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Tourism and Globalization in Latin America and the Caribbean: The ethics and concerns of Mass Tourism and Ecotourism

An honors thesis presented to the
Department of Anthropology,
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graduation from The Honors College.

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Abstract

The ethics of ecotourism and mass tourism have different implications on the local populations and environment in developing regions, such as in Latin America and the Caribbean. This paper explores the ethics related to these two types of tourism, what the advantages and disadvantages of combining them would be, how they affect the local populations and environment, and the necessary actions to successfully change and create a sustainable tourism industry. Information and examples from various authors and their scholarly research were used to formulate a discussion about the ethics of ecotourism and mass tourism. Overall, the importance of creating a sustainable management system, local participation and protection of the environment were viewed as necessary steps to ensuring the success of tourism.

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Introduction

The tourism industry is a huge part of the economy for Latin America and the Caribbean. It is important to study the ways in which tourism effects these developing regions in order to properly construct policies that benefit both the local communities and the tourists. Rising in popularity in these regions is mass tourism, which is considered the typical sun, sand, and sea all-inclusive vacation. Often times, the penetration of large groups of people associated with mass tourism create negative impacts at the sites and for the local populations. As a way to divert this degradation while continuing to expand the tourism industry, alternative forms of tourism have emerged. While there is no single, comprehensive definition of what ecotourism is, it involves tourism directed toward natural environments, often to promote conservation, sustainability, and activism. There are different types of ecotourism based on the tourist's involvement, which will be explored in further detail. Overall, the goal is to limit the negative effects that tourism has on the communities and construct policies that benefit both the local populations and the tourists.

Discussion

i) What are the ethics of combining both eco and mass tourism? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

In the article “Ecotourism as mass tourism: Contradiction or reality?” by David Weaver, the argument was made that both ecotourism and mass tourism mutually benefit one another and that ecotourism can be viewed as a form of mass tourism. Weaver explained the two types of ecotourism, “hard” and “soft”, as being the small group of people who focus mainly on environmental aspects and strive to improve their surroundings for the former, and the large group of people who participate in short environmental excursions as part of a larger, multi-purpose mass tourism trip for the latter. The definitions and distinction between these types of

ecotourism is essential to the author's argument because he indicates that he is referring to "soft" tourists when speaking about the participants of what he calls mass ecotourism.

Weaver stated that the general belief, that the combination of mass tourism and ecotourism is detrimental to the environment, is not the case as there are mutually beneficial linkages between ecotourism, mass tourism, and protected areas. The main benefit was that mass tourism of the environment increases revenue, which can be used to more effectively manage the park by improving, protecting, and providing better, up-to-date facilities for the tourists. This is a point that many people neglect to realize since their first thought is usually about the degradation of a natural habitat by large populations. The littering and vandalism that is commonly referred to is due to a lack of management, which ultimately comes from a lack of money to provide better services. A strength noticed in this article was Weaver's careful way of explaining that increased revenue generated from mass tourism that is used to improve the natural environment cannot be possible without strict management and the allocation of a small portion of the site where the population is allowed to go. This is an important concept that allows for the success of the author's argument. To compliment this idea, a study was performed that measured the causes of degradation at the Grand Canyon. Results suggested that the effects were due to increased motor vehicle activity and not to the increase in people who visited the site.

This example provides evidence that it is necessary to observe the non-obvious factors that are involved in mass ecotourism and that other influences need to be studied. Overall, Weaver provided great examples to explain the ethics of combining eco and mass tourism that highlight the positive aspects of linking these two popular forms of tourism.

In the article "Ecotourism and mass tourism in Southern Thailand: Spatial interdependence, structural connections, and staged authenticity" by Nick Kontogeorgopoulos it

was noted that the definition of ecotourism that involves remote, natural areas inherently excludes mass tourism in relation to spatial locations because of the implication of its association with high concentrations of people and human modifications to the natural surroundings. Both ecotourism and mass tourism seem to be polar opposites when using these definitions, but it is important to recognize that there are other ways of defining each type of tourism. As Weaver mentioned, ecotourism has a spectrum of definitions ranging from “hard”, being more exclusive to nature and “soft”, referring to short excursions from a mass tourist’s trip. It is important for each type of tourism to have a set operational definition in order to properly compare and contrast them, and decide whether it is ethical and beneficial to combine them.

