Experiential Tourism in the Peruvian Andes: A Cultural View

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Background

Experiential Tourism:
Visiting not so popular destinations to experience living like locals.

(Araújo, V. & Brea, 2013; Matos, 2013)

- Experiential tourism is often offered by communities in developing countries to tourists from developed countries.

The Impacts of Experiential Tourism:

<table>
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<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
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<td>- Restoring traditions</td>
<td>- Loss of traditional lifestyles &amp; customs</td>
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<td>- Revalue of cultural manifestations</td>
<td>- Threat to sustainable practices</td>
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The Peruvian Case

Community-based experiential tourism has been developed to:
- Foster rural development
- Expand the benefits of major tourism attractions
- Government & NGOs provide technical assistance & training.

The Problems:
- Its impacts in the Andes is anecdotal & contradictory.
- Indigenous communities are extremely vulnerable to outside influences.

Study Purpose & Methods

Purpose: Assess community-based experiential tourism:
- Sustainability
- Cultural impacts
- Gender roles

The Setting:
7 rural communities in the Cusco–Puno corridor (Andes)

The Sample: 26 community members & leaders
- 11 men & 15 women
- 28 - 62 years old

Data Generation & Interpretation:
- Semi-structured interviews (Nov. 2015)
- Recorded & transcribed (M = 42 min.)
- Open & axial coding

Key Findings

1. Recovering our unique artistic manifestations
“More people are making handicrafts. For example my wife, who as a child was a good specialist in weaving. As we migrated to the city she forgot all her craftsmanship. She’d no longer weave anymore. Now that I offer tourism in Amantani, my wife is coming back to it, she is remembering her weaving. She’s reaching a special finesse with her weaving. Then, it is an incentive, right?” (Ermel, Amantani)

2. Revaluing ancestral traditions
“We have a ‘mamacha’ patron, Saint Anne. We have two days of celebrations, July 26 and 27 and we also have dancers. And before, we were losing that tradition, but now, our experiential tourism organization is recovering dances. (…) Yes, [our children] always come and then want at least to dance.” (Ermel, Misminay)

3. Passing on the Quechua to our children
 “[Tourism] helps to improve things, no? Like, people are not afraid to speak Quechua. Now the kids speak Quechua again. (…) Before, the person who could speak Quechua would say ‘I do not speak’ or ‘I do not want my children to learn Quechua at school’ (…) because knowing some native language was a reason for being discriminated.” (Kevin, Puno)

The Setting: 7 rural communities in the Cusco–Puno corridor (Andes)

Key Findings (Continued)

4. Recreating culinary authenticity...
...based on local products

“Everything is produced here, potatoes, quinoa. Generally it is forbidden to cook pasta, or it is forbidden to cook rice. Well if you find a lady serving a bowl of noodles here, I think she’d be penalized. They can not do that, it must be all natural products from here.” (Pedro, Potato Park)

...but adapting to please tourists’ tastes

Concluding Remarks

Participants believe tourism is helping to:
- Recover traditional arts & language
- Revalue ancestral traditions & foods

But...
- Are those impacts positive or negative?
- Are benefits spreading across families?
- How do they define “authentic” & local?

Literature Cited