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No one asks the children, right?

Abstract

Modern tourism planning and development of a destination should include input from all levels of society, including different age groups and varying interest groups within a local community. However, it is very rare that, in the process of participatory planning, youths and school groups are invited to express their views on development plans or have the opportunity to take an active part in decision-making. In this study, a nonverbal semantic differential was used in order to learn about how children in Slovenian primary schools view tourists and tourism. A sample of students from three primary schools located in developed, semi developed and poorly developed tourist destinations completed an "activity book" containing questions and a methodology for drawing a picture of "tourists", "hosts", and "children's parents' perception of tourists". This study showed that children from regions where tourism is highly developed have significantly different attitudes toward tourists than children living in regions where tourism is not as developed. However, the study also takes a perspective of the importance of sustainability in the tourism offer and how this may affect the views of children & youth in general and in different regions in particular.

Key words: children and visitors; perception of visitors and hosts; sustainability; destinations; participatory planning

Introduction

By analyzing the various approaches to the concept of sustainable tourism Bramwell and Lane stressed that, based on the famous Brundtland Report (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987), which is considered as a source of ideas on sustainable tourism, it may be defined: "as tourism that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Bramwell & Lane, 2011, p. 413). This certainly does not refer only to the future generations that will live in our areas for 500 years or more. Future generations are our children who live here now and in the future, and therefore will have to endure the consequences of our environmental management. This was the initial concept in the thinking of those researchers who participated in this study. If the fundamental rationale of the concept of sustainability is "without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs", then it is logical to conclude that for these

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future generations someone should pose questions about development of tourism in the locations in which they live and where they will probably continue to live.

The first of the four basic principles of the concept of sustainability is the principle of holistic planning and strategy-making (Lu & Nepal, 2009, p. 5). The principle of holistic planning includes the principle of participatory planning. Participatory planning is one of the most important elements and a key approach to the tourism development if one seeks to satisfy the requirements of the modern paradigm of sustainability and responsibility in tourism. Furthermore, a community-based approach to tourism development that involves a broad number of stakeholders is a prerequisite for sustainability. Inclusion of the widest possible range of stakeholders in tourism development, based on the concept of sustainability, requires local communities to adopt fundamental principles derived from the theory of social learning (Wray, 2011). This certainly includes children who live in a particular destination. Specifically, these children in the process of social learning acquire knowledge and understanding of elements of sustainability necessary for the future of their local community. This inclusion of children in the planning process at the local level indicates a departure from the traditional "top-down" approaches and proposes the inclusion of broader community needs (Wray, 2011). This, of course, emphasises the sustainable future of tourism in certain destinations. Maximising benefits to local residents typically results in tourism being better accepted by those residents and signals their active support in the conservation of local resources (Inskeep, 1994). This collective planning for the tourism industry, at the same time, is a significant step in the advancement of education of children and their sensibility to the community life (Iorioa & Corsale, 2014).

Planning for sustainable tourism development is an effort to shape the future. Children, who clearly have the largest stake in the future, should therefore have the right to participate in planning sustainable tourism development. Adult attitudes towards place reflect immediate (largely short term) concerns and motivations. Children's perceptions are free of adult concerns. In this regard, children are much more objective in their assessment of what matters. Furthermore, adults' perceptions and evaluations of place depend on the instrumental value of place; place is often a commodity, a resource to be exploited. For children, place represents an inherent value in itself. Thus, favourite places are often those that are remembered from childhood and why children ought to have a voice in the planning of tourism destination, in pursuit of a sustainable and responsible long-term life (Sancar, 2005).

The idea that children may be the best informants about themselves (Atzaba-Poria, Pike & Deater-Deckard, 2004; Measelle, Ablow, Cowan & Cowan, 1998) should encourage scholars to conduct empirical research in the field of tourism *with* rather than *about* children. Such studies may reveal elements of behaviour that adults may not have considered, as children's understanding of self-presentation rules and emotional regulation is limited compared to that of adults and usually develops throughout childhood and adolescence (Banerjee & Yuill, 1999; Measelle et al., 1998). Also, children, in general, and young children, in particular, are less socially conditioned with pre-conceived notions. Additionally, such studies may highlight children's attitudes toward tourism as having no voice or option but to follow their parents' decisions. To summarize, influenced by the post-modernist and feminist movement, it is claimed that exploring childhood experiences based on children's voices, rather than those of adults or the assumptions of experts, is essential in advancing tourism scholarship and industry knowledge and may contribute to developing a more inclusive view of tourism and its impact.