Kontogeorgopoulos articulated that the way in which the environment is preserved at Thailand’s two largest ecotourism sites, Sea Canoe and Siam Safari, is by strictly limiting the amount of people per tour group and scattering the tours throughout different parts of the day to relieve any ecological pressure that mass populations would have on the environment. This way of operating is a great example of how mass ecotourism can be regulated to accommodate for large populations. This idea is related to Weaver’s article, again, as he emphasizes the importance of keeping tourists in small, sectioned off areas of ecotourism sites to limit the amount of damage that could occur. While these are both different approaches to preserving the environment, the overall goal is the same.

A benefit of close spatial proximity of ecotourism and mass tourism sites is the availability of nature-oriented excursions without the inconvenience of long, uncomfortable trips to get there. A mass tourist associated with sun, sand, and sea resorts is usually looking for convenience, which is provided for them by the short travel time to their local environmental excursions. They do not feel as if they are spending their day travelling and missing out from

amenities that their hotel has to offer because they are only a few minutes from their host site. Other benefits of close proximity for ecotourism are the financial gains provided from large amounts of people utilizing their services and the combined use of infrastructure. Not only does ecotourism benefit, but mass tourism also benefits in a more subtle way. The “greenification” of the mass tourism industry is introduced, as Kontogeorgopoulos lists the advantages to a more sustainable form of tourism and the importance of a conscious awareness that the tourists will gain. Also, the close proximity of ecotourism sites to sun, sand, and sea tourists adds to the appeal of the place in general, which can increase the amount of tourism generated in that area. Overall, the sustainability of both types of tourism is preserved as services are shared and symbiotic relationships are formed.

This was a comprehensive article that used the example of tourism in Thailand to highlight the benefits of spatial proximity between ecotourism and mass tourism. It would be interesting for this author to do more research in the Caribbean and Latin America to see if there is a way to implement this system more widely throughout the region as it seems to work great in Thailand. The combination of making mass tourism green and introducing ecotourism to mass tourism seems to create mutually favorable relationship that both parties benefit from, as stated by the author based on surveys taken from tourists at these places. While this spatial closeness of these two types of tourisms may not be favorable in all destinations, it is definitely favorable and essential for the survival of tourism in Thailand as proposed by Kontogeorgopoulos.

The article “Mass Ecotourism vs. Eco Mass Tourism” by Ivanov et. al. focuses on the advantages and disadvantages of eco mass tourism and mass eco tourism compared to the traditional separate extremes of mass tourism and ecotourism. The authors used the scale of development and ecological footprint (SDEF grid) to show the benefits and disadvantages of

each type of tourism compared to the rest. The information contained in this grid was presented in a clear way that enabled the reader to visualize the data and make logical evaluations of the outcomes of environmental effects based on small and large populations. Combined with the SDEF grid was the use of sustainability vectors represented by the 3 dimensions of environmental, social, and economic vectors to assess the effects of each type of tourism. Overall the authors concluded that there is a trade-off between the environmental benefits of ecotourism and the economic and social benefits of mass tourism. They then suggested that it might be better to make mass tourism more sustainable (eco mass tourism) and to increase the amount of people who participate in ecotourism (mass ecotourism).

The authors stated that the expansion of ecotourism into mass ecotourism decreases the environmental sustainability due to the negative environmental impacts of mass tourism, however there were no specific examples of negative impacts stated. As mentioned by Weaver, increasing the amount of people who participate in ecotourism increases economic sustainability, a point mutually agreed upon by Ivanov et al. This increase in revenue generated from mass ecotourism would be used to improve management and infrastructure, which would eliminate the proposed negative environmental effects. This idea needs to be explored further with a more quantifiable way of measuring negative environmental consequences of mass tourism.

In opposition to mass ecotourism, the positive environmental aspects of eco mass tourism were explored and compared to the social impacts that are generally not influenced and the negative economic results that occur. As mentioned in the article, and discussed in various literature, it would be wise for extensive research to be done on how to make environmentally sustainable products for the least amount of money in order to eliminate the high costs of making

industries “green”. Overall, both of these intermediate forms of tourism were seen as sustainably better alternatives to ecotourism and mass tourism separately.

In the article, "Large-scale ecotourism—A contradiction in itself?" by Michael Lück, the argument was made that large-scale ecotourism could have positive impacts in the host countries if the right environmental measures are taken. Lück used examples of how two large companies involving mass tourism, TUI's Robinson Club Baobab in Kenya and LTU International Airways, used environmentally beneficial methods to improve the infrastructure of each. While Robinson Club, a mass tourism hotel in Kenya, is not a form ecotourism, it has been established as a nature preservation park due to the environmental, sustainable, and use of local goods to run this establishment. These factors correlate directly to the environmental and economic sustainability vectors mentioned by Ivanov et al. By making a hotel “green”, the negative impacts of mass tourism on a local environment can be limited and even reversed. There is much to gain if more hotels invested in environmental and sustainable measures that would benefit the local communities as well as enhance the experience of the tourists, due to the knowledge that they are staying at an ecologically sophisticated hotel.

