The Italian Mountain Lab, an opportunity to communicate the experience tourism

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Abstract

The Italian Mountain Lab, is an important project (supported by public institutions and other private partners) dedicated to the development of mountain areas. Three universities (The Mountain University – Edolo campus of the University of Milan, the University of Eastern Piedmont and the University of Tuscia) work together to advance an action program aimed at increasing the awareness towards the problems and the opportunities of mountain territories. Starting from a short theoretical introduction, the poster describes the methods and tools of Italian Mountain Lab and put special emphasis on the communication opportunities aimed at increasing sensitivity and awareness towards the chances of the experience tourism (particularly about the theme of learning) in the Alps and the Apennines. The goal of the poster is to stress the tourism communication as a priority relating to the management of mountain areas and to suggest actions to meet the challenges that threaten their local resources.

Information

Italian Mountains (Spinelli G., Istat 2019)

Coglio (VB), Piedmont Mountain (Ferrario C., 2019)

Methodology

| REVIEW | Italian and foreign literature |
| CREATE | An annotated bibliography |
| COLLECT | Quantitative and qualitative data |
| ANALYSE | The exiting situation and case studies chosen based on perceived level of success |
| JOIN | Research efforts conducted by investigators from different disciplines |
| COMMUNICATE | Results with appropriate way (meeting, conference, papers, summer school, master…) |

Research timeline

Time: from March, 2017 to June, 2021

Fund: 1.000.000,00 euro

Step 1: the stakeholders start a collaboration and in a Kick off Meeting defined the network defined (December 2017)

Step 2: the Universities contextualized the tasks (October 2018):

WP 1 RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND FUNDING MECHANISMS

Project 1: Agriculture & forestry (high value supply chain)

Project 2: Environment, territory and community (tourism)

Project 3: Development, socio-economic aspects, local governance

WP 2 TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION

meetings, conferences and summer schools

WP 3 COORDINATION THE NETWORK AND GOVERNANCE

* to create a network with Italian and foreign organizations for the innovation and research
* to increase the database with new relationship
* to implement a operating system

Conclusion

The 35.4% of the Italian territory is mountainous (ISTAT, 2010) and part of these areas are in crisis (little economic growth, depopulation). The core of the project is socio-economic and environmental development of mountain areas.

In particular, the UPO team analyse how the tourism can change significant these Italian territories to make substantial impacts on the mountain socio-economic sphere. Thanks to a transdisciplinary research (biology, history, anthropology, geography, marketing), the investigators work jointly to create a new conceptual, theoretical and methodological approach to identify which experiences can be offered to the visitors to increase the destination competitiveness.

The experience tourism may be recognised as a key of success, innovation and competitiveness, and also is about creating a memorable and unique event. Currently, tourists seek appealing, unique and memorable experiences shaped by their motivations, prior travel experiences, individual perceptions, behaviours and ways of coping with the environment. For this reason, the study focus on this aspect of the tourism and it want to address also the education feature.

The research aims to explore the experience tourism as tool to attract resources and protect the environment. To do so, it is necessary to new standpoint: achieving more high level of life it is necessary the implementation of quality and unusual management strategies.

The mountain area is an ideal context because it related to a set of possible activities involving both passive and active participation by guests. Thanks to experiential and educational tourism, this activities can be communicate and became good practices to preserve the ancient traditions and the natural environment (sustainability).

Currently the team is defining the methodology and the conceptual aspect, studying success experiences, organizing informative seminars on specific studies that link the mountain aspects with the natural environment, the history and the tourism. The results will be communicate to the communities with meeting, publications, training courses and so on.

References

UNIMONT: https://www.unimontagna.it/
UPO: https://www.unipo.it/
UNITUS: http://www.unitus.it/
ISTAT: https://www.istat.it/