

Chapter 1

Tourism, Poverty, and Human Rights: An Unspeakable Relationship

Maximiliano Emanuel Korstanje

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5149-1669>
University of Palermo, Argentina

ABSTRACT

Over recent years, the philosophical dilemma of human rights has occupied a central position in the academic debate worldwide. Of course, tourism seems not to be an exception. Despite the promising economic benefits and multiplying effects of tourism, some voices have alerted on the problems and limitations of tourism management to achieve a fairer wealth distribution in local communities. Having said this, the idea of tourism as a key force towards a more democratic and prosperous society began to be placed under the critical lens of scrutiny. This chapter, in this context, discusses critically how tourism potentiates economic growth but under some conditions deteriorating (if not vulnerating) the basic rights of locals. The opposite is equally true. Local communities embrace tourism to boost their economies while paradoxically making them more dependent and vulnerable to external economic actors.

INTRODUCTION

Different experts and pundits of all stripes have considered tourism not only as an economic multiplying factor but also as a key driver towards economic prosperity and fairer wealth distribution (Pablo-Romero & Molina, 2013; Ivanov & Webster, 2007). Doubtless, tourism only is successfully proliferated in the context of strong

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-8726-6.ch001

democratic institutions which lead invariably towards political stability (Harrison & Schipani 2009). Having said this, tourism contributes positively and of course directly to the development of the local community, at least as the specialized literature holds. Anyway, some emerging voices have alerted on the problems as well as conceptual limitations economic growth has. At a closer look, some underdeveloping economies come across higher levels of dependency which impedes a fair wealth distribution (Fayissa, Nsiah & Tadasse 2008). In other cases, tourism paves the way for the rise of much deep sentiment of resentment and inter-class conflict which ultimately turns out of any governmental control (Comaroff & Comaroff 2009). The present book chapter interrogates furtherly on the paradox of economic growth [at least stimulated by tourism] where [under some conditions] some basic rights of local people or ethnic minorities are simply vulnerated. The opposite is equally true, local stakeholders strive for adopting tourism as the main source of growth, and in so doing they develop a strong dependency on foreign investment.

THE ASHES OF POVERTY AND TOURISM

The history of poverty as well as the intention of international financial corporations to employ tourism as an efficient poverty relief seems far to be new. As Andrew Holden (2013) eloquently documents, once situated as a WatchGuard of economic stability (just ended WWII) the US instrumentalized the development program to assist developing economies since the 70s decade. Over years, the concept of development stimulated by the World Bank was invariably synonymous with economic progress. In these terms, development theory conceptualized economic progress through quantifiable factors and indicators which overlooked other types of wealth. At the time Truman`s speech divides the world into two, developed and underdeveloped economies, the debates revolving around the notion of poverty are simply introduced to the legitimate economic intervention of some nations over others. Beyond any ideological dispute, it becomes evident that the financial asymmetries between the global North and South call attention to a radical shift in the economic paradigms. Unless these dichotomies are previously resolved, tourism tends to perpetuate exploitative relations between development-generating countries and peripheral destinations. In consonance with this, Emanuel de Kadt (1979) describes the role played by culture in the configuration of exploitative institutions which impede genuine development. Per his viewpoint, those peripheral destinations mainly marked by a state of subordination or domination by the side of external powers have little probability to adopt successful development programs. De Kadt holds the thesis that tourism development works in the context of economic dependency and political

10 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/tourism-poverty-and-human-rights/324704

Related Content

Entertainment and Food Tourism in the Backdrop of Late Modernity and a Reflection on Turkey

Aysegul Kesimoglu (2015). *Hospitality, Travel, and Tourism: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 727-744).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/entertainment-and-food-tourism-in-the-backdrop-of-late-modernity-and-a-reflection-on-turkey/119247

Looking at the Future of Medical Tourism in Asia

Somjit Barat (2021). *International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management in the Digital Age* (pp. 19-33).

www.irma-international.org/article/looking-at-the-future-of-medical-tourism-in-asia/267925

Los Angeles: Diversity and Dreams as Brand

Kristen Smirnovand Gabriela Khowploum (2017). *Global Place Branding Campaigns across Cities, Regions, and Nations* (pp. 52-73).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/los-angeles/160540

Slow Movement and Forms of Evolution in the 21st Century

Gheorghe Georgica (2020). *New Trends and Opportunities for Central and Eastern European Tourism* (pp. 122-141).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/slow-movement-and-forms-of-evolution-in-the-21st-century/245245

Museum or Mausoleum?: Electronic Shock Therapy

Maureen Thomas, Marianne Selsjordand Robert Zimmer (2011). *Digital Culture and E-Tourism: Technologies, Applications and Management Approaches* (pp. 10-35).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/museum-mausoleum-electronic-shock-therapy/49617