

Chapter 4

TOURISM PhD STUDIES A Swedish Experience-Based Perspective

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Abstract: This chapter offers an experience-based report about the development of the first Scandinavian PhD program in tourism studies at Mid-Sweden University. This process is documented through a framework which, rather than having the coherence of a single clearly bounded discipline, focuses on tourism as a *study area* encompassing multiple disciplines. Tourism knowledge is derived through a synthesis of fact-oriented positivist methodologies and critical theory. The theoretical framework employed to develop the graduate program in tourism studies is presented by critically discussing its multidisciplinary base and briefly outlining future veins of further development.

Keywords: Higher education; graduate program; multidisciplinary; faculty development; tourism studies

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has emerged as a major activity in contemporary society. Yet, despite the growing attention it receives within academe as well as the broader public and private domains, it remains far from fully understood. Plenty of reasons exist for this, an important one being its highly

fragmented nature involving numerous players and institutions causing multiple effects on both host and generating areas. Since tourism is essentially integrated with other sectors in the economy, trends affecting it cannot be considered in isolation from the drivers shaping, both the industry itself and the contemporary societies where it takes place.

Concurrently with tourism's growth as a global phenomenon, academic interest in this topic has grown dramatically. Over the last quarter century, an ever-increasing number of university programs examining the phenomenon have appeared while it is becoming increasingly common to see stand-alone PhD programs in tourism studies. One such program is the recently developed PhD program offered in the Department of Tourism Studies and Geography at Mid-Sweden University (MIUN). In this chapter, the aim is to present this program and explain the theoretical framework upon which it is founded. This framework has been inspired by the pedagogic contributions of many notable tourism academics including Jafar Jafari in whose honor this volume has been prepared.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First, before describing the program at MIUN, a few important global trends are portrayed and their general implications for the industry itself, destinations, as well as research and higher education. This is followed by a brief overview of existing tourism PhD programs and career possibilities for graduates. Finally, the multidisciplinary base of the theoretical framework employed to develop the graduate program is presented. The framework is based on three pillars which reveal the interface between interacting individual disciplines and tourism. Pillar one, on tourism-related resources, focuses on the sustainable treatment of natural, cultural, and sociotechnical resources devoted to tourism production. Pillar two, on consumer behavior, investigates behavioral and attitudinal aspects of tourists related to the consumption and experience of tourism services. Pillar three, on tourism management, focuses on the functioning and the interplay of operations and processes within and among tourism organizations.

Trends Affecting International Tourism

The United Nations World Tourism Organization forecasts that the number of people traveling will continue to boom with international arrivals

increasing to almost 1.6 billion worldwide by 2020 (2002, 2009). This is 2.5 times the volume recorded in 2000. Due to this growth potential, intensive development and an increasing competitive pressure are expected among destinations worldwide and also among firms (Dwyer et al., 2007, p. 4). Thus, the sketched global trends noted in this chapter are some of the main factors that shape and will continue to shape the future of tourism (European Travel Commission, 2004; National Intelligence Council, 2004).

Economic Trends Instability of financial and currency markets, an increasingly complex globalized world economy creating an expansion in the middle class with greater spending power and available leisure time impact tourism. Further, the demand for it will continue to be determined by exchange rates and economic prosperity (in India, China, and Brazil).

Demographic Trends Population explosion to 7.2 billion in 2015 (UNWTO, 2002; US Bureau of the Census, 2014); declining birth rates/increased life expectancy in developed countries; urbanization (mega cities, especially in developing countries), changing social structures (family nucleus switches to fragmented households showing racial/ethnic diversity), changing value/lifestyles (work/education patterns, health/safety consciousness, and ethical awareness) continue to influence tourism demand.

Political Trends New global players will render labels of developed and developing countries obsolete; relationships between governments, societies, and economies become redefined; arcs of instability, including the threat of fundamentalist religious groups (governments balance the need to ensure freedom of travel while protecting people through security measures, such as border control, passports, and visas) constitute another set of deterministic factors in tourism demand (Dwyer et al., 2007).

Environmental Trends Global climate change and shifts in the utilization of natural resources (including fossil-based energy sources, water, land, biodiversity, and food resources) will continue affecting tourism patterns and consumer behavior (Gössling, Hall, Peeters, & Scott, 2010; UNEP, 2002).

