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Cultural Acceptance and Its Effect on Tourism

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ABSTRACT
Cultural Acceptance and Its Effect on Tourism

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This professional paper examines the relationship between cultural acceptance in conjunction

with social perception and cultural tourism promotion strategies. It provides a matrix to

evaluate the likely success of promoting a specific cultural aspect of a destination and

suggestions for ways of dealing with a lack of cultural acceptance or negative perceptions. It

underscores the need for tourism strategic planners to take into account the cultural acceptance of

a proposed project by the host community before proceeding.

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PART ONE

Introduction

Due to globalization and increasing mobility, tourism has become a popular global industry. More and more countries now are eager to participate in this mostly non-polluting industry. However, not every country has a natural landscape or features to attract tourists. Therefore, tourism today is changing from taking pictures and seeing scenery to experiencing different cultures of people and their folk customs. The tourism product is enhanced by an additional human element known as cultural tourism, which encompasses a more complete experience than sightseeing by itself can provide. Every place has its own cultures, and some may be perceived more favorably than others. A culture can be positively viewed or negatively viewed by the global society. Yet, as long as a culture is accepted by the host community, it can still be used to build a successful tourism industry, no matter how it is perceived globally. The fundamental idea behind this paper is that cultural tourism can be successful only if the host community accepts that part of their culture.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to explore the relationship between cultural acceptance in conjunction with social perception and cultural tourism promotion strategies.   It will also provide a way to evaluate the likely success of promoting a specific cultural aspect of a destination and provide suggestions for ways to dealing with negative perceptions.

Objective

The objective of this paper is to present evidence and to inform tourism strategic planners that through the increase of cultural acceptance, they will be able to promote their tourism more efficiently. In order to increase the cultural acceptance of the host communities, the tourism

planners must take into consideration the host communities' opinions in the development of projects, encouraging locals to be involved in tourism development.

Justification

Tourism development generates many economic and social benefits for the host communities (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011). Therefore, tourism is an integral component of economic development strategies, and underdeveloped countries use tourism as a tool to alleviate poverty (Scheyvens, 2007). In fact, the United Nations World Tourism Organization has found that in 41 of the top 50 poorest countries in the world, tourism contributes more than 5% of gross domestic product (United Nations World Tourism Organization, n.d.). While developing countries might find it difficult to afford the luxurious tourism amenities that attract visitors, those countries can provide cultural tourism, exploring the exotic cultural experiences that catch the fancy of tourists. The culture itself can be viewed positively or negatively by the larger society, just as it can be accepted or rejected by locals. Negative perceptions can be overcome; however, local acceptance of the culture is critical to success of cultural tourism, as this paper will demonstrate. Thus, tourism strategic planners would be wise to work on local acceptance of proposed projects by taking into consideration the host communities' opinions.

Constraints

This paper focuses on the human capital effect of tourism, neglecting the natural resources or other assets of the host community. We contend that human capital, as well as natural resources, geographical location, government policies and tourism security all influence tourism success.

Although a relatively new concept, cultural tourism has been around for a long time. In the past, heritage sites, historical monuments and artistic performances were normal cultural

tourism amenities, with the motivation to visit a destination usually involving "learning" (Richards, 1996). Since 2000, "experience," is the new buzzword in cultural tourism. Travelers want to be included in customary daily activities of the native people. Living in the same areas as the natives, eating their food, and dressing in authentic clothing are all examples of activities that tourists now want to experience. Cultural tourism is no longer the purchase of cultural products, but rather immersing oneself into the way of life of the natives (Smith, 2009). In the future, the focus of cultural tourism could change again. This paper focuses on the current trend, which involves "experience." It does not deal with past trends or try to anticipate future trends.

PART TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review covers the definitions of culture and cultural tourism, the history of the concept and recent research in the field. It examines why cultural acceptance is important in tourism. It then provides some real world examples of how cultural acceptance affects tourism development. In the each case, the example will be analyzed first in terms of its perception in global society, then by the acceptance of the culture within the host community.

Brief History of Culture and Cultural Tourism

The origin of the word "culture" is from the Latin word *cultura*, which means "a cultivating, agriculture" (Harper, 2010, para. 1). Its figurative meaning "cultivation through education" (Harper, 2010, para. 1), was first recorded by Sir Thomas More around 1510 (Barnhart, as cite in Pozefsky, 2004, para. 2). In 1805 it became known as "the intellectual side of civilization"; in 1867, the definition became "collective customs and achievements of a people" (Harper, 2010, para.1). The modern meaning of culture refers to the total way of life of any society (Linton, 1945). Cultural theorist Raymond Williams (1985) wrote that "culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language" (p. 87). Culture is integrated into everyday life practices around the world. Today, there is no consensus about what culture really means (Smith, 2009). In this paper, "culture" will refer the unique way of life of a people, including past or present, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

Cultural tourism first appeared in the days of the Romans (McKercher & Cros, 2002). Although they did not have a term for it, the Romans traveled to historic sites, museums, and cultural landmarks and they attended special events and festivals. Today, these activities are

recognized as cultural tourism. Thus, "[c]ultural tourism is arguably the oldest of the 'new' tourism phenomena" (McKercher & Cros, 2002, p.1). Nowadays, cultural tourism includes many categories, including heritage tourism, arts tourism, urban cultural tourism, rural cultural tourism, indigenous tourism, and experiential cultural tourism. All of the named categories contain one common element: experience. Today, tourists are not satisfied with just walking around and taking pictures. They want to undergo, discover, and gain a unique experience.

