Evaluation of Cultural Heritage in Posavje Region by Tourists and Employees

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Abstract:

Purpose and Originality: This paper investigates tourism sustainability and examines the research problem of cultural and historical heritage sustainability in the Posavje region. The aim of this research paper is to evaluate the opinion of employees in tourist sector and tourists about tourism sustainability and their suggestions for improvement. The objective is to determine the level of sustainability of cultural and historical heritage.

Method: Quantitative method with closed-ended questionnaire and qualitative method with open-ended questionnaire were used. Collected quantitative data were analyzed using frequency statistics, Spearman's correlation coefficient, Wilcoxon rank-sum test, and Wilcoxon signed-rank test. Qualitative data were analyzed by three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

Results: The results showed that maximizing benefits to cultural heritage and minimizing negative impact was rated more positively by tourists in comparison to employees in the tourist sector. The scores were rated between 2.72 and 4.05 on a scale from 1 (low level of sustainability) to 5 (high level of sustainability).

Society: We conclude that the level of tourism sustainability in Posavje region is not satisfactory and has to be improved.

Limitations / further research: Respondents proposed a great number of ideas for improving tourism sustainability.

Keywords tourism, sustainable tourism, cultural heritage, tourism management.

1 Introduction

In the highly demanding global market, the state as well as region must be economically successful and efficient. Slovenia is in the phase of transition, and is not an exception. It has to exploit all resources and potentials. In a broader sense, tourism is part of a national economy and has to be effective and also efficient. In order to achieve this objective, it has to exploit environmental, historical, cultural, archeological, spiritual, and other heritage. Slovenia had 9,590,642 overnight stays in 2015. Tourism sector has 103,500 employees, which represents 13% of all employees. It contributes 13% to the GDP and 7.1% to the total exports. Region Posavje had 625,525 overnight stays, which represents 6.5% of total overnight stays in Slovenia (STO Slovenija, 2015). According to statistics, Posavje region has

180,000 visitors annually and 6,500 employees in the tourist sector (Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia). According to these numbers, tourism is extremely important to the national economy, and also for the Posavje region.

Sustainability is a term based on development and environment. It is a ratio between consumption and preservation of all sources. Sustainable development can be analyzed by three approaches: (1) economic; (2) environmental; and (3) socio-cultural. "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" is sustainable development (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. 43). Sustainable tourism is tourism without negative impact on economy, environment and society, where it is important to achieve the satisfaction of all players in tourism activities, community, employees, tourists, and so forth. Research in sustainable tourism is in progress. If tourism sector wants to be economically effective and efficient, it has to follow sustainable developmental trends. Traditional mass-tourism is transforming at the global level, therefore the change toward sustainable tourism is a necessity to remain in a demanding global market. Sustainable tourism represents global and local perspectives, and also is a challenge for the Posavje region.

This paper investigates tourism sustainability and examines the research problem regarding cultural and historical heritage sustainability in the Posavje region, which is maximizing benefits to cultural heritage and minimizing negative impact of tourism on the community and environment. The purpose and objective of the research was to evaluate the actual situation regarding sustainability in the Posavje region. Is the level of tourism sustainability adequate or not? Additionally, the objective was to determine the opinion of tourists and employees in the tourism sector and determine the level of differences. Moreover, the goal also was to determine suggestions for improvement, based on employees' and tourists' opinions. We believe that experts from the tourism sector and guests are an unlimited source of developmental ideas.