The other main example explored by Lück was the environmentally friendly travel experience that tourists were able to have on LTU International Airways. Even though there was a huge increase in tourism from 1990-1996, there was still a 50% reduction of waste from this airline. An amazing initiative that LTU participated in was the distribution of eco-bags so that passengers going to the Maldives could bring back waste in hopes of preventing the degradation and pollution of the coral reefs and ocean. This example suggests that the abundance of people participating in mass tourism, especially in the Maldives, actually helps the environment by adding an aspect of waste removal to their travel experience.

This article does not necessarily address the combination of ecotourism and mass tourism. However, it does address a very important positive effect of mass tourism on the environment, which adds to the hypothesis made in other articles that increasing the amount of people who are visiting a place is actually beneficial to the environment, especially related to ecotourism. Many researchers think that if you increase the amount of people who are travelling, there will be harmful effects on the environment, including increased air pollution and damage to the environment. The example of LTU and the Maldives attempts to refute this thought and demonstrates that it is important to explore better fuel options for planes, reduce the amount of waste coming from travelling, and to increase the amount of people who are going to these islands in order to decrease the amount of waste being dumped into the ocean. Overall, this article illustrates how mass tourism can be beneficial to a location if the right environmental measures are taken.

ii) How are local communities in Latin America and the Caribbean affected by the ethical concerns of eco and mass tourism?

In the article “New directions in tourism for third world development”, author John Brohman viewed tourism in the third world as an extension of neo-colonial economic reforms of underdevelopment. This is an extremely negative view of mass tourism, which he backed up by stating examples of how the individual states and countries in the third world are affected. The main problems with tourism are loss of control over local resources due to foreign dependence, low spread of positive effects outside the tourism enclaves, socioeconomic inequality, fluctuating earnings, environmental destruction, and rising alienation among local populations producing crime, overcrowding, poor infrastructures, and pollution. Brohman argued that the reason for this damage is due to favoring the development of large-scale, multinational enterprises. To prevent this from happening, the author suggested the necessity of an increase in local involvement, a

topic that will be further discussed.

The incorporation of smaller-scale, locally owned tourism alternatives is proposed to solve many of the aforementioned problems associated with large-scale, foreign-based mass tourism. Money is less likely to be lost due to foreign exchange leakages and benefits would be in the hands of the local population instead of the small group of elites who are currently managing the industry. If these problems associated with tourism can be eliminated, then the economies and quality of life for third world countries can begin to improve. This is a bold statement that makes it seem as if the entire economy is based solely on tourism, which is known statistically to not be true. However, this industry is a huge part of life in these locations and could really make positive changes in the local populations if implemented correctly. These positive changes include better infrastructure, education, social reforms, and a greater, more influential participation in the global economy.

The re-creation of the elite core and poor periphery is rooted in a traditional colonial past, which is essentially displaying the regressive nature of the tourism industry and local populations. While it may not be occurring yet, mass tourism in third world countries will not survive if this system is not changed and the necessary problems are not addressed. The enclosure of all-inclusive hotels to the privileged travelers demonstrates the significance of the socioeconomic gap between them and the local populations. This visual representation of disparities generally makes everyone uncomfortable as the local populations are envious of the tourists and the tourists trips are “tainted” from the close proximity of devastation and poverty within the area in which they chose to vacation.

Brohman declared that the addition of alternative tourism would help counter the negative, unethical effects of mass tourism in the third world. While he did not say that mass

tourism should be replaced with alternative tourism, he did provide numerous examples as to why it is sustainably better than the popular sun, sand, and sea trips that travelers take year-round. Through alternative tourism, the local communities are included more in the developmental processes and gain more economic, social, and environmental benefits. The complementation of alternative tourism to mass tourism adds variety in experiences, attracting more tourists to that area.