Technological Trends Information and communication technologies are the major drivers in achieving business competitiveness (Dwyer et al., 2007, p. 61). Such advancements will continue reducing operating and distribution costs, leading to a better understanding of customer needs, and also allowing customers to benefit from added-value through personalized information and service components (location-based community services, new market spaces, such as eBay; Fuchs, Eybl, & Höpken, 2011).

Implications for Tourism, Research and Higher Education

Successful tourism suppliers are those providers of experiences who offer authentic encounters bundled as attractive packages ensuring long-lasting memories. These actors typically consider the continually changing needs and tastes of tourists as well as sustainability principles (McCool & Moisey, 2008). The evolving new type of tourist is characterized as quality-conscious, less loyal to any particular destination, but simultaneously empowered through new information and communication behaviors, such as web-based “comparison shopping” (Fesenmaier, Gretzel, Hwang, & Wang, 2004).

Furthermore, tourists increasingly reveal new vacation purposes and styles (participating in the everyday life of the destination, discovering and seeking self-improvement by emphasizing health and skill development as it relates to cultural and social appreciation). Thus, destination managers increasingly must measure success not only through the number of tourists, but through the “yield; per customer incorporating economic, social, and environmental dimensions. This covers the range from a growth focus to a sustainable yield specification” (Dwyer et al., 2007, p. 70). A sustainable industry minimizes negative social and environmental impacts and designs operations to become a tool for broader opportunities in society (McCool & Moisey, 2008). In this manner, instead of focusing narrowly on sustainability, the emphasis shifts to tourism as a vehicle to overall balanced development within any given destination (Schianetz & Kavanagh, 2008). This implies that future management must require a thorough understanding of the various tourism systems as basis for the effective utilization of planning frameworks considering complexity and adaptive behavior.

Obviously, global trends, as already described, dramatically influence the industry as a whole, posing challenges for the management of entire destinations and the businesses within these. Managers and destination organizations can ensure their future problemsolving capability only in cooperation with higher education establishments and research institutions,

thereby underlining theory's supporting role for solving real world problems in a dramatically changing global context (Dwyer et al., 2007, p. 77). These developments, in turn, have implications for the role of academic research. The design and implementation of higher education (such as PhD) programs has been an obvious outgrowth of these recent trends. According to Jafari's (2001) "scientification of tourism" platform, this additional societal demand on tourism knowledge created through academic research will, to a large extent, be covered by university researchers holding doctoral degrees in or related to tourism. This is the thinking that guided the establishment of the PhD program in tourism studies at MIUN and which influenced the three-pillar framework upon which this rests.

INTERNATIONAL DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

Doctoral level research relating to tourism has occurred for decades within several social science disciplines (including sociology, economics, and geography) as well as business schools and departments of recreation and leisure studies. This is because, as Jafari and Ritchie argued, tourism research and education evolved, at least initially, in isolation of each other and because those who had been trained in various disciplines had a prevailing attitude about their research as "an extension of their discipline of origin rather than as part of the field of tourism." Thus, the attitude towards stand-alone tourism programs was on the whole negative despite the fact that Jafari and Ritchie vehemently believed from the outset that "tourism studies would best flourish in an independent, well-funded department or institute" (1981, p. 29). A list of who's who in tourism studies (based on number of publications relating to tourism) would reveal that until now the majority of these individuals hold degrees in subjects like geography, business, economics, sociology, urban studies, history, computer science, and so on. In other words, the long-term tradition of research in tourism has been produced mostly by researchers with academic backgrounds in subjects other than tourism.

More recently, in response to the aforementioned challenges and opportunities, a boom of established PhD programs in the field of tourism has been observed internationally. These include, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PhD in Hotel & Tourism Management); Temple University (in Business Administration with a concentration in tourism and sport); Texas A&M University (in recreation, park, and tourism sciences); University of Waikato (in hospitality and tourism management); University of Exeter (in

tourism studies); Clemson University and University of Utah (in parks, recreation, and tourism); University of Technology in Sydney (in leisure, sport, and tourism); Bournemouth University (in tourism); University of Surrey (hospitality and tourism management); Tarragona's University Rovira i Virgili (in tourism and leisure); University of Algarve (in tourism); and the University of Lausanne (in tourism studies).

Many of these programs are provided within an interdisciplinary context, together with related subjects, such as park management, leisure studies, and business (such as Texas A&M offers a PhD in recreation, park, and tourism sciences while Temple University has a PhD in business administration with a concentration in tourism and sport). There is also an increasing number of programs focusing specifically on tourism, some of which offer doctoral degrees. These include programs at Exeter University and Bournemouth University, University of Lausanne, and University of Algarve. To some extent, this phenomenon is due to the growing body of tourism knowledge created over the last two decades by academics representing several disciplines. The theoretical corpus associated with the tourism phenomenon, despite the fact that its origins come from various disciplines, has now reached a level of maturity whereby few could argue against the merits of establishing stand-alone departments and institutes.