Cultural Acceptance

Cultural acceptance is part of accepting oneself and one's culture in the context of the larger community. Pope John Paul II (2001) underscored the importance of this acceptance during his speech for the celebration of the World Day of Peace 2001:

> The need to accept one's own culture as a structuring element of one's personality, especially in the initial stages of life, is a fact of universal experience whose importance can hardly be overestimated. Without a firm rooting in a specific 'soil,' individuals risk being subjected at a still vulnerable age to an excess of conflicting stimuli which could impair their serene and balanced development. (Para. 6)

Indeed, cultural acceptance is a major component of identity consciousness. It helps people to love themselves, love their families, love their countries, and then extend the love to the world as a whole. The process is similar to an inspirational Chinese proverb: Cultivate oneself, harmonize one's family, govern the state, and pacify the world. In other words, accepting one's own culture as a way of life creates a strong sense of self-identity, which then leads to better contributions to society.

Since the advantages of cultural acceptance are so significant, it should be common practice. Yet, this is not universal. Minority groups have undergone dramatic economic and

socio-cultural conformity to the majority and are moving towards a modern lifestyle (Yang, 2011). If people believe that their culture contributes to poverty and another culture leads an easier life, then they would eagerly abandon their own culture (L. Fisher, 2008; Iunn & Huang, n.d.).

McKercher and Cros (2002) note, "Culture is not a static concept" (p. 97). As time goes on, every culture changes, sometimes imperceptibly but sometimes radically (McKercher & Cros, 2002). One of the major forces of cultural change is social perception, which is the judgment of outside individuals or social groups. For example, the consumption of dog meat has a long history in South Korea and other Asian countries. It is a part of their culture. But it is considered repulsive in other cultures, and that judgment appears to be having an effect. In June 2011, the dog meat festival in Korea was cancelled, because no facility would allow the festival to rent space ("South Korea," 2011). Some Koreans believe this festival makes their country an international laughing stock and believe that their compatriots cannot publicly celebrate killing and eating dogs. An online campaign was launched to stop the event, and as a result, no convention operator wanted to be the place that hosted the dog meat festival ("South Korea," 2011). In this case, social perception played a significant role, affecting the Koreans' view of their own culture that has included dog meat consumption throughout their history.

Research in Cultural Tourism

Cultural tourism was first recognized as a distinct product in the 1970s (Tighe, as cite in McKercher & Cros, 2002). Research began in earnest on the subject in the early 1990s. The research revolved around case studies that analyzed the cultural marketing of specific destinations as well as cultural consumption and how to market and manage cultural attractions

(Boniface, 1995; Boniface & Fowler, 1993; McKercher & Cros, 2002; Richards, 1996). The

majority of this research was focused on tangible cultural heritage.

Since 2000, the research has shifted to two areas: preserving heritage sites through

cultural tourism, and tracking social impacts from tourism (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; McKercher

& Cros, 2002; Richards, 2001; Smith, 2003; Wu, 2000). The work on preserving sites has meant

more researchers have placed their efforts on maintaining sustainable tourism. The work on

tracking social impacts has taken into consideration the intangibles of cultural heritage, such as

lifestyle and technical skill. Other researchers have shifted their focus onto the attitude and

support of residents in the host communities (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Gursoy, Jurowski, & Uysal,

2002; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Vargas-Sanchez, Porras-Bueno, & Plaza-Mejia, 2011). As

a result of their work, these researchers encourage tourism strategic planners to include the host

communities' opinions in the decision-making process.

Outside the field of tourism, research in sociology that explores self-identity, also known

as cultural acceptance, is relevant (Iunn & Huang, n.d.). Project planners usually focus on what

attractions will bring in more tourists, but they do not actually try to understand what the

destination already has. However, this focus on popular attractions diminishes the differentiation

between ethnic groups and hurts their identity consciousness. For example, a culture that values

art may adopt dancing because it has seen its dancing neighbors draw more tourism. By doing

so, the adopting community loses its identity. Locals should not abandon their own traditions

because of outside perception of their culture, the research suggests; they should instead embrace

their authentic customs and culture in order to boost cultural tourism (Iunn & Huang, n.d.). The

focus of this research, however, has been identity consciousness. Sociologists focus on the

position of the underprivileged groups, but their work does not emphasize the desire of these

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groups to generate economic development, or what it would take to attract tourism investors or help tourism strategic planners.

