

Impact case study (REF3)

Institution: York St John University		
Unit of Assessment: UoA 17 Business & Management Studies		
Title of case study: Improved Practices and Outcomes in Tourism Destination Management		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: September 2014 – July 2016		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Dr Brendan Paddison	Associate Dean	2011 - present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2015 - present		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Research by York Business School (YBS) has been used in partnership with destination management organisations in the UK and Spain to improve management practices and outcomes. Research into stakeholder engagement and the visitor experience resulted in changes in approach for two cities' tourism agencies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. YBS has changed how Make it York, a UK tourism management organisation, engages and consults with its stakeholders, leading to significant improvement in strategic decision-making, substantial increases in visitor numbers, income from tourism and the creation of new jobs; 2. YBS, together with the University of Seville, designed a new visitor survey, adopted by Turismo de Sevilla, which evaluates the quality of experience and emotions on visitor satisfaction. Data from the new visitor survey and recommendations from our research have been used to advance strategic decision-making in Seville, specifically the development of the Seville Post-COVID-19 recovery plan. 		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>The work that forms the theoretical underpinning of this case study integrates multiple levels of analysis (international, country, region and local) and has been widely cited. The research focused on three interrelated themes:</p> <p>Theme 1 - Engagement in heritage tourism and implications for destination communities [3.1; 3.2]</p> <p>This focussed on the re-theorisation of issues such as visibility and representation in the public sphere of heritage tourism and the implications this has on modalities of marketing, destination development and community management of cultural heritage. The research findings revealed that heritage provides a source of engagement and understanding that is different from the professional discourses circulating in destination management organisations. Further, this can empower stakeholder and community groups to find voices of their own in the political processes and thereby beneficially affect their development, identity, and well-being.</p> <p>Theme 2 - Evaluating tourism governance structures, engagement mechanisms in the creation of public policy, and the implications of these structures for destination development and community engagement [3.3]</p> <p>This is concerned with the politics of place, focusing on destination management and urban governance. The research focused on York and analysed governance approaches in tourism, addressing the need to understand the implications for stakeholder representation and</p>		

engagement. The findings demonstrated that, rather than leading to greater levels of stakeholder engagement, the outsourcing of destination management to the private sector resulted in a weakening of accountability and the widening of a democratic deficit. The research revealed a management system and structure that were far from participatory, resulting in a “local elite” dominating the decision-making process. This resulted in the development of a tourism strategy that prioritised economic growth over social well-being and neglected to take into consideration how the benefits of tourism are distributed. *Paddison* developed a framework for stakeholder collaboration that centred on the engagement of networks and associations within a destination governance approach. This theory for evaluating tourism governance structures was subsequently tested in York by *Paddison* [3.6] and contributes a method to evaluate governance arrangements in tourist destinations.

Theme 3 - Collaborative research examining the cognitive factors influencing the visitor experience [3.4; 3.5]

This sought a better understanding of the cognitive factors that influence the quality of the visitor experience in heritage destinations. The research findings demonstrated that cognitive variables, such as emotions, have an impact on the perceived quality of the visitor experience. It draws attention to the importance of quality of experience and emotions on visitor satisfaction and has significant management implications for destination managers when designing visitor experiences. Working in collaboration with the University of Seville, Spain, a new visitor survey was devised, designed to capture the cognitive factors that influence the perceived quality of the visitor experience

Taken together, this research has resulted in YBS being recognised by destination management organisations and tourism businesses as a valued and influential research group, with its research directly guiding tourism strategy and influencing the decisions taken and strategies employed by destination management organisations in the UK (Make it York; Visit Country Durham) and Spain (Turismo de Sevilla; Trigueros Council, Huelva).

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

The underpinning research has received recognition in the form of papers published in high-impact international journals, prestigious best paper award from the Academy of Marketing [3.4], and research funding.

