



Article Title

(Re)Creating spaces for tourism: Spatial effects of the 2010/ 2011 Christchurch earthquakes

Citation

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Abstract

This paper applies an economic geographical perspective and Niche Construction Theory (NCT) to the spatial effects of the Christchurch earthquakes on the city's tourism and hospitality spaces. An analysis of policy and planning documents, relevant reports, and twenty-four semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders forms the empirical basis. Niche Construction Theory (NCT) offers an analytical framework to interpret the environmental selection pressures and key stakeholders' responses in the evolving environment. This paper illustrates the spatial reconstruction processes pertaining to urban tourism and the related hospitality industry after a major natural disaster. Emerging themes include displacement and relocation, demographic changes and market shifts for hospitality businesses.

Summary

By studying narratives and factors related to entrepreneurial survival in a post-earthquake tourism and hospitality business environment, this paper presents the dynamic process of spatial evolution of an urban tourism sector during the aftermath of a major natural disaster. Theoretical implications address the nature of transformational impacts on the hospitality and tourism spatial landscapes, related entrepreneurial resilience, and the application of EEG and NCT in a tourism context.

Entrepreneurial resilience was evident in knowledge capital, businesses' adaptability to external shocks, robust business models, procurement and use of market intelligence, and relocation strategies.

Business agility displayed in the aforementioned ways has been the driving force of evolutionary responses of the businesses studied here. This paper thus demonstrates that, for a time, the tourism sector had become virtually indistinguishable from other economic activities as it co- and re-evolved with other dominant sectors of the post-earthquake regional economy. Indeed, hospitality

entrepreneurs emerged as significant change agents in the spatial-temporal distribution of the overall visitor economy as they, among other things, recreated spaces for tourism.