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Mombeuil, Claudel

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# Interaction from tourism development in Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Claudél Mombeuil

Université Quisqueya, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

**Abstract:** *Intensive or inadequate management of tourism and related development may affect the nature, integrity and the dominant features of an area. Local communities hosting tourism often are the weaker link which interacts with guests and service providers within the tourism value chain. Therefore, tourism development should embrace the paradigm of sustainability by improving the living conditions of host communities, ensuring efficient use of the resources available, and valorizing and preserving local heritage and traditions from any damages or loss. This paper examines the extent to which tourism development may affect social, economic, and environmental conditions of communities of the Sud Department of Haiti particularly Les Cayes. To meet the objective of this paper, we surveyed of 453 residents and examined their views on the influence of tourism development in the region. By using conducting this survey, we gathered insights on what is considered significant for the respondents, and also an assessed the influence of number of residents, place of residence, and coastal vs. Inland on residents' perceptions.*

**Keywords:** Residents' perceptions, tourism development, Population Density, Type of Residency

**JEL Classification:** P23, L83, F6

**Biographical note:** Claudél Mombeuil, is an Assistant Professor at Université Quisqueya, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and a former Business Consultant at Centre d'Entrepreneuriat et Innovation, a Unit of Université Quisqueya that provides entrepreneurial training and consulting services to small and medium enterprises. He is also the co-founder and Executive Director of an NGO named Rezo Inovasyon Edikatif Ayisyen (RINOVEDA), which has mission to support and promote innovation in education in Haiti. His research interest encompasses an interdisciplinary approach which includes corporate social responsibility, (sustainable) entrepreneurship, local governance, grass-roots innovation and development of SME. Corresponding author: claudelmombeuil@gmail.com

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The development of tourism in most regions is based on the existence of the local natural and cultural wealth. However, the degree (as well as the way) of its development often impairs significantly the quality of the environment and the natural and cultural heritage, and in turns threaten the base of sustainable development (Chen and Chen 2010, Fotiadis, Yeh, and Huan 2016). Obviously, the development of tourism in a region depends much the existing local natural (e.g. beaches, forests, etc.) and cultural (e.g. traditional settlement) resources, and the attractiveness of a region. However, the extensive use of these resources may result in far reaching consequences, such as damages inflicted to the environment, impairment the quality of life of its residents, which often leads to the reduction of tourism and in turns affects crucially the local economy and society at large. Consequently, the inclusion of local residents in the

development of tourism is crucial because the successful function and sustainability depend to a large extend on their good will (Lyons and Branston, 2006; Anthopoulou 2010, Haven-Tang and Jones 2012, Kaltborn, Qvenild, and Nellemann 2011, Henkel et al. 2006).

Within this vein, the perception of the local residents regarding any forms of tourism development is a vital and complicated task given the divergence of interests and the interrelated factors. For example, some residents may be more concerned about the financial benefits of a tourism development project, while others may be more concerned about the social, cultural and environmental impairment of such project (Christou, 2006; Brida, Osti, and Faccioli 2011, Holladay and Powell 2013, Lorde, Greenidge, and Devonish 2011; Almeyda-Ibáñez & George, 2017). In many cases, other local residents may hope a balance between financial benefits and social, cultural, and environment improvements. Hence, the research on reactions of residents is still a current



interesting issue (Wu and Chen 2015, Fan, Lu, and Wu 2013, Vareiro, Remoaldo, and Cadima Ribeiro 2013; Chatzigeorgiou and Christou, 2016; Sotiriadis and Shen, 2017).

If the negative impact of development of tourism on the environment is inevitable, the questions raised here is whether this impact can be limited by diminishing the negative consequences and costs for all (Kouvaris et al. 2017, Han and Yoon 2015, Hsiao et al. 2014; Volgger et al., 2017). However, any decisions to limit the negative impact of development of tourism should encompass both actual and future potential of the specific place to support the tourism activities while offering the same benefits to future residents as today. When this does not happen, the environment ceases to provide its natural resources to the tourists, who leave it for other regions, and are replaced by tourists-consumers who are willing to pay less to consume a tourist product of lower quality (Rivera 2001, Christou and Kassianidis, 2002; Michalko and Fotiadis 2006; Martins, 2016).

As the main type of tourism developed during the latest decades is related with the sun and the sea, the demand is higher in the summer, when there is special and seasonal gathering at the same time (Avdimiotis and Christou, 2004; Seebaluck et al. 2015; Chatzigeorgiou, 2017). This practically means that for a very small period of time, a great number of visitors are gathered in a small area, where as a result the natural resources are strained intensively. This spatial and seasonal density of people and activities, often crosses the tolerance limits of the system itself, which means the potential to absorb the changes caused without significant problems of balance.

