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The missing voices in the perceptions of tourism: The neglect of expatriates

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ABSTRACT

The interconnected nature of tourism suggests it can offer alternative solutions and perspectives to a variety of situations which have hitherto been unexplored. This research reviews the extant literature pertinent to community tourism to explore potential gaps present, with a particular focus on the suggested impact upon expatriates. A number of gaps are uncovered, from both a tourism and expatriate perspective, including demographic discrepancies, lack of geographical representation, and the lack of temporal consideration, among others. These gaps offer future areas of analysis that can provide more insight into the possible role of tourism in improving expatriate adjustment, as well as areas of future community tourism analysis. Of specific note, the expatriate community has been by-and-large excluded from much of the analysis on perceptions of tourism, which holds significance given the increasing prominence of expatriates globally.

1. Introduction

An expatriate; an individual who lives and/or works in a foreign country for an extended period of time (Isakovic & Whitman, 2013). A tourist; an individual who stays outside their usual environment for at least one night (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007). Two very closely related groups with many overlaps, yet existing research has still to fully explore the nature of these overlaps.

Numerous studies exist considering the economic, environmental, and socio-cultural perceptions of tourism held by the resident population (see for example Ap, 1990; Gu & Ryan, 2010; Liu & Var, 1986; Pizam, 1978; Sharpley, 2014). A frequent approach to assess perceptions of tourism has been through the guise of community tourism and Social Exchange Theory (Ap, 1990; Pizam, 1978; Sharpley, 2014). However, throughout the literature pertaining to community tourism and host involvement, the expatriate has been excluded when defining the 'resident', even though they can play host to tourists (see Dutt, Ninov, & Haas, 2015) and may hold alternative opinions of tourism than the 'naturalised' resident. Their growing numbers and potential integration issues would suggest that further consideration needs to be given towards this market in order to facilitate more comprehensive review of perceptions of tourism to acknowledge any potential differences between the types of resident.

Doxey's 'Irridex' Doxey (1975), proposes that as tourism development continues, the local population can move from feelings of euphoria to ones of annoyance and antagonism. While this is normally targeted towards the tourist, it is not clear to what extent the expatriate

is being made a scapegoat or compounding the issue. This is particularly important in nations such as the UAE, where up to 74% of the population are expatriate (Isakovic & Whitman, 2013). The expatriate could side with the host or be victimised accidentally, or intentionally, along with their tourist compatriots. Alternatively, could excessive expatriate numbers force nationals along the 'Irridex' to greater annoyance with the tourist through misplaced annoyance? Furthermore, in environments where expatriates hold positions of influence over government decision making – directly or indirectly – their opinions could be instrumental in the formation of government policy.

The purpose of this review is to critique the current community tourism literature – with special emphasis on the exclusion of the expatriate community. This review will, therefore, analyse current community tourism literature to uncover gaps or disagreements relating to the understanding of community tourism – the study period, the length of residence, the place of birth, the cultural base, and the role of community tourism in the Middle East, among others – as well as expatriate-specific short-comings such as the exclusion of expatriates from community tourism analysis. This will help to lay the ground work to explore how and why expatriate opinions of tourism should be further considered. Community tourism offers the potential to develop community involvement in tourism and enhance the social impacts of tourism. By conducting this review, a more holistic understanding of the nuances of community tourism can be offered with the aim of encouraging further research to consider, for example, the use of community tourism as a social mechanism to include expatriates and facilitate their integration into a community.

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1.1. Tourism

Tourism has repeatedly been reported as a powerful activity that can have significant impacts on a nation, often concerning a country's economy, society and culture, and environment (Fan, Lu, & Wu, 2013; Harrill, 2004; Kaltenborn, Andersen, Nellemann, Bjerke, & Thrane, 2008). In a very general sense, considerable previous literature would seem to argue that economic impacts are often regarded as positive by residents, while socio-cultural and environmental impacts are viewed more negatively (see Dowling, 1993; Liu & Var, 1986; Perdue, Long, & Allen, 1990; Pizam, 1978). Pizam (1978) offered one of the first attempts to consider residents' perceptions of tourism. He found that residents dependent on tourism were more supportive, while residents living in tourist-heavy areas were less supportive. It is worth pointing out that related studies found that local residents enjoy the economic benefits of tourism but dislike the tourists themselves (Sharpley, 2014). Again there is scope in this literature to mention the voice of the expatriate.

The term 'resident' has been poorly defined within the tourism literature. Fallon and Kriwoken (2003), along with Gu and Ryan (2010) and Sharpley (2014) have explained that communities and residents are not homogeneous groups, each potentially having their own set of demographic and attitudinal factors which can influence their overall perception of tourism (cf. Šegota, Mihalic, & Kuscer, 2016). With that in mind, further consideration should be given to the resident and their attitudes; they are arguably a heterogeneous group and hence greater analysis of their experiences could help to gain a more nuanced representation of their perceptions of tourism.