One of the major reasons for the inclusion of children in the planning and development of tourism destinations concerns the right of children to express their opinion as guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, 20 November 1989

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(UNHR). Article 12 of the Convention states that when the adults make decisions that affect children, they are obliged to hear the opinion of children on those decisions. Adults should not only listen to children, but also involve children in the process of planning changes in the environment that may in any way affect children. But the fact is that presently it is not known whether children have been invited to express their views on the development of tourism in the neighbourhoods in which they live. This research is a rare opportunity to seek their opinions by scientists involved in research in the field of tourism.

Children in tourism

Unfortunately, there is little or no theoretical and empirical literature that considers the voices of the younger generation in the planning and development of tourism. Little has changed since Graburn's (1983) observation, almost thirty-five years ago, of the absence of children in the tourism literature. Research which discusses children as tourists has primarily focused on children's influence on parental decision making (Filiatrault & Ritchie, 1980; Fodness, 1992; Tagg & Seaton, 1994; Wang, Hsieh, Yeh, Tsai 2004) and children's influence on adult tourists' experiences (Johns & Gyimo´thy, 2002; Salma, 2001; Thompson, Pinney & Schibrowsky, 1996). With few exceptions, the studies of children have been from an adult perspective, though some writers have recognised the importance of children as a market segment (Cullingford, 1995; Ryan, 1992; Swarbrooke & Horner, 1999). For instance, Connell (2005) refers to the phenomenon of ''toddler tourism'', which emerged in the United Kingdom stimulated by the British TV program, *Balamory*, set on the Island of Mull in Scotland.

It is only in the last two decades that researchers have begun to examine how children experience holidays. Cullingford (1995), in a study of attitudes toward overseas holidays of British children, aged seven to eleven years, found that children had clear ideas of those holiday destinations which were attractive to them. It was the developed world that was most desirable; in other words, destinations which were culturally familiar. The author found, for most of the children in the study, that travel meant beaches, good weather and eating out rather than cultural sightseeing. He explained that ''for the most part, children are confined to their clearly demarcated 'holiday' and while they enjoy the entertainment of a beach holiday with friends, they are also aware of the differences in being abroad'' (p. 125).

The importance of including the traditionally excluded voices of children and youth in the planning of public spaces is also an issue articulated in the literature. For example, Parnell and Patsarika's (2011) work focuses on children's contributions to the planning of school-related spaces, while Laughlin and Johnson's (2011) work deals with the role of youth in informing decisions related to housing developments (Laughlin & Johnson, 2011). Very few of the researchers studied how children in destination areas perceive tourists.

According to Gamradt (1995), tourism affects the lives of children particularly if one or more of their relatives and/or acquaintances are employed in the industry: ''[S]uch children will have acquired knowledge of, and may even have formed strong opinions about tourists and the tourism industry'' (p. 735). These previous studies offer a strong basis on which to understand the environment of children living with tourism destinations.

In the report on cultural tourism in Wales, Jones and Travis (1983) defined culture as "the system of values, beliefs, behaviours, morals, and other social phenomena shared by a group of people, based on their common experience of life, language and history." This testifies to tourism not simply being an economic branch, but it is also, amongst others, a culture in the wider contextual sense. It is a culture

that is transmitted inter-generationally, as indeed the wider concept of culture is transmitted. Efforts to address the complex linkages between culture and development require, on the one hand, promoting the inclusion of minorities and disadvantaged groups in social, political and cultural life; and, on the other hand, harnessing the potential of the creative sector for job creation, economic growth and poverty reduction efforts more broadly. The inclusion of minorities and disadvantaged groups in social, political and cultural life remains an ongoing development priority. Tourism is able to play a significant role in achieving these objectives, due to its character as a horizontal sector with a value chain that crosses almost every existing economic, human, or cultural activity in each place. Compared with other economic activities, the special relationship of tourism with the environment and society makes it an ideal tool for sustainable development. This is due to its unique dependency on quality environments, cultural distinctiveness and social interaction, security and wellbeing. On the one hand, if poorly planned or developed to excess, tourism may destroy those special qualities which have such a central relationship to sustainable development. On the other, it may be a driving force for their conservation and promotion – directly through the raising of awareness and income to support them, and indirectly by providing an economic justification for the provision of such support by others.