[3.1] Waterton, E. and Watson, S. eds., (2013). *Heritage and community engagement: collaboration or contestation?* Routledge, New York. [Can be Supplied by the HEI upon Request]

[3.2] Mortimer, C. and Paddison, B., (2019). Expert Leadership and Hidden Inequalities in Community Projects. In: Nachmias S. and Caven V. (eds) *Inequality and Organizational Practice*. Palgrave Explorations in Workplace Stigma. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. (pp. 37-64). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-11644-6_3

[3.3] Paddison, B. and Walmsley, A., (2018), 'New Public Management in tourism: a case study of York', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*. Vol. 26 (6), pp. 910-926. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2018.1425696>

[3.4] González-Rodríguez, M.R., Domínguez-Quintero, A., and Paddison, B. (2020), 'The direct and indirect influence of experience quality on satisfaction: the importance of emotions', *Current Issues in Tourism*, Vol. 23 (22), pp.2779-2797. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2019.1668917>

[3.5] Domínguez-Quintero, A., González-Rodríguez, M.R., and Paddison, B. (2020), 'The mediating role of experience quality on authenticity and satisfaction in the context of cultural-heritage tourism', *Current Issues in Tourism*, Vol. 23 (2), pp. 248-260. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2018.1502261>

Research Income

[3.6] Paddison, B. (2017-18) 'Measuring the Impact of Tourism: The Case of York', Funds: £1,000, Learning and Teaching Development, York St John University.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words).

Concerns regarding a lack of stakeholder engagement in tourism decision-making in York and a need to better understand visitor satisfaction in Seville, has resulted in significant impact in improved management practices and outcomes in:

1. Stakeholder engagement and tourism strategy development;
2. Visitor experience survey design.

1. Stakeholder engagement and tourism strategy development

YBS research on community engagement in heritage and tourism (Underpinning Research Theme 1) has made a substantial contribution to strategy and policy making locally and regionally [5.1]. YBS research has made a significant contribution to the way that tourism destination management organisations engage with key stakeholder groups in their decision-making processes. *Paddison's* research [3.3] found that the approach to destination management in York indicated a structure that was far from participatory. As a consequence, the City of York Council sought the expertise of YBS in the development of their tourism strategy. YBS "*played a key role in co-ordinating the development of York's current tourism strategy, through co-ordinating the consultation events, providing data support and analysis, running a stakeholder conference and supervising research into the strategy-making process*" [5.2]. A series of strategic goals and an interim strategy [5.3] were created, were constructed based on the stakeholder consultation led by YBS (Underpinning Research Theme 2). In addition, "*a key output was the establishment of Make It York, the city's new destination management organisation, tasked with driving the strategy. The university was instrumental in this.*" [5.2]. The impact of this was stakeholder groups, including government, tourism operators and local residents, having the ability to influence decision-making. An evaluation of the strategic consultation by *Paddison* and *Biggins* [5.4] provides evidence that this new approach in York ensured effective community engagement, resulting in successful participation in the strategic planning process and facilitated more positive community attitudes towards tourism [5.4]. 16 stakeholder representatives, including tourism operators, public officials and residents who participated in the strategic consultation were interviewed, and commented that the process felt "*genuine*", "*authentic*" and "*community-led*" [5.4]. The process led to better economic and social outcomes for all stakeholders involved.

After experiencing the benefits of this approach led by *Paddison*, Make it York changed its strategy towards stakeholder engagement. The Tourism Advisory Board (TAB) was created to continue to engage with stakeholders. In 2016, *Paddison* was appointed to the TAB [5.5]. "*I appreciated Brendan's insight and knowledge. What was especially refreshing was the advice he offered, although infused with academic thought, was grounded in reality and actionable for a commercial organisation. He understood the challenges and the importance of bringing the business community along with any strategy*" [5.6]. *Paddison's* work was cited as being significant [5.2; 5.6], in influencing the destination management strategy and subsequently shaped public policy. This included a "*tourism strategy that focused on developing a better value proposition, targeting longer-staying and higher spending visitors and tackling the perceived 'over-tourism' issues in the city. The strategy was well received by the media and tourism businesses alike*" [5.6]. "*The impact of the new strategy was demonstrated in data released at the end of 2019. This showed that in 2018, York received 8.4 million visits, bringing an economic value of £765 million and supporting over 24k jobs. This equated to an increase of 12%, or 900k more visits, a 20%, or £126m, increase in the value of tourism and 3,000 more jobs within the city's tourism industry over the preceding five years*" [5.2]. Furthermore, in addition to the economic benefits cited, as a direct result of YBS involvement in the creation of the tourism strategy, a number of social benefits were identified. For example, stakeholders felt that the new strategy was "*owned by the community*" with "*the strategic aims driven by those consulted*" [5.4]. Respondents interviewed as part of the evaluation [5.4] highlighted that "*the nature of the whole process was strategic*" and "*consultative*", resulting in positive attitudes towards tourism in the city: "*they seemed interested when I was talking about*

