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Paper Three: Local Residents' Perceptions on Tourism: An Espiritu Santo and Tangoa Islands, A Vanuatu Study.

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Abstract

The research reported in this paper sought to identify the Ni Vanuatu responses to developing small island tourism on Espiritu Santo and Tangoa Islands which form part of Vanuatu in the South Pacific region. The residents' were asked what activities or facilities they thought the tourists would require and if they thought tourism was important to their region. The sample

included 61 residents who were asked to complete a questionnaire in relation to tourism to their islands. Findings indicated that 93.4% of respondents did want tourists to come to their island and nearly 74% said tourists were good for the economy and 62% liked showing visitors their culture and that tourists bring development (54%). The local residents rated the three main activities that tourists' participated in while on the outer islands were: going to the beaches, buying local handicrafts and scuba diving. While the three least likely activities for the tourists to participate in were: going to the casino, night clubs and clubs.

Keywords: Small island tourism, Vanuatu, South Pacific, Tourism, Residents' Perceptions, Activities.

Introduction

This research addresses a gap in the current literature on local residents' perceptions on small island tourism by identifying those activities or facilities they thought the tourists would require together with their thoughts on the importance of tourism to the region. This was deemed as important, because the Pacific region attracted 4,894,038 visitors for the year ending July 2008 (Pacific Asia Travel Association, 2008). In deference to its size, tourism is one of the mainstays of the region's economy and is a major employment provided for many countries in the region (Milne, 1990, 1991, 1992, Prosser, 2001).

Literature Review

Research investigation into the development of sustainable tourism in remote communities, particularly those that are island based, has attracted the attention of a number of researchers, including Cassidy, Brown and Prideaux (2006), Craig-Smith and Fagence (1994) and the Pacific Asia Travel Association (2008). Specifically Tisdell and McKee (1988) and Fagence (1997) noted that Nauru faced an uncertain future without new industries such as tourism.

Furthermore, remote communities generally face problems in developing sustainable industries (Dowling, 1999; Tao & Wall, 2009). However, these problems are not unsolvable, as shown by successful tourism developments in larger islands, including Hawaii (Craig-Smith, 1996), Bali and Fiji (Mistilis & Tolar, 2000), and smaller island nations, including the Maldives (Dowling, 1999), Malta (Bull, 1991) and Saipan (Craig-Smith, 1996). While

Briguglio (1995) provides information on the special features of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) which make them vulnerable and highlights the need for special attention for such economies. Factors include; small size, insularity, remoteness, and disaster prone together with environmental factors all of which need to be considered (Briguglio,1995). This has resulted in difficult economic development for such countries.

Other problems commonly encountered include distance, environmental impacts (Bushell & Sinha, 2000; Carlsen, 1999), lack of infrastructure (King & McVey, 1997), unwelcome income distribution consequences (Dwyer & Forsyth, 1997), lack of political and administrative leadership, and a lack of destination knowledge by potential visitors. In remote islands, these issues can be seen in different contexts: a core-periphery problem where the political centre of power resides in larger islands and where the main city is the main centre of tourism development, particularly in the early stages (Weaver & Lawton, 2010), or in terms of push-pull demand mechanisms (Dann, 1977; Yang, Gu & Wang, 2011). The impact of both forces shapes development and can be seen in many tourism areas. For example, the main island of Efate in Vanuatu receives more international visitors than the outer islands of Espiritu Santo and Tangoa Island. Hence, considerable public funds are directed towards tourism marketing internationally by core providers but not by the peripherals. However, all of this may be to no avail unless the desires and wishes of both visitors and residents are taken into consideration at the planning stage, irritation will continue to rise with long-term disastrous effects to the tourism development (Nunkoo & Ramkisson, 2010).

Several studies have been conducted over recent years in an attempt to analyse the residents' attitudes towards tourism and an indicator of tourism appropriateness by the host population towards tourism (Lepp, 2006). In an attempt to give a theoretical base to the study of host perceptions toward tourism several theories have been developed. For example the attribution theory (Pearce, 1989), dependency theory (Preister, 1989), the social representation theory (Andriotis & Vaughan, 2003), Butler's (1980) destination life cycle, Doxey's (1975) Irridex model, the intrinsic/extrinsic framework (Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997) and the social exchange theory (SET) (Ap, 1992). However, the theory which has received the greatest attention by researchers attempting to study community attitudes toward tourism and consequent support for the industry is the SET theory (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004: Sirakaya,

Teye & Sonmez, 2002). The SET theory when applied to tourism would mean that residents benefiting from tourism are likely to perceive the industry as positive and thus, support tourism, while those who perceive themselves not benefiting from tourism development would display negative attitudes towards it there for opposing tourism development (Nunkoo & Ramkisson 2010).

Research Methodology

In this research, the objective was to gather data to enable the analysis of the residents' attitudes to tourism. Questionnaires were seen as the most suitable method to gather primary data given the context of this research. First, they enable the researcher to distribute the questionnaire personally, which allowed respondents to seek clarification of specific points if needed, and, second, they enabled direct collection of research specific information.

