

Critical elements in determining tourism routes: a systematic literature review

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ABSTRACT The development of tourism routes often involves supply and demand drivers; however, the roles of both perspectives are not well understood. This study explores this approach from both perspectives using a systematic literature review. The review of these articles is associated with the scope of the development of tourism routes. Guided by the (PRISMA) method, 56 articles were retrieved for the analysis. A comprehensive review of the articles extracted six main elements – (supply perspective) – participation, route marketing, and promotion, government strategies, destination competitiveness (demand perspective), tourist motivation, tourist satisfaction, and loyalty. Several recommendations for future studies are highlighted that relate to the approach and subject of studies from other perspectives. Overall, the concept of developing a successful tourism route requires parties from both supply and demand perspectives.

KEY WORDS tourism route – PRISMA – supply perspective – development perspective

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1. Introduction

For decades, trails and routes have formed the basis of tourist mobility patterns, contributing to recreational activities, a plethora of travel plans, and tourism progress worldwide. First utilised by explorers, traders, migrants, and pilgrims for generations, trails and routes later provided a foundation for showcasing many tourism products, thus attracting local and international tourists. These pathways have also shaped today's current highway systems (Timothy, Boyd 2015).

The establishment of tourism routes seems to have massive potential for ascertaining tourist destinations (Dayoub et al 2020; Proos, Hattingh 2020; Timothy, Boyd 2015; Denstadli, Jacobsen 2011; Rogerson 2007). However, they are frequently viewed only from the perspective of transportation passageways, undermining the contribution that could be derived from the tourism perspective. Otherwise, nature trails and scenic routes as linear corridors, for example, serve as attractions and resources for tourists and recreationists, providing a wide range of cultural and nature-based opportunities to be capitalised on.

There is also evidence that they add to positive socioeconomic returns and greater awareness of conserving natural and cultural environments among tourists and the local community (Timothy, Boyd 2015; Rogerson 2007). For instance, route development is often based on specific attraction theory implementation. Some routes provide access to a single primary tourist attraction, whereas most routes ought to serve secondary attractions and link them as groups (Briedenhann, Wickens 2004).

As tourism routes have recently gained prominence in enhancing the tourism industry (Rogerson 2007; Timothy, Boyd 2015), there is a need for a strategic approach to developing a successful tourism route. Within the scope of this review, this study focuses on the role of supply and demand perspectives.

This paper aims to critically review and provide an overview of critical elements in the development of tourism routes using a systematic literature review of scientific publications (peer review). This method provides a report and synthesises some of the main features of the status regarding this topic. All the publications reviewed were from 1990 to 2020 and will form the study's timeframe for changes over time.

2. A systematic literature review framework on the tourism routes development

According to Higgins et al. (2011), systematic literature review can be defined by examining past literature studies by formulating transparent, organised, and replicable procedures with every step of the process that can be studied and comprehended synthesised. There are several advantages of using systematic reviews compared to formal assessments. As Mallet et al. (2012) explained, a systematic

review through a transparent article retrieval process covers a more prominent research area with more important goals that can control research bias, ultimately resulting in a solid basis of evidence. This will provide scholars and researchers with high-quality evidence to produce better and more accurate results. Furthermore, this type of review emphasises transparency, which includes criteria that must be well-defined and justified, while articles being excluded must have the right reasons (Greyson et al. 2019). In addition, this type of review is processed under strict protocols, with publication standards and established guidelines, thus enabling researchers to navigate and guide themselves in a proper manner and within a designated track (Haddaway et al. 2018).

Despite the abundance of studies on tourism routes, a comprehensive overview of the approach of supply and demand perspectives in the development of tourism routes has not yet been created. Therefore, this study attempts to fill the knowledge gaps in understanding, identifying, and determining the critical elements from supply and demand perspectives for developing tourism routes. This research can thus be justified and issues clarified while attempting to understand the gaps and establish essential aspects for a potential outlook. The researchers mapped all the literature to understand the lessons learned from the past and discussed the potential of this topic for the plan, which will hopefully provide a holistic baseline for international tourism route research.

In developing the framework of systematic literature review for developing tourism routes, the current study is guided by the main research question: What is the critical element in the success of tourism route development? Hence, the principal focus of the investigation is strategy adaptation toward the development of tourism routes. More importantly, exceptional attention has been given to tourism routes globally, and for this study, systematic literature review is considered an appropriate method of review from the existing literature.

