

Socio-cultural Impacts of Contemporary Tourism

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ABSTRACT

The topic of the paper is devoted to analysis of socio-cultural impacts of tourism, as effects on the people of host communities resulting from their direct and indirect associations with tourists. The social and cultural impacts of tourism are the ways in which tourism is contributing to changes in value systems, individual behavior, family structure and relationships, collective lifestyles, safety levels, moral conduct, traditional ceremonies and community organizations. Special attention is devoted to considering complexity of tourists/host interrelationships and discussing the techniques for appraisal of quality and quantity of socio-cultural changes which tourism provokes in local communities.

Key words: *tourism, socio-cultural impacts, methods, research*

Introduction

Socio-cultural effects of tourism are demonstrated by its strong impacts on the changes presented in value systems, individual behavior, structure and relationships within the family, collective way of life, level of security, moral norms, traditional rituals and customs, the organization of human communities and the like. Socio-cultural impacts of tourism are primarily manifested on the population of receptive areas, as a result of their direct and indirect contact with tourists.

Wider research of socio-cultural effects of tourism has aroused interest in academic public much later than economic aspects of tourism as a phenomenon. Economic issues were the focus of research in the first decades after the Second World War, when most attention was devoted to considering the influence of tourism on the growth of material income and employment level¹. In the late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s the emergence of numerous scientific and research papers were dedicated to socio-cultural effects of tourism, which by most of the academic community were seen in a negative way. Some of the authors have attempted to present a wide inventory of different socio-cultural effects of tourism^{2,3}, while others have concentrated on certain types of related effects⁴, but in recent years a growing number of research is dedicated to socio-cultural impacts of tourism in certain geographic areas such as Bali⁵, Florida⁶, Norway⁷ and others. In addition, some of the recent researches have focused on developing new methodologies

and models for assessing the attitudes and relations between population of receptive areas towards tourists and tourism in general⁸. It is noticeable that there are numerous of discussions and polemics on alternative forms of tourism and the different consequences which resulted as the effect of interactive evolution between tourists and local communities^{9,10}. By highlighting the negative impacts of tourism on local communities, recent researches have put in doubt earlier view that tourism promotes understanding between people of different nations and cultures.

Mutual Relations between Tourists and their Hosts

Socio-cultural influences are a result of specific social relations that occur during relationship between tourists and their hosts who are dominant population in receptive areas. The nature of these relationships is a key factor, according to which can be estimated whether tourism contributes to the strengthening of understanding or misunderstanding among the mentioned two entities.

According to Wall and Mathieson¹¹, the relationship (contact) between tourist and host in the destination is related to the three main contexts: while the tourist buys a particular product or service from the host, when the tourist and the host can be found side by side (exp. on the

Third feature of relationship between tourists and their hosts is described by the lack of spontaneity. Tourism contributes putting certain informal and traditional relationships and values under the frame of economic activity, which transforms the former spontaneous hospitality into commercial transactions. Package tours, events, exhibitions and other tourist attractions and facilities are promoted before their actual implementation. This means that supply offers appropriate, comfortable and risk-free activities and experiences in the framework of well planned and organized trips while the possibilities of spontaneous and direct contacts are pushed to the background. These types of relations and contacts are under rigid control of tour operators and in some cases reduced only within the possibility of their additional incomes.

Fourth feature is initiated by their nature of often unequal and unbalanced relations. Differences in material status is mostly expressed in consumption and attitudes of tourists so the hosts often feel inferior and for return they use each possibility to exploit the apparent wealth of tourists. As well, the inequality is present on the level of satisfaction that comes from relations between the tourist and the host. Vacation to a tourist is a new experience, but its consequences represent an everyday routine for the host. Maintaining such a routine can be difficult in cases of aircraft delays and other unexpected situations during the tourist trip. This may cause increased psychological pressure on the hosts, which tourists are not aware of and often do not pay attention to. The relations with tourists do not always produce influences on their direct hosts. However, hosts as individuals can effect on other members of local community by changing their usual behavior or attitude. Such indirect socio-cultural effects can become more complex due to additional possibilities of employment brought by the tourism development. The increased volume of tourist traffic can be an initial factor of social change, relied on innovation and improvement of transport and other elements of infrastructure, of which benefits entire local community. Tourism development increases the income of the accommodation and the percentage of local people involved in serving tourists. This result by the consumption pattern changes of the local population, causing the new socio-cultural changes related to changes in consumer habits.