The present study compares and contrasts its results with previous studies regarding the impacts of tourism development. It also identifies the most crucial financial, cultural and environmental factors for the development of the Sud Department of Haiti. Simultaneously, it will examine the extent to which factors such as “distance from the tourist zone” and “type of residency” play an important role in the intensity of the impacts.

**2 METHODOLOGY**

The present study has been conducted in Sud Department of Haiti, Les Cayes Arrondissement, a community of 71,236 residents. The calculation of the sample size was independent from the total population and included 453 residents. The questionnaire was developed based on the existing literature on the residents’ perceptions associated with tourism (Andriotis 2006, 2011, Fotiadis 2011). The questionnaire consisted of 29 items, which included 4 socio-demographic and 25 Likert scale questions. Excluded the 4 socio-demographic items, the other items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale in which 1 stood for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. The Likert scale helped measure and examine residents’ perceptions regarding financial benefits, and social and environmental issues associated with the development of tourism in their community.

The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) edition 22.0. The relations between

the two independent variables were assessed through t-tests and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The T-tests were conducted on the independent variable “Coastal vs. inland areas” because it was divided into two sub-groups, and the ANOVAs on the independent variable “Number of Residents” because its divided into three sub-groups.

**3 RESULTS**

**Reliability Analysis**

To check the reliability of the items of questionnaire, we conducted a Cronbach Alpha test using SPSS. The test yielded a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of 0.945 for all 25 items, which supports a high level of reliability of the questionnaire. Also, the individual items grouping into Economic Impacts, Social Impacts, and Environmental Impacts constitute a good internal consistency in terms of reliability with a successive Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of 0.832, 0.855, and 0.921, as indicated in Table 1.

**Table 1: Summary of the Reliability Test**

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>N of Items</b>
Impacts – total	0.945	25
I. Economic Impacts	0.832	11
II. Social Impacts	0.855	8
III. Environmental Impacts	0.921	6

As indicated in Table 2, 57.6% of the respondents are male and 42.4% female. The educational background of the residents was divided into 65.1% for bachelor degree, 6% for master’s degree or a PhD, 18.8% for high school degree, and 8.6% for elementary education. Table 2 also indicated that 72.0% of the respondents are still single, while 22.1% are married. This may be explained by the fact that 67.5% of them fall between the age bracket of 18-29 years old while only 0.9% are older than 60. Furthermore, 17.7% of respondents belongs to the age bracket of 30-39 while 10.6% them belongs to the age bracket of 40-49. Then, we examined the economic, environmental and social impacts of tourism in Les Cayes, the Sud Department of Haiti.

**Table 2: Social and demographic characteristics of the sample**

	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	192	42.4
Female	261	57.6
<b>Education</b>		
Elementary	7	1.5
High school	85	18.8
Lyceum	39	8.6
University	295	65.1

Master - PhD	27	6.0
<b>Personal</b>		
Singe	326	72.0
Married	100	22.1
Married with children	24	5.3
Divorced	3	0.7
<b>Age</b>		
18-29	306	67.5
30-39	80	17.7
40-49	48	10.6
50-59	15	3.3
>60	4	0.9

As we can observe from Table 3, the residents believe that the most important impact refers to the attraction of more investments. On the contrary, they believe that the profits from the tourism development are not distributed equitably and it is only beneficial for a small group of individuals. Moreover, the results show that residents believe, most of the entrepreneurs are not local, and most of the money earned from tourism are not reinvested in the region, while they consider most of the entrepreneurs are not native of the community. Additionally, the questions with the lowest average, as shown in Table 3, refer to the statement that *the local citizens are becoming richer and that entrepreneurs do not hire local citizens because they are not well qualified*.

**Table 3: Economic impacts from tourism development**

Factor	Mean
Tourism attracts more investments	3.28
Tourism is beneficial only for a small group of people	3.23
Most of the entrepreneurs are not local	3.23
Tourism increases the labor opportunities	3.22
Most of the money earned from tourism ends up going out of the region.	3.20
The transportation is becoming better	3.11
The lifestyle is becoming better	3.07
Due to tourism, primary sector is decreased	3.06
The quality of services is becoming better	3.03
Entrepreneurs do not hire local citizens since they are not well qualified	2.99
The local citizens are becoming richer	2.89

According to Table 4, the residents have positive perceptions regarding the social impacts of tourism development in the region. They believe that tourism has commercialized the local traditions and has created more employment opportunities. They also believe that tourism has enhanced cultural exchange and has rejuvenated old customs. The lowest averages, as shown in Table 4, are related to the variables claiming that tourism has increased the social inequalities among local residents and has also reduced the importance of family.

