

The outcomes of tourism social entrepreneurship: Host community perspectives

Oral Presentation Working Paper

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This study investigates the outcomes of tourism social entrepreneurship (TSE) activities in Sitio Liwliwa, a surfing destination community in Zambales, Philippines. Formally initiated by an accommodation-type tourism social enterprise, tourism in the locality was envisioned to deliver sustainable and community development outcomes through inducing resident participation and livelihood integration. To obtain an understanding of the TSE outcomes delivered in this locality, case study methods involving the participation of 18 host community actors were employed. Particularly, direct observations, archival research, semi-structured interviewing, and a community asset mapping workshop, were carried out to collect qualitative information. Constructivist grounded theory techniques were performed in analysing the data. This working paper presents the preliminary findings of this study that are outlined using a community capitals framework, and structured according to the emergent categories that encompass host community perceptions and constructions of TSE outcomes. By looking at the nature of the outcomes experienced by a host community, this paper furthers the understanding of the viability of TSE as an emerging alternative tourism entrepreneurship and development approach.

KEYWORDS

Community capitals framework, host community, impact evaluation, social enterprise, surfing tourism, tourism social entrepreneurship

INTRODUCTION

As a development approach, tourism is positioned towards producing positive outcomes for host communities. However, negative outcomes (or 'externalities') may also be generated usually through the adoption of traditional capitalist tourism entrepreneurship models at the destination level. Tourism social entrepreneurship (TSE) is depicted as an alternative tourism entrepreneurship and development approach, in which strategies are designed towards creating innovative solutions for societal challenges faced by destinations (Sheldon, Pollock, & Daniele, 2017). TSE is also conceptualised as a tool for sustainable community development that is often led and envisioned by tourism social entrepreneurs and facilitated through meaningful engagement with local community actors and resource utilisation (Aquino, Lück, & Schänzel, 2018). Understanding the outcomes of TSE is essential, especially for host communities who are regarded as its primary beneficiaries. Identifying these outcomes will provide insights into the viability of TSE as a tourism entrepreneurship and development model. The aim of this paper is to investigate the outcomes of TSE in a community in the Philippines.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have investigated the outcomes of TSE on host communities, usually conducted in developing country contexts (Aquino et al., 2018). Sloan, Legrand, and Simons-Kaufmann (2014) surveyed how seven accommodation-type tourism social enterprises help facilitate the socio-economic development of their locations. The major outcomes discovered include economic benefits such as employment generation and stable income streams for residents. In an indigenous community-based TSE in Bolivia, Peredo and Wurzelmann (2015) found similar economic benefits, such as an increase in household and community income. In South Africa, TSE initiatives were revealed to provide supplemental income particularly for women who participate in farming activities organised by a social enterprise (Laeis & Lemke, 2016). The economic outcomes of TSE are streamlined to produce social benefits, as well. For example, the revenues of an accommodation-type tourism social enterprise in Nicaragua were used in funding local educational programmes (Franzidis, 2018). Also, in some of the above cases (Laeis & Lemke, 2016; Peredo & Wurzelmann, 2015; Sloan et al., 2014), the income from TSE was found to be invested in improving public facilities and infrastructures, which to some degree, boost community pride and enhance the quality of life

The outcomes of TSE on the natural environment are also evident. Nature-based TSE activities were found to reduce or even eradicate consumptive wildlife practices and deforestation, leading to habitat conservation (Peredo & Wurzelmann, 2015). While in the case of a tourism social enterprise in Papua New Guinea, residents have viewed tourists as environmental educators, raising the former's knowledge about their natural surroundings (Sakata & Prideaux, 2013). As a result, a management organisation was established to advocate environmental education for the community. Socio-cultural and political outcomes can be induced by TSE, too. Some TSE cases showed that social cohesion amongst community members, and an increase in support for traditional customs and practices were perceived by residents as advancing their way of life (Sakata & Prideaux, 2013). Other intangible benefits include valuing local leadership and an increase in residents' self-esteem, as a result of successful TSE-initiated community development projects (Peredo & Wurzelmann, 2015).