Janusz and Bajdor (2013, p. 529) predict that in a few years sustainable tourism will become traditional tourism. Sustainable tourism is a question about our existence and prosperity on the local and national level. The related works proposes different theoretical backgrounds and different research directions. Mihalic (2014) stresses discourse between sustainability and responsibility and proposes implementation in three phases: (1) awareness; (2) agenda; and (3) action. Begum, Alam and Sahazali (2014) emphasize three stakeholders groups: (1) government; (2) local residents; and (3) private entrepreneurs. Waligo, Clarke, and Hawkins (2013, pp. 347–351) propose a "multi-stakeholder involvement management" that is required for successful implementation; multi-stakeholder involvement management is composed by three strategic levels and six stages: (1) attraction; (a) scene-setting: effective communication, raise stakeholder perceived value of sustainable tourism; and (b) recognition of stakeholder involvement capacity: targeted stakeholder engagement, appropriate stakeholder engagement; (2) integration; (c) stakeholder relationship management: multi-level interactive networking, consolidate sustainability objectives; and (d) pursuit of achievable

objectives: managing stakeholder adaptability, ensure opportunity optimization; and (3) management of stakeholder involvement; (e) influencing implementation capacity: enhance practice and policy, increase degree of stakeholder involvement; and (f) monitoring stakeholder involvement: review, reward and rejuvenate, raise level of stakeholder motivation.

To achieve the research objectives, two approaches were used: (1) a literature review; and (2) empirical investigation. The literature review was based on an extensive review of theory and literature including appropriate articles, books, and internet sites. The empirical study was composed of quantitative analysis (closed-ended questionnaire) and qualitative analysis (open-ended questionnaire). "The Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria" was used as a measure of tourism sustainability and hence, the research model was based on these criteria. Quantitative analysis included four questions or domains that represent indicators for measuring sustainability. Qualitative analysis was used to investigate employees and tourists opinion about tourism sustainability. Specific research interest of this paper was to determine suggestions in improving sustainability.

2   Literature review

2.1 Sustainable tourism

A feature of sustainable tourism is rational use of resources. The most important is conservation of resources to assure long-term exploitation. Sustainable tourism is a form of sustainable development (Weaver, 2006, p. 10), where sustainable tourism involves the minimization of negative impacts and the maximization of positive impacts.

The Tourism Sustainability Group published a report entitled: "Action for more sustainable European Tourism". The goal of the report is to promote measures to enhance the sustainability of European tourism. The twelve aims for sustainable tourism are (Tourism Sustainability Group, 2007, p. 45): (1) economic viability; (2) local prosperity; (3) employment quality; (4) social equity; (5) visitor fulfilment; (6) local control; (7) community wellbeing; (8) cultural richness; (9) physical integrity; (10) biological diversity; (11) resource efficiency; and (12) environmental purity. Commission of the European Communities prepared the "Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism", which considers tourism as an economic activity that is very important to the EU. Tourism contributes 4% to EU's GDP, which represents from 2% to 12% in different countries (Commission of the European Communities, 2007, p. 2). Additionally, tourism offers job opportunities, especially for the younger population.

UN (Commission on Sustainable Development) and OECD (Tourism Committee) support sustainable tourism on the global level, while at the regional level, EU (European Commission) is active. Slovenian government accepts and supports all activities and directives. In line with that, Slovenian key goals up to the year 2023 are to (Služba vlade Republike Slovenije za razvoj in evropsko kohezijsko politiko, 2015, p. 18):

(1) increase the value of tourism by 15%,

(2) increase the revenue from exports travel by 4 - 6% per annum and

(3) increase energy efficiency in tourism facilities by 20%.

Region Posavje is aware that cultural heritage has different development opportunities that have to be exploited. Such opportunities contributes to the development, not only in an economic sense, but also in a social, environmental and cultural aspect (Šmid Hribar & Lapuh, 2014, p. 113).

A coalition of 27 organizations, named "Partnership for Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria", developed a list of global sustainable tourism criteria with four main domains (Global Sustainable Tourism Council, 2013): (1) demonstrate effective sustainable management; (2) maximize social and economic benefits to the local community and minimize negative impacts; (3) maximize benefits to cultural heritage and minimize negative impacts; and (4) maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts. The study in this paper is focused in the third domain: maximize benefits to cultural heritage and minimize negative impacts that further contains four sub-domains. Maximizing benefits to cultural heritage and minimizing negative impacts that include four indicators noted here (i.e., independent variables):

(1) Guidelines for visits – The organization follows established guidelines or a code of behavior for visits to culturally or historically sensitive sites, in order to minimize negative visitor impact and maximize enjoyment.