The problem of the factors that determine the nature of the relationship between tourists and hosts is argued by several authors^{11,14,15}. Factors can be both positive and negative, which means that they can encourage or discourage interaction between the two parties. Among these are the following: the volume and the type of tourism development, physical isolation of tourists, length of stay, the volume of new tourists, temporary purpose of stay, language and forms of communication, the economic importance of the hospitality, the involvement of local people in economy, developed level of national pride, etc. These factors interpenetrate each other and it is difficult to consider and analyze each of them separately, as well as other factors, such as: the phase of tourism development, ethnic structure, the involvement of local people

in tourism development, attitudes about the quality of tourist services etc., the aforementioned factors always has to be taken into consideration when making travel plans. It is certain that the mutual irritations in tourist-host relation and negative socio-cultural effects can be low rated and reduced to a tolerable extent, but cannot be completely eliminated.

Insight into the available literature shows that in the previous studies of socio-cultural effects of tourism development can be divided into two segments: some authors have studied the social while others were exploring the cultural and other aspects of development of the tourism phenomenon. Although this division should be accepted only tentatively because of the large entanglement of social and cultural effects of tourism development, it can be said that social research, mainly are devoted to interpersonal relations in tourism, moral norms, the emergence of crime, gambling, religion, the impact of tourism on the health of tourists and residents of receptive areas and the like. On the other hand, research on cultural effects is mostly focused on the consideration of tangible and intangible forms of culture and cultural process of change. Following this division, and considering the fact that it does not make a clear distinction between social and cultural aspects, in this paper the focus will be based on the social consequences of development of the tourism phenomenon.

Methods for Measuring the Social Impacts of Tourism

Globally, previous studies of social impacts of tourism are a useful inventory of indicators of such impacts, but it is noticed that they are, on the one hand, very descriptive, while on the other hand related to some small and rural tourism areas, without a clear conceptual foundation^{11,16}. Possible ways of evaluation of social impacts are suggested in a small number of scientific research papers. Although several authors stress the need for basic monitoring of tourist's and resident's behavior and the reciprocal effects that arise from their interaction^{10,17}, the current practice indicates a small number of theoretical models that can be widely applied in researching the social impact of tourism. These models represent the initial framework for the development of the conceptual basis for the comprehensive evaluation of the social impact of tourism. Their creators are aware of the fact that these impacts of tourism are changing over time, representing a response to structural changes in tourism activity, as well as the degree and duration of exposure to the domestic population due to tourism development. They also try to determine the types of residents and their reason for supporting or opposing tourism, taking into account the type of factors that lead to such attitudes and behavior.

Doxey¹⁸ proposed the »Iridex model« to monitor the degree of irritation of the domestic population, caused by increases in tourist traffic, which includes several stages. At the beginning of tourism development in yet isolated

destination of the traditional type, the occasional arrival of guests causes a pleasant reaction on domestic population and tourists are welcome. It is an »euphoric phase« in which the author described satisfaction among domestic population due to arrival of tourists and tourism development. As the number of visitors increase, euphoria is replaced by the state of residents »apathy«, and their will for interaction with tourists increasingly gets weak. The next phase of the »Iridex model« is a stage of »irritation« which is characterized by permanent concessions which the hosts have to do in order to meet the demands and needs of the progressive number of tourists. This implies an progressive building of fun and recreational infrastructure facilities and it effects the competition among entrepreneurs that tend to use the same space and limited resources of the destination. The value of these resources is consequently growing, their market is increasing and the destination becomes more expensive. In addition, the local people are blamed for the eventual fall of the tourist interest for local traditional heritage. Increase of dominant apathy and irritation is caused by the fact that tourists are visually different from the hosts (the way they dress and behave is different), and the fact that tourists have much more free time for leisure compared to their hosts who are burdened with extensive actions and obligations. Tourists are free and unfettered to spend their money in order to meet their various needs and wishes. The high degree of irritation can lead to a phase of »antagonism«, where residents mark tourists as main responsible for everything bad that has affected destination. Some of the examples can be the following phrases: »Tax rates have risen because of the tourists«; »Tourists do not respect our property«; »Tourists have corrupted our youth«; »Tourists intend to destroy all that is good and beautiful in our country«, etc. The final stage of »Iridex model« starts when the pressure of visitors and the saturation of space reach such level that violate the basic values of tourist destination. This includes the abolishment of a traditional architectural style, violating the traditional values of hosts and loss of their kindness, etc. Authentic environment of destination is permanently changed, so the local population have to adapt to new living conditions and to initiate a new concept of tourism development based on a different type of tourist segment.