There are several possible factors that may assist in explaining the deficiency of research on children and tourism. First, research with children demands special expertise (Measelle et al., 1998). As far as implementing the research is concerned, interviews and surveys with children must be conducted by researchers who are familiar with specific techniques (e.g. doll-play, storytelling and pictorial questions) and procedures (e.g., the Berkeley Puppet Interview) used for investigating children at various developmental stages.

Furthermore, in many countries, scholars who wish to involve children in their studies need permission not only from parents but also from government agencies and ethics committees inside and outside the university. An additional factor that hinders scholars from studying children is the state of the current body of tourism knowledge and unfamiliarity with theories needed to conceptualize children's behaviour. Most lines of thinking in tourism studies are based on the assumption that tourists are free agents who are enabled to choose from a wide range of travel options, many of which form an escape from daily routines and social obligations (Obrador, 2012).

The development of the child and her/his understanding of the world around them, takes place in constant interaction with the environment. One of the most important interactions is certainly their interaction with their parents. So parental views on the environment are passed on to their children, either through explicit or implicit attitudes. Both of these attitudes are recognized and adopted in their own way by children in the socialization process (Holden & Hawk, 2003, p. 199).

Thus, our research investigated the perceptions of 11-12 year old children of tourists, hosts and their parents' opinion of tourists, taking into account the stages and development of the tourism destinations and whether the children's parents or relatives were employed in the tourism industry. Children are very careful observers of the attitudes of their parents, though even from an early age it is not always certain whether they will agree with those attitudes. Our research indicates that children may closely replicate the attitudes of their parents. This has led us, in our study, to examine how children view parental attitudes towards tourists.

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Methodology

The perception of tourists was measured in four different Slovenian towns. The first was in the small town of Trebnje in central Slovenia where tourist activities are very poor and the hospitality industry almost exclusively serves the local population. Those who are employed in tourism and hospitality work off-site, in the nearby capital city of Ljubljana and other cities. The second was the small town of Brežice in south-east Slovenia close to a spa complex. In this town there are almost no tourist activities and the hospitality industry in the town, to a large extent, serves mainly the local population. The nearby spa provides local inhabitants with job opportunities. The third area is to two small towns on the Adriatic coast - Lucija and Piran - where tourism activity is very intense. In both towns, there is practically no other industry apart from tourism.

The study was carried out, therefore, in three municipalities - Brežice, Piran/Pirano (including the settlements of Piran/Pirano and Lucija/Lucia within that municipality) and Trebnje. However, if we look at tourism data, there is a strong distinction between the three municipalities. On overnight stays, Piran/Pirano received 270,022 (of which 73% were foreign and 27% domestic); Brežice received 118,633 (63% foreign and 37% domestic) whilst Trebnje received 1,405 (84% foreign and 16% domestic) (RS Statistical Office, August 2016, http://www.stat.si/StatWeb/).

The objectives of the study

The study had several objectives. The first objective was to determine how school children in the 6th and 7th grades (age 11-12 years) in elementary schools perceive tourists. The second objective was to ascertain how children perceive the host population, as opposed to tourists. The third objective was to measure how children see the way their parents perceive tourists.

Our interest in this study is in how children understand the tourism process. We seek to learn the ways in which children understand basic concepts of tourism; concepts that include people we usually identify as tourists and the local people, identified as hosts. Psycholinguistics tells us that words may have two types of meaning, denotative and connotative. Denotative meaning is the basic meaning of words (usually expressed in any thesaurus). In this study, researchers relied primarily on the connotative meaning of the terms tourists and hosts, and the way how their parents perceive the same terms. This meaning relies on the experience that children have had with the meaning being tested, i.e., the tourists and local population, hosts. The meaning is affective in its nature.