3. Methodology

This section explains the five main subsections of the method used to review the concept of tourism routes. The technique used by the reviewers is PRISMA, which includes resources, steps of the systematic process, eligibility exclusion criteria, abstraction of data, and analysis to be employed in this study.

3.1. PRISMA

Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA), introduced by Moher et al. (2009), is a procedural standard for conducting

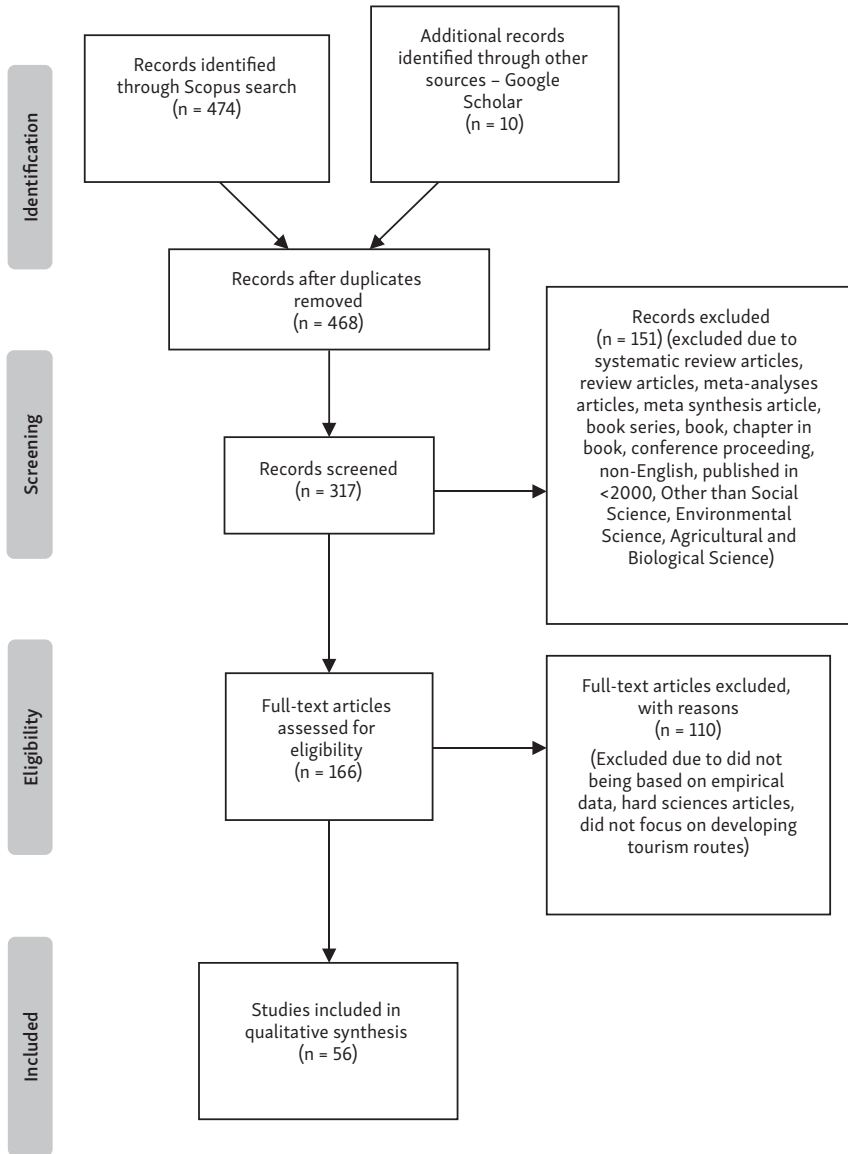


Fig. 1 – The Flow Diagram of the study. Source: Adapted from Moher et al. 2009.

systematic literature reviews. The standard publication procedure was required to guide the authors in searching for related and required information that would allow them to synthesise and evaluate the quality and facilitate a detailed review (Fig. 1). Furthermore, PRISMA accesses an extensive database of existing literature within a defined time, thus enabling a specific search of terms (Shaffril et al.

2019). In addition, Sierra-Correa and Cantera Kitz (2015) revealed that PRISMA provides three unique advantages: (i) describing a straightforward research question that authorises a systematic search, (ii) identifying the eligibility of the criteria (inclusion and exclusion), and (iii) attempts to assess extensive databases in the existing literature within a definite time. Moreover, PRISMA provides systematic information that allows quality reference for future studies (Shaffril et al. 2019).

