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**GLOBAL TRENDS IN THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM
INDUSTRY**

Introduction

The tasks within the group are distributed based on the level of expertise shared for contemporary tourism industry developments and emerging trends in it. The emerging global trends in the travel and tourism sector, and possible benefits and costs required to promote these trends in the UK are areas that are divided among the group of 4 to form the presentation effectively. The 21st emerging trends in the travel and tourism industry, the importance of these trends in tourism development and planning, and the influence of changes upon the competitiveness of the industry globally would be outlined. Lastly, the benefits and costs of following these trends in the UK would be addressed.

Global Trends in Travel and Tourism Industry

The major global trends impacting the travel and tourism sector are seen as sustainable tourism, evolving visitor demands, and the digital wave. As per the study by Liburd *et al.* (2022), sustainable solutions in the tourism sector help generate a platform for green hotel chains and renewable energy usage. The ability to meet the sustainable development goals set by the United Nations becomes easier when green practices are entertained. As viewed by Ferrer-Roca *et al.* (2021), evolving visitor demands are needed to be predicted with the help of modern tools. For instance, historical data could be compared with modern data to predict the flow of tourist visits. As discussed by Li *et al.* (2022), the digital wave acts as a megatrend that deeply impacts the proceedings in the tourism sector by helping businesses digitally transform and automate various services. For instance, online booking, previewing the destination virtually, and making cashless payments have helped travellers in the travel and tourism industry. On the other end, technological advancements have helped the business units in the sector to revamp the operational side by making way for renewable energy use, the presence of electric vehicles for the transportation of supplies, and automated check-in and check-out facilities (Guo *et al.* 2019).

Why are these Global Trends important in Tourism Planning and Development?

Sustainable practices need to be pursued in the UK tourism industry to make sure the industry registers better success in the future. As stated by Stylos (2020), sustainable tourism allows businesses to restructure their business and optimise service delivery to make customer services prompt and efficient. This would ensure that foreign travellers face no issues while visiting sites and booking hotels online. As mentioned by Liu *et al.* (2019), destination planning for tourism needs to be structured depending on the strength of macro-environmental factors such as the infrastructural capacity, legal codes, and socio-cultural acceptance. It is seen that the UK

permits strong infrastructure which allows robust service offerings to tourists. Using tools such as big data analytics, and forecasting methods, business units can easily become sustainable. The legal and environmental pressure from the international tourism units seems to be present as United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) asks for increased governance from the end of national governments to secure better sustainability standards and better longevity to the world heritage sites. The UNWTO boosts the strength of Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), thereby helping build a harmonious relationship between the residents and visitors. As per present reports, UNWTO.QUEST is formed to help the DMOs govern sustainability actions efficiently (UNWTO, 2023). The UNWTO.QUEST helps certifies enhancement in three performance elements Strategic Leadership, Effective Implementation and Efficient Governance. Therefore, the Public Private Partnership (PPP) and strategic planning of tourism policies are guided by the UNWTO to help travel destinations become more sustainable. On the other end, UNESCO has also made efforts to escalate sustainability actions in tourist destinations. For instance, the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme helps advocate frameworks and policies for better engagement with sustainability measures in a specific destination (World Heritage Centre, 2023). Hence, both UNESCO and UNWTO from a legal and environmental standpoint force the application of sustainable tourism development in countries. Sustainable tourism, evolving visitor demands, and the digital wave help these external entities to govern in a better way.

The stakeholder involved in the tourism sector known as residents, visitors, government, business units, and foreign authorities such as UNWTO and UNESCO. According to the views of Ntounis *et al.* (2022), during the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, the flow of tourists decreased to a large extent in all destinations across the world. Global trends such as sustainable tourism, evolving visitor demands, and digital waves hold an ample degree of benefits for the stakeholders. In the UK, tourism companies are expected to face an economic downturn as possibilities for inflation are on the cards soon. Since, the gross domestic product (GDP), employment, and community developments are dependent on the tourism sector, then the idea would be to secure better transactions in the tourism sector. Hence, all of the global trends would add immense value to the stakeholders and ensure better resilience against the economic downturn in the UK.

