultural tourism in the region. In fact, Itálica constitutes one of the numerous declared Places of Special

⁵ Local Development Agency data, 2003.

Cultural Interest (SCI) that is located in Andalusia. The archaeological site of Itálica receives 200,000 visits every year. Santiponce is a small town (8.48 km²); and a population of 7,511 inhabitants. There are 336 companies registered in the town, where 290 are service companies. Its unemployment rate is 4.9%.

In addition, culture is, after sun and beach, one of the major reasons to choose Andalusia as a tourist destination (19% of the visitors in 2002, mainly coming from Spain). French, Americans, and British are the major foreign markets for cultural tourism in Andalusia.

The Roman city of Italica was founded in the year 206 B.C. by General Publius Cornelius Scipio, as a place of settlement for those soldiers wounded in the battle of Illipa, in which the Carthaginians were defeated. It was also to serve as a military outpost in an area of great strategic importance. The name of Italica made reference to Italy, the original homeland of the first inhabitants of the city. Marcu Ulpius Trajan (53-117 AD) the first emperor to be born in a Roman province was born in Italica, as his successor, Publius Aelius Hadrian (76-138 AD). Hadrian spent part of his early life in Italica, and honoured the city by the construction of a new district (*nova urbs*).

In Italica two zones can be easily distinguished: the *vetus urbs* (old city) the nucleus founded by Scipio, and the *nova urbs* (new city) the district founded by Hadrian, only functional from the first third of the second century to the fourth century approximately. The rest of the city survived until de the time of the Arab domination. The history of the archaeological excavations in Italica began in 1788, and has not stopped ever since.

3. MODEL FOR THE ANALYSIS OF THE LOCAL TOURIST SECTOR POTENTIALITIES

The model we present, developed in Santiponce, must be implemented in four stages. Each stage is independent and, later, putting in common all the results will allow an holistic analysis about the potentialities of the tourist in a certain local area. The stages are respectively based in four information sources used for obtaining the data.

We can observe the model in the next figure:

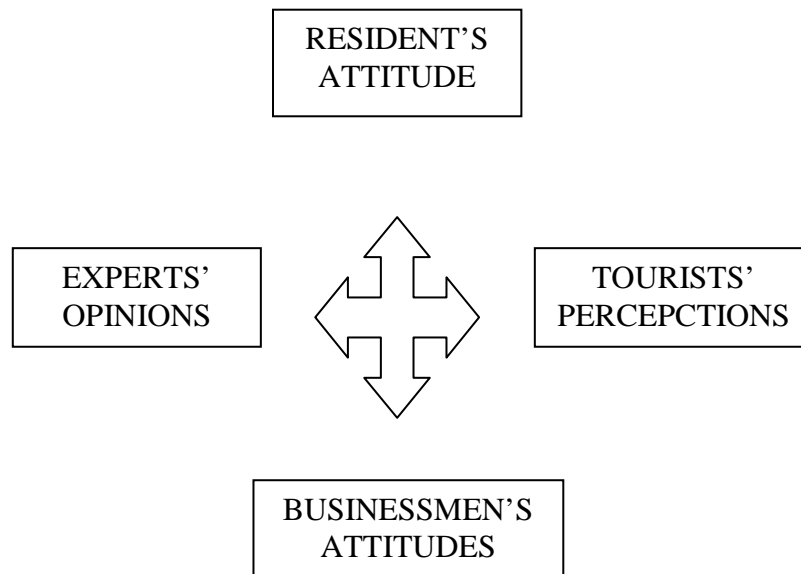


Figure 1. Proposed model. Self elaboration.

In order to obtain the data from these four sources of information we use several methods for studying the same problem. This fact allows us the methodological triangulation, and in that way enrich the conclusions of the study:

- Residents. Data are collected through a non directed personal questionnaire to homes in the municipality. Only one questionnaire is given to each house. The information obtained in this way allows us to analyse resident's perceptions of tourist impact (economic, social, cultural and environmental) and their satisfaction with the tourism.

Taking into account that the municipality is formed by 1,742 homes, according to official data in May 2003, it is necessary to specify the size of the representative sample, in a simple random design for the proportion with a confidence level of 95% and a permitted error of 5%. The representative sample is formed by 315 homes. Data were collected from 18th to 27th December 2004.

600 questionnaires were provided and 397 were collected (answer percentage: 66,16%). 18 questionnaires were eliminated because they contented a great proportion of lost data. Final sample were formed by 379 valid questionnaires.

- Expert's opinions were collected through in deep interviews. This way of collecting data gives us a qualitative analysis, chose because it will give us the chance to generate a theory, which discovers new concepts, generalisations and

hypothesis from the collected data from the panel of experts. This methodology gives us the chance of moving from the theory and the data and theory is supported by the data in order to establish relationships.

It has been made twelve interviews during June and July 2005. Interviews have been recorded in order to get a better treatment with the specific software programs (CAQDAS: Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis). These programs allow to develop an investigation process more transparent and rigorous but do not substitute the researcher in the qualitative data analysis process. Simply, the programs allow to storage, manage, describe and explore complex data and, at the same time, create and probe new ideas and theories, although the theory will continue being the fundamental task of the researcher.

- **Businessmen.** In this case data collection is made through personal interview with the businessmen connected with tourism. In order to get the information, it was asked the collaboration of the Businessmen Association in Santiponce. We planned to carry out this stage in September 2005.

Our aim in this case is to know, basically, the level in which the local businessmen is innovator as well as its degree of training, risks' assumption...

- **Tourists.** In this case we focus our attention in the group of tourist visiting the Archaeological Area of Itálica. In order to get the information, we have asked the collaboration of this Good of Cultural Interest Management in order to make interviews at the beginning and at the end of the visit. The data will be collected from September to October 2005.

In this case the objective is to know the perceived quality of the service (visit processes, personal attention, price, accessibility, etc.), client typology and their future behaviour.

Summarising, the proposed model, that has being implemented in Santiponce, will provide us with an analysis of relationships and, also, analysis of opportunities and weakness that will allow us to recommend proposals for actions according to the obtained conclusions.

4. FINAL NOTES

During this project, based on the Tourist Development Theory, which is rooted in the Social Interchange Theory, we have validated a model in which perceived resident's impacts, both positive and negative ones, are related with their support to tourist activity and its planning. For this reason it is important to know how residents perceived the total impact of tourism and the factors that influence the total perceived impact of the tourist development.

In this way we state that any project of tourist development might be threatened by the way it is planned and implemented without the knowledge and support of the local residents. In such a situation, angry, apathy or lack of confidence will be transmitted to the tourist and, in the majority of the cases, tourists will be reluctant to visit places where they are not welcome.

That is why we consider essential to make, through promotion strategies, a clear bet for the local identity starting from the cultural patrimony, as the axe for the economic, social and cultural development of the village.

It is obvious the necessity to involve the citizens, in general, and the local businessman/entrepreneur, particularly, in the opportunities generated for the tourism in their village as well as foster their integration in the tourist services offered in the village.

This manifest an opportunity of the entrepreneurs of Santiponce. We cannot forget that the business local initiatives are in charge of invigorate and growth of the local economy as well as stopping the process of the young moving from the village to the city.

The problem we need to contrast as starting hypothesis in the businessmen stage, and it would be a negative factor, is the lack of an open mentality to the innovation among the entrepreneurs in this area. This lack of open mentality, although it is common in many areas of Spain, put obstacles to the introduction of changes in habits and ways of behaviour in almost all sectors not only in the tourist one.

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