3.2. Resources

The initial attempt in this study relied on a central journal database, Scopus. The databases were robust and covered more than 256 fields of study. Gussenbaeur and Haddaway (2020) revealed that 'Scopus' is included in 14 databases suggested to be dominant in the article search process. Regardless, some concerns arose as there are still weaknesses in databases, such as the accuracy of the keywords and limiting the searching function (Bates et al. 2017). However, some databases have provided exceptional and advanced processes. In addition, it should be noted that there is no perfect and comprehensive database; hence, researchers must perform a systematic search from various databases to retrieve relevant articles (Xiao, Watson 2019). In this case, the current study used manual searching techniques using several databases.

4. Steps of the systematic review process

4.1. Identification

In determining the relevant articles for the current study, the identification involved three main stages. First, the titles of the main keywords were selected (tourism and routes) to search for related articles. In addition, to boost the likelihood of obtaining relevant articles, reviewers also used a combination of the associated terms (Table 1). However, as previously stated, manual searching from different databases with similar keywords and phrases was conducted. As a result, 10 and 474 articles were retrieved in the first stage of the systematic review.

Table 1 – Search String

Databases	Key words
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (tourism AND routes) AND (factors OR success OR key OR innovation OR potential OR development OR sustainable)

Table 2 – The Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criterion	Eligibility	Exclusion
Literature type	Journal (research article)	
Language	English	Non-English
Time Frame	2001–2020	<2001
Subject Area	Social Science	Other than social science

4.2. Screening

The next step was the screening process, and the initial stage involved the removal of duplicate articles. Altogether, 16 articles were removed, while 468 articles were screened according to the reviewers' exclusion criteria and the inclusion criteria. Several criteria were established for this study. First, the literature study mainly focused on journals (research articles), considered a primary source of empirical data. Nevertheless, the reviewers still thought of additional sources because of the limited resources in this study.

Moreover, this review focused only on articles published in English journals. In addition, it should be noted that the period of the timeline from 2001 to 2020 was adopted for this study. Most importantly, articles published in social sciences were considered to enhance the possibility of relevant articles. In total, 110 articles were excluded (Table 2).

4.3. Eligibility

The final stage of the process was eligibility. Overall, 56 articles were collected and examined based on the title, abstract, and full content. This was to ensure that all articles were acceptable and fulfilled the criteria in the execution of this study to obtain the objective of the present study.

4.4. Data Abstraction and Analysis

To develop a database, the remaining 56 articles were processed and categorised according to all items and information from the articles. Content analysis was conducted through thorough reading in full (in-depth) to extract and identify the key elements and sub-elements. Table 3 provides an overview of the critical factors in developing tourism routes.

5. Results

5.1. General findings

The findings produced a significant key element in developing a sustainable tourism route. Overall, the 56 articles included in the eligibility phase to be analysed comprehensively were viewed from the principal research question: What is the critical element in developing a tourism route? The analysis identified six main factors related to tourism development (Table 3). Overall, 56 articles were selected for analysis. From 2001 to 2020, there has been a consistent increase in tourism route development research. From 2001 to 2010, between one and four papers on improving tourism routes were published annually. From 2011 to 2020, between two and seven articles will be published annually. In addition, the number of tourism-related scientific journals has increased during the year. For instance, “African Journal of Hospitality” and “Tourism Leisure” have been published annually since 2004, while “Journal of Heritage Tourism” has been published annually since 2006. This demonstrated that tourism-related research has been critically essential over the previous two decades.

Four methodologies were applied from the 56 selected articles (Table 4). Thirty-six articles used the qualitative method (64%), quantitative method (11 articles (20%)), and mixed methods combining qualitative and quantitative methods (six articles), while three articles used the GIS approach in their studies.

All 56 articles selected for the review were published in various journals (Table 5). Sustainability (five articles) and the Journal of Tourism Management (four articles) had the highest number of publications related to developing tourism routes. Tourism Recreation Research and Development Southern Africa published three articles, while the rest of the journal had one and two articles in terms of numbers.