In the article “Tourism penetration index in small Caribbean islands” by Jerome McElroy and Klau De Albuquerque, the argument was formed that tourism negatively affects the small islands of the Caribbean socially, economically, and environmentally due to the lack of one, single tourism integration system. Overall, tourism is invasive and disrupts the lives of those who live on these islands. Some of the ideas presented in this article were that the affects of tourism are dependent on the behavior rather than the amount of tourists visiting the site and that tourism created infrastructure disruptions, inflation, congestion, noise, crime, prostitution, and rising host hostility. These are serious affects that could ultimately decline the value of that place as a vacation spot for tourists.

McElroy and Albuquerque explained how the Tourism Penetration Index was created and applied to the different small islands of the Caribbean. This index measures the level of socio-economic development and impacts that tourism has on each Caribbean nation. The three factors used to calculate the Tourism Penetration Index were visitor spending per capita, average daily visitor density per 1,000 population, and number of hotel rooms per square kilometer. The authors were careful to mention the constraints that these three factors had on the results since the implications of a variable could be drastically different from place to place. The index numbers were only taken for two separate years, which provides incomplete data in the area of

tourism research. While there are huge global impacts on tourism each year, such as hurricanes and shifts in the economy, it would be beneficial to gather information for a range of years to compare the secular trends related to the index number. The global impacts on tourism would create spikes in the data during certain years, but overall, the research would be more complete. It was also mentioned in the article that this index was created in order to make a universal equation to measure tourism penetration in the Caribbean, but this ultimately generates skewed data that may not be representative of the true affects of tourism. While research regarding the affects of tourism is moving in a positive direction, this Tourism Penetration Index method needs to be reevaluated.

The authors discussed that the lure of economic success related to mass tourism influences the social elites to impulsively implement tourism, which ends up having a poor infrastructure and being unsustainable. The social and environmental stability are compensated for what management thinks will provide them with the most money. It is important for the government to, at this point, step in, and reevaluate the structure of their industry and improve it in a way that will allow for tourism to continue in that area in the upcoming years. A necessity of the success of tourism is the limitations to the destruction of the environment and negative impacts on the host communities. Local hostility towards tourism generates negative interactions that affect the experience of the tourists and could be a reason why they do not come back to that place, overall upsetting the industry. It was mentioned briefly that alternative forms of tourism, such as ecotourism, could be beneficial for the Caribbean since it attracts a small, more conservative population of travelers. Expansion of this topic would have been helpful for the discussion and would have provided an insightful opinion of the affects that mass tourism has on the local populations compared to alternative forms of tourism.

When trying to understand the impacts of tourism, it is important to learn about the relationships that the hosts and tourists have with each other as well as the behaviors and opinions associated with each group. In the *The social psychology of tourist behaviour*, Philip Pearce introduced the idea of cultural exchange and the problems that can occur as a result. Differences in language, social class, traditions, rituals, and every day practices, could all create contention between tourists and hosts. Pearce suggested that tourists should conform to local habits and practices while they are on their trips in order to not offend the hosts. This should be common courtesy for all travelers because many tourists seem to forget that their vacation is located in someone else's home. This respect would allow for a more positive response from the local communities.

Differences in the host's perception of tourists can be attributed to the type of community that they are living in. Hosts from technologically advanced communities generally have a positive view of tourists and are more welcoming of them. In contrast, hosts from relatively unsophisticated nations generally have negative views of tourists due to stereotypes that have been formed over time. These negative attitudes are what lead to the victimization of tourists through cheating, stealing, lying, and harassment, as mentioned in each article researched regarding the effect of tourism on local populations. Once the host-tourist friction is eliminated, further advances in the local communities can begin to occur.

This chapter was not directly related to the physical, and monetary affects of tourism, however it focused on the social and behavioral effects that tourism can have on local communities. The differences in attitudes towards tourists in technologically advanced and unsophisticated communities raise the question of how to incorporate aspects of positive attitudes into the unsophisticated communities, such as in the Caribbean and Latin America.

From a scientific perspective, studying the psychology of people's opinions can help us understand where their actions come from.

iii) What are the effects of ecotourism on the environment? How can ecotourism be improved?

In the article "Environmental Impacts of Tourism", P.P. Wong studied the environmental impacts of tourism in relation to general sociocultural and physical categories, the nature of impacts over space and time, and the specific environmental components that were being affected. Pressure on natural resources, harm to wildlife and habitats, and pollution are three of the biggest issues associated with the increase in tourism. Unless more sustainable measures are taken, a necessary force of equilibrium must exist between tourism and the environment in order to preserve it. For example, air pollution from high occurrences of travel can impact the global climate and ultimately the environment, while economic recession can slow down tourism and allow for natural restoration with the decrease on environmental pressure. The combination of natural, social, and economic changes throughout time are important to study since the tourism industry is at the mercy of fluctuations in all three.