The semantic differential is one of the most popular instruments that tests concepts, values, or terms of some social environments. The instrument has a long history of successful application. It has been applied many times with different measurement positions in different cultures (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, 1998). In this study, a nonverbal semantic differential was chosen. The graphic form of semantic differential was not used as much. This form is particularly suitable when dealing with people from different language areas and people who have poor verbal communication and social experience, as is the case with children. The author of this particular form of the instrument is the late Croatian psychologist, Zoran Bujas (1967). The instrument is composed of 12 pairs of abstract drawings. These drawings consist of pairs of opposite meaning (Figure 1 and 2).

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Figure 1
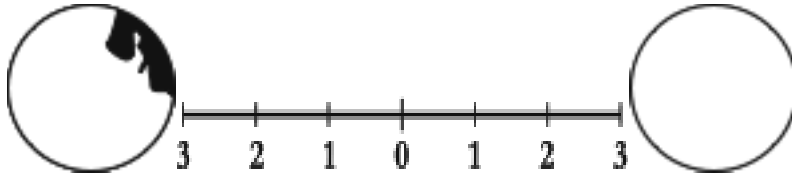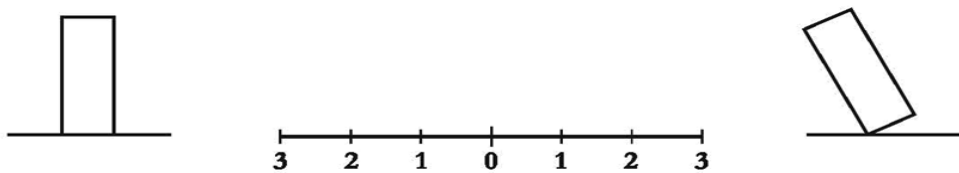**An example of one question - dirty versus clean (a part of the evaluation factor)**

Figure 2
An example of a second question – stable versus unstable (a part of the activity factor)

This scale comprises of three factors: Evaluation, Potency and Activity. The Evaluation factor examines whether respondents have a negative or positive opinion about the object that is evaluated. This dimension highlights the ways in which a respondent is emotionally experiencing certain entities from their surroundings (Janković, 2000, p. 225). In a broader sense, it relates to goodness or badness, morality and utility (Heise, 2010). Some recent researchers have named this factor 'social competence', underlining the importance of the social aspects (Dziobek & Hülser, 2007; Schaefer & Rotte, 2010). This is the strongest factor among the three; it was found to explain a large part of the common variance (Kumata & Schramm, 1969, p. 278). Factor called Potency factor reflects the strength of a concept that is being researched. The Potency factor relates to magnitude, social power, strength and expansiveness (Heise, 2010). Regarding the Activity factor, respondents expressed that the subject that they evaluated was perceived as active or passive. This relates to speed, animation, spontaneity, etc. (Heise, 2010).

Each factor contains 4 pairs of drawings. The respondents have to choose one meaning from each pair and evaluate it on a scale from 1 to 3. The rating of each factor is obtained by simply summing the ratings of all four variables. The maximum possible value of one factor is 12.00, and the lowest possible value is -12.00. The factor is better evaluated, as the arithmetic mean is greater.

Respondents

A total of 393 children participated in our study from four primary schools. Participation in the study was voluntary. Before testing, approval from the administrations of each school was obtained. The children's parents agreed in writing to their child's participation in the study.

Respondents distribution according to study area is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Respondents according to the study area

	Frequency	Percent
Trebnje (almost no touristic activities in the town)	160	40.7
Brežice (touristic activities on the outskirts of the town, but not in the town itself)	88	22.4
Lucija and Piran (tourism is the only industry)	145	36.9
Total	393	100.0

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The children were aged 11-13 years. Our respondents included 192 girls (48.9%) and 201 boys (51.1%). The population of respondents by gender corresponds to the distribution in the field.

Table 2
Employment of the parents

Employment of parents	Number	%
Both parents employed	304	77.4
Father only employed	50	12.7
Mother only employed	32	8.1
Not known	7	1.8
Total	**393**	**98.2**

Children were asked whether their parents were employed. Employment of parents is an important factor in the socialization of children in a family. Parents both directly and indirectly convey social experiences associated with their work and participate in social processes that are associated with the work. Children adopt their parent's attitudes not only towards work, but also the attitudes towards objects and entities associated with the work (e.g., not only the managers, but also the customers and even tourists). As can be seen in Table 2, both parents of almost 80% of the respondents were employed. High levels of employment of both parents of our respondents reflect a typical urban population lifestyle.