Recently, cultural tourism researchers have examined how to balance a community's cultural identity with tourism development and the benefits that would bring (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Smith, 2009; Waterton & Watson, 2010; Xie, n.d.). Pennington and Thomsen (2010) have adapted C.S. Peirce's semiotic model to cultural tourism, noting that tourists' perception of the destination is a key to its success. Because tourist' perceptions can become the larger social perception, this part of the model is important in understanding how to make cultural tourism successful.

This paper will draw on the above areas of research, combining the cultural sensitivity of the sociologists with the practical approach of the tourism strategic planners. This paper will then strive to provide a win-win situation for host communities and project investors, showing that strong cultural acceptance can lead to more successful cultural tourism endeavors and increased revenue for both the communities and investors.

Cultural Tourism around the World

"The perfect life: earning American wages, living in a British castle, having a Japanese wife, eating Chinese food, and driving a German car" is a famous Asian proverb. This saying implies that each culture, although very different, has its positive attributes. Those unique things attract people from other places and promote cultural tourism in those places.

The following are some famous tourist destinations around the world. In each case, one specific characteristic has been identified that attracts tourists. Each is categorized on the basis of positive or negative social perception and then analyzed on the basis of this perception and the host community's cultural acceptance.

Positive Social Perception

      Hawaii: Indigenous tourism. Indigenous tourism refers to visiting native people in their original habitats and experiencing the traditional lifestyles of tribal groups (Smith, 2009). Hawaii is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world, and its multicultural tourism among the amenities making it famous. Since the early1990s, more than 7 million people have visited Hawaii each year. The Polynesian Cultural Center, a theme park and living museum that opened in 1963, is a popular attraction for most visitors, with 33 million visiting the center since its opening ("The Polynesian," n.d.). It contains eight villages and exhibits representing the cultures of Aotearoa, Fiji, Hawaii, Marquesas, Samoa, Tahiti, Tonga and Easter Island (Hawaii Tourism Authority [HTA], 2011a). Because the natives adhere to their culture and follow their traditions so closely, tourists are attracted to experiencing the villagers' way of life. It social perception is obviously high.

      In Hawaii, the tourism industry is the primary economic driver, and 80% of its residents believe that tourism makes a positive contribution to employment (HTA, 2011b). This high level of cultural acceptance is not an accident. Through the Hawaiian Tourism Strategic Plan of 2005-2015, the government has been working to address residents' concerns about the effect of tourism on their quality of life, increasing the residents' knowledge of tourism issues and encouraging them to participate and collaborate on tourism activities (HTA, 2011b). Also, the government is trying to renew local cultural pride in traditions and reinstate the indigenous Hawaiian culture while enhancing the experience of local residents and visitors alike. Cultural acceptance of the Polynesian ways has become strongly encouraged in Hawaii to generate revenue for the state through the tourism industry.

France: Culinary art tourism. France is well-known for the finest culinary art in the world. The social perception of French cuisine is so high that it has had a broader influence on Western culture. Today, almost every refined restaurant in the world has adopted some elements of French cuisine, some even without realizing their origin as French. In 2010, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization also added French cuisine to its list of the world's intangible cultural heritages. Le Cordon Bleu, the renowned French culinary institution, has many branches around the world. French cuisine has become such a powerful force in the country's cultural tourism that it draws not only people who visit to eat the food, but also those who visit Le Cordon Bleu Paris and other French cooking schools for vacations centered around learning to cook the French way. Culinary art tourism can be seen as a new segment in the country's tourism industry.

The high cultural acceptance among the French people of this part of their culture is legendary. French people are very proud of their historically refined culinary technique and high quality food, even to the point of life and death. The Michelin Guide, a rating system for restaurants, once downgraded French chef Bernard Loiseau from the top rating of three stars to two stars, which led Loiseau to commit suicide. His wife earned back the lost star the following year (Willsher, 2004). In taking his own life, Loiseau demonstrated that the refined culinary techniques and appreciation for quality food is taken very seriously in France.

The French people's emphasis on great food has a historical background that dates back to King Louis XIV. He pioneered the ideas of using silver utensils and the use of multiple chefs in the kitchen, which explains our current tradition of the sous chef. The cookbook *Le Cuisiner Francois*, written by one of his court chefs in 1651, is still regarded as a turning point in culinary history (Olver, 2000). The seriousness and history of the French cuisine are accepted, explored

and celebrated, and the French have made culinary art tourism one of their main attractions for visitors.