It is imperative to remember that there are a number of research constraints when collecting data on environmental effects of an area. Data is often gathered from the viewpoint of a single discipline, which means that there is most likely information being left out concerning the causes and effects of tourism on the environment. Studying a situation from one discipline creates a narrow-minded point of view, biases within the data, and the potential for skewed results. Other disciplines that could research environmental effects and incorporate their expertise are ecologists, biologists, economists, geographers, and sociologists. Another research constraint mentioned by Wong was difficulty of distinguishing the exact causes of environmental impacts due to the complex nature of their progression and a lack of availability of base-

reference data to know where the depletion originated. While there are a number of great experiments, field studies, and questionnaires that are used to collect data, there is a need for further research to enhance the validity and understanding of the ecological affects of tourism.

While this article provided examples of environmental impacts of tourism, it mostly focused on the research and evaluation methods used to determine the causes and effects. Wong stressed the importance of weighing the impacts against other economic and political activities because each sector effects one another. This article was not entirely relevant to developing countries, however useful information was provided to assist researchers in thinking critically about how and where their data is collected in relation to environmental impacts, which could ultimately allow for the improvement of ecotourism by minimizing negative effects.

In the article “Managing ecotourism: an opportunity spectrum approach”, Stephen Boyd and Richard Butler emphasized the necessity of a structured management system in order for the proper implementation and survival of ecotourism. Without this control, the potential for overuse, misuse, and abuse of the natural resources are more likely to occur, which could jeopardizes the integrity of the environment. It was noted that the quality of the experience for ecotourism is dependent on the amount of people who participate and the initial expectations of the tourist. For these reasons, there needs to be an organized way of conducting ecological tours and creating safe, enjoyable, and educational experiences that not only sustains the environment, but also improves it.

It was stated by Boyd and Butler that as participation in ecotourism increases, the severity of the impacts on the environment also increases. The differentiation between eco-specialists and eco-generalists was explored in this article. Eco-specialists are the tourists who tend to travel alone and go “off the beaten path.” These types of tourists may enter highly

human-sensitive areas, however the few people who are actually classified in this group tend not to leave a huge impact overall. Eco-generalists are the tourists who travel in large groups and are usually sanctioned to a specific path or area on an eco-tour. It is important to raise the awareness of these tourists so that they know how large groups of people can influence the environment. Again, this necessitates the implementation of a strict management and control over the eco-tourists.

Something that this article lacked was the discussion about the consequences of foreign vs. local control. Other articles expressed the importance of local control, however Boyd and Butler did not mention anything about the distinction of who was to manage, but just the necessity for there to be a structured management system, in general. Even with a management system in place, the motivation of the elite to gain profits from ecotourism could be detrimental to the environment. If the local community and government were in control of the ecotourism industry in that region, then there would be more of an incentive to create a framework that truly benefits the community as a whole.

The article "Ecotourism: towards congruence between theory and practice" by Sheryl Ross and Geoffrey Wall highlights the gap between what ecotourism is supposed to be and how it is practiced. The initial problem, noticed in almost every article related to ecotourism, is the vagueness of what ecotourism actually is due to various definitions that focus on different aspects in each. Discrepancies result from differences in how to distinguish what an appropriate definition of ecotourism should be. The comprehensive definition provided in this article included the protection of natural areas through the generation of revenues, involvement of local people, and environmental education, all of which are necessary to promote conservation and development in a sustainable form. The emphasis of a proper framework for management was

stressed for the success of ecotourism, as was studied in great detail by Stephen Boyd and Richard Butler. Ross described many of the assessment methods that could be used to evaluate the success at separate ecotourism sites. While it would be convenient to have a general assessment method that all places could use, Ross mentioned the inability for this to happen due to differences in variables involved. The uniqueness of each location suggests that there would and should be different parameters to indicate how to measure the success and sustainability of ecotourism.

A detail mentioned by Ross that was left out of Boyd and Butler's research was the importance of community involvement, which ultimately gives the power to determine the outcome of ecotourism to the local people. Overall, local participation creates social, environmental, and economic benefits to the community as well as increased satisfaction of the tourist's experience. Biodiversity and natural areas provide the opportunity for environmental based education, which in turn yields revenue that can be distributed back to management systems for protection and improvement of the environment. Education is crucial in ecotourism, as it becomes a more popular form of tourism. It is important for travelers to understand the repercussions of their actions and the delicate nature of the environment. It is also useful to know how fragile an ecosystem is in order to understand why any spatial or quantitative restrictions are applied. The implementation of education has the power to change the mind-set and behavior of the tourists and influence them to be more conscious of their choices.