When it comes to employment of parents in tourism and hospitality, a total of 69 (17.6%) children reported that their parents were employed in the tourism and hospitality industry. It was interesting to see whether any other of the children's relatives were employed in tourism activities. Because of the connection between families, children do not only receive experience from their parents, but also from other family members (aunts, uncles, grandparents).

Table 3
Employment of children's parents in the tourism and the hospitality industry, according to the study area

Location	Family members or relatives employed in tourism				Total
	Employed	%	Not employed	%	
Trebnje (almost no tourism activities)	47	29.7	111	70.3	158
Brežice (poor tourism activities and a spa)	28	31.8	60	68.2	88
Lucija and Piran (developed tourism destination)	61	43.6	79	56.4	140
Unknown					7
Total	**136**	**35.2**	**250**	**64.8**	**393**

As can be seen from the Table 3, most family members and relatives, employees in the tourism industry, can be found in the mostly developed tourism destination. The value of Chi-square test was 6.799, with 2 degrees of freedom and with p = 0.033. These values indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in employment in tourism between destinations. As was to be expected, by far the highest employment rate in tourism was in the most developed tourism activities. But in the areas where tourism is not a very developed industry, the share of employees in the tourism industry was still relatively high. In most cases, family members and relatives work in other towns where there are more jobs in the tourism industry. Slovenia is territorially a very small country and commuting to other places from one's area of residence is relatively easy and common.

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Table 4
Ownership of tourism or hospitality facilities in a family

Ownership	Number	%
No family owned facility	310	78.88
Family members or relatives own tourism or hospitality enterprises	72	18.32
Not known	11	2.80
Total	393	100.00

As can be seen, almost 20% of the children reported that some members of the family owned a tourism or hospitality facility, which represents a relatively large percentage. The largest number of owners was located in the most developed tourism area.

Research instrument, data collection and analysis

The implementation of the instrument was conducted in groups and it was explained to the children that the research was about tourism activities in their towns and they were asked to participate voluntarily. The nature of the instrument was explained to them. They were given training in the method of application of the instrument using a completely neutral example (i.e., external appearance of examiners). Instrument was divided into following sections and collecting data on:

• a set of demographical questions,
• the assessment on their perception of tourists,
• their perception of hosts and
• the assessment of the perception they think their parents have of tourists.

For data processing statistical techniques, frequency distribution, Chi-square test, T-test for independent samples, paired samples T-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Pearson's correlation coefficient were used.

Results and discussion

The research seeks to understand the views that children have about tourists in their home environment. At the same time the research was also required to take account of how children understand their overall socio-economic environment outside the tourism sector. Additionally, the research also investigated children's attitudes of their parents towards tourists. This multi-faceted approach ensured that the views of children are not purely based on their own attitudes, but in addition takes account of the socio-economic and parental environment in which they live.

• Therefore the specific objectives of the research were as follows:
• The first objective was to determine how school children in the 6th and 7th grades (age 11-12 years) in elementary schools perceive tourists.
• The second objective was to ascertain how children perceive the host population, as opposed to tourists.
• The third objective was to measure how children see the way their parents perceive tourists.

Children from the least-developed tourism area, the town of Trebnje, had a more positive assessment of tourists. Slightly less positive, but still with positive ratings, was the assessments given by children from Brežice, the city in which tourism is not developed but which has a large spa outside the town. Children

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from the most developed Slovenian tourism destinations of Lucija and Piran assessed tourists least positively. The differences in responses were statistically significant when compared by the study area.