Bjorklund and Philbrick¹⁹ developed a model to analyze the processes that occur in situations when there is interaction between two or more groups of people with different cultural characteristics. Butler⁹ elaborated this model, pointing out that it can be used for the study of social relations between tourists and their hosts. The following figure shows that the attitudes of groups and individuals to tourism can be positive or negative, and their behavior can be active or passive. The resulting combination of responses to tourism can have one of four forms that are displayed on the diagram. In particular local community all of four categories may be present in any time frame, but the number of people belonging to certain category is changing over time. For example, entre-

preneurs who are financially involved in the development of tourism are likely to be involved in strong tourism promotion, while the small group of distinguished and individual subjects, who are not involved in the development of tourism, can be expected to lead an intensive campaign of opposition to tourism development and the possible changes it may bring. Most of the population in the community generally can be subsumed under one of two remaining passive categories, whether it's about people who silently and slowly embrace tourism because of the positive impact brought by these activities, or residents who do not see the possibility to change current trends of tourism development. Ap and Crompton²⁰ offered a model of narrow scope, focusing on individual residents and their behavior and adaptation on the development of tourism:

- Sympathetic acceptance. Acceptance of tourists with great enthusiasm;
- Tolerance. Residents were prepared to accept the inconveniences caused by tourism, recognizing the benefits that tourism brings to local communities;
- Customization. Residents actively change their past behavior in order to avoid discomfort caused by the arrival of tourists, organizing different spatial and temporal distribution of their activities in order to avoid often meeting with tourists;
- Withdrawal. This includes physical (leaving the destination) or psychological withdrawal (being quiet and withdrawn without any contact with tourists).

The aforementioned models are similar because they include elements of dynamics and progress, starting from the fact that social influences change over time. However, the concepts of authors differ in how these changes manifest. For example, Doxey¹⁸ represents the opinion that change can take place only in one direction, while Butler⁹ points out that changes in the behavior or attitudes of residents can be manifested in different ways. Doxey's model can be adopted and applied on dominant behavior in destination in general. On the other hand, Butler, Ap and Crompton are researching the groups and individuals among particular destinations. They correctly conclude that the destination indicates different attitudes toward tourism, which could create tensions between different groups of the population on a given receptive area. This means that social change can be treated as a direct consequence of the way residents perceive the changes in spatial and time frame of their life, caused by tourism (especially in peak season). The aforementioned and other models suggest the need to further strengthen the empirical studies of behaviour and attitudes of residents, their level of response, including the upper threshold of such reactions observed in the context of the degree of tourism influence.

Some authors²¹ emphasize the importance of »process/model of creative destruction« by indicating the sequence of activities during which the field of cultural heritage, and especially the smaller destinations in the hiking areas of large cities, are significantly transform-

ing thanks to tourism. These areas have been modified through changes in relations between the three variable elements: investments of local entrepreneurs, market valuation of cultural heritage and the destruction of the rural idyll. The model points out the need to make a profit by investing in the renovation, reconstruction and development of cultural heritage (ethno-social features, events, environmental entities, monuments, etc.), which can be offered in the form of product intend for sale on the tourist market. Mentioned investments are made in order to attract and animate a large number of consumers, whose consumption will lead to new funds for reinvestment. This negatively affects rural areas and small towns mostly because they are losing their authentic appearance by transforming the landscape units and degrading the original environment.

The »process of creative destruction« is developed in several phases. First phase includes co-modification of tradition and cultural heritage. Investments made at this stage are focused on achieving significant financial profit. In the next stage (»advanced co-modification«) investments are increasing: there are new jobs opportunities and previous job positions are transforming in order to adequately meet the needs of visitors/tourists. Local communities are promoted and positioned in the market, and the number of visitors is growing dynamically. The groups and individuals involved in tourism development are aware of market reputation importance, while other segments of the locals are faced with difficulties of a large inbound of visitors. Phase of »early destruction« begins when the profit starts to reinvest in new jobs in order to meet the needs of the growing number of tourists. Over time, the crowds and congestion of the area increases and larger number of residents notice the erosion of the quality of their local communities followed by the deterioration of their own lifestyles. The final phase of destruction occurs when residents of certain destination become clear that living conditions have deteriorated drastically, and that the previous appearance of an attractive destination (made in the process of co-modification) is completely devastated. Finally, the phase of »post-destruction« starts when destination becomes a place for recreation and shopping, primarily intended for mass tourists and less attractive for those who are interested in exploring the unique cultural heritage. For those residents who choose to stay in such destination the only alternative left is to accept the new terms of living and adopt them as a lifestyle.