The curricula offered by the aforementioned international PhD programs in the field of tourism have been thoroughly inspected. According to the findings of these reviews, the thematic subjects that their students undertake research on can be placed in six groups: destination management and strategy planning (destination marketing, visitor management and demand modeling, carrying capacity, and social and economic impacts of tourism); operations at tourism organizations (service production and quality management, information systems management, human resource management, and accounting, finance, and yield management); organization studies in tourism (leadership and entrepreneurship, innovation and new product development, and internationalization and foreign direct investments); responsible tourism (ecotourism, environmental policy, ethics, sustainable tourism, authentic production/consumption, and pro-poor tourism); special interest tourism (convention, sport, nature-based, wine and food, and culture tourism, as well as festivals and management of events and attractions); and tourism and climate change (adaptation and mitigation strategies to deal with global climate/environmental threats).

Most programs are designed for candidates displaying a high promise in the field of tourism management or who desire a career in academia, research, or consulting. However, for the remaining doctoral degree

holders, booming leisure and tourism, related consultancy, and public/semi-governmental sectors (local, regional, and national tourism organizations) are known ways to launch a professional career.

TOURISM EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AT MIUN

MIUN was a pioneer in higher education in tourism when the first Swedish undergraduate program was launched in the 1970s. What was initially a two-year college degree was later replaced by a three-year undergraduate degree in tourism studies. Today, it is offered as a subject at the undergraduate level through the three-year program, which amounts to 180 European Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) focusing on destination development, and through several individual courses offered both on campus and through web-based instruction. At the advanced level, a one-year Magister (60 ECTS) and a two-year Master (120 ECTS) are offered with the option to graduate in either tourism studies or human geography. In 2009, MIUN began offering a four-year graduate PhD program in tourism studies. The education programs are offered by the Department of Tourism Studies and Geography at the Faculty of the Humanities. This department has approximately 20 faculty members, including three full professors, four associate professors (Docents), five lecturers, and eight doctoral students (five of whom are in tourism studies).

MIUN requires a student to obtain a total of 240 ECTS. Ninety ECTS should come from a combination of various courses taken within the department, other departments at MIUN, or other PhD programs in Sweden or abroad. The remaining 150 ECTS are derived from a written thesis. This must be an individual work using social science theories within the field of tourism. It can be written in either Swedish or English. It should be of a scientific quality that is publishable in scientific journals.

The thesis can either be submitted as a monograph or a combination of scientific papers (the latter option is most common). If written as a combination of papers, the thesis should also have an introduction containing a synthesis of the papers included, an overview of the thesis topic(s), and a discussion. It should further include at least four independent papers, of which at least three have been published or have been accepted for publication in scientific journals through a double-blind review process. The candidate must be listed as a single author on at least one of the papers. Papers with more than one author can be included in the thesis if the work done by the candidate can clearly be described and quantified. It is required that

the candidate makes at least one presentation at an international scientific conference before defending the thesis. Each candidate must present the thesis at three stages: a “planning seminar” before final decision of thesis topic; a “half-time seminar” when the work is half way through; and a “final seminar” when a draft of the entire thesis is available.

Tourism research at MIUN is conducted by the European Tourism Research Institute (ETOUR) established in 1997 by the Swedish Tourist Authority, the Swedish Travel and Tourist Association, and MIUN. Today, ETOUR is one of several research centers at MIUN and the leading producer of scientifically published tourism-related research in the country. It conducts applied research and communicates scientific results that support destination development. The research at ETOUR is organized under the umbrellas of nature-based tourism; e-tourism research for developing, marketing, and managing destinations; tourism’s economic, political, and spatial dynamics; and destinations. The research team at ETOUR includes all academics at the Department of Tourism Studies and Geography, plus an extensive network of national and international collaborators.

Scientific Framework

A standard definition of tourism that is often used today is that of the United Nations World Tourism Organization: “Tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes” (UNWTO, 1995, p.10). Meanwhile, several academics have sought to refine definitions of tourism for the purposes of research. Jafari and Ritchie, for example, argued long ago that a working definition is essential in order to “identify the disciplinary boundaries of tourism and its building blocks” (1981, p. 15).