What was very interesting were the differences when analysing individual factors. On the Activity factor, tourists were rated highly, but the range between the highest and lowest score was broad. Children in the town without a significant tourism industry had a rather high assessment of the Activity of tourists, but children in the tourism area with the most intense tourist activity evaluated it as negative or, it might be better to say, as a non-active. This non-movement of tourists certainly should be interpreted in the context of the nature of destinations. Two active tourism destinations where the research was conducted are coastal destinations for summer beach holidays. Hence, a most likely perception of tourists is of them lying on the beach and not moving around much. This perception is obviously also enhanced by what the children hear from their parents, who evaluate the Activity factor of tourists more negatively than children do. On the other hand, children who do not have a specific personal experience with tourists see them as people who are active, fast, mobile and spontaneous, as is usually associated with this factor (Heise, 2010).

Table 5
Response by factors and study area

Factor	Location	N	Mean	Std. dev.	Significance of difference
Tourists – activity	Trebnje (almost no activity)	158	4.45	5.58	**0.000**
	Brežice (some activity)	87	3.01	5.57	
	Lucija and Piran (tourism destination)	141	-0.199	5.50	
Tourists – evaluation	Trebnje (almost no activity)	158	2.29	5.33	**0.000**
	Brežice (some activity)	84	0.83	4.52	
	Lucija and Piran (tourism destination)	142	-0.54	4.80	
Tourists – potency	Trebnje (almost no activity)	159	3.42	5.07	**0.001**
	Brežice (some activity)	86	3.53	5.75	
	Lucija and Piran (tourism destination)	138	1.31	5.16	
Residents – activity	Trebnje (almost no activity)	157	2.64	6.64	0.079
	Brežice (some activity)	87	3.16	6.33	
	Lucija and Piran (tourism destination)	143	4.24	5.59	
Residents – evaluation	Trebnje (almost no activity)	159	1.89	5.13	0.060
	Brežice (some activity)	87	1.21	5.07	
	Lucija and Piran (tourism destination)	141	2.81	5.05	
Residents – potency	Trebnje (almost no activity)	159	2.57	6.07	0.166
	Brežice (some activity)	87	1.66	6.30	
	Lucija and Piran (tourism destination)	144	3.17	5.40	
Parents – tourists activity	Trebnje (almost no activity)	158	1.72	6.26	**0.003**
	Brežice (some activity)	86	-0.13	5.69	
	Lucija and Piran (tourism destination)	145	-0.510	5.73	
Parents – tourists evaluation	Trebnje (almost no activity)	158	.949	5.24	**0.000**
	Brežice (some activity)	87	-0.379	5.13	
	Lucija and Piran (tourism destination)	142	-1.43	4.66	
Parents – tourists potency	Trebnje (almost no activity)	158	1.24	5.61	**0.002**
	Brežice (some activity)	86	.51	5.02	
	Lucija and Piran (tourism destination)	142	-0.88	4.69	

Significant differences are in bold.

The Potency factor shows children's experience of tourists as those having social power, strength and expansiveness (Heise, 2010). Everyday events at any tourism destination are power games between locals and tourists; power games are a part of the daily encounters and meetings (Beritelli & Laesser, 2011). The Hierarchy rating is very similar, such as with the Activity factor. Tourists are evaluated higher by children in the area where tourism is the least developed and less high by children in regions with highly developed tourism. This finding is very interesting and certainly requires further research efforts in this direction.

The Evaluation factor in a number of studies that used semantic differential as a research technique proved to be the most stable one. As noted previously, the high factor value indicates an acceptable image, while low and particular negative values indicate an unacceptable image. Since this factor indicates the importance of the social aspects of perception of a social space, the fact that there are statistically significant differences between the perceptions of children in different areas can be interpreted as the local presence of tourists significantly determining the social space of the children. However, it is not just about the categories good-bad or moral-immoral. It is as much about the broader concept that indicates what the emotional experience of the child is in relation to people who enter into her/his social space more or less forcibly (albeit invited by the parents of the child). Children in underdeveloped tourism areas idealize tourists and are socialized, especially by their schools, to consider them as highly acceptable partners in social life. Such an importance factor is called a factor of 'social competence' (Schaefer & Rotte, 2010). There was the same order and nature of assessment when we asked the children to let us know how their parents evaluated tourists according to all three dimensions of semantic differential. The ANOVA test showed statistically significant differences among the three different tourism and hospitality-developed areas. We analysed the statistical values in pairs. That is, we were interested in whether there was a statistical difference between the assessments of individual categories that the children were given and how the children said, their parents evaluated this category.