(2) Historical and archeological artifacts – Historical and archeological artifacts are not sold, traded, or displayed, except as permitted by local to international law.

(3) Protection of cultural heritage – The organization contributes to the protection and preservation of local historical, archeological, culturally, and spiritually important properties and sites, and does not impede access to them by local residents.

(4) Incorporation of cultural heritage – The organization incorporates elements of local art, architecture, or cultural heritage in its operations, design, decoration, food, or shops; while respecting the intellectual property rights of local communities.

These indicators are represented in the research model for this study (see Figure 1).
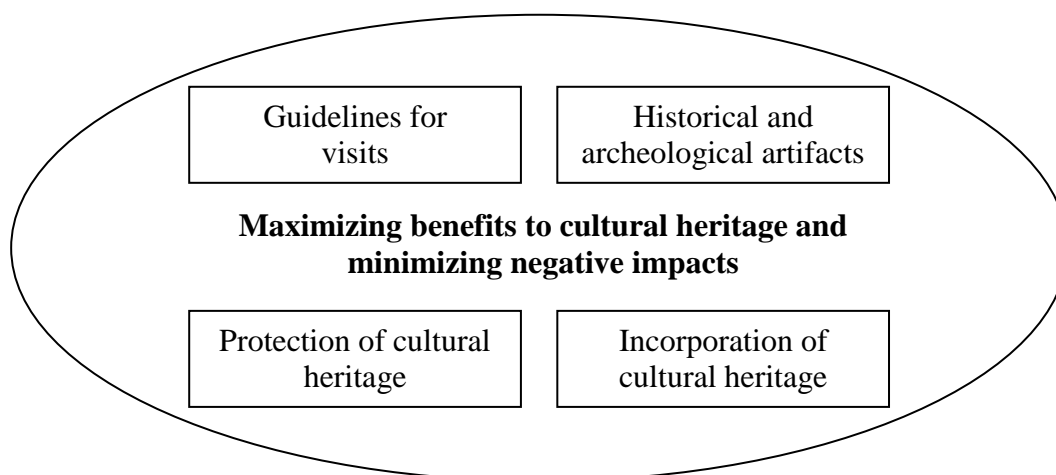

Figure 1. Research model

Heritage can be classified as tangible and intangible. Prentice (1993) distinguish three categories of heritage: (1) historic and artistic: relics with physical/tangible characteristics; (2) scientific: elements drawn from birds, animals, rocks, etc.; and (3) cultural heritage: folk, fine arts, traditions, and languages. Timothy and Boyd (2003, p. 59) suggested different heritage attractions: (1) museums: arts, sports, music, industrial science, philatelic, and local history; (2) war sites and atrocities: battlefields, war graves, cemeteries, and memorials; (3) religious sites: pilgrimages and sacred sites; (4) living culture: traditions, ways of life, ceremonies, dances, agricultural practices, culinary habits, and arts and crafts; (5) festivals: focusing on culture and heritage; (6) industrial places: mines, quarries, factories, harbors, ports, agricultural relics, railroads and railway museums; and (7) literary sites: fictional and real-life places of authors and play-wrights. ICOMOS (2004) list is more detailed: (1) archaeological heritage; (2) rock-art sites; (3) fossil hominid sites; (4) historic buildings and ensembles; (5) urban and rural settlements/historic towns and villages; (6) vernacular architecture; (7) religious properties; (8) agricultural, industrial, and technological properties; (9) military properties; (10) cultural landscapes, parks, and gardens; (11) cultural routes; (12) burial monuments and sites; (13) symbolic properties and memorials; and (14) modern heritage.