Several attempts have been made to define the terms “tourism” and “tourist” over the years, though to this day there is not a single definition that is viewed more favorably than others. That being said, Jafari and Ritchie chose one that perceives tourism as the study of people outside their home environments, the sectors that cater to these people’s needs while traveling and at their destinations, and the impacts that both the tourists and the industry have on host societies.

A more recent definition is that of Tribe, who sees tourism as “the sum of phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction in generating and host regions, of tourists, business suppliers, governments, communities

and environments.” This latter definition does reveal six key dimensions of tourism research: the *tourist* (motivation, choice, satisfaction, interaction, and experience intensity); the *business* (marketing, organization, corporate planning of transport, hospitality, and recreation); the *host community* (attitudes, economic, social, and cultural impacts, as well as assets); the *host environment* (ecological impacts and assets); the *host governments* (tourism measurement, planning, and policy); and the *generating country* (economic, environmental, and cultural effects) (1997, p. 641).

A process view helps in deducing typical characteristics of tourism phenomena. Urry (2002) argues that “tourism encounters are negotiated via intricate webs of interaction through which labor, capital and information flow” (2002, p. 159). This particularly requires the coordination of complex (commercial and social) stakeholder constellations to deliver and mediate tourist experiences. Thus, *connectedness* is seen as the “hallmark” of tourism (Coles, Hall, & Duval, 2006, p. 311). Related research thereby explores complex and multiscale issues, such as networks of tourism flows, organization, and coproduction conceptualized as taking place in clusters and networks (thematic, spatial, electronic, and the like).

Tourism research, typically takes place in the form of a multi- and post-disciplinary study field (Coles et al., 2006; Echtner & Jamal, 1997; Tribe, 2006). Similar to the field of marketing, which borrows from such disciplines as economics, sociology, and psychology, as well as codifying practices from the world of business, tourism borrows from a number of disciplines to investigate and explain its area of interest (Tribe, 1997, p. 649). However, the legitimate sphere of academic enquiry is widening as a result of the relevance driven tourism agenda spanning broad social boundaries. This, in turn, destabilizes the traditional understanding of disciplinarity. Thus, in order to address complex issues of human affairs, scholars increasingly identify themselves with “learning outside of established disciplinary agendas” (Coles et al., 2006, p. 303), thereby effectively modularizing knowledge on new subject matters, theory development, or methods. Examples for new areas of enquiry include tourism and xenotourism, welfare shopping, environmental change, and complexity/chaos theory (Baggio, 2008; Coles et al., 2006).

Moreover, Barnett (1990) alludes to the dualism in higher education with management and engineering schools at one end and departments of sociology, philosophy, and cultural studies at the other end of the spectrum. While the former “produce” highly employable but largely uncritical compliant human resources, the latter produce highly critical and noncompliant individuals with limited employability (Tribe, 2008). In order to

overcome this problem, which is also inherent in tourism research, the PhD program at MIUN strives for a synthesis and a strong practical engagement reflecting both sides of this dualism by combining research approaches encompassing (post)-positivism, interpretivism (constructivism), and critical theory as equivalent paradigms.

While knowledge derived from predominantly value-free and fact-oriented positivist methodologies typically serves technical interests and the discovery of new solutions to (socio)technical problems (management and control), critical theory emphasizes the fact that knowledge is historically and culturally specific and sustained through social practices (Tribe, 2008, p. 246). Consequently, in order to support PhD students' capabilities in terms of critical reflection, contextual understanding and decisionmaking, domain specific issues should be made accessible in a way that their underlying complexity and dynamics will not be disguised. Hence, the formation of graduate programs calls for universally employable research paradigms (Finn & Elliot-White, 2000).

The goal of the MIUN's PhD program is to develop and apply the latest research methods and instruments to successfully cope with new research challenges in tourism. Based on the work of Tribe (1997), Leiper (1995), and Coles et al. (2006), a framework was developed which, rather than having the coherence of a single discipline, is formed by concentrating on tourism as a post-disciplinary study area that encompasses multiple disciplines to investigate and explain the area of interest. In order to avoid an intellectual "free for all," the framework follows the post-disciplinary tradition, thus serving as a guiding principle defining major fields of academic inquiry, both from a conceptual and a methodological perspective (Coles et al., 2006). The framework (Figure 1) combines the concept for creating tourism knowledge (Tribe, 1997, p. 650) with the system framework (Leiper, 1995).