5.2. Participation of Stakeholders

Stakeholders are the major players in the tourism industry. The range of involvement of stakeholders working collaboratively in the planning and development of tourism routes is crucial (Dayoub et al. 2020; Ramsey, Everitt 2007). The interaction between stakeholders is accounted for from the beginning of development to its ever-continuing management (Hardy 2003; Nowers, De Villiers, Myburgh 2002; Timothy, Boyd 2015). Horák et al. (2015) emphasised that the effective integration of all stakeholders, strategic planning, and purposeful implementation of policies and possible activities in developing tourism routes are necessary. For example, Proos, Kath, and Hattingh (2017) found that a lack of support from stakeholders is

Table 3 – The six main elements of tourism routes

Authors	Year	Participation of Stakeholder	Route Marketing and Promotion	Government Strategies	Destination Attractiveness and Competitiveness	Tourist Motivation	Tourist Satisfaction
Dayoub, Yang, Dayoub, Omran, Li	2020	x		x			
Proos Hattingh	2020	x			x		
Roy, Gretzel	2020	x	x	x			
Mutana, Mukwada	2020	x			x	x	x
Trišić, Štetić, Privitera, Nedelcu	2020	x	x	x	x		x
Zulkifli, Ibrahim, Zakariya	2020	x			x		
Barroco, Amaro	2020	x	x				
Zdon-Korzeniowska, Noviello	2019	x	x	x			
Bambi, Iacobelli, Rossi, Pellegrini, Barbari	2019	x		x			
Cava Jimenez, de la Torre, Rojas	2019					x	x
Tkaczynski, Rundle-Thiele	2019	x	x	x			
Widawski, Oleśniewicz	2019	x	x	x	x		
Ramukumba	2019				x	x	x
Zakariya, Ibrahim, Wahab	2019	x		x	x		
Qiu, Hsu, Li, Shu	2018					x	x
Frash, Blose, Smith, Scherhag	2018					x	x
Breiby, Slåtten	2018						x
Oikonomopoulou, Delegou, Sayas, Moropoulou	2017	x	x				
Mutana, Mukwada	2017	x			x		x
Aukland	2017	x	x	x			
Proos, Kokt, Hattingh	2017	x	x			x	
MacLeod	2017	x	x	x	x		
Xu, Leung, Barbieri	2016	x		x	x		
MacLeod	2016	x	x	x			
Božić, Tomić	2016	x		x	x		

Authors	Year	Participation of Stakeholder	Route Marketing and Promotion	Government Strategies	Destination Attractiveness and Competitiveness	Tourist Motivation	Tourist Satisfaction
Fyal, Templeton, Fjellstul, Sonmez	2016			x		x	
Horák, Kozumplíková, Somerlíková, Lorencová, Lampartová	2015	x	x	x			
Telfer	2015	x	x	x			
Ispas, Constantin, Candrea	2015	x	x				
Camprubí Galí	2015		x				
Fjellstul, Fyall	2015	x		x			x
Zheng	2015		x			x	x
Timothy	2014		x	x			
De La Torre, Fernández, Pérez Naranjo	2014	x		x			
Antonson, Jacobsen	2014	x	x	x			
Nemeth, Che	2013		x	x			
Arslan	2013				x	x	
Maurizio, Pattanaro	2012	x	x				
Marschall	2012	x	x	x	x	x	x
Denstadli, Jacobsen	2011	x	x	x	x		
Snowball, Courtney	2010	x		x			
Cartan, Carson	2009	x	x	x			
Zoomers	2008	x	x	x			
Rogerson	2007	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ramsey, Everitt	2007	x	x	x			
Zillinge	2007		x	x	x		
Lourens	2007		x	x			
Shih	2006				x		
Plumme, Telfer, Hashimoto	2006	x	x	x			
Hemme	2005	x	x		x		
Briedenhann, Wickens	2004	x		x	x		
Hardy	2003	x	x	x	x	x	x
Olsen	2003	x		x	x		
Nowers, de Villiers, Myburgh	2002	x	x				
Moulin, Boniface	2001	x	x			x	x
Telfer	2001	x	x	x	x		

Table 4 – Research Method

Method	No.	%
Quantitative	11	20
Qualitative	36	64
Mixed	6	11
GIS	3	5
Total	56	100

the main issue in promoting the Maloti Drakensboug Route, and there was a need for support and cooperation among these organisations, which consequently managed to strengthen the image of the destination (Proos, Hattingh 2020).

Similarly, Roy Gretzel (2020) outlined that in the case of regional and national thematic routes in India, a collaboration of multiple stakeholders is essential in establishing and sustaining the identity of the theme routes. In addition, most alliances need to work together to promote the Niagara Wine Route to maintain its identity (Telfer 2001a). This indicates that stakeholders play a critical role in developing successful tourism routes.

