Chapter 4
Advancing the Global Perspective of Tourism by Examining Core and Peripheral Destinations

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ABSTRACT

Core and peripheral destinations are very significant to island tourism because of core and peripheral islands. Peripheral locations may be disadvantaged as they are isolated from the core or economic centers and from the main population. This chapter reviews literature on the complexity of core and peripheral destinations, their development, planning, marketing and management together with local resident’s perceptions of tourists and the tourist’s expectations. The South Pacific is defined and it’s Colonial past discussed together with tourist motivations. It is becoming increasingly difficult for all stakeholders to agree on programs and tourism practices and that various South Pacific countries have different ways of collecting statistical data resulting in few generic standards to adhere to.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will discuss several issues in relation to core and peripheral destinations using the South Pacific as a case study. Island Tourism (IT) refers to the practice of exploring outer Peripheral Islands while situated in a core destination which may suggest that tourism development inevitably entails exploitation of the periphery by the core (Chaperon & Bramwell, 2013). This style of tourism has been popularly consumed by tourists yet little research has specifically been conducted to clarify its features and foundations. This work will contribute to the adjectival definitions of tourism and advance a new and exciting stream of research. The chapter will proceed by offering the background and brief overview of island tourism and the core-periphery concept will be
introduced and examined. The contribution of this chapter will be in advancing the understanding of the constructs of core and peripheral service in the tourism sector elaborating the notion of Island Tourism as a sub contribution. The chapter will then review the development of tourism in the South Pacific and use this context to examine the foundations of IT. The third section explores the tourist expectations of the tourism experience against those of the indigenous local people while the next section explores the motivation of tourists to visit the South Pacific. It will advance the understanding of the motivations of tourists to the core destination and explore reasons why tourists do not visit the peripheral islands which could enhance their tourism experience. The next section explores how marketers can be proactive in advancing tourism to the periphery islands and finally the areas for implementation considerations and further research will be discussed.

This chapter adopts a case study methodology to identify overall themes and practices and offer a deep understanding of core and peripheral tourism. The case is reflective and retrospective and includes a range of facts related to tourist motivation, island geography and service in the Pacific islands. Exploratory research is a flexible and valuable tool for social science research (Babbie, 1989; Churchill, 1979; Kinnear and Taylor, 1996). The objective of exploratory research is to assist in increasing the researcher’s familiarity with a problem and clarifying concepts (Churchill, 1979; Grbich, 2013; Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2013). Exploratory research has limitations. The interpretation of the findings is usually subjective and with small sample cases that cannot be projected to a wider population (Zikmund et. al; Grbich, 2013).

This research conducted a variety of content analysis such as web pages, journal articles and various tourism organisations. Together with in-depth interviews and surveys which were conducted with locals and tourists in Vanuatu. It was found that there is a misalignment between what the tourists feel they would participate in or use in the peripheral destinations to those which the local resident’s thought the tourist would use. The contribution is chapter makes towards the global understanding of core and peripheral tourism and destinations will be reflected in the context of Island Tourism (IT).

BACKGROUND

A number of studies have been undertaken into the development of core and peripheral destinations and tourism in Australia (Schmallegger & Carson 2010) and in islands (Cassidy 2012). In many areas, tourism development in third world countries has come about on an ad hoc basis with little thought given to local society or the expectations of the traveller. Scheyvens and Russell (2012) notes that tourism is not a practice of the indigenous, but of large corporations making as much money as possible in ways which may not be compatible with balanced island development. The large corporations are looking at maximizing profit and this may conflict with traditional island ethics of giving and sharing.

Destinations are a combination of tourism products including, accommodation, transportation, shopping, climate, attractions, culture and tours as well as infrastructure that when combined offer an integrated experience to the traveler. In most instances destinations are regarded as well-defined geographical areas, such as a country, an island or a town (Hall, 2008). According to Qu, Lo and Im (2011) it is now recognized that a destination can also have a ‘perceptual concept’ which the consumer can interpret subjectively according to their past experiences, cultural background, reason for visit and educational background. Not all destinations can take into consideration the preferences of the consumer of travel and tourism products because of geographical or political