2.2 Guidelines for visits

The international, European, and national institutional initiatives significantly influence the creation, use, and spread of the concept of sustainable tourism, especially for the tourism sector (Torres-Delgado & López Palomeque, 2012, p. 9). Organizations have to adopt or self-prepare, use and monitor guidelines (i.e., a code of behavior) for visits that should be revised annually. This is vital for the protection and preservation of culturally or historically sensitive sites. Each visit has a negative impact and such a negative impact has to be reduced to a minimum. Sustainable tourism has to reduce the destination's vulnerability and increase resilience without negative impact on economic results, social quality of life, and the environment (Njoroge, 2014, p. 24). On the other hand, satisfaction of visitors should not be affected, but has to be improved. Guides have direct contact with visitors. The role of a guide is essential for sustainable behavior of visitors to protect the environment, property, as well as cultural and historical artifacts. Guides have to be properly informed and educated on sustainable tourism. Pereira and Mykletun (2012, p. 89) conclude that only the guides' contribution to sustainable tourism development is not sufficient. For this reason, negative impact is greater and tourists' satisfaction is smaller than it should be. All players involved in tourism activities have to contribute to achieve sustainability.

2.3 Historical and archeological artifacts

Historical and archeological artifacts are national heritage, often of priceless value. Ritchie and Crouch (2004, p. 21) say that "The stock and condition of historical and cultural resources depends upon a nation's appreciation of their value and its ability to care for their

condition. Government departments, trusts, arts councils, grants bodies and the degree of public patronage are examples of manifestations of support for cultural activities and the cultural heritage of a destination." Trading is regulated by local and international law and has to be respected by all players in business and tourism. It should be able to check any historical and archeological artifacts before trading or putting on an exhibition. The tracking of sales must be established.

2.4 Protection of cultural heritage

Heritage represents historical, archeological, culturally, and spiritual properties and sites. Individuals and organizations have to contribute to the protection and preservation of cultural heritage, with financial or non-financial support.

Torres-Delgado and López Palomeque (2014, p. 130) stress the importance of measuring level of sustainable tourism on a municipal scale using three dimensions of indicators: (1) social dimension; (2) economic dimension; and (3) environmental dimension. They classified the indicator "Protected monuments and historic buildings" into social dimension. Slovenia is rich with castles, churches, and other historical buildings, so protection and preservation are essential for cultural heritage. The primary role of museums is protection, preservation, and exhibition work of art and historical artifacts. Another vital role is contributing to sustainable development. Inadequate legislation, insufficient human resource training, and uneducated management with regard to sustainable museums are factors that impede sustainable change in museums (Pop & Borza, 2015, p. 128).

2.5 Incorporation of cultural heritage

Advertising and marketing are essential for success. Organizations have to use elements of cultural heritage for self-promotion. Chhabra (2010, pp. 14–16) lists the following facts influencing trends in heritage marketing tourism: (1) demand trends; (2) increasing competition; (3) optimal effective use of time; (4) growing demand for authenticity; (5) ethical consumption and volunteering; (6) continued relationship with politics and the accountability thereof; (7) experience-based economy; (8) resistance to marketing by both consumers and conventional suppliers of heritage; (9) multiculturalism; and (10) heritage economics. All these elements have to be considered when planning and incorporating cultural and historical elements into tourist products and services. Businesses should and have to enrich their entire identity with national, cultural, and historical wealth.

3 Methodology

The research model is derived from the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria document (Global Sustainable Tourism Council, 2013). It contains four variables, i.e. questions or four indicators for evaluating the benefits of cultural heritage and negative impacts on the environment. The mixed research method used in this paper uses a quantitative and qualitative approach.