Stakeholder involvement is formed at various levels through strategic alliances (Telfer 2001b). He stressed that in terms of horizontal and vertical partnerships, stakeholders should work together to plan and develop tourism routes. Nowers, De Villiers, and Myburgh (2002) stressed that sharing information between wine operators and local tourism authorities is a critical factor that leads to the success of the tourism wine route. Local engagement played a significant role. Community participation among tourism stakeholders on Australia's Gunbarrel Highway could potentially improve the diversification of the tourism market within the region (Cartan, Carson 2009). Indeed, a good framework of cooperation between the government, local councils, private enterprises and associations, the tourism industry, and local councils is essential for establishing a route within the region (Lourens 2007). Thus, the management concept of 'bottoms up' and 'top down' directives in the planning and development of tourism routes will have a distinctly positive impact when the stakeholders' views are taken holistically.

5.3. Route Marketing and Promotion

An essential basis for successful tourism routes is *adequate information and marketing promotion* of any route tourism initiative (Proos, Hattingh 2020). According to Meyer (2004), most examples of globally designed tourism routes that attract day visitors and tourists neglect to provide transparent information and lack marketing. For instance, Proos and Kokth. Haattings (2017) outlined the satisfaction of

Table 5 – Publications per Journal

Journal	No.
African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure	1
Agrekon	1
Alam Cipta	1
Anatolia	1
Applied Geography	1
Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	1
Boletín de la Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles	2
Current Issues in Tourism	1
Development Southern Africa	3
e-Review of Tourism Research	1
European Countryside	2
European Planning Studies	1
International Journal of Culture, Tourism, and Hospitality Research	1
International Journal of Heritage Studies	1
International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning	1
International Journal of Tourism Research	1
Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports	1
Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering	1
Journal of Contemporary Religion	1
Journal of Destination Marketing and Management	1
Journal of Heritage Tourism	1
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	1
Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change	1
Journal of Tourism and Development	1
Journal of Vacation Marketing	2
Land Use Policy	1
Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences	1
Planning Malaysia	1
Prairie Forum	1
Public Archaeology	1
South African Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation	1
Sustainability (Switzerland)	5
Tourism and Hospitality Research	1
Tourism Geographies	2
Tourism Management	4
Tourism Management Perspectives	1
Tourism Planning and Development	1
Tourism Recreation Research	3
Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences	1
TTRA International Conference	1
Urban Forum	1
Total	56

the marketing level in the Maloti Drakensboug Route and found that marketing for the route is weak with a poor strategy. Furthermore, in India, there is no clear understanding between stakeholders in creating tourism-themed routes, thus reflecting the bad promotion of the routes (Roy, Gretzel 2020).

Similarly, the Iberian Ham routes in Andalusia faced inadequate satisfaction of marketing levels owing to insufficient coordination between public and private entities (Cava Jimenez, de la Torre, Rojas 2019). It is vital to know that promoting tourism routes requires several entities at different levels. Hence, the most critical finding was the collaboration between organisations and stakeholders in marketing tourism-themed routes (Olsen 2003; Ramsey, Everitt 2007).

It should also be noted that the establishment of organisations or entities should be acknowledged with the appropriate strategies adopted. Several scholars have suggested the establishment of a destination marketing organisation (Roy, Gretzel 2020; Proos, Hattingh 2020; Trisic et al. 2020) to strengthen the marketing and promotion of tourism routes. The recognition of destination marketing organisations has had a tremendous impact on tourism routes. Proos Hattingh (2020) outlined the role of the destination marketing organisation in assisting the marketing of the South African War battlefield route. They indicated that the establishment of the destination marketing organisation will ensure that marketing levels reach a broad audience and become sustainable. For example, 'Garhwal Mandal Vikhas Nigam' (Garhwal Region Development Corporation), known as GMVN, promoted and developed the Char Dham Route in India (Aukland 2017). Roy, Gretzel (2020) suggest that destination marketing organisations should have full mandated initiatives to provide innovative strategies to ensure the marketing of viable themed routes.

