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ACADEMIC WEEKLY DIGEST

School of Hospitality & Tourism Management

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WHEN A PRO- ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION CREATES A DILEMMA

What happens when a pro-environmental policy creates a social dilemma? SHTM's **Prof Iis Tussyadiah** and **Prof María Rosario González-Rodríguez** (SHTM Visiting Scholar in 2019) tried to better understand the patterns behind tourists' behaviour intention associated with a pro-environmental policy to support tourism in a nature-based destination. The findings inform destinations when considering implementing pro-environmental policies to manage tourism and influence tourist behaviour.



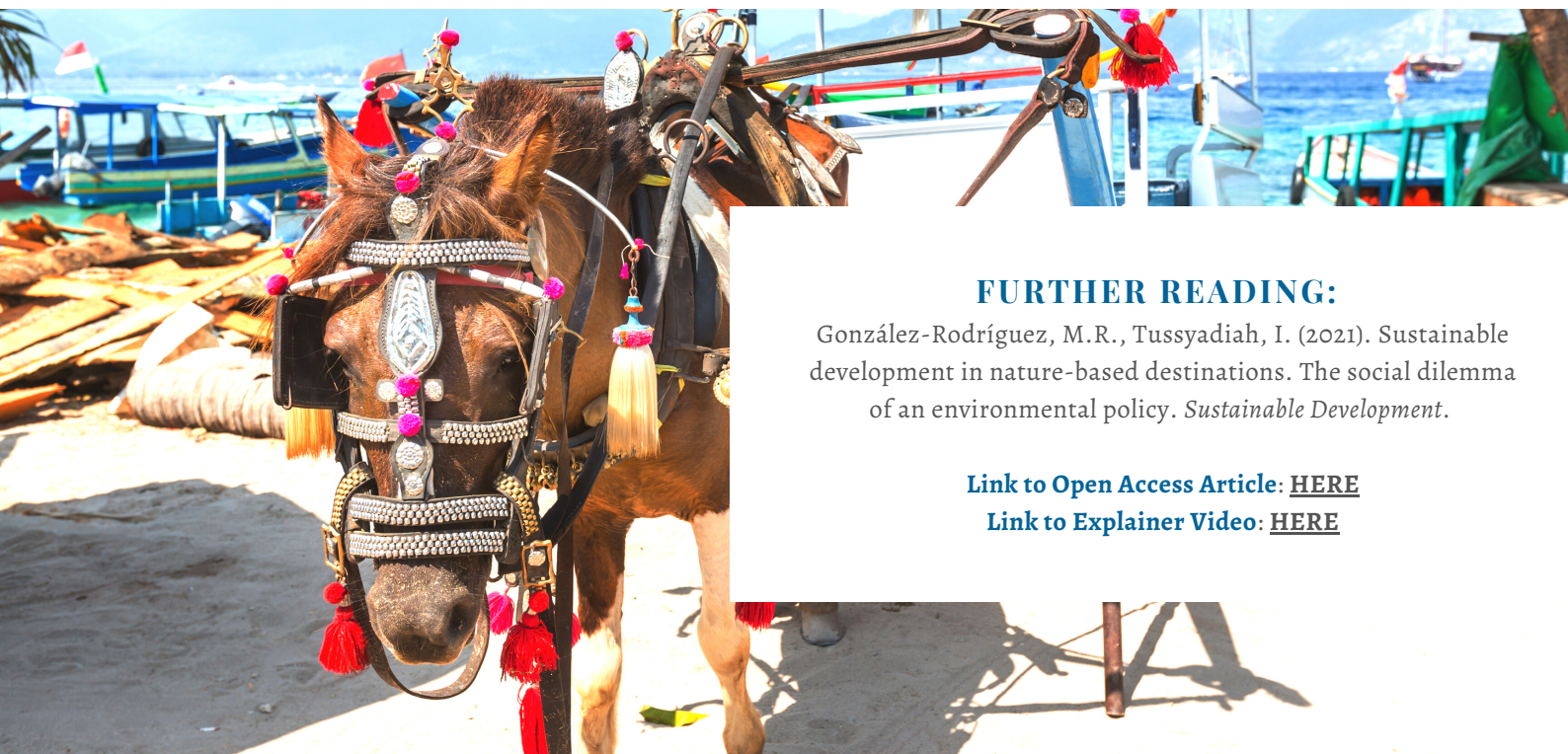
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SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY
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THE SOCIAL DILEMMA OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

PROF IIS TUSSYADIAH

This study uses a specific pro-environmental policy to foster tourism in the Gili Islands, Indonesia. To reduce the adverse environmental impact of tourism, motorised vehicles are not allowed in the islands. Consequently, horse-drawn carriages become the common mode of public transport for tourists. However, negative opinions about using horses for labour and images of suffering horses have appeared on review sites, painting a not-so-good image of the policy, and presenting a social dilemma for tourists who consider the islands for their next destinations to visit.

The study aimed to reinforce the cognitive process that leads people's decisions. Using the **perspective-taking approach**, we tested if people's environmental concern and awareness change after exposure to more information, and if different perspective-takings influence subsequent behaviours toward the destination. We presented different scenarios with images and tourists' positive and negative opinions. People exposed to images of suffering horses and opinions about animal abuse perceived the high cost of the policy, resulting in lower willingness to visit the destination.



FURTHER READING:

González-Rodríguez, M.R., Tussyadiah, I. (2021). Sustainable development in nature-based destinations. The social dilemma of an environmental policy. *Sustainable Development*.

Link to Open Access Article: [HERE](#)

Link to Explainer Video: [HERE](#)

This study provides relevant implications for governments and Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) to develop and relay accurate communication when a pro-environmental action is adopted to attract tourists. Pro-environmental actions might cause a dilemma for tourists when deciding to visit and recommend a destination due to the growing awareness of environmental consequences when exposed to additional information, which in turn enables potential tourists to assess the benefits and costs derived from the policy.