The quantitative questionnaire includes four closed-ended questions that are assessed using a five-point Likert scale from 1 (low level of sustainability) to 5 (high level of sustainability). All variables are categorical (i.e., ordinal). The qualitative questionnaire contains four open-ended questions, asking respondents to express their opinion regarding improvement. This was based on the following indicators: Guidelines for visits, Historical and archeological artifacts, Protection of cultural heritage, and Incorporation of cultural heritage. In addition, the questionnaire includes four demographics questions with nominal type of socio-demographics variables (i.e., Person, Gender, and Level of Education).

The data were collected from September 7th to September 10th, 2015. According to statistics, Posavje region has on average 250 daily visitors in September and 100 top managers in the tourist sector (Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia). The interviews were carried out personally and randomly in the field with the sample size of 122 individuals, including employees and tourists. Tourists were interviewed between visiting museums, monuments, old town centers, castles, touristic points, touristic information centers, tourist agencies, hotels, and swimming pools. Selected employees from tourist facilities and tourist sites such as castles, museums, churches, public tourist institutions, public tourism associations, hotels, pubs, and tourist farms were CEOs of tourist facilities, top managers, guides, curators, sommeliers, and professional tourist employees. All of the employees were experts with many years of professional experience.

The socio-demographic data of the respondents are displayed in Table 1. Two groups of employees in the tourism sector (49.2%) and tourists (50.8%) are balanced also in terms of gender (55.7% females; 44.3% males). The level of education is relatively high, 64.8% of respondents have at least a high school diploma. Comparing both groups, the tourists were better educated, where 69.4% have at least a high school diploma in comparison with employees (i.e., 60.0%).

Table 1. Respondents socio-demographic profile

Socio-demographic variables	n	Percentage
Person		
- Employee	60	49.2
- Tourist	62	50.8
Gender		
- Male	54	44.3
- Female	68	55.7
Level of education		
- =< High School	43	35.2
- > High School	79	64.8

Notes. n sample (122)

Collected quantitative data were analyzed using frequency statistics, Spearman's correlation coefficient, Wilcoxon rank-sum test, and Wilcoxon signed-rank test (Field, Miles, & Field,

2012). All four variables are ordinal and not normally distributed. For this reason non-parametric statistics were used. Frequency statistics was used for analyzing demographic data. Spearman's correlation coefficient was used for calculating the correlation between four open-ended questions. Wilcoxon rank-sum tests were used for comparison of four open-ended questions between two groups (i.e., employees and tourists).

The reliability of the model was confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha test, which is 0.771, representing a sufficient value. According to the literature the value from 0.7 to 0.8 is acceptable (Field et al., 2012, p. 799). We can conclude based on this analysis that all constructed questions are adequate measures for tourism sustainability (i.e., level of "maximizing benefits to cultural heritage and minimizing negative impacts"). Qualitative data were analyzed according to Silverman and Marvasti (2008, p. 220–221) using three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

4   Results

Spearman's correlation coefficient between four variables (i.e., Guidelines for Visits, Historical and archeological artifacts, Protection of cultural heritage, and Incorporation of cultural heritage) was calculated at 0.36 to 0.55 (see Table 2), extending from medium to large, respectively with regard to the correlation value (Field et al., 2012, p. 58). The correlations indicate that questions were adequate measures for tourism sustainability and the research model or data construct was adequate.

Table 2. Spearman's correlation coefficient between indicators

Indicator	(1)	(2)	(3)
(1) Guidelines for Visits			
(2) Historical and archeological artifacts	0.50**		
(3) Protection of cultural heritage	0.36**	0.52**	
(4) Incorporation of cultural heritage	0.47**	0.49**	0.55**