There are many ways to market and promote tourism routes strategically. Advances in technology have made the dynamics of marketing tools more viable and visible. The development of websites to promote tourism routes seems more appropriate for meeting tourist expectations (Maurizio, Pattanaro 2012). According to Barroco, Amaro (2020), developing a wine route tourism website is essential for increasing a product's marketing level. In addition, tourists are likely to use the Internet to obtain information about their destination before visiting (Maurizio, Pattanaro 2012).

Nevertheless, the use of the website is an exception in marketing, as the constant need to update and maintain website content becomes necessary (Barroco, Amaro 2020). Essentially, the quality of the website is also essential, just as it is to keep updated information for tourists on the Priorat Wineries Route (Camprubi, Gali 2015). Moreover, social media (Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram) can be an increasingly important marketing medium to attract more potential visitors (Ispas, Constantin, Candrea 2015). Of late, social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram substantially influence advertising and significantly target audiences

toward more specific areas of interest and apparent places. According to Hardy (2003), successful tourism routes provide compelling marketing opportunities focusing on target audiences.

Roy, Gretzel (2020) further emphasised the branding element as critical in promoting tourism routes. They outlined several guidelines for marketing theme routes in India, such as the creation of brand identity regarding the significance of the destination and the establishment of themed route brands between stakeholders. Zheng (2015) suggested using the tourist map to recommend routes that can enhance the level of experience in travelling to cultural areas in Banqiao District, New Taipei City.

5.4. Government Strategies

Success in developing tourism routes appears to be related to government initiatives. In most of these organisations, the branding element is a critical factor in implementing policies, strategies, and funding to support the development and sustainability of the region. It should be noted that the development of tourism routes consists of an overall strategy, policies, and the involvement of strategic partnerships (Antonson, Jacobsen 2014). The development of tourism routes should involve firm guidelines to enhance local economic development. For example, Zdon-Korzeniowska, Noviello (2019) indicated that the local government in the Wooden Architecture Route, Poland, should initiate a firm tourism policy to develop a tourism route to stimulate regional economic development. In essence, policies should ensure the preservation and sustainability of the region in the long term (Fyall et al. 2016). In developing the Inanda Heritage Routes in South Africa, the focus was to attract more visitors to that peripheral region while simultaneously enhancing the local community by improving their livelihoods (Marschall 2012).

Dayoub et al. (2020) stressed that funding support is crucial at local and regional levels to ensure development viability. For example, in Waterloo Wellington Ale Trail, Canada, the federal government supported funding initiatives to enhance the project's development (Plummer, Telfer, Hashimoto 2006). Nevertheless, government initiatives that provide financial aid should be more comprehensive. Marschall (2012) suggests that government intervention might be needed to provide financial assistance to support local communities and foster business activities related to tourism services within the route area. Overall, it is crucial to note that the government's approach to developing tourism routes is significant in enhancing tourism development.

5.5. *Tourist Motivations*

To develop tourism routes, it is critical to recognise the interests of potential tourists. Even though the interests of potential tourists to the destinations vary individually, it is crucial to discern the motives within the tourist market segment towards the development of tourism routes. For example, Denstadli, Jacobsen (2011) indicated that the fundamental principle of the reasons for tourists on tourism market routes should be viewed within the “push” (internal) and “pull” (external) contexts. Interestingly, their studies outlined the dimensions of tourists’ motivation and satisfaction in the National Scenic Route in Norway when travelling along routes with two variables: (i) visual experience and (ii) activity-based experiences. The results indicated that visual experiences were more significant than activity-based experiences. Further, according to Denstadli Jacobsen (2011), tourists’ reasons in the tourism route markets are commonly related to external aspects and attributes rather than internal interests. For instance, Olsen (2003) and Hardy (2003) revealed three segments of motivation related to driving tourism routes: (i) touring and stopping where they please, (ii) going from A to B with stops by those who break the journey, but only for short periods, and (iii) going from A to B by those who drive straight through to their destination without stopping.

Overall, motivation in the context of tourism routes seems to be influenced by external rather than internal motives. Hence, the development of tourism routes should focus on strengthening attractions according to the attributes of the destination itself.

5.6. *Destination Competitiveness*

The attractions of the tourism routes themselves seem to influence tourists to their destinations significantly. In the context of tourism routes, destination attraction comprises several characteristics, including the image and identity of the destination, availability of infrastructure, and availability of tourism resources and activities (Rogerson 2007, Ramukumba 2019, Qiu et al. 2018).