Italy: Gastronomic tourism. Food is an important attribute in modern tourism development. Gastronomy tourism is the art or science of good eating. It is often misunderstood as referring specifically to the art of cooking, but it is more about exploring the relationship between food and culture (Kivela & Crotts, 2006). Sometimes called gourmet tourism, it is a way for tourists to discover and then understand the culture of a specific destination by tasting and experiencing the local food. In other countries' recent research, 20% of annual visitors come just for the food, implying that gastronomy tourism could be a sustainable industry to produce revenue for Italy (Kivela & Crotts, 2006).   Italian food is widely spread and accepted by the world. In addition to a wealth of world heritage sites, Italy offers a world famous tourist attraction in its gastronomy. Thus, gastronomy tourism can be a very profitable attraction to engage with its tourists.

Even though Italians are passionate for food, fewer Italians are willing to spend their time in sweaty and underpaid kitchen work. Today, more and more, the chefs in Italy are from foreign countries (I. Fisher, 2008). Also, most of Italy's best food is prepared at home; it is hard to find people to do the same in restaurants. A restaurant owner in Italy said that in order to keep the Italian culture surviving, its culinary tradition needs to be carried forward by Italian youngsters, not foreigners (I. Fisher, 2008). Although Italian food has a positive social perception, the cultural acceptance of its food industry as a tourism asset is low, making gastronomic tourism an underdeveloped resource in the country.

Germany: Dark (grief) tourism. Dark tourism is tourism that involves traveling to the sites and attractions where death and suffering have been recreated (Stone, 2005). Many visitors

from Western countries seek answers about Germany's horrific role in World War II, and curiosity about the Holocaust is inevitable. The dark tourism in Germany sprung up in the 1960s, when the German government officially opened the Dachau concentration camp as a tourism site. The act of opening the camp has a special role of delivering and bringing back the information from past to present, educating the public about the tragedy, and addressing the horrors of the Nazi regime ("Dachau Concentration Camp," 2011). In 2005, the first official Holocaust memorial, Holocaust Mahnmal, opened in Berlin. News publications in countries from Europe to America wrote positive articles about Germany, noting that it was taking responsibility for its past mistakes. This reflection in the world created a positive social perception ("Berlin Opens," 2005; Bhatti, 2005; "Holocaust Monument," 2005).

Some Germans, including Jews, thought that the memorial was dispensable, stating that instead of building a memorial, educating Germany's younger generations about the Holocaust is more important (Bhatti, 2005). It is hard for a nation to apologize for the tragedy that it has done publicly. In fact, a small group of right-wing Germans goes as far as to deny that the Holocaust took place (Dahmann, 2005). This negative cultural acceptance may be preventing Germany from capitalizing on its dark tourism. In 1985, Germany's legislature had passed legislation making it a crime to deny the Holocaust, and then tightened the law in 1994. Germany now has no tolerance for Holocaust denial (Dahmann, 2005). As time continues to separate the country from its violent past, the cultural acceptance of the Holocaust events will slowly increase, and Germany's ability to capitalize on the dark tourism will in turn increase with the acceptance.

Negative Social Perception

Russia: Vodka tourism. "There is nothing in the world worse than drunkenness. No evil no misfortune, can be compared with it," said D. G. Bulgakovskii, a temperance priest, in 1913

(as cited in Herlihy, 2002, p.3). Heavy drinking is often socially perceived to be a bad thing, sometimes leading to unacceptable acts of violence, sexual harassment, or even death. Although he said it close to one hundred years ago, Bulgakovskii's statement about drinking points out the traditional negative social perception of overindulging in alcohol consumption. A lot of Russian research studies note that a high level of alcohol use has been a perennial problem in this country. For example, alcohol consumption has been positively and significantly related to Russian homicides and suicides (Pridemore, 2002; Stickley, Jukkala, & Norstrom, 2011). Russia has a negative reputation globally for its harmful drinking culture, and that is a difficult barrier for attempts to bring tourism to the country based on its vodka production.

In Russia, however, an association with heavy drinking has been part of popular culture and a central component of life since at least 10th century A.D. (McKee, 1999). Excessive alcohol consumption and binge drinking became widely acceptable as rulers in history encouraged and tolerated it because of its potential to raise revenue for the royal treasury (McKee, 1999). The location of the country gives Russians with some of the coldest temperatures in the world, providing another reason residents give for drinking alcohol regularly, as in small amounts, alcohol can make people feel warmer, even though it actually decreases body temperatures (Haynes, 2000). Nearly 90% of alcohol consumed in the country is in the form of vodka, a higher alcohol content drink (McKee, 1999), making it one of the most popular symbols of Russia and the Russian national drink. The Bolshevik revolution attempted to control consumption by reducing production, but the Russian people still consumed alcohol, and even produced it illegally in their homes (McKee, 1999). Consumption returned to very high levels once the laws were lifted, and Russian people still continue to accept and indulge in alcohol abuse today.