While this article did not specifically talk much about the environmental influences of ecotourism, it did highlight the features of the infrastructure system necessary to successfully manage ecotourism. The information provided in this article should be applied to communities who are trying to add another sector of tourism into their society and who are also attempting to

preserve and improve their surroundings. Since tourism in Latin America and the Caribbean runs the risk of deteriorating, the countries in this region should really consider changing some parts of their management system to ensure the sustainability of the industry as a whole.

In the article “Towards a more desirable form of ecotourism” by Mark Orams, the numerous definitions of ecotourism were discussed, as well as the author’s opinions about how to improve the management system of ecotourism to benefit both the environment and the tourists long-term. Some definitions focus on the leisure and enjoyment of nature while others rely heavily on the activism of tourists to contribute to the quality of the environment. Orams argued that there should be a shift in the passive attitude of ecotourists to a more active role in contribution to sustainability of the environments, which indicated that he is in favor of a more environmentally impactful definition of ecotourism. However, his argument disregarded that some tourists simply just want to observe their natural surroundings and have an enjoyable, relaxing experience. This is where the debate over what the official definition of ecotourism should be and why there is not one single, comprehensive definition.

Orams shared an interesting view of the term “eco” as he suggested that there might be a marketing advantage to putting that prefix in front of the product in order to heighten interest from consumers and thus generate more money. This is a very cynical view of the sustainability business, however it may be rooted in some truth. It would be worthwhile for researchers to do some investigation of the marketing aspects of ecotourism. While this may be a beneficial tactic that could be used in developing regions, such as the Caribbean, it is important that the ecological sites keep their word about remaining sustainable or attempting to improve the habitat, otherwise their marketing is not being truthful.

It was suggested that satisfaction-enjoyment, education-learning, attitude-belief change and behavior-lifestyle change can be used to effectively measure the success of a management strategy that has a goal of influencing an eco-tourist to become more inclined to make a positive impact rather than only minimize negative impacts. This is a great suggestion that encapsulates all aspects of what ecotourism should be and how it could be most effective environmentally, economically and socially. A problem, however, with attempting to advocate behavioral change is that once the tourists return home at the end of their trip, they become disinterested or suddenly do not have enough time to participate in sustainable programs. Orams also noted the difficulty of measuring behavioral change due to the constraints of a longitudinal study. There needs to be a way for the world to act as one with the common goal of “greenifying” society in order for this management strategy to really be effective.

While this article does not speak directly about the effects of ecotourism on the local environments, it is very related in terms of infrastructure. Improving upon the ecotourism industry as a whole would have a trickle-down effect that could really improve the culture, environment, and economies of developing countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. These regions should apply this ideology in order to improve their tourism industry, which ultimately will benefit both the host country as well as the tourists.

iv) Is community participation necessary in mass tourism?

In the article “Barriers to Community Participation in Tourism Development: Empirical Evidence from a Rural Destination” by Ravinder Dogra and Anil Gupta, it was stated that the sustainability of the tourism industry is dependent on the active support of the local population. The inclusion of culture in an area adds to the enticement of going to a unique destination. The most important ways in which a community can become involved is through the empowerment

of being included in decision-making processes and through tourism benefits such as employment. Through their research, Dogra and Gupta noticed that there was something holding back certain local populations from participating, which ultimately kept their communities from becoming developed. This article highlights the barriers that exist in community participants as being operational, structural, and cultural.

The operational barriers included centralization of public administration towards tourism development and lack of coordination. Structural barriers included elite dominations and lack of expertise from the locals. Lastly, cultural barriers included the limited capacity of lower classes due to poor infrastructure. These three barriers can all be attributed to the social, political, and economic problems that are characteristic of developing countries. The added element of surveying and interviewing local community members near a high tourist area made the author's argument seem more credible. The results of the survey indicated that local populations, on average, trusted the government officials with the development of tourism but also felt as if their opinions were being neglected. These people also believed that they were not benefitting from tourism directly and that the high costs of participating compared to their inadequate financial situations did not make community involvement beneficial to them.