Notes. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); sample 122

Table 3 shows the means, standard deviations, and medians related to the four questions and the two groups (i.e. employees and tourists) participating in the survey. Both groups agree that the least sustainable is "Protection of cultural heritage" and the most sustainable is "Incorporation of cultural heritage". Tourists scores regarding all four questions were higher in comparison to the employee group. The overall mean of all questions assessed by tourists was 3.70, while for the employees it was 3.15. All Wilcoxon's tests were significant at less than 0.05. As such, the difference in opinion was significant. Results regarding the effect size show the highest difference in the variable "Historical and archeological artifacts", while all effect sizes were between small and medium, more precisely between 0.22 and 0.34. According to the literature, a small effect size is 0.1 and medium effect size is 0.3 (Field et al., 2012, p. 58). Tourism sustainability related to "maximizing benefits to cultural heritage and minimizing negative impacts" that was defined by the four indicators was significantly higher evaluated by the tourist group. In this connection the following question arises: "What is the

actual situation?" Are employees too critical, or are tourists too indulgent towards the actual situation. Nevertheless, the positive opinion of tourists is encouraging. Overall, the scores were between 2.72 and 4.05.

Table 3. Frequencies of indicators

Indicator	Employees (n=60)			Tourists (n=62)			W	p	r
	M	SD	Mdn	M	SD	Mdn			
Guidelines for visits	3.37	0.938	3	3.81	0.827	4	3235.0	0.014	–0.22
Historical and archeological artifacts	3.12	1.121	3	3.82	0.820	4	2988.0	<0.001	–0.34
Protection of cultural heritage	2.72	0.846	3	3.11	0.925	3	3202.5	0.008	–0.24
Incorporation of cultural heritage	3.38	1.059	3	4.05	0.818	4	3029.0	<0.001	–0.32
Mean	3.15			3.70					

Notes. *M* Mean, *SD* Standard deviation, *Mdn* Median, *W* Wilcoxon's test, *p* Significance, *r* Effect size

The indicator "Protection of cultural heritage" had a lower value with the results of Wilcoxon signed-rank tests being ambiguous. The difference between "Protection of cultural heritage" and "Guidelines for Visits" ($Z = -6.02$, $p < 0.001$), "Protection of cultural heritage" and "Historical and archeological artifacts" ($Z = -5.37$, $p < 0.001$), and "Protection of cultural heritage" and "Incorporation of cultural heritage" ($Z = -7.08$, $p < 0.001$) were significant. Other combinations were not.

Table 4. Suggestions for improvement by indicators

Indicator	Employees	Tourists
Guidelines for visits	- sustainable tourism development strategy - strategy of visits - strategy for protection and preservation of environment and buildings	- sustainable transport - arrival of guests
Historical and archeological artifacts	- promotion of archeological and historical artifacts - education and information - collaboration with other businesses - international collaboration - governmental support - virtual museums	- promotion of sustainable tourism - national identity - integration of sustainable tourism with trademarks - virtual heritage
Protection of cultural heritage	- security policy - security systems - education and information	- security policy - security systems - education and information - competent guides
Incorporation of cultural heritage	- incorporation in education process - alliances and partnerships - quality of life	- incorporation in business organizations - research and development

Table 4 depicts responses with keywords. The assumption that employees' and tourists' perceptions differ was also supported with the qualitative results. Certain topics were common for both groups and a few are highlighted and compared with one another in Table 4. All respondents expressed suggestions for further sustainable tourism improvement. Employees suggested a more systematic approach while tourists were more practically oriented. Both approaches are important for implementation and further research in this area.

5　Discussion

5.1　Sustainable tourism

Sustainable development of the future is part of both European's and Slovenian's orientation, especially as tourists will choose more sustainable destinations. Quality of sustainable tourism destination is recognized by tourists as environment of the current and future generation. Consequently, sustainable destinations will be more attractive in the future.

Blancas, Lozano-Oyola, and González (2015, p. 50) propose composite indicators (Sustainable Tourism Country-Brand Ranking) for determining degree of sustainability by country: (1) France, Italy, Norway, Portugal, and Greece, countries with a strong tourist tradition, are at the top of sustainability ranking; (2) new entrances, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Malta, and Luxemburg are at the bottom; and (3) Slovenia is in the middle. Furthermore, a stable political situation in a country is necessary the success of sustainable development in tourism. Unstable political system and frequent changes of government influences sustainable tourism negatively (Farmaki, Altinay, Botterill, & Hilke, 2015, p. 187).