**Table 4: Social impacts from tourism development**

Factor	Mean
Tourism commercialized the local traditions	3.29
Tourism created more employment opportunities	3.22
Tourism enhance cultural exchange	3.19
Tourism had rejuvenated old customs	3.14
Local citizens start to have mimetic behavior due to prototypes created by visitors	3.14
Tourism upgraded local arts development	3.12
Tourism increased the social inequalities among local citizens	3.04
Tourism is reducing the importance of family	2.94

From Table 5, we can read that local residents support that development of tourism has increased pollution -including noise pollution- and has destroyed the natural environment, and increased traffic congestion in the village. Inversely, they support that development of tourism helped improve roads and public infrastructure as well as the restoration of historical and traditional buildings.

**Table 5: Environmental impacts from tourism development**

Factor	Mean
Tourism increased pollution	3.30
Construction of hospitality accommodations has destroyed the natural environment	3.22
Tourism improved roads and public infrastructures	3.19
Tourism increased the noise in the village	3.15
Tourism increased the traffic congestion in the village	3.14
Tourism is a factor of historical and traditional buildings restoration	3.08

#### **Explanatory variables of the residents' attitude**

As indicated in Table 6, the ANOVA and t-tests results yielded some statistical differences at the level of 0.05. More specifically, in Type of Residency (Table 6) there are

considerable differences in 4 out of 25 Likert scale items. The residents of coastal areas, in contrast to other studies (Andriotis 2011) display almost the same average with the non-coastal areas. In particular, two variables about the economic impacts have statistical interest: *The quality of services is becoming better* (p=0.048) and *most of the entrepreneurs are not local* (p=0.039). For those two variables, the residents of the coastal areas have higher mean scores compared to those of the non-coastal areas. The other two variables which have statistical interest are related to the social impacts and concern the following variables: *Tourism created more employment opportunities* (p=0.039) and *Tourism commercialized the local traditions* (p=0.040). In both cases, the mean scores for residents of the inland areas are much higher than those of the coastal areas.

**Table 6. Mean Scores and t-tests for Type of Residency**

	Mean		t	df	Sig.
	CA	IA			
<b>I. Economic Impacts</b>					
Tourism attracts more investments	3.29	3.25	0.27	1.746	0.187
The lifestyle is becoming better	3.06	3.09	-0.21	0.072	0.788
The local citizens are becoming richer	2.89	2.86	0.32	0.014	0.907
Tourism increase labor opportunities	3.21	3.24	-0.21	2.227	0.136
The quality of services is becoming better	3.44	2.99	0.42	3.116	0.048
The transportation is becoming better	3.11	3.12	-0.03	2.856	0.092
Tourism is beneficial only for a small group of people	3.23	3.23	0.03	1.944	0.164
Most of the entrepreneurs are not local	3.22	2.90	-0.40	2.738	0.039
Due to tourism, primary sector is decreased	3.11	2.90	1.97	0.159	0.690
Entrepreneurs don't hire local citizens since they are not well qualified	2.98	3.04	-0.49	0.052	0.820
Most of the money earned from tourism ends up going out of the region.	3.23	3.12	0.88	0.101	0.750
<b>II. Social Impacts</b>					
Tourism created more employment opportunities	3.00	3.30	-0.66	4.278	0.039
Tourism enhance cultural exchange	3.18	3.20	-0.15	1.031	0.311

Tourism had rejuvenated old customs	3.15	3.12	0.18	0.652	0.420
Tourism upgraded local arts development	3.11	3.14	-0.22	0.073	0.787
Tourism commercialized the local traditions	3.05	3.41	-0.97	3.079	0.040
Tourism is reducing the importance of family	2.95	2.90	0.44	1.372	0.242
Tourism increased the social inequalities among local citizens	3.05	3.01	0.36	0.092	0.762
Local citizens start to have mimetic behavior due to prototypes created by visitors	3.17	3.05	1.02	1.331	0.249
<b>III. Environmental Impacts</b>					
Tourism increased the traffic congestion in the village	3.12	3.20	-0.61	0.402	0.527
Tourism increased the noise in the village	3.15	3.12	0.20	0.232	0.630
Tourism increased pollution	3.27	3.39	-0.84	0.415	0.520
Construction of hospitality accommodations has destroyed the natural environment	3.22	3.20	0.14	0.902	0.343
Tourism is a factor of historical and traditional buildings restoration	3.09	3.07	0.17	0.722	0.396
Tourism improved roads and public infrastructures	3.16	3.30	-1.02	0.077	0.781

\*CA= coastal areas, IA= inland areas

On the other hand, the ANOVA tests, as shown in Table 7, have displayed significant differences in 2 out of 25 items of the questionnaire. For the two variables which are statistically interesting one is associated with *social impacts* and the other with *environmental impacts*. Specifically, the residents of areas distant from the tourist region agree in a higher percent that the development of tourism has negative impact but has commercialized the local traditions (p=0.010). On the contrary, the residents who live in regions closer to the tourism zone believe that the development of tourism has

increased the noise in the village ( $p=0.042$ ) in contrast to the other two groups with lower mean scores.