Thailand: Prostitution tourism. Prostitution is frowned upon in most societies and is seen as defying traditional moral principles, which is why most cultures have zero tolerance for it. Providing sexual services in exchange for money or other benefits in return is considered depraved. Most cultures think commercializing and marketing the prostitute's body, which is most generally a woman, reduces her worth and dignity, that it degrades females. Yet, it is not the case in Thailand, as prostitution is one of the main sources of tourism revenue. Research has shown that the sex tourism in Thailand goes back to the Vietnam War. A lot of soldiers in Asia during their vacations brought in not only the prosperity of tourism, but also the primitive human demand for sex (S. Chen, 2007). After that, with economic globalization and sexual commodification, sex tourism was an increasingly widespread phenomenon (Frohlick, 2010). People from Europe and other developed countries are willing to travel, and Thailand has become the first choice for cheap prostitution.

In Thailand, prostitution is not viewed as an activity reserved only for immoral people. Surveys indicate 90% of Thai men have bought sex at least once in their lives (Lyttleton, as cited in S. Chen, 2007) and view prostitution as a social activity. Therefore, the argument against prostitution is not popular and is seen as hypocritical, because it is the norm in Thailand. In fact, the vice premier, Boonchu Rojanasathien, was reported to say in 1980 in a closed meeting of government officials that even though prostitution might be bad for the morality of the country, increasing it might bring a lot of job opportunities. He used Japan as an example, stating that the growth of Japan's sex industry during World War II helped lead to the future success of the Japanese economy (Ghosh, as cited in S. Chen, 2007). The religious beliefs in Thailand encourage prostitution. In the Theravada Buddhism religious principles, women are inferior to men. In order to become men in the afterlife, women are taught to be kind to monks, providing

them with food and clothing. Therefore, Buddhists in Thailand are lenient with prostitution, because it is a way for women to make money to then purchase goods to offer to the monks (Sukanya, as cited in S. Chen, 2007). Additionally, in north and northeast Thailand, women are the pillars of the economy within their families. When facing an agricultural downturn, they have no choice but to sell their body to feed their families (Brown, as cited in S. Chen, 2007). Thai society condones prostitution because it is a means for uneducated and financially strained females to earn money for their spiritual goals and to provide for their families.

Japan: Adult video film tourism. Adult video production in Japan is a major industry, reportedly worth billions of dollars per year ("AV Idols," 2011; Hays, 2010). In 2009, Japanese companies began to market adult video tours in Taiwan (R. Chen, 2009; Now News, 2009). This tourism allows paying visitors to watch pornography being made. For a higher price, the tourists can create their own plots and characters for the actors to perform on the video. Like the unwritten rule in strip clubs forbidding the touching of the dancers, tourists cannot touch the pornography actresses. The tourists participating in the production must sign a contract that they cannot publish any photos or video they shoot, making the adult video film tourism covered in a veil of mystery (R. Chen, 2009).

Like prostitution, pornography videos also market and commercialize women's bodies. Pornography videos do not care about the emotional exchange involved in sex, but are concerned only with the primitive physical desire. The videos strive to portray forbidden fantasies, and viewing these acts on film can make them more realistic in the mind, leading to sexual violence (Meese, as cited in Diamond & Uchiyama, 1999), especially when a large amount of adult video in Japan includes rape, sex with minors, and sex in public places. Some would argue that by

making taboo acts appear normal and acceptable, pornography is more unethical than the act of prostitution, which may be supporting a family.

Japanese people have a broad reputation as being respectful and courteous. Their attitude about sex is the same as other Asian countries; it is a custom that you can do but cannot discuss in public. Because the Japanese pay close attention to other people's perceptions and because of the history of prostitution in the country, prostitution in Japan is a very tricky industry. Today, most of prostitutes in Japan are foreigners (Hanochi, 1998; Lenheny, 1995). Many tourists learn when they arrive in Japan something that many say is common knowledge: It is hard for non-native Japanese to buy a native Japanese prostitute ("Sex tour," 2001). This represents a major shift in attitudes in Japan. Japan sent prostitutes, "Karayuki-San," overseas and with those profits supported the Japanese military in times of war and the post-World War II economic recovery (Hanochi, 1998; Mihalopoulos, 1993). Now, this country is rebuffing prostitution customers from foreign countries by using a signboard in front of the brothels to graciously decline foreign customers, if prostitutes are native Japanese girls. It is a matter of national pride and dignity. There is a strong taboo against foreigners engaging in commercial sexual activity with native Japanese. Most of the pornography actresses in Japan are still natives, who are seeking to get public awareness, because the AV idols in Japan have social status just like movie stars ("AV idols," 2011). Therefore, the pornography AV tourism industry faces a problem with cultural acceptance, just as prostitution with foreign customers has little cultural acceptance, because this tourism brings non-natives into a sexual situation with native women.