How would the changes in global trends affect the businesses in the tourism industry?

The sustainable long-term objectives would be met in a better way if the global trends are followed effectively. Businesses in the tourism sector are making strategic changes to cope with global trends in a better manner. According to the views of Zhang *et al.* (2020), the digital

wave brings the possibility of better service handling, automated tracking, and renewable energy usage. This helps stakeholders such as businesses, travellers, and governing bodies such as UNESCO and UNWTO to be positively affected. Businesses in the sector have made efforts to invest in sustainability and follow the concept of circularity by reducing, reusing, and recycling. Optimisation of customer experience also becomes possible as a result of forecasting fluctuating consumer demands.

The flow of tourists in the UK has remained moderate in the recent period, while the crisis during the years 2020 and 2021 occurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. As per recent reports, the number of overseas visits to the UK stood to be near 30 million in the year 2022, but this value remained lower than the pre-pandemic levels (Statista Research Department, 2023). The marketing techniques require improvement to escalate the flow of travellers in the country. As per the study by Qiao *et al.* (2022), the tourism industry in the UK faces severe threats from higher inflation and higher interest rate possibilities in future. The rising cost of raw materials is leading towards increased operational costs in the sector, thereafter forcing the travelling companies to offer services at a higher price. Supplier costs are expected to escalate due to the economic crunch, whereas overhead cost reductions are a major threat as well.

What are the Benefits of these Global Trends to the Destination Country?

Sustainable tourism, evolving visitor demands, and the digital wave all carry immense value for UK travel and tourism. As mentioned by Patterson and Balderas (2020), the economic, societal, and environmental factors are identified to be part of the triple bottom line as each of these reciprocates the values of profit, people, and the planet. Since meeting the triple bottom line becomes a major part of being a sustainable business, the tourism sector units in the UK are forecasted to retrieve an ample degree of benefits from the application of global trends. Digital wave assures better economic growth, environmental sustainability, and societal improvements. For example, automated business solutions would mean that there would be no need for any formal paperwork at the front desk of hotels. Customer demand fluctuations positively influence the economic condition as various service offerings in the tourism sector could benefit from the varied customer demands. Heritage sites could gain better customer flow as a result of changing customer demands. Furthermore, the sustainable tourism trend would positively impact the environment as pollution would be lesser, society would benefit as community developments will be greater, and the economic will boom due to certification from UNWTO and UNESCO once sustainable practices are exercised.

What are the Costs of these Global Trends to the Destination Country?

Digital wave shares a direct negative impact on the employment of the workforce in the tourism sector in the UK. As discussed by Qiao *et al.* (2022), the trend to follow digital solution integration in the tourism sector would mean that there would be job cuts as most of the services would become automated. Hence, to tackle this crisis, the tourism sector should consider the optimised application of advanced equipment in the business. No demerits can be found for digital waves against the environmental factor. The sustainable tourism concept shares the cost of high operational costs and compliance trouble for businesses (Hall, 2019). This makes it hard for small and medium-sized enterprises in the tourism sector to apply sustainability standards. Hence, on an economic level, business profits shrink, and unemployment becomes a major theme. However, sustainable tourism shares no demerits for society and the environment. Contrary, customer demand fluctuation is one such trend that shares negative effects on the environment as there are still minimal efforts shown by travellers to use eco-friendly hotels. Apart from this, this would not share any direct detrimental impact on society and the economy.

Conclusion

It could be inferred that a positive influence is carried by sustainable tourism, evolving visitor demands, and the digital wave in the UK travel and tourism sector. It can be recommended that to better manage emerging trends, businesses need to set long-term goals. Apart from this, technology integration should be stronger. Hence, third-party information technology solutions could be added alongside the follow-up of the UN sustainable development goals.

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