

**Backpackers' contribution to development and poverty alleviation: myth or reality? A critical review of the literature and directions for future research**

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**Abstract**

Due to its great diversity and characteristics, backpackers can increase business opportunities in many destinations that decide to invest on their promotion. Those responsible for destinations planning and management will be able to conduct marketing strategies to segments that are best adapted to local or regional reality, bringing with it, important competitive advantages. It

can be promoted not only in regions where the tourism sector is already well established and developed but also in more peripheral regions usually in the margins of the main tourist flows. This paper aims to present and discuss the backpacker tourism contribution to development and poverty alleviation, emphasising some theoretical aspects related to concepts, constructs and methodological options used in articles published in Scopus platform. A systematic review of literature and a qualitative and quantitative analysis were made. In a first stage data compilation and quantitative analysis of scientific articles published in Scopus database since 1960 was carried out. In a second stage, a qualitative analysis was performed. Despite few exceptions, the majority of governments worldwide continue to ignore backpacker tourism. It was confirmed the lack of quantitative studies that demonstrate, objectively, the economic impact of backpackers and it is suggested the need of quantitative data collected and analysed by statistical official agencies.

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