The outer circle represents contemporary disciplines of primary significance for analyzing and understanding the phenomena and additional disciplines ("n") of future relevance (including environmental studies, engineering, forestry, history, and anthropology). Between the outer and the inner shaded circle (the one which represents tourism studies) an area emerges (band "k") representing interaction points between disciplines and the field of tourism where its concepts, such as lifecycle are distilled (Butler, 1980; Tribe, 1997, p. 650). Similarly to Tribe (1997), the inner circle of tourism studies is composed of two areas of enquiry: business and non-business-related tourism research, thereby considering two modes of knowledge production; academic institutions of higher education and the non-institutionalized and extra-disciplinary application context, typical for the (external) world of

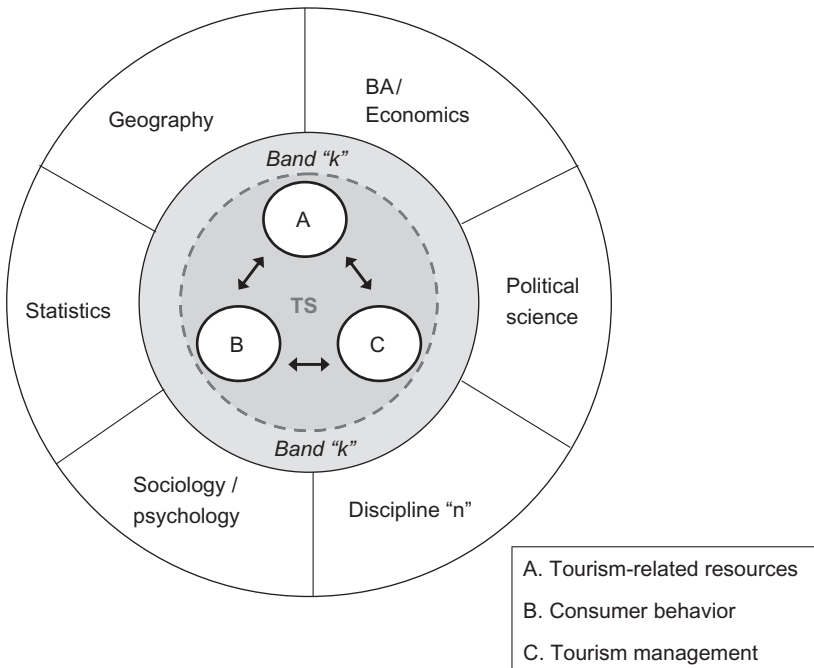


Figure 1. Framework for Tourism Studies at MIUN

Source: Adapted from Tribe (1997, p. 650).

tourism (industry, government, NGOs, research institutes, consultancies; Tribe, 1997, p. 652). Finally, tourism studies as a field of academic inquiry at MIUN is particularly based on the three "pillars": tourism-related resources, consumer behavior, and tourism management.

Tourism-Related Resources Pillar A focuses on environmental, cultural, and sociotechnical resources devoted to tourism production processes, and hence on the sustainable treatment of these resources and their expected impacts (Carter, Baxter, & Hockings, 2001; Fuchs & Höpken, 2011; Fuchs, Höpken, Föger, & Kunz, 2010). From a disciplinary perspective, research dealing with natural resources devoted to tourism is mainly supported by disciplines relating to nature sciences (physics, geography, ecology, forestry, planning, and engineering). Research on human resources related to tourism, primarily, follows the social science paradigm (sociology, psychology, human

geography, cultural sciences and ethics, management science, and more). Finally, the sociotechnical study field related to tourism borrows from both social and natural sciences (computer science, management science, economics, and engineering).

Consumer Behavior in Tourism The second pillar deals with consumer behavior in tourism. It investigates the various and over-time changing behavioral and attitudinal aspects of tourists related to the consumption or experience of tourism goods, services, images, and emotions (McKercher, 2005; Pizam & Mansfield, 1999). It also focuses on tourists' consumption and mobility patterns in time and space (Hall & Page, 2006). Thus, the first issue builds upon social and behavioral science disciplines and study fields, such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, micro-/experimental economics, social-psychology, marketing, and demographics (Pearce, 2006). In contrast, issues related to tourist mobility mainly borrow from geography, engineering, computer science, and management and business studies, respectively.

Tourism Management The third pillar focuses on the functioning and the interplay of the various operations and processes within and among tourism organizations, while the planning and development of destinations is analyzed. The study field can mainly be based on management sciences and business subdisciplines, such as business administration, operations research, managerial economics, entrepreneurial research, internationalization, and strategic management (Page, 2006). The latter study field can mainly borrow from history, geography, and social sciences (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003).