Tourism and Social Change: From Euphoria to Xenophobia

Initial stages of tourism development are usually accompanied by enthusiasm of the domestic population in receptive areas, mostly because they perceive the potential benefits that will bring investors and tourists to their local communities. There is no doubt that tourism brings investments and insures income that can replace traditional sources of income in the destinations. Tourism de-

velopment is often followed by the governmental support and local residents' approval, especially in underdeveloped areas because this segment of economy is highly potential to achieve rapid growth and insure regular budget followed by the personal income increase. The previous optimistic attitude and euphoria that are usually present in the initial stages of tourism development are beginning to come down, as the tourist arrivals and tourism growth rises. Analyzing the social impacts of tourism on the islands of the Pacific Ocean, Wall and Mathieson¹¹, focused on enthusiasm of local political leaders of Fiji Islands and Samoa at the end of the 1970s, who were saying the following: »Tourism will improve our economy, of which the immediate benefit will be reflected on our residents. We are proud that the tourists will meet the beauty, cultural heritage and the tradition of our islands.« However, the same authors describe that the present authorities on these islands and their inhabitants express concern over the negative impacts of tourism that constantly reverse the traditional customs and way of living. Initiating the tourism development, governments of these and many other attractive Pacific Islands were aware that tourism economy will, in certain way, damage local traditional values but they could not predict the destruction of social structure.

Yet, it is more rational to accept the point of view that the tourism contributes social and cultural changes of receptive areas than to think that tourism is the only cause of all socio-cultural disorders in local communities²². Society and culture are dynamic categories and the influence of tourism shouldn't be overrated because it can lead to deceiving conclusions and values.

Perceptions and attitudes of hosts about the constant expansion of facilities and services that are designed to match the needs of visitors can be increased over time and even reach the level of xenophobia. Xenophobia occurs in cases when socio-cultural carrying capacity in destination is overused which can be caused by mass tourist flow. It involves expressed negative attitudes and emotions of hosts to tourists and their behavior. Negative attitudes of hosts towards tourists vary in their intensity and manifestation: from complaining on the tourist traffic in destination to the open expression of unfriendly attitude or even violence towards tourists¹¹.

Insight into the literature shows that larger number of experts researched socio-cultural impacts of tourism in rural areas^{20,23,24} than in urban environment²⁵ although tourism development is more dynamic in the second type of destination. However, all researchers agreed about the fact that over last fifty years, tourism has led to significant changes in the social structure of receptive areas. As well, there is consent that while assessing the socio-cultural effects of tourism in one destination, the category that should be considered primarily includes possible limits of tolerance for tourists by residents, which are spatially and temporally very different. As long as the number of tourists and their cumulative impacts are below the critical level, and economic effects of tourism have a positive trend, the presence of tourists in

the destinations are more or less, accepted and met with approval of the majority of local population. Yet, if the upper tolerance level is reached and exceeded, many symptoms of dissatisfaction could come to surface, varying from mild apathy and irritation to extreme xenophobia. The upper tolerance level of locals is a sensitive psychological category and it can depend on several factors^{8,9,11,26}:

1. Cultural and economic distance and other differences between tourists and their hosts. Residents on destinations differ in their tolerance towards people who are different from them in terms of the following categories: physical appearance, race, number, nationality, etc. The greater the divergence between the tourist-host relations gets, certain social influences are more significant, especially in small and isolated receptive areas. Problems in interaction generally occur due to lack of education, mutual misunderstanding of cultural differences and previous knowledge about what behavior is acceptable and what is not. Such communication problems can be present on both sides, among tourists and their hosts. The essence of social contact and interaction between tourists and hosts mainly depends on expressed level of desire to achieve relationship.

2. Ability of destinations and their local communities to physically and mentally absorb tourist arrivals, without disrupting or suppressing usual local activities. This factor can best be analyzed through the index of intensity of tourism, measured in number of tourists compared to the number of residents. Best examples are capitals such as London, Paris or New York, all cosmopolitan cities and destinations that absorb millions of tourists per year. However, high flow of tourists is supported by large number of tourist facilities and the ambient involves fusion of tourists and great number of local population. On the other hand, in Barbados or the Virgin Islands the number of tourists is many times greater than the number of local people, and facilities are often overbooked. Accordingly, dissatisfaction of the local population will be much more manifested in Barbados rather than in London.