**Table 7. Mean Scores and ANOVA Tests for Population Density**

Depended variables	Independent variable: Distance from the tourist zone				
	Mean			F	Sig.
	0km	1-10km	> 11km		
<b>I. Economic Impacts</b>					
Tourism attracts more investments	3.26	3.28	3.50	0.426	0.653
The lifestyle is becoming better	3.11	3.03	3.06	0.231	0.794
The local citizens are becoming richer	2.92	2.84	2.97	0.425	0.654
Tourism increase the labor opportunities	3.30	3.12	3.41	1.283	0.278
The quality of services is becoming better	3.08	3.00	2.97	0.362	0.696
The transportation is becoming better	3.15	3.10	3.00	0.249	0.780
Tourism is beneficial only for a small group of people	3.20	3.29	3.00	1.096	0.335
Most of the entrepreneurs are not local	3.19	3.28	3.09	0.586	0.557
Due to tourism, primary sector is decreased	3.08	3.08	2.84	0.940	0.391
Entrepreneurs don't hire local citizens since they are not well qualified	2.92	3.04	3.09	0.760	0.468
Most of the money earned from tourism ends up going out of the region.	3.20	3.21	3.16	0.046	0.955
<b>II. Social Impacts</b>					
Tourism created more employment opportunities	3.27	3.15	3.44	0.822	0.440
Tourism enhance cultural exchange	3.22	3.12	3.41	0.809	0.446

Tourism had rejuvenated old customs	3.19	3.07	3.38	1.189	0.306
Tourism upgraded local arts development	3.19	3.03	3.31	1.374	0.254
Tourism commercialized the local traditions	3.15	3.21	4.06	4.626	0.010
Tourism is reducing the importance of family	2.94	2.94	2.97	0.012	0.988
Tourism increased the social inequalities among local citizens	3.08	3.00	3.06	0.304	0.738
Local citizens start to have mimetic behavior due to prototypes created by visitors	3.18	3.13	2.94	0.796	0.452
<b>III. Environmental Impacts</b>					
Tourism increased the traffic congestion in the village	3.22	3.08	3.06	0.784	0.457
Tourism increased the noise in the village	3.20	3.14	2.81	1.422	0.042
Tourism increased pollution	3.30	3.31	3.22	0.071	0.932
Construction of hospitality accommodations has destroyed the natural environment	3.19	3.26	3.06	0.457	0.633
Tourism is a factor of historical and traditional buildings restoration	3.15	3.03	3.06	0.592	0.554
Tourism improved roads and public infrastructures	3.23	3.14	3.28	0.399	0.671

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#### 4 CONCLUSION

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Andriotis (2006) have proved that there is a gap in development between the coastal and the inland areas of an island, as well as between the areas of low and high population density. More specifically, the residents who live in coastal areas perceive the development of tourism in a more positive way. However, Gursoy, Jurowski, and Uysal (2002) claim that the ones who live closer to the sights feel that the increase in the number of tourists who use the resource may affect negatively their ability to use the same resource.

According to the results of this study, the development of tourism has mainly positive financial benefits and cultural impacts, whereas its environmental impacts remain negative. Consequently, it is suggested that the actors who are responsible for the tourism development should improve the living conditions of community stakeholders by eliminating or limiting the negative impacts of tourism and reinforcing the positive ones.

Also, the results of mean scores and t-tests for type of residency and ANOVA tests for population density of this study have proved local community stakeholders who live closer to a tourism region someone, express a more negative feeling about the noise. By contrast, community stakeholders who live further from the tourism region express a more positive feeling to the changes brought by tourism regarding revitalization of old customs and commercialization of local traditions. According to the residents of the coastal areas, tourism has improved the services provided in the region, but unfortunately, they find out that the tourism industry is mainly developed by entrepreneurs who do not belong to the local community. However, residents of the inland areas believe that the chances for finding a job have been increased and that tourism has positive impacts on the development of the local traditions.

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