Based on the aforementioned specifications concerning the research framework, the content areas of the PhD program for tourism studies at MIUN are conceptualized as circling around the three pillars employing a post-disciplinary approach to the study area (Figure 2).

These topics apply to several of the subthemes in each pillar, and are accordingly considered in the "roadmap" (Table 1), comprising the research agenda for graduate tourism studies at MIUN.

Requirements and Course Offerings

As a rule, Swedish universities offer a limited number of positions for doctoral candidates. Because the normal stipulation is that students who pursue doctoral studies in Sweden must have 100% funding throughout their

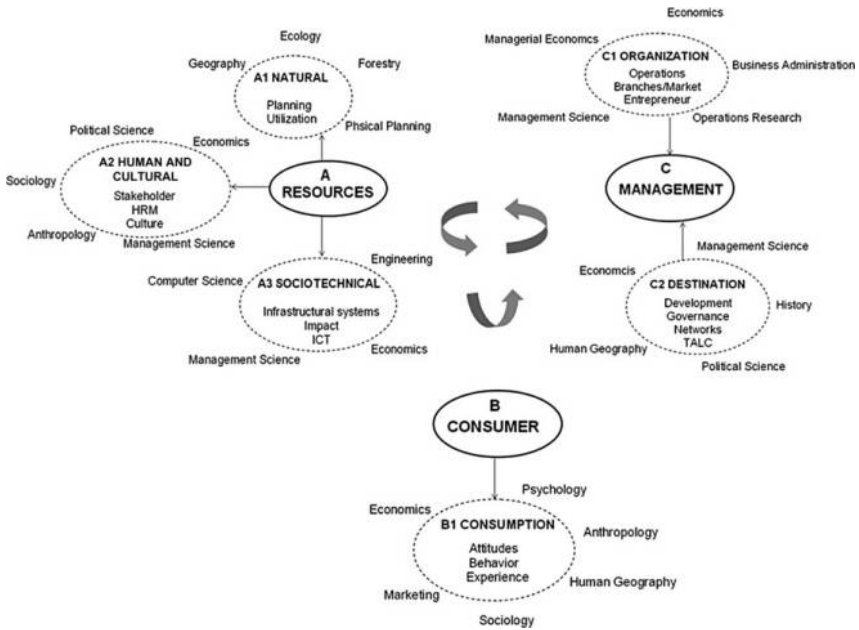


Figure 2. Interplay of Graduate Fields in Tourism Studies at MIUN

studies, universities either offer one through internal or external funds. The money available for a position, which in the Swedish university system is an academic rank, is normally a regular salary for five years and comes with a 20% teaching allocation. Being a relatively small university, MIUN normally, offers approximately two internal grants per doctoral program, while the rest are funded by external projects. This means that while presently there are five students at the doctoral level in the department, only two are internally funded. Because of the limited funding sources, these positions do not open up annually. Rather, they are advertised only when funds are available. A student can take up her/his appointment at any time of the year.

For students to be admitted into the Program in “Tourism Studies,” they must have a master degree in either tourism studies, business, or one of the social sciences. Preference is given to candidates who demonstrate advanced knowledge of tourism as a scientific area of inquiry. Experience in teaching and/or conducting research is considered a plus. To apply, applicants must submit an application package that includes a detailed

Table 1. Roadmap for Graduate Tourism Studies at MIUN

Pillar	Core Content, Underlying and Neighboring Research Disciplines	Main Research Question: Understanding ...	Research Agenda (Examples)	Example Literature
Tourism-related resources	<i>Natural resources devoted to tourism:</i> geography, ecology, forestry, engineering, political science, physical planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Environmental impact of tourism – Nature as tourism assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Natural resource usage and space use dynamics (visitor flows, capacity constraints, biodiversity, climate change) – Planning and utilization of natural resources (zoning, land use optimizations, attraction systems) 	Ioannides and Debbage (1998), Dowling and Page (2002), Hall and Page (2006), Newsome, Moore, and Dowling (2012)
	<i>Human and cultural resources involved in tourism:</i> sociology, economics, human geography, anthropology, ethics, management science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Social impact of tourism – Culture as tourism assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Human resource management (quality of life, carrying capacity, hospitality) – Workforce development (education and employability, career paths development, seasonality, training and education) – Cultural resources (cultural heritage, authenticity, indigenous tourism) 	Ateljevic and Doorne (2000), Baum, Amoah, and Spivack (1997), McKercher and Du Cros (2002), Richards (2007), Ryan and Aicken (2005)
	<i>Sociotechnical resources devoted to tourism:</i> computer science, management science, regional and macro-economics, engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Impacts of tourism – Sociotechnical assets in tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Infrastructural systems (transport systems, resorts, events, and attractions) – Impact studies (value added, satellite accounting, multiplier effects) – Information and communication technologies (recommender & notification systems, mobile technologies, Knowledge Management Systems) 	Adams and Parmenter (1995), Werthner and Klein (1999), Getz (2005)