Conversely, though TSE may appear as an ideal tourism entrepreneurship and development approach, undesirable consequences were also apparent from the extant literature. While employment and income generation are dominant economic outcomes of TSE, it was shown that the wages received by local social enterprise staff are somewhat lesser than what commercial enterprises offer (Peredo & Wurzelmann, 2015). Social tensions in communities were also evident as a result of internal misunderstandings; these create low levels of commitment to, poor coordination within, and lack of confidence with the social enterprise (Peredo & Wurzelmann, 2015). Jealousy and social exclusion were also felt by some women that were less involved in TSE operations assessed by Laeis and Lemke (2016). Negative social outcomes related to alcoholism amongst youth in communities have been revealed, which are linked with the stable income that this social group receives from TSE, making alcoholic drinks accessible to them (Sloan et al., 2014). Furthermore, multiple leadership and collective ownership of community tourism social enterprises were demonstrated to create tensions, especially in some aboriginal contexts where relationships are power-charged (Sakata & Prideaux, 2013). As these studies illustrate, even though TSE is positioned to produce desirable community outcomes, it may also directly and indirectly generate negative implications on host communities. Therefore, it is vital to generate further understandings of the outcomes of TSE on host communities.

METHODS

To address the research aim, single case study methods were conducted with 18 individuals having different nature of TSE involvement in Sitio Liwliwa, a surfing destination community located in Zambales, Philippines. From June to August 2018, qualitative data collection strategies, namely semi-structured interviewing and a community asset mapping workshop, were carried out to elicit individual and collective participant narratives about the outcomes of TSE in the host community. These data gathering methods were complemented by direct observations and archival research, in order to develop a contextual understanding of the community. Using *NVivo 12*, constructivist grounded theory analysis methods (i.e. Charmaz, 2014) were performed on the collected data. Line-by-line and incident with incident forms of 'process' coding (i.e. naming codes using gerunds) were initially carried out. The initial codes that pertained to TSE outcomes were selected and further analysed using a community capitals framework (Emery & Flora, 2006). A higher level of conceptual analysis was then applied through focused coding techniques; these were performed to create an understanding of how the host community perceive the TSE outcomes. Overall, these coding strategies guided an inductive analytical framework, allowing the generation of knowledge that was strongly grounded on the data.

FINDINGS

Tourism in Sitio Liwliwa was formally initiated by an accommodation-type tourism social enterprise whose community engagement strategies aimed at encouraging resident participation through livelihood integration in tourism operations, and local entrepreneurial development. To obtain a wider view of the preliminary findings, the outcomes of TSE at the study site are first presented according to community capitals. This asset-based lens indicates that the community's built resources, natural environment, socio-cultural structures, political capital, local economy and livelihood, are both positively and negatively shaped by TSE activities. Based on these initial findings, three emergent categories from the grounded theory analysis are discussed. These categories encapsulate the perceptions and interpretations of TSE outcomes, as they were experienced by the host community. These broad categories entail dominant TSE outcomes directly related to the constructions of the economic values of TSE, changing way(s) of life in the community, and the evolving attitudes and social dynamics in the locality. Some of these categories reveal that although the tourism social enterprise exerted efforts in employing

an inclusive approach in developing community-based TSE, social tensions arose as a result of some community residents' having low levels or no participation in tourism livelihood activities. Moreover, the consequential growth of the destination posed additional conditions that deteriorate locals' sense of ownership.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the importance of exploring the outcomes of TSE, an increasingly adopted tourism entrepreneurship and development approach. In this working paper, the preliminary findings of a case study involving TSE in a surfing destination community in the Philippines are presented. Context-wise, surfing-based TSE as a socio-economic activity transformed local livelihoods, and strengthened the community's dependence on the coastal land and the sea as community resources. These renewed dependencies brought about stronger environmental attitudes and internal competition. Yet the drastic growth of the local visitor economy that followed in Sitio Liwliwa created subsequent environmental and social issues, stemming from the (un)controlled commercial capitalist activities that occurred in the community. This paper concludes by critically discussing how tourism social enterprises can potentially mitigate these negative outcomes.

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