The current use of 'resident' would seem to generally consider those who live in the area being researched (see Belise & Hoy, 1980; Pizam, 1978). Some categorisation occurs with regards to participants' demographic characteristics, such as: age, gender, contact with tourists and employment in tourism (Brida, Osti, & Faccioli, 2011). However, these elements mostly seem to be used as characteristics to describe the same pool of resident and differentiate their views of tourism; they are not seen as different types of resident. Expatriates, for example, could be considered a different type of resident in a destination, yet they have not been specifically identified in extant literature. Kaltenborn et al. considered the attitude of residents towards the second-hand, holiday-home market who "...interact with local communities in different ways and pose [other] challenges..." (2008, p. 665). In a similar light, expatriates may interact with tourists differently to nationals and therefore will hold different attitudes towards tourism, due to their varying levels of commitment to the host community. Hence, the lack of a concrete definition of resident is, in itself an important oversight as it limits the extent to which community tourism research can be applied and compromises the completeness of the research and its application. The exclusion of expatriates, specifically, is problematic due to their growing numbers and potential exposure to tourism (see Bailey & Dragoni, 2013; Bischoff & Koenig-Lewis, 2007; Dutt et al., 2015). The burgeoning number of expatriates means they are playing an increasingly significant role in the functioning of societies globally as well as the delivery of tourism products. In the case of the former, this impact on the functioning of society, is a matter of increasing importance as expatriate numbers rise (Enright & Newton, 2005) while the latter will influence tourists' experiences and hence a destination's competitiveness (AlBalushi & Wise, 2017).

If expatriates constitute a different type of resident and exhibit different behaviours, they will, nevertheless, hold a perception of tourism. This perception may then influence their interactions with tourists socially, or in a work capacity. While expatriates may not necessarily be able to enforce any political change when it comes to tourism, their treatment of the tourist can, not only impact the perception tourists will hold of the destination, but also may affect the manner in which nationals treat the tourist. There is also the potential that expatriates may hold alternative perceptions of tourists to

nationals because expatriates may be incorrectly categorised and treated by the national as an 'extended tourist', which could lead to resentment on the side of the expatriate, particularly if the (foreign) tourist is treated differently and openly discriminated against.

By considering the national and expatriate communities' perceptions of tourism, more thorough analysis of tourism perceptions is possible. With an improved understanding, tourism could be leveraged in alternative scenarios – such as expatriate adjustment – further establishing the usefulness and reach of tourism.

1.2. Perceptions of tourism

International tourism has been defined by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) as activities related to individuals "travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, or other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited" (Commission for the European Communities, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, World Tourism Organisation, and United Nations Statistics Division, 2011, p. 1). Based on this definition, any number of activities can be related to tourism including Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR), leisure, business, hedonism, cultural exploration, spa and health visits, and historical tourism, among many others.

The umbrella-term 'Community Tourism' has been used to study the opinions of a destination's resident population towards tourism, often analysing residents' perceptions of tourism's economic, environmental, and socio-cultural impacts (see Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005; Brida et al., 2011; Choi & Murray, 2010; Getz, 1994; Harrill, 2004; Jurowski, Uysal, & Williams, 1997; Murphy, 1985; Pizam, 1978).

1.2.1. Community tourism

Community Tourism has been referred to as tourism which allows the community to "join in the general progress and participate in the blessings of prosperity" brought about from tourism (Krippendorf, 1987 as cited in Ap, 1992, p. 681). Murphy (1985) explained that the Community Tourism product was like any other tourism product but specifically referred to that which "...the community as a whole, wishes to present to the tourism market." (Murphy, 1985, p. 37). Murphy's view of Community Tourism suggested that a community focus would help alleviate economic, environmental, and socio-cultural concerns related to tourism. The literature often discusses Community Tourism in the sense of residents' attitudes towards tourism, frequently using the ideology of Social Exchange Theory (SET). The basic philosophy of SET suggests that individuals will support an activity if they receive more benefits than costs from the activity (Ap, 1992; Pizam, 1978). The literature on Community Tourism has used SET to understand residents' support for tourism. That is, if residents perceive greater personal benefits from tourism than costs, they will support tourism and tourism development in their community (see Perdue et al., 1990; Vargas-Sánchez, Porras-Bueno, & Plaza-Mejía, 2014; Yoon, Gursoy, & Chen, 1999, 2001). While the premise of this theory is relatively clear, it does not consider the perception of the tourist, nor allow for the weighting of impacts. In the case of the former, an individual may support tourism because of the benefits generated, but still view tourists negatively (Sharpley, 2014). In the case of the latter consideration, individuals may weight various impacts more than others. For example, current economic benefits may be perceived more positively than negative environmental impacts. Yoon et al. (1999) discovered that individuals who had lived in a destination for a longer period of time were more resilient to the economic impacts of tourism, suggesting a presence of some form of internal weighting, which current research has yet to specifically address.

A theme of Community Attachment has been discussed in the literature in line with Community Tourism. While Community Tourism considers residents' perceptions of tourism, Community Attachment

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