Table 1. (Continued)

Pillar	Core Content, Underlying and Neighboring Research Disciplines	Main Research Question: Understanding ...	Research Agenda (Examples)	Example Literature
Consumer behavior	<p><i>Tourists' consumption:</i> psychology, anthropology, sociology, marketing, micro-economics</p> <p><i>Tourists' mobility:</i> geography, sociology, physical planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tourists' consumption – Experience quality – Mobility in time and space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tourist behavior (information, planning, spending, bundling, loyalty, satisfaction, image, benefits) – The tourism service and destination product (perceptive dimensions) – Travel motives and values, traveling styles – Concepts of mobility, time geography, transport geography, visitor flows, spatial tracking, travel modes, location, generation, and hosting regions 	<p>Pizam and Mansfield (1999), McKercher (2005), Manning (2010)</p> <p>Butler (1980), Burns and Novelli (2008), Hall (2005), Page (2005), Lau and McKercher (2007)</p>
Tourism management	<p><i>Tourism organizations and operations:</i> business administration, operations research, managerial economics, strategic management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Interplay of functional areas in tourism organizations and competitiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Process optimization and redesign (marketing, electronic distribution, information technologies) – Tourism businesses and markets (hotel operations, tourism organizations, electronic intermediaries, strategy formation) – Entrepreneurship (product development, strategic partnerships) 	<p>Leiper (1995), Carter et al. (2001), Page (2006), Holmes et al. (2007)</p>

Table 1. (Continued)

Pillar	Core Content, Underlying and Neighboring Research Disciplines	Main Research Question: Understanding ...	Research Agenda (Examples)	Example Literature
	<i>Destination management and development:</i> management science, history, geography, political science, institutional economics	– Interplay of destination businesses, resources, and organizations	– Destinations and tourism networks – Tourism area lifecycle – Destination development and governance (positioning, branding, positioning, communicating, auditing, and benchmarking)	Sinclair and Stabler (1999), Morgan, Pritchard, and Pride (2002), Ritchie and Crouch (2003), Russell and Faulkner (2004), Fuchs and Weiermair (2004)

proposal on the tourism inquiry theme that they wish to pursue. Shortlisted students are interviewed, their references are consulted, and only the ones deemed outstanding are selected. The successful applicants should develop an individual study plan according to the guidelines provided by the faculty. This is reviewed annually by the student's appointed committee, which typically includes a lead supervisor who must hold the rank of professor or docent and an additional faculty member who holds at least the rank of Senior Lecturer. In order to supervise a PhD student at a Swedish university, the faculty members should have already completed a supervision course. In some cases, a third external advisor from another department or another university may be appointed to the committee if that person possesses a specialization the committee deems useful to the student's work.

For the thesis defense, the thesis committee chooses an opponent (a person with a PhD who works at another institution) whose task is to oppose the student's work. The opponent presents the work of the PhD candidate and discusses its merits and shortcomings. Meanwhile, a committee of three examiners makes the decision as to whether or not the student has passed the defense. Of these three examiners, at least one has to be from another university, either in Sweden or another country.

To complete the PhD program, the student must have taken several classes, in addition to conducting research and writing a thesis. There are two types of courses, mandatory and optional. At least three of the former courses should be in tourism and the choice is done in agreement between the candidate and the supervisors. The department offers four courses worth 7.5 ECTS each. They are “Advances in tourism-related resources,” “Advances in tourism management,” “Advances in tourism consumer behavior,” and an independent literature study where the student examines key writings related to his/her study subject. The student is required to take at least three courses in this category.