If community involvement is truly dependent on local participation, then the government should be more active in promoting it by enhancing the benefits that could be gained personally and locally. Dogra and Gupta had a great suggestion that the government provide courses to train individuals how to actively participate in the tourism sector in hopes of promoting local employment. Many people in developing countries are not considered eligible to work due to lack of skills. Education systems in these developing countries need to be improved as well as enhancement of training programs in order to make more local people qualified to work. If the

local people were provided with a better education, then the government may be more willing to include them in the decision making process for the development of tourism. This point brings the situation full-circle as we see the need for improvement in developing countries in order to advance the tourism industry.

While this article agreed with the notion that community involvement is a necessary aspect of successful tourism development, examples of different barriers were addressed that show the complications occurring in developing countries. Overall, Dogra and Gupta were advocating for change in order to better the tourism industry. If the lives of the local communities were enhanced and the majority did not have low socioeconomic statuses, then the dynamic would drastically change, as there would be more community participation, which is overall beneficial to the local population, the tourism industry, and the tourists themselves.

In the article "Mastering Caribbean tourism", author Chandana Jayawardena commented on the importance of creating a sustainable tourism industry by providing examples of how to accomplish this goal. Many aspects of Caribbean tourism need improvement and restructuring, however Jayawardena emphasizes that the most vital way for creating a sustainable tourism industry is to increase the participation of the local communities. Without positive participation of residents, the tourists often feel threatened by crime and harassment from the locals who live in close proximity to the resorts. A way to decrease these negative impacts would be to increase the educational system and training to help persuade more locals to participate in the tourist industry, an idea also mentioned in by Ravinder Dogra and Anil Gupta.

One of the reasons, mentioned by Jayawardena, for needing to increase local participation was due to the decrease in airflow as a result of the 2001 terrorist attacks. Unfortunately, an industry dependent on travel is subject to these external influences that can largely disrupt the

entire business. For this reason alone, it is imperative to increase domestic tourism as a way of preventing huge losses of revenue in times of global instability. As more people from the local populations are employed and participating in tourism, the industry has more stability as a whole, which ultimately increases the sustainability of tourism in general for the Caribbean.

A critique about this article in relation to the research topic was that the information provided was about 15 years old. The tourism industry has advanced dramatically in that time due to exponential enhancements of technology. It would be interesting for this author to re-write this article with more current information, including popularization of alternative tourism in the Caribbean. She did mention the benefits of increasing the options of alternative tourism, however in current times, the mass tourism industry is still lacking in local participation. While this article was written almost 15 years ago, the ideas are still relevant and provide answers to the question at hand, emphasizing the importance of community involvement necessary in mass tourism.

The hypothesis made in the article, "Influencing factors of community participation in tourism development: A case study of Xingwen world Geopark" by Shui Wei was that community participation would help implement sustainable approaches to tourism development by increasing the benefits to both the tourists and the local people. A study in tourism and local involvement was performed at a tourist destination in China that resulted in statistical data to explain the most beneficial ways of improving community participation. These ways included "improving the comparative benefit of tourist industry, enhancing the attraction of tourism for boosting participant wishes, improving the preference consciousness on obtaining working opportunity in tourism industry and cultivating residents' participant skills through training" (Wei 2012:210).

The statistical and quantitative data collected was a great way of measuring the influences of increased community involvement with tourism. Wei mentioned that more samples would need to be taken in order to see how representative the data actually is. It would be interesting to know the time period in which he collected this information; was it all in the same day or within one week, month, year, etc.? When sampling people based on their “feelings” it is important to take into account the confounding variables, such as someone with a more positive attitude due to the proximity of a major holiday within the country or someone who happens to be in a bad mood that day. Overall this study showed the benefits of using statistical methods and surveys to hear the opinions of the local participants in the tourism industry, instead of assuming their feelings. A weakness of this article concerning the research topic was that it related to the community participation in a more developed country rather than poorer regions such as Latin America and the Caribbean. There are differences in socioeconomic statuses of the local populations which inherently could create different motivations for improving local participation.

In her dissertation, *Maya cosmopolitans: Everyday life at the interface of archaeology, heritage, and tourism development*, Sarah Taylor wrote about a community development project in Ek'Balam that allowed for the participation of landowners and their families to create tourist accommodations for the benefit of their village. The motivations of the participants for this project were to create adequate accommodations, increase revenue for the community, and decrease emigration out of their village. Overall, there was a boost in morale and pride shared amongst the participants of this project. This example suggests the importance of proper motivation needed to gain local involvement that will directly benefit the community and the tourism industry as a whole. While the idea behind this community development project was

good in nature, the non-inclusive allowance of participants as well as the strenuous labor required that pushed people away from the project served as a source of contention between villagers. While most researchers emphasize the necessity of community involvement to create a sustainable form of tourism, the hostility generated from this initiative suggests that there is still a need for infrastructure improvement. It is premature to assume that all aspects of community involvement in tourism will be beneficial, especially in areas where populations have relatively low socioeconomic status compared to the rest of the world.