Table 6
Paired samples statistics

Pair	Factor evaluation Children/Parents	Mean	Std. deviation	Correlation coefficient
1	Children – tourists - evaluation	0.96	5.12	0.353*
	Parents – tourists evaluation	-0.24	5.09	
2	Children – tourists - potency	2.66	5.37	0.269*
	Parents – tourists potency	0.38	5.21	
3	Children – tourists activity	2.49	5.90	0.459*
	Parents – tourists activity	0.48	6.04	

* Correlation is significant at 0.05.

Children and parents evaluated individual factor dimensions differently. Children evaluated all the semantic factors far more positively than their parents. All differences were statistically significant. It is clear that children do not necessarily follow the opinions of their parents and, in some cases, their views are very different. The likely reason for the obvious differences in the experiences of the tourists might be the fact that some of the parents are economically dependent on tourists, while children are not, at least not in a direct way.

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Table 7
Paired samples statistics – very intense tourism destinations of Piran and Lucija

		Mean	Std. dev.	Statistical sign.
Pair 1	Children – tourists - evaluation	-0.54	4.84	0.065
	Parents – tourists evaluation	-1.47	4.65	
Pair 2	Children – tourists - potency	1.30	5.19	**0.000**
	Parents – tourists potency	-0.74	4.65	
Pair 3	Children – tourists activity	-0.10	5.50	0.385
	Parents – tourists activity	-0.57	5.71	

* Significant differences are in bold.

In locations where there is no active tourism, there were significant differences between the assessment of tourists by children and how the children perceive the three semantic factors in their parents' assessment of tourists. In contrast, in the tourism intensive destination of Piran and Lucija, differences between children and their parents almost completely disappeared. The differences remained only in the Potency factor, where children rated tourists statistically significantly better than their parents did. In the factor of tourists' Evaluation and the factor of tourists' activities, the children's assessment approached the level of their parents.

Finally, we analysed whether there is a correlation in the estimates among the different territories where we conducted research. We calculated Pearson's correlation coefficient and the results are shown in the table below.

Table 8
Pearson's correlation coefficient between study areas

	Brežice (some activity) – tourists	Brežice – residents	Brežice – mother and father	Lucija and Piran (tourism destination) – tourists	Lucija and Piran – residents	Lucija and Piran – mother and father
Trebnje (almost no activity) – tourists	-0.004			-0.042		
Trebnje – residents		0.053			-0.221	
Trebnje – mother and father			-0.112			0.041
Lucija and Piran (tourism destination) – tourists	-0.035					
Lucija and Piran – residents		0.133				
Lucija and Piran – mother and father			-0.024			

As can be seen from the table, there is statistically no significant correlation among the places where the test were conducted, or the concepts. Very little connection, only at the level of -.221, was observed between the least-developed tourist regions, Trebnje on one side, and the most developed, Lucia and Piran on the other. Therefore, it seems that it is possible that the results that we got from testing children were indeed the result of factors in each environment, not some general perceptions that exist in Slovenia as a society.

Limitations

There are two major limitations to this study. The first limitation is cultural, the study was conducted in the Slovenian cultural environment. In this case, while it is only relatively applicable to other

European cultures, we should be able to discuss the possibilities of its application in non-European conditions. Jan Gamradt (1995), in his research with children in Jamaica, showed a very positive attitude towards "visitors" to Jamaica. To be able to generalize the results, the study should be repeated in other cultures (Gamradt, 1995).

A further underlying limitation in this study is that children in areas where tourism has a low profile (albeit not a necessarily low economic input) may tend to have little relationship with tourists unless their family is directly engaged in some tourism activity (e.g. agro-tourism). Children in areas where tourism has a high level of intensity will have a strong relationship to tourism - albeit positive or negative. This tends to highlight one of the dilemmas of sustainable tourism; it seeks to exploit the fact that sustainable destinations are "off the beaten track" but at the same time seeks to promote sustainable destinations to increase inflows and revenues. The tipping point between profitability and sustainability is very difficult to judge and to reach a balance. Whilst sustainable tourism has a low profile, its environmental impact is low but its socio-economic impact from evidential tourism economic inputs is low. If the profile is made greater, the socio-economic impact will increase, but the potential environmental damage may also increase. We may envisage that this an issue affecting children in sustainable tourism areas - may they see tourists as an advantage (income, economic development) or a threat (destruction of the environmental, cultural and heritage environment)? To a degree, this adds a further dimension to this study.