In total sixty-one local Ni Vanuatu on Espiritu Santo and Tangoa Island were asked to complete the questionnaire in relation to tourism to their islands. Respondents were willing to complete the questionnaire when approached to do so which enabled the research to obtain a 100% response rate. Respondents were comprised of those who were in Luganville, the capital of Espiritu Santo, together with villagers, village chiefs, and college students on Espiritu Santo. After conducting the research on Espiritu Santo it was a few minutes by dugout canoe to the island of Tangoa, south of Espiritu Santo. In two instances an interpreter was required to translate from English to Bislama for the local residents. The respondents on Tanoga Island were local villagers and all were female, as the males had gone to Espiritu Santo for a graduation ceremony at the local college. Data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This package was chosen because it is a versatile computer package that will perform the statistical procedures required to analyse the relevant data. Several analytical techniques were considered, including chi-square, cross-tabulation, frequency distributions, analysis of variance (NOVA) and factor analysis.

Research Findings

The results shown in Table 1 indicate that 59% of all respondents on Espiritu Santo and Tangoa Island were between the age of 21 and 39 years.

TABLE 1 Age of outer island respondents

Age group	Percentage (%)
20 and under	19.7
21-29 years	32.8
30-39 years	26.2
40-49 years	9.8
50-59 years	9.8
60 and over	1.6

As indicated earlier in this paper the respondents on Tangoa Island were all female because the men of the village were attending a graduation ceremony at the Talua Ministry Training College on Espiritu Santo. The results shown in Table 2 indicate there were only approximately 4% more female respondents than male.

TABLE 2 Gender of outer island respondents

Gender	Percentage (%)
Male	45.9
Female	54.1

Respondents were asked if they were employed full time and 62.7% said they were employed full time while 37.3% were not employed on a full time basis. However, when asked if their employment was tourism related 62% said their employment was not tourism related while 38% said it was tourism related. When asked if tourists were wanted on their islands the majority of respondents (93.4%) said that they did want tourists to come to their islands. The remaining 6.6% chose not to answer this question. The respondents wanted tourists to their islands because they believed that tourists were good for the economy (73.8%), the local residents liked showing visitors their culture (62.3%) and that tourists bring development (54.1%).

The Ni Vanuatu were then asked to indicate which activities/facilities they thought tourists to their island would be interested in using. The responses are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3 Activities/facilities which local residents think tourists would use.

Activities/facilities	Percentage (%) yes	Rank	Mean	Percentage (%) no	Rank	Mean
Going to beaches	83.3	1	1.17	16.7	14	1.30
Buying local handicrafts	80	2	1.58	18.3	13	1.35
Scuba Diving	75	3	1.87	25	12	1.63
Visiting local rainforests	53.3	4	1.72	46.7	11	1.85
Cultural Shows	48.3	5	1.51	51.7	10	1.75
Boat cruises	35	6	1.62	65	9	1.85
Fishing	33.3	7	1.90	66.7	8	1.90
Visiting National Parks	28.3	8	1.74	71.7	7	1.90
Coach tours	23	9	1.75	75.4	6	1.90
Shopping	21.7	10	1.12	78.3	5	1.30
Restaurants	21.7	10	1.20	78.3	4	1.40
Casino	13.3	12	1.78	86.7	3	1.95
Night Clubs	8.3	13	1.88	91.7	1	1.95
Clubs	8.3	13	1.97	91.7	1	1.80

It is evident that local residents believe that tourists will use the beaches, buy local handicrafts, go scuba diving and see a cultural show. The local residents do not feel that tourists to their islands would be interested in nightclubs, clubs, casinos, shopping of restaurants.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

The generalizability of the findings was limited by the following: the time of year and the sample size, both factors that were attributable to cost and time constraints. It is therefore suggested that further research address these shortcomings by conducting a longitudinal study involving a greater sample size. It is also suggested that departing tourists be surveyed to see if there is a consensus of what the local residents think the tourist wants to experience and what the tourist actually wants to experience.

Conclusion

This research into outer island tourism in the South Pacific focused on Vanuatu and in particular the islands of Espiritu Santo and Tangoa and investigated the local residents' thoughts on the facilities or amenities which they felt the tourists would want to experience. The majority of local respondents were female between the ages 21 and 39 and over 62% were employed full time with the same number saying that their employment was not tourism related. An overwhelming 93% of respondents said that they did want tourists to come to their island and nearly 74% said that tourists were good for the economy. Interestingly 62% said they liked showing tourists their culture but did not state how they did this. While the three main activities/facilities which the local respondents thought the tourists would like to partake of were going to the beaches, buying local handicrafts and scuba diving while the three least activities of facilities used by the tourists would be a casino, night clubs and clubs.

It is considered that there may be a lack of sophistication by the local residents in their perceptions of what activities /facilities a tourist to their island wants to participate in and that further research into this would be beneficial to developing initiatives to enhance the marketability of Vanuatu and particularly the outer islands at the operational level.

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Paper Four: Climate Change Responses By Queensland Local Councils

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Abstract

This paper reports on climate change responses by Queensland local councils (n=32). A survey of council officers profiled climate change responses, carbon mitigation actions, and council motives for emissions reduction. This study found climate change actions related to council size and capacity, coastal location, and climate change strategies or policies.

Keywords: climate change mitigation, carbon management, local government, Queensland

Introduction

Climate change impacts and carbon mitigation initiatives are key issues for local government (ACELG, 2011; Pillora, 2011). In this context, *Mitigation involves taking actions to reduce*