A major criticism of community participation is the elite domination of the tourism sector. These are the people who take control of the design, implementation, and management of the project and who do not assure that benefits are shared equally throughout the community. The elites usually exaggerate about how many people are benefitting from their efforts in order to preserve a positive reputation and make it seem as if they are actually doing something good for the whole community. The actual number of people in Ek'Balam who were benefitting was much lower than reported by the dominating elites, which is usually the case in small rural areas. Overall, there was a sense of animosity toward the elites as a result of their dishonesty and greed.

While this section of the dissertation does not directly address mass tourism, Taylor uses a great example to express the consequences of community involvement in relation to tourism. She agreed that it is important for local participation, however, the system in which it is implemented must be carefully planned and stay true to its word of benefitting the population. There is much need for structural adjustment in rural areas, such as Ek'Balam in order to drastically improve the local benefits awarded to the inhabitants and to compensate for their assistance in the development of the tourism industry.

Conclusion

Based on my research, it was concluded that combining ecotourism and mass tourism can mutually benefit each and can circumvent the negative effects that are usually associated with mass tourism. There needs to be operational definitions of each type of tourism because there are different forms of involvement, especially in ecotourism. The sustainability of the industry is reliant on the economic, social, and environmental successes, which depend directly on a strong management system and infrastructure. While not all scholars would suggest combining the two forms of tourism, many agree that close spatial proximity of ecotourism and mass tourism adds to the value of each. The large numbers of people generated from mass tourism boosts business at ecological sites and ecotourism adds variety to a tourist's trip. Creating ways in which the environment and local populations are protected is important to the success of the industry as a whole.

Problems associated with tourism in general are the negative effects that it has on the local population, including socioeconomic inequality, environmental destruction, and crime. A solution to these problems is to incorporate local participation so that the industry is in the hands of the communities instead of the greedy elite whose only motivation is to make money. Improvement of infrastructure would also allow for more benefits to go directly back in the local communities. Generally, tourism is viewed more negatively in developing countries, which creates a host-tourist friction. The behavior of the tourists is viewed as more of a problem than the sheer amounts of people who visit the area. Techniques on how to measure tourist penetration effects on a location needs to be improved. It is suggested to use certain variables to create one evaluating system, however this is impossible due to the different factors that affect each tourist destination. Creating more options for tourists, enhancing their experiences, and

implementing a neutral system to benefit both parties would decrease the negative effects of tourism on the local populations.

Ecotourism can create pressure on natural habitats, destruction to the environment, and large amounts of pollution to an area. It is hard to determine the origin of environmental destruction, which makes the quantifiable measurements of degradation imperfect. It is suggested that by improving local participation and management systems, protection of the environment will follow. The difficulties of defining ecotourism creates a struggle in estimating the change that is necessary for the success of this alternative form of tourism. Education and changes in the behavior of tourists were two of the biggest recommended factors that would create a lasting positive effect on the environment. While there are very obvious detrimental ecological consequences of tourism, the continuous enhancement of the industry as a whole is necessary for the sustainability of ecotourism. If the environment is ruined, then there would be no locations to conduct ecotourism, which is the main motivation for researching ways in which we can decrease or even eliminate the negative effects that occur as a result.

Local participation is necessary for the success of tourism, especially in developing countries. The reason for the lack of community involvement is due to a variety of factors including their low socioeconomic status, poor education, lack of labor skills, and lack of motivation due to the opinions that the benefits of tourism are not reaching the community. All of these reasons create a sense of oppression of the local population as the tourism industry is controlled by elites. The implementation of structural reforms from the government would increase local participation, however the money necessary to do this is essentially non-existent. The improvement of infrastructure, proper motivation, and elimination of elite domination are all ways in which we can increase the local participation necessary for the success of tourism.

The tourism industry is an area in need of extensive research as it effects so many people world-wide. Improving the management systems and increasing local participation are both ways in which tourism can become beneficial for both the hosts and the tourists. Protection of the environment is an area of great concern as the tourism industry is dependent on the quality of the destination. Enhancing the quality of travel for everyone is a necessary step to ensuring the sustainability of tourism.

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