3. The dynamics and intensity of tourist development. While implementing tourism in large and well-ordered economic systems, the impacts of tourism are not that significant. Most developed countries have matched the growth of tourism with the overall economic expansion. However, in cases when tourism is replacing other dominant and existing business, becoming the main source of income in a short period, the socio-cultural and psychological consequences are inevitable. Popular travel destinations on the Pacific Islands and islands of Aegean and Caribbean Sea, whose development is based on tourism as a main source of income, met with numerous negative socio-cultural effects as the consequences of rapid tourism growth.

4. The degree of involvement of local people in the process of providing tourism services. It is widely known that local community members, who found their source of economic income in tourism, manifest the positive at-

titude to tourism. On the other hand, a higher percentage of local people who tend to protect their community and lifestyle from the negative impacts of tourism, are joining the local organizations that control and affect the tourism development. Such people are engaged in planning activities, supporting specific forms of tourism that will not harm the local environment, while the public remains at the level of the general attitude or relationship to tourism, without undertaking specific activities.

Although it is hard to estimate whether the local community has reached the critical level of tolerance towards tourism (socio-cultural carrying capacity of destination is abstract and hard to be measured²⁶, the literature indicates that several authors in their papers point that many destinations are at the edge position to reach and overcome the mentioned tolerance level. Former low-key approach to the negative aspects of tourism development and its economic benefits, is in modern terms less common. The growing animosity towards tourism is strictly limited only in case of socially and economically less developed segments of population, because the negative reactions can be represented by concerned politicians, academic people, priests and even businessmen. Expressing dissatisfaction is especially characteristic of areas with »tourist magnetic attractive force«¹⁴, in which tourism is the main source of income for the local community and where all activities are, more or less, in a function of satisfying the needs of tourists, whose stay at the destinations is related to the shorter period of the year. Although in such areas the economic benefit of residents is secured by the tourist consumption, each beginning and the end of a tourist season is greeted with mixed feelings and emotions.

Conclusion

Growing interest of experts and researchers to explore the socio-cultural impacts of tourism corresponds with the fact that tourism does not always bring certain positive effects to receptive areas. Until recently it was taught that »mass tourism is a big thing«, mostly because of the positive effects that have appeared on that basis. However, the ambient and effects of contemporary tourism indicate the question: Do residents of tourist destinations really live better since they took over the role of the host?

If accepted that tourism effects are positive components that contribute to preservation of social structure in tourist areas and destinations, than it can be concluded that the negative social and cultural effects are those components which disturb and damage social integrity of local communities. However, it is controversial whether the negative socio-cultural effects appear always as a result of intensive tourism growth or their genesis is initiated by other factors. As well, the possibility of application of the certain research results based on several destinations and in case of all other destination is questionable. Future research should not only expand former conclusions, but to focus on new aspects of socio-

-cultural effects of tourism. Research in this field should make clear distinction between actual socio-cultural effects of tourism and those effects that the residents of destinations have already perceived.

Comprehensive assessment of socio-cultural influences requires that perception of these effects, based from the point of resident's view, is constantly analyzed in the context of the level or the phase of tourism development in targeted area. It is completely understandable that realization of these tasks requires further improvement of

research methods which might perceive socio-cultural changes caused by tourism. The fact is that reliable research results of tourism socio-cultural effects requires multidisciplinary approach, taking into account the high complexity and heterogeneity of the tourism as a phenomenon. Due to that, the integration of economic, socio-cultural, environmental, institutional, political and other elements represents the basic background for all future studies of tourism, including socio-cultural influences of its development on destinations and their inhabitants.

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SOCIOKULTURALNI UTJECAJ SUVREMENOG TURIZMA

SAŽETAK

Tema ovog rada posvećena je analizi sociokulturalnog utjecaja turizma, kao učinka na pripadnike udomljavajućih zajednica uslijed njihovih izravnih i neizravnih kontakata s turistima. Socijalni i kulturalni utjecaji turizma su načini kojima turizam pridonosi promjeni u sustavu vrijednosti, pojedinačnom ponašanju, obiteljskoj strukturi i odnosima, zajedničkom stilu života, razini sigurnosti, moralu, tradicionalnim svečanostima i organizaciji zajednice. Posebna pažnja posvećena je kompleksnosti međuodnosa između turista i domaćina te raspravi o tehnikama za podizanje kvalitete i kvantitete sociokulturalnih promjena koje turizam izaziva u lokalnim zajednicama.