Moreover, the department regularly organizes supplemental (blocked) PhD courses offered by guest professors in such subjects as event management, complexity and network analysis (Baggio, 2008), and business intelligence (Höpken, Fuchs, & Lexhagen, 2014). Finally, additional courses, such as courses in philosophy of sciences and quantitative methods (multivariate statistical analysis, structural equation modeling, etc.) are offered by other MIUN departments. It is also possible, upon agreement with the committee, for a student to take courses at other universities either in Sweden or abroad. Courses in tourism are offered in the form of seminars, lectures, and tutorials. Students are expected to complete all the required readings before the seminar. They may also be required to participate in field activity. Examination is based on students’ active participation in seminars as well as on individual written assignments, including paper presentations with opponents.

The first PhD course, “Advances in tourism management” (7.5 ECTS) aims to identify how advanced tourism management perspectives relate to theories and fields of research and how they can be combined to generate insights and theoretical propositions. One focus is the interplay of operations and processes within and among tourism organizations, thus applying concepts and methods from business administration, operations research, economics, entrepreneurial research, and strategic management. Moreover, the planning, management, and development of destinations are studied through lenses of economics, geography, and political sciences. Doctoral students can take the course and so can other doctoral students from other programs. The course is also offered to PhD students from other European countries, including Denmark, Finland, and Iceland.

The “Advances in tourism-related resources” course (7.5 ECTS) focuses on the planning, development, and management of natural and human-built (sociotechnical) resources, such as information and communication technologies. Specific attention is paid to how tourism uses such resources

and the economic, sociocultural, and environmental impacts of tourism-related activities on these resources and the destinations overall. As such, tourism is examined in a holistic manner, as an integral component of a destination, which both affects and is affected by other sectors. Upon completion of the course, the students gain an informed understanding of the impact that tourism has on particular destinations and on a broader scale, global society. In addition, they feel capable to analyze how the use of resources and tourism development interplay and recognize techniques for directing tourism development within the tenets of growth management. The students are able to analyze the central obstacles to managing tourism's growth in a sustainable manner and to identifying means and methods to overcome associated problems, and to develop within their own doctoral work theoretical constructs based on concepts of sustainable development, growth management, and planning.

A third course, "Advances in tourism consumer behavior" (7.5 ECTS) covers topics in consumer behavior in tourism. In particular, it investigates various and over-time changing behavioral and attitudinal aspects of tourists related to experience. The course modules include the psychology of consumer behavior, consumer behavior in marketing, especially relating to information and communication technologies targeting the final user, such as mobile (ubiquitous) services, electronic recommender and review system, tourists' mobility, techniques for modeling consumer behavior, and methods in researching consumer behavior. Central questions during the course involve tourists' consumption and their mobility in time and space.

CONCLUSION

The PhD program in tourism studies at MIUN was inaugurated in 2009 and is the first of its type in Scandinavia. One student has graduated (Brouder, 2013) and there are currently five fully financed students who find themselves at various stages of their studies. They are working under continuous supervision on research on event management, customer-based destination brand equity measurement, the supply-side of nature-based tourism companies in Sweden, residents' coping strategies with tourism, the identification of user-generated content in e-review sites relevant for product development, analysis of e-business readiness, and adoption and impact at the destination level.

A fundamental difference between these PhD students and tourism-oriented academics of the past is that they are now in a stand-alone

program focused specifically on tourism-related phenomena albeit one that draws inspiration from an inter- (post-)disciplinary approach (Coles et al., 2006). That is in stark contrast to earlier doctoral graduates who studied tourism through the lens of their respective parent disciplines. In many ways, one could argue that the MIUN's stand-alone PhD in tourism strives to follow many of the recommendations originally set forth by Jafari and Ritchie (1981) with regards to prescribed frameworks in tourism education. Jafari himself would be proud to see that this program and others like it have managed to finally evade many of the original obstacles by creating such a program, which he and Ritchie identified more than three decades ago.

In sum, the MIUN graduate program is set up to provide well-trained and highly skilled professionals, competitive in both academia and industry positions. Career possibilities include academic research, higher education, applied research institutes, specialist and management positions in tourism companies, government, and NGOs, as well as consultancy and small firm business operations. The goal is to educate successful candidates who develop specialist skills in future frontier areas related to sustainable development of resources, nature-based tourism, and planning or business intelligence for marketing.

While the establishment of the PhD program at MIUN has been successful in several ways, there are also many challenges with respect to further development. A key issue is to grow in volume in order to provide a sufficient base of students that will maintain good disciplinary dynamics and continuity of the program. MIUN, being a small-size university at a peripheral location, must benefit from increased cooperation with other tourism departments in Sweden, as well as internationally.