Spain: Bullfighting tourism. Since medieval times, the traditional sport of bullfighting has been an essential part of Spanish culture, entertaining Spaniards with the matador's courage in the arena. Ernest Hemingway, a famous American author, said in his book *Death in the*

Afternoon, "bullfighting is the only art in which the artist is in danger of death and in which the degree of brilliance in the performance is left to the fighter's honor" (1996, p. 91). Yet as time goes by, more people think that bullfighting is not a fight at all. It is a cruel slaughter, hurting the animal at first and then slowly afflicting it (Bailey, 2007; BullFighting-Free Eurpoe, 2008).

In Spain, the top matador earns as much as the best soccer players or rock idols (Spanish Fiestas, n.d.). But the tradition has begun to have a different amount of acceptance among the Spanish and among people from other countries. In 2006, a Gallup poll showed that 82% of Spaniards between 15 and 24 years of age are not interested in bullfighting (BullFighting-Free Europe, 2008). Natives of Spain are rejecting this activity; the same poll demonstrated that only 8% of Spaniards consider themselves fans (Zaluda, 2007). Many cities or towns in Spain, Barcelona for example, adhere to the local traditions and customs, but have passed a law to prohibit the bullfighting (Zaluda, 2007). Bullfighting has become less culturally accepted in modern-day Spain as the world perceives the sport to be cruel and barbaric to animals.

Conclusion

More and more destinations are entering into the tourism industry, following the trend of increasing revenue for their country by sharing their culture with outside tourists. With the rise of cultural tourism outlets, the industry will become more competitive and the main interest of future travelers. In order to stand out from other destinations, it is necessary to explore a systematic and efficient way to market the destination's distinguishing feature, especially in this changing world. In this case, discovering the impacts of cultural acceptance and social perception on the cultural tourism offers an effective marketing tool.

PART THREE

Results

Introduction

In order to explore the relationship between cultural acceptance and social perception, a matrix was developed. The matrix will be used to exhibit the results of cultural acceptance and social perception and can be used with all cultural tourism destinations. The eight destinations discussed in the previous chapter were placed into the matrix according to their characteristics for this analysis. The conclusion will inform tourism strategic planners that local cultural acceptance is important for the success of tourism and increased revenue. Thus, increasing the cultural acceptance will allow strategic planners to promote their tourism more efficiently.

The Matrix

This matrix has two controlling aspects: Cultural Acceptance and Social Perception, resulting in four categories. The matrix is established with two assumptions. First, cultural acceptance helps provide the corresponding human resources and capital to build the cultural tourism. This is because cultural tourism is a labor-intensive industry, and it requires enough participants with knowledge and acceptance of the culture to achieve success. Another assumption is that social perception must correspond with a sizable potential market. This means the more people that accept a specific cultural product, the more customers the project will have. The matrix is simplified to allow straightforward conclusions to be drawn for each project. Based on the given information in Part Two, the following example destinations are placed into the matrix in Figure 1. Each zone has been given a food-related name to make it memorable.

Cultural Acceptance

	High	Low
Positive	Hawaii: Indigenous Tourism France: Culinary Art Tourism	Italy: Gastronomic Tourism Germany: Dark (Grief) Tourism CHNESE FAST FOOD
Negative	Russia: Vodka Tourism Thailand: Prostitution Tourism	Japan: Adult Video Tourism Spain: Bullfight Tourism LEFTOVER FOOD

Social Perception

Figure 1. Matrix to analyze cultural tourism based on social perception and cultural acceptance. The zones have been given the names Ice Cream for positive social perception and cultural acceptance; Kimchi for negative social perception and high cultural acceptance; Chinese Fast Food for positive social perception and low cultural acceptance; and Leftover Food for negative social perception and cultural acceptance.

Ice Cream Zone (positive social perception with high cultural acceptance). Almost everyone loves ice cream, and few people can withstand the fascination. The cultural tourism characteristics that lie in this zone will have a lot of competitors. Because of high cultural acceptance, many locals are striving promote it. Therefore, tourism strategic planners need both to understand the market trends and to follow competitors' moves in order to stand out and stay on top.

Practice. The most proven way to success is learning from the "best." Utilizing

borrowed methods to attract tourists is not prohibited. Therefore, the culinary art tourism in France has many newborn competitors, such as Spain, Italy, and even Peru. Even though France is the dominant destination in culinary art tourism, in order to avoid losing that position to other destinations, the French need to pay attention to their competitors' next moves. Therefore, in the Figure 2, there is no suggested move from the Ice Cream Zone. Tourism destinations in this zone must just keep a constant awareness of the competition and overall tourism trends.