The measuring instrument used in this study was based on the "The Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria", which is a five-point scale measuring low level to high level of sustainability. The mean off all responses were evaluated between 3.15 by employees and 3.70 by tourists. The level of "maximizing benefits to cultural heritage and minimizing negative impacts" was good, but there is sufficient possibility to improve and be excellent (i.e., a 5 on the 5 point Likert scale).

5.2　Guidelines for visits

According to the research results of this study, the guidelines (i.e., code of behavior) for visiting culturally or historically sensitive sites were taken critically by employees. Experts with years of experiences expressed strategic approaches. Economic and political situation is crucial for sustainable tourism development in all aspects, taking into account that governmental support is essential for future development direction. The foundation is global and European politics and its compatibility with national policies, depending on all directives that have to be accepted and implemented into the regional and local level. Employees in this research study highlighted sustainable tourism development strategy, which includes: (1) sustainable environment development and sustainable cultural and historical heritage development. (2) strategy of visits, including appointments throughout the year, seasonal price policies with balanced distributed visits, as well as limited visits for especially sensitive

areas; and (3) strategy for protection and preservation environment, eco-system, buildings, and historical monuments (i.e., physical protection, limiting all types of pollution, as well as waste sorting). A common suggestion provided by both groups (i.e., employees and tourists) was sustainable transport, mainly because transport and logistics are problematic polluters, where improvement is possible and necessary. The tourist group was focused on traditional transport optimization and alternative eco-transport deployment, for example bicycles, carriage, tourist train, and so on. One of the major elements of sustainable tourism development is hospitality and transport, which was also confirmed by the results in this study. Hospitality includes (Ekinci, 2014, p. 182): (1) carrying out training courses on the provision of tourist information and quality hospitality; (2) using international signs on signboards at historic places; and (3) arranging "slow" routes of the city.

5.3 Historical and archeological artifacts

For this variable, the opinion of both groups (i.e., employees and tourists) was different, but also with a few common topics. The first common topic was promotion of sustainable tourism and promotion of archeological and historical artifacts. In this connection the groups stressed several possibilities, such as: conferences, expositions, roundtables regarding actual problems, competitions with symbolical rewards, Internet, brochures, and so forth. The second common topic was education and information, meaning that local citizens and tourists were not satisfactory informed. Education about archeological and historical artifacts has to start in the early ages, in kindergarten, and must continue through all generations, especially considering that national identity also is promoted in education and information. Promotion, education, and information depends on national and local policies. "The tourism policy provides a framework within which a competitive tourism destination can be developed on a long-term, sustainable basis" is stressed by Ritchie and Crouch (2004, p. 183). The tourist sector has to be sustainable, economically competitive, effective and efficient. Another common topic also was cooperation with the business sector and collaboration with foreign tourist sectors. All types of connections are important in sustainable tourism development for presenting historical and archeological artifacts. The tourist group in this study also pointed out the importance of integrating historical and archeological artifacts into trademarks, more specifically, to highlight historical and archeological identity into products, services, and identity. Virtual reality technology is in progress for exhibiting archeological, architectural, and natural sites. The goal also is to protect cultural sensitivities.

5.4 Protection of cultural heritage

Correct carrying capacity calculation of a sensitive area is critical for the protection of cultural and environmental heritage (Mowforth & Munt, 2009, p. 102). Uncontrolled increasing number of visitors can cause unrepairable damage. In this study, the tourists' opinions regarding protection and preservation of local historical, archeological, culturally, and spiritually important properties and sites was more positive than compared with the employee group opinion. Both groups commented on the same topics with different importance or different actual perception. Suggestions for improvement also were very similar, including