First, in the context of the identity and image of the destination, Rogerson (2007) stated that the development of tourism routes is commonly aimed at enhancing the core product’s marketing and sales. Examples include the wine routes in Vojvodina Province, Northern Serbia (Trisic et al. 2020), food trails such as the Iberian Ham Route in Andalusia, Southern Spain, and the Land Flowing with Milk and Honey trail in southwestern Poland (Widawski, Olesniewicz, 2019). On the other hand, some development of tourism routes expressed the image of the destination in thematic terms and included examples such as the

Cultural and Heritage themed routes (Proos, Hattingh 2020; Zdon-Korzeniowska, Noviello 2019; Oikonomopoulou et al. 2017; Bozic, Tomic 2016) or the Spiritual and Pilgrimage theme (Dayoub et al. 2020; Roy, Gretzel 2020; Auckland 2017) or scenic and rural themed themes (Mutana, Mukwada 2020; Zulkifli, Ibrahim, Zakariya 2020; Bambi et al. 2019). Proos and Hattingh (2020) argue that it is essential to characterise the routes that are primarily concerned with the image and identity of the destination. In addition, destination attractions are commonly related to the place's attributes.

Second, the availability of infrastructure and accessibility are the most critical parts of developing tourism routes (Olsen 2003, Hardy 2003). Jacobsen (2011) stressed that facilities and infrastructure play crucial roles in supporting the development of tourism routes. Rogerson (2007) stated that all facilities and services provided within or near a route could enhance the local economy and expand the tourist market. Accessibility is also considered one of the fundamental elements in developing tourism routes (Rogerson 2007). Correspondingly, Xu, Leung, Barbieri (2018) mentioned the importance of the level of accessibility of the Wine Trail in North Carolina, USA.

In the context of the availability of tourism resources and activities, Qiu et al. (2018) suggested that destination attractions must provide a varied offering of tourism-related activities to meet the expectations of tourists. Meanwhile, Ramukumba (2019) indicated that destinations' attractiveness and competitiveness should be constantly reviewed and strengthened to ensure that they remain viable in the tourism market, although the determination may be complicated. Overall, destination attractiveness and competitiveness are crucial for developing tourism routes.

5.7. Tourist satisfaction and loyalty

The satisfaction and loyalty of visitors are crucial in developing tourism routes (Qiu et al. 2018; Denstadli, Jacobsen 2011). In general, visitor satisfaction is related to the specific products or services they experience at a destination. Within the context of tourism routes, the satisfaction of the tourist concerns not only the experience of the journey along the road itself but also the infrastructure and services provided along the journey (Qiu et al. 2018). Hardy (2003) also emphasised that tourism routes constitute roads and attractions along the route, accommodation, rest areas, and roadside services.

Interestingly, Denstadli, Jacobsen (2011) indicated the level of satisfaction of tourists with the attributes of the destination during their journey on a scenic road in Norway. They found that facilities and services play a vital role in achieving tourist satisfaction. Hence, they stressed the quality and standards of tourism

routes, which are vitally important to meet tourists' delight. On a similar note, as argued by Qiu et al. (2018), destination characteristics (accommodation, toilet, rest area) influence tourists' satisfaction levels in Xinjiang Province. Hardy (2003) emphasised that facilities within tourism routes must consistently meet quality standards, as the presentation of the tourism route will satisfy tourists. Jacobsen (2011) suggested that the quality of facilities along or near roads is vital as an attraction for tourists. In addition, Hardy (2003) stated that it is compulsory to evaluate the facilities along the roads (rest areas, toilets, accommodation) to ensure that the quality of standards concerned can meet tourists' satisfaction. Safety and security are vital issues in developing tourism routes (Olsen 2003). Ramukumba (2019) indicated that the safety and security of the Garden Route in South Africa are critical issues related to tourist satisfaction. It should be noted that the tourist's satisfaction ultimately leads to loyalty to the destination. In addition, high levels of happiness increase revisitation (Denstadli, Jacobsen 2011).

6. Discussion

This study aims to assess the critical elements in developing a tourism route. This section divides the approach to developing tourism routes into two perspectives. Figure 2 shows two different views on demand and supply understanding. The first perspective refers to the supply perspective, which is described as strategy adaptation through the participation of stakeholders and government intervention and the marketing and promotion aspects of the routes. The second perspective refers to the demand perspective, covering tourists' satisfaction and loyalty considerations, market potential, destination attractions, and competitiveness.