Another limitation is related to the locations where the research was conducted. These are all small towns because of the nature of tourist activities in Slovenia, which mainly take place in small towns. It is quite possible that in a bigger city, results would be different. Therefore, in future research, it would make sense to extend the research to different cultural environments, as well as to bigger cities.

This survey explored children's attitudes towards tourists at one point in time. Our subjects were children aged 11 to 13 years. In further investigations, it would be very interesting to see how these concepts change over time as they grow up, such as for example in later adolescence and early adulthood. We should then have an opportunity to obtain better answers concerning relations between the local populations and their visitors.

Findings and conclusions

If the concept of sustainable tourism has a significant meaning, then it requires above all the concept of holistic development and seeking those solutions that solve the integrity of the human problems rather than piecemeal policy solutions or the concept described by Agyeman and Evans, as "Just sustainability" (Agyeman & Evans, 2004). Therefore, the current generation that is undertaking governance of tourism and sustainability should (Bramwell & Lane, 2011) be aware that a new generation is waiting on the horizon, that will seek to impose stricter codes of governance which will have a stronger impact on the processes of sustainability in tourism. In this study we have shown that children are not only 'residents' in tourist areas, towns and villages, but participants in events in those areas and careful observers of the events around them. However, in spite of all the research done on tourism, no-one ever asks the children their views about tourism. Such a partial view makes the sustainability concept at least incomplete.

This research has shown that children have very clearly defined attitudes towards tourists coming to the destinations in which they live, but the fact is that no one asks children about their positions, although tourists are constantly entering into their living space. The simplified answer, that tourism is an

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economic activity that allows children an orderly life, is clearly not a sufficient answer. Since children are obviously part of what is called a tourism destination, they also need to be consulted. Otherwise, as seen in this study, children carry negative biases onto the next generation, because prejudice, as it is well known, transfers inter-generationally.

The next conclusion is more obvious: the definition of destination "a geographic area, territorial-administrative or an important attraction that is trying to offer its visitors experiences which can range from acceptable to unforgettable" (Bornhorst, Ritchie & Sheehan, 2010). From a conceptual point of view, that is, if we take into consideration the manageability of a destination, it is far more efficient to regard a destination as a geographical region that has necessary critical mass or as a cluster attraction. A destination can be regarded as a combination (or even as a brand) of all products, services and ultimately experiences provided locally (Buhalis, 2000). In this definition, it is clear that from the point of view of the hosts these are both adults and children, therefore tourism destinations "have" this age group which can perform and should have input when it comes to planning and development.

As a next step in our research, we plan to conduct an international study involving young people aged 11 to 13, attending school and living in tourist-intensive cities. The research will be conducted in the following cities: Bad Gleichemberg in Austria, Opatija in Croatia, Topola in Serbia, Kranjska Gora in Slovenia, Malaga in Spain, Erzurum in Turkey, and Stirling in Scotland. These cities were selected because they were perceived to have a strong economic overdependence on tourism, which results in young people's day-to-day routines being highly affected by tourist activity. This will enable the surveying of their perceptions and attitudes towards tourism.

In the development of destination management, there is almost no evidence that youths and children are invited and asked about their views on destination development plans. This study showed that the mere presence of tourists is an important socialization factor in the development of children. Children observe and listen to what their parents say and how they behave towards tourists. They see how their parents treat tourists. Perceptions that they see in their parents and their own experiences with tourists define their 'social competence'. Many analyses of the workforce employed in hospitality and tourism have shown that young people are reluctant to enter professions in the tourism and hospitality sector. Many authors emphasize that there is a very high turnover of staff in the tourism industry. One result of this research shows that children in tourism-intensive areas are internalizing the relatively negative perception of tourists that their parents have. Therein lays one of the important problem factors with labour that is found in the tourism and hospitality industry. Therefore, it is wrong not to ask children about their views and not to care about their attitude towards tourists, because these children are the basis for the future development of tourism activities in these areas.

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