security policy, which is fundamental for protection and preservation of cultural heritage. Among others, policy also includes: model of environmental planning, internal regulations of employees, cohesion and cooperation with governmental and nongovernmental institutions, compliance with guidelines for regional development, integrated preservation of cultural heritage, and systematic management of cultural sites. All propositions are systematic and regulatory. Both groups mentioned that the implementation of security policy is an efficient security system including technical regulation, security arrangements for access, protection of monuments, and signalization. Both groups agreed that policies and systems are efficient and effective with proper education and information. For protection and preservation of cultural heritage and for appropriate access to cultural heritage suitable guides are vital. Educated and motivated guides are fundamental for sustainable behavior. In comparison to others indicators, protection of cultural heritage was the most poorly rated by both the employee and tourist group. Hence, it is important to place a great deal of effort in this area.

5.5 Incorporation of cultural heritage

Authentic key product development and product diversification attract tourists and can be crucial for competitiveness and sustainable development of the destination (Benur & Bramwell, 2015, p. 222; Jaković, Tubić, & Đurović, 2015, p. 112). The integration of local art, architecture, or cultural heritage elements into tourism and other business operations is important. They represent the part of national identity and are practically free with values that are often priceless. Additionally, they enrich the corporate image. For this category, the tourists group listed: art works, elements of gastronomy, architectural elements, and touristic sites. The employee group stated that the integration of education process at all levels is the most important. In this context, integration also includes all connections and partnerships with different types of business entities. Incorporation of cultural and historical heritage improves quality of tourists and local peoples' life. Moreover, cross-border cooperation between regions and countries can reinforce incorporation of cultural heritage and sustainable tourism development. The results from this study on cultural heritage are in accordance with heritage mission by Garrod and Fyall (2000, p. 686), that it must: (1) be inexpensive and visitor-friendly; (2) be physically and intellectually accessible; (3) balance the needs of the visitors and conservators; (4) be able to maintain authenticity and the integrity of the site; and (5) deliver value for money.

6 Conclusion

This paper investigates tourism sustainability of cultural heritage ("maximizing benefits to cultural heritage and minimizing negative impacts"), which was measured by four indicators: guidelines for visits, historical and archeological artifacts, protection of cultural heritage, and incorporation of cultural heritage in the quantitative analysis. The scores were rated between 2.72 and 4.05 on a scale from 1 (low level of sustainability) to 5 (high level of sustainability). The results also showed that maximizing benefits to cultural heritage and minimizing negative impacts was better evaluated by the tourist group with a mean of 3.70 compared to the employee group with a mean of 3.15, resulting in a more positive perception by the tourist

group. The level of tourism sustainability of cultural heritage was not satisfactory and has to be improved. This study also includes qualitative analysis, which showed that respondents provided a great number of ideas for improving tourism sustainability. Employees were more systematically oriented and proposed governmental support, strategy of visits, strategy of sustainable development, adequate legislation, and so on. While tourists suggested more practical solutions regarding improvement of tourism sustainability, such as sustainable transport, promotion, competent guides, collaboration with business, and so on. The research findings also showed common topics between the employee and tourist groups, including security policy, security systems, education and information, and so on.

This study contributes in determining the level of tourism sustainability in the Posavje region. It includes suggestions for tourism sustainability improvement. The results are important for the local community. Improvement is necessary to be competitive on the global tourism market.

Although this study provides new insights, it is possible to derive further research directions. This research study focused on maximizing benefits to cultural heritage and minimizing negative impacts, while the other domains from the "Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria" document were not considered. For complete sustainable tourism analysis, researchers have to consider also the remaining three domains: (1) demonstrate effective sustainable management; (2) maximize social and economic benefits to the local community and minimize negative impacts; and (3) maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts. This study is limited and investigates only the Posavje region. For generalizations, research at the national level is needed. For deeper analysis, it would be advisable to use a larger sample size and capture all players involved in tourism activities, not only top manager employees and tourists. How to implement sustainable tourism successfully is a real and fundamental question that considers the involvement of different stakeholders.

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