Kimchi Zone (negative social perception with high cultural acceptance). Every Korean loves Kimchi (spicy fermented cabbage), but not every person in the world can adapt to the food's taste. The tourism projects that lie in this area have fewer competitors, but have a particular consumption group. Therefore, the tourism strategic planners can either contribute less effort to keep their markets, or exude extra effort to carve out new markets. However, with the market expansion, social perception will shift to positive, and then more competitors will join the market.

Practice. Even though prostitution tourism is still profitable and has a certain market, the industry is still seen as immoral to many other destinations. The social perception today successfully stops new destinations' entry into this market. Prostitution tourism in Thailand has very few competitors in Asia. The strategic planners of Thailand can easily stay in the same zone and remain profitable or can make the effort to educate society that paying for sex is natural and acceptable, shifting the social perception. After higher acceptance, it would then move into the Ice Cream Zone on the matrix and increase the demand by tourists. Then the Thai planners would need to watch their competitors' moves. Hence, in Figure 2, the matrix has two suggested moves for the Kimchi Zone: investing to change social perception to grow the market or stay and dominate a smaller market.

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Chinese Fast Food Zone (positive social perception with low cultural acceptance).

Everyone likes Chinese fast food, except the Chinese. Native Chinese people argue that the fast food is not real Chinese food. Cultural tourism projects that lie in this area have a high potential market. However, as a part of the hospitality industry, the tourism industry is very labor intensive. With a limited amount of workers and resources, the host community might struggle to provide a gracious and welcoming environment. Consequently, the first choice for the strategic planner is to increase the cultural acceptance to ensure success. The other choice is to abandon the project.

Practice. The memorial site for the Holocaust is accepted by the world. However, the memorial today has not been as well accepted by Germans. With the legislature's assistance, in the future, more Germans will accept their history, making this cultural tourism project move to the left, to the Ice Cream Zone. In Italy, gastronomy tourism is about food and culture. Without enough native chefs who are educated on their cultural history and willing to work in the kitchen, it is difficult for tourists to experience native Italian food in Italy. The strategic planners in Italy can either encourage Italians to participate in this cultural project or give up the project and then discover another cultural characteristic to promote. Therefore, in the Figure 2, the matrix has two suggested moves for destinations in the Chinese Fast Food Zone: to prioritize on increasing the cultural acceptance or discard this project.

Leftover Food Zone (negative social perception with low cultural acceptance).

Leftovers always trouble people. One can never decide whether to save them or throw them out. The cultural tourism projects that lie in this zone have few competitors and also have little support from the host communities. When deciding to enhance a project in this area without changing the product itself, the planners should increase the cultural acceptance first. By doing

so, a tourism project in this zone can become a monopoly or oligopoly player and be able to acquire the needed personnel. If the planners are making efforts to improve social perception first, the destination will not have enough human resources to support the increased market. This effort will bring in more competitors, and the project destination will not be able to enjoy the fruits of success.

On the other hand, the planners could change the content of the project entirely, focusing on the positive elements of the original project so that its social perception and cultural acceptance move directly to the Ice Cream Zone. However, the redefined project might entirely modify the original culture, and this approach carries a high risk.

Practice. Bullfighting in Spain has a long history. Today, the bullfighting performance is still reeking with blood and brutal to the bulls. In the beginning of the performance, assistant matadors stab the bull and at the end, the matador cuts the ear of the bull and drags the bull around the arena as a part of the performance. Modern people, including the locals, think that bullfighting is outdated, and should be abandoned. If project planners only focus on increasing the social perception of bullfighting, the outcome might be like the Korean dog meat festival, with no community wanting to host it. There will be no inside support for this sport. Today, many cities in Spain are legislating to stop bullfighting events. Hence, in Figure 2, the matrix has two suggested moves for destinations in the Leftover Food Zone: The planners should prioritize increasing cultural acceptance or abandon the project.

A possible third choice might be to keep the cultural project but change it entirely so that its social perception and cultural acceptance will be positive. For example, with bullfighting, if the strategic planners use drama or opera to display the courage of the matador, then new activities might be reminiscent of the past cultural elements, but would take out the brutal

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elements that offend modern audiences. However, there is a large risk in this approach. The

performance might lose its authenticity and, most importantly, the new cultural project might not

be supported by the infrastructure in place—both the hard facilities and the soft human resources.