my own concerns". These positive social benefits have resulted in more progressive engagement amongst city wide stakeholders, particularly residents, towards tourism. This has resulted in a recognition by the tourism management organisation and the City of York Council of the value of working with all tourism stakeholders, including residents, in strategy development and on-going tourism related activity, including marketing, promotion and product development [5.4].

2. Visitor Experience Survey Design

Working with colleagues at the University of Seville, Spain and Turismo de Sevilla, YBS research (Underpinning Research Theme 3) has enabled Turismo de Sevilla, a destination management organisation, to better understand and evaluate the quality of experience and emotions on visitor satisfaction through the redesign of their Visitor Experience Survey. Previously, different organisations were involved in the collection of tourism data in Seville, with no central coordination where trends could be identified and monitored. After our intervention demonstrating the benefits of a more centralised approach, the Centro de Gestion Integral de Datos Turisticos were appointed and tasked with coordinating tourism data, including working with the University of Seville and YBS to gain a *"better understanding of how cognitive factors influence the visitor experience"* [5.7]. Furthermore, a member of the research team was invited to *"participate in a round table of experts about proposals for the tourism sector"* [5.7]. This collaborative research with the University of Seville has drawn attention to the importance of understanding visitor satisfaction. The impact of this is that *"the new tourism strategy currently being developed focuses on the visual attributes and experiences to create differentiation and sustainability of tourism"* [5.7].

Questionnaires designed and distributed in Seville found that the quality of experience positively and significantly influences perceived value, and perceived value positively and significantly influences visitor satisfaction. It was also identified that emotions positively and significantly influence satisfaction and that the quality of experience positively and significantly influences emotions. Consequently, Turismo de Sevilla redesigned and adopted a new visitor survey drawing upon research by YBS to better understand the quality of visitor experience by identifying how cognitive variables, such as emotions, influence visitor satisfaction. Data from the new visitor survey and recommendations from our research have been used to advance and refine strategic decision-making in Seville.

Specifically, this has included the development of the Seville Post-COVID-19 Recovery Plan – Plan 8 [5.8]. A key focus of this plan is on creating quality visitor experiences. *"Plan 8 is about the recovery and promotion of tourism in Seville post COVID-19. The recovery plan aims to increase the quality of the tourist product and visitor experience. We have created a set of recommendations that recognise the value of quality tourist experiences"* [5.7]. Specific examples include, *"interpretation spaces and the provision of new, innovative and quality content in some of the most relevant interpretation spaces in the city"* [5.7]. In addition, the city authorities *"have created a training programme that allows for the transmission of knowledge, good practices and experiences of other destinations or other tourism companies, in order to improve the tourist quality in Seville"* [5.7]. Plan 8 is currently being implemented by Turismo de Sevilla and the City Council, with engagement from the research team.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of ten references)

[5.1] Conference Presentation: Not Just Part of the Scenery - Northern Heartlands - <https://northernheartlands.org/project/not-just-part-of-the-scenery/>

[5.2] Testimonial: Assistant Director, City of York Council

[5.3] Document: York's Tourism Strategy, Visit York.

[5.4] Article: Paddison, B. and Biggins, R., (2017), 'Advocating community integrated destination marketing planning in heritage destinations: the case of York', *Journal of Marketing Management*. Vol. 33 (9-10) pp. 835–857.

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- [5.5] Document: Marketing York to the World Annual Review: 2017 - 2018 (*page 43 confirms Paddison's role on the Tourism Advisory Board*)
- [5.6] Testimonial: Head of Visit York, Make it York
- [5.7] Testimonial: Associate Dean, University of Seville
- [5.8] Document: Plan 8 Seville COVID-19 Recovery Plan - https://plan8sevilla.org/wp-content/uploads/Plan8Sevilla_doc_final.pdf (submitted in Spanish)