A literature review revealed that these six critical elements are necessary for developing tourism routes. From the supply perspective, three main components were extracted: participation of stakeholders, route marketing, and government strategies. In contrast, the demand perspective concerned destination attractiveness and competitiveness, tourist motivation, tourist satisfaction, and loyalty. The dimension of supply and demand perspectives for the development of tourism routes is a strategic approach for establishing the success of these developments. This dovetails with the proposition forwarded by Hardy (2003) that the development of tourism routes must be taken holistically by considering both sides of the supply-demand perspective.

7. Future recommendation

This research has raised several questions that require further investigation. First, future scholars should focus on demand perspectives to develop existing or potential tourism routes. By focusing more on the behaviour of tourists, particularly their motivations and intentions in terms of experiencing the attractions of tourism routes, a more definitive perspective can be obtained, allowing for better future planning and policy orientation. It is also vital to explore the indicative satisfaction level of tourists regarding the development of tourism routes, as this will provide clarity and predictive indication for future growth and innovation of tourist destination routes.

Second, based on the number of articles reviewed, 34 fully utilised quantitative approaches, 12 relied on the quantitative method, while the mixed-method and GIS approaches had six and three articles. Future studies should consider the GIS approach using quantitative and qualitative methods. The authors opine that tourism destination routes involve locational issues and network attributes related to spatial perspective. The GIS-combo approach offers a more in-depth analysis of the spatial view. Combination with other methods towards developing tourism routes can only generate better research outcomes that truly benefit the industry devastated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

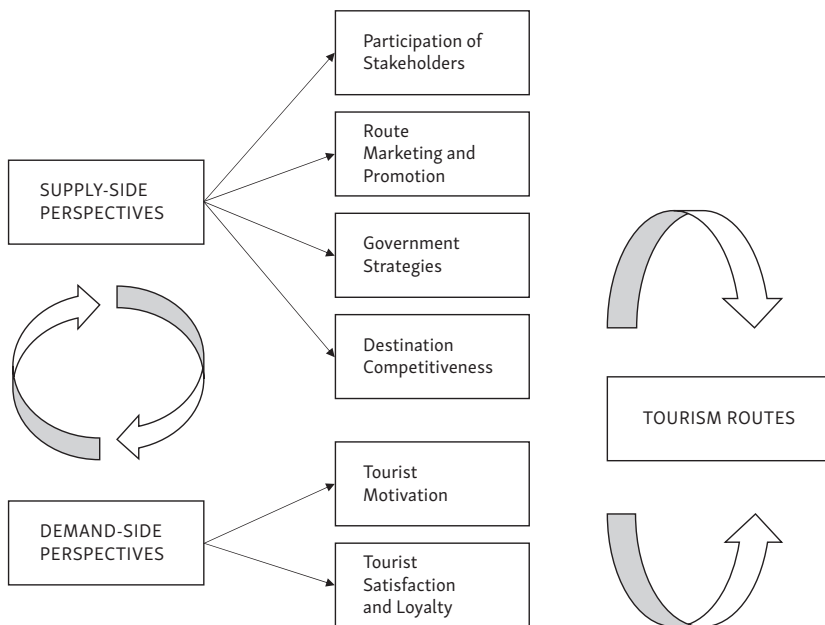


Fig. 2 – Supply and Demand Dimension in Developing tourism routes

8. Conclusion and limitation

The present study was designed to determine the critical elements in developing tourism routes. These studies suggest that, in general, there is a need to pay attention to both supply and demand perspectives in developing successful tourism routes. This review identified six critical elements for creating tourism routes from the supply and demand perspectives. This study revealed that the systematic literature review provided valuable insights into determining the essential elements for developing tourism routes within the supply-demand dimension. Premised upon the systematic review, the authors classified six main strategic elements: participation of stakeholders, route marketing and promotion, government strategies, destination attraction and competitiveness (supply-side perspective), tourist motivation, and tourist satisfaction and loyalty demand-side view. We believe that the study results will add value to the body of knowledge in enhancing our understanding of tourism development routes.

However, these findings are limited to only a single database (Scopus) to collect the data for analysis; studies on the development of tourism routes from other databases were not utilised. Therefore, future studies should consider broadening the range of database coverage to obtain more articles related to the development of tourism routes. In addition, this study only reviewed and focused on English journal articles. More articles were written in non-English journals, so an exhaustive and in-depth analysis could not be conducted.

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