Because the project would be changed entirely, the matrix does not recommend this choice.
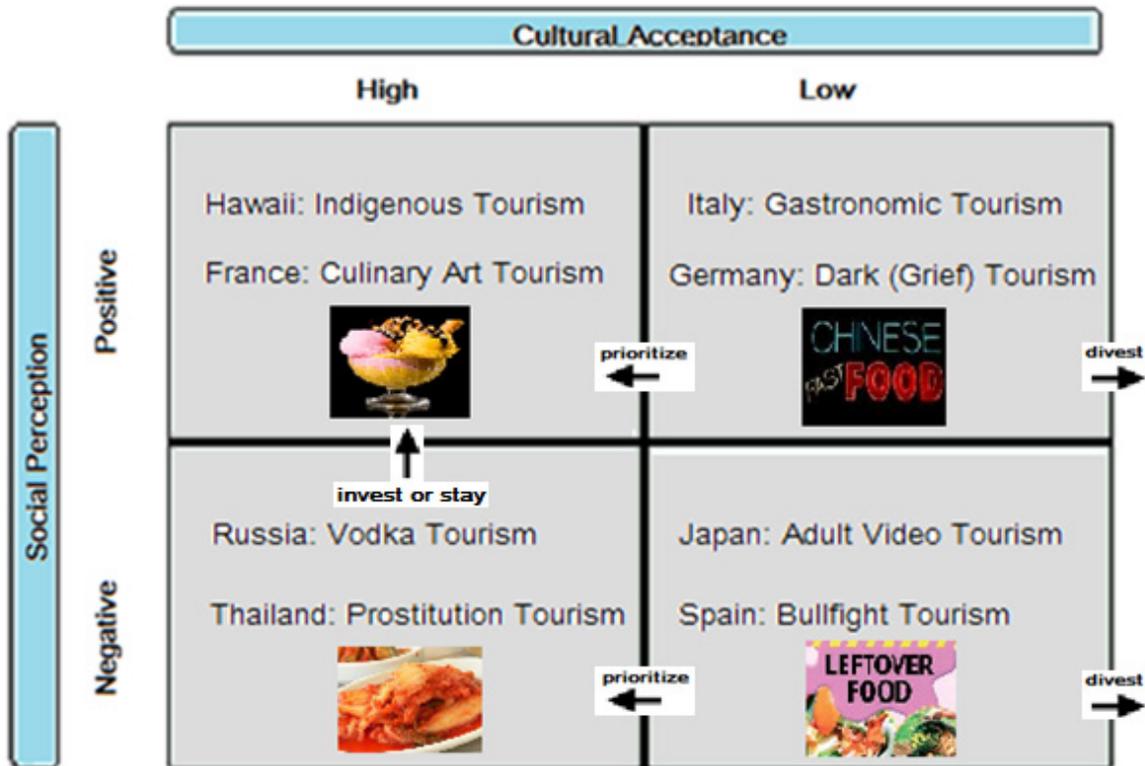

Figure 2. The → in this Matrix shows the optimal strategies for project planners to analyze
cultural tourism based on social perception and cultural acceptance.

Applications

      Tourism strategic planners can look at individual cultural characteristics from the

destination and place them into the matrix. By finding the suitable category of the project,

strategic planners can make a simple decision for this project. Also, they can place a

destination's cultural characteristic into this matrix, forecasting what the next move will be and preparing for any obstacles to retaining market position.

In addition, the matrix implies that whenever the strategic planners want to improve their cultural tourism project, the priority is to increase the cultural acceptance of the host community. Otherwise, the tourist destinations cannot obtain the benefit from any change. It is not a necessary step to raise the social perception, as increasing social perception does not guarantee a payback. Therefore, in order to ensure the reward of higher tourism revenue, strategic planners should engage with the host communities and increase the cultural acceptance. For accomplishing the goal of host community engagement, the strategic planners should stand in the locals' shoes and take into consideration the host communities' opinions about the development of projects. This will encourage the locals to be involved in tourism development, providing a larger resource to accommodate a rising market.

Recommendations

This paper uses the inverse method to develop a way to analyze tourism strategic projects. The resulting matrix focuses on the social perception and the cultural acceptance of the host community. By using this matrix, the strategic planners can systemically analyze the cultural tourism projects, and then be able to promote their projects more efficiently.

Further research in this field can focus on the cultural assets of a host community and on finding a systematic way to estimate competitive advantage and disadvantage of each cultural tourism project given those native cultural resources. The matrix created for this paper is simplified in many ways, and further research can incorporate additional controlling aspects into the matrix to allow more possible results. An example for additional controlling aspects can be

the destinations' economic situation.   If Thailand today had a better economy and more job opportunity, it might close down its prostitution industry like Japan did.

Conclusion

While global tourism is growing, cultural tourism is growing in equal proportions. The success of cultural tourism is closely related to the degree of cultural acceptance from the host community and the social perception about this culture. The hospitality industry is a labor intensive industry, making the cultural acceptance directly related to personnel, which is extraordinarily important. In the other words, when developing a cultural tourism project, it is indispensable to take into consideration the host communities' opinions about proposed projects, encouraging locals to be involved in tourism development. Cultural tourism can be successful only if the locals accept that part of their culture and market it to tourists. When locals accept and celebrate their culture, it will teach others to gain an interest in their activities. Once outsiders have become interested and want to immerse themselves into the culture, the social perception will become more positive and in turn, the tourism industry will experience a rise in success.

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