



Social Impacts of Tourism in the Heritage City of Vigan, Philippines and Ayutthaya City, Thailand

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Abstract

Both the Heritage City of Vigan, Philippines and Ayutthaya City, Thailand are inscribed in the UNESCO's World Heritage list. Culture and heritage sites are among the notable attractions of tourists in these two cities. The purpose of this study is to identify and examine the attitudes of residents in these two cities towards tourism development. A sample was secured from the residents of the two cities. Data in Vigan City, Philippines were gathered by Ferdinand Lamarca who resides in this city while data in Ayutthaya City, Thailand were gathered by Chiara Ayn Lamarca who resides in Chonburi, Thailand. Mean was used to determine the level of agreement of the respondents on the social impacts. T-test was utilized to test the significant differences of the perception of the two sets of respondents. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between the social impacts and demographic variables.

There is no significant difference in the perceptions of the respondents in Vigan City and Ayutthaya City of the social impacts of tourism. Both sets of respondents similarly agree that more tourism improves the economy; the benefits of tourism outweigh its negative impacts; tourism should play vital role in the future; tourism provides good jobs for residents; and that tourism improves the appearance of the city, among others. On the other hand, both sets of respondents similarly agree that tourism businesses are too influential politically; local government should restrict tourism; tourism has negative effect on the environment; tourism increases traffic; and that tourism leads to more litter on the streets, among others.

Concerning the relationship of social impacts and some demographic variables, in Vigan City, whether respondent is born in the city or not and the relationship of the employment to tourism industry affect significantly the social impacts. In Ayutthaya City, it is the relationship of the employment to tourism industry that affects significantly their perception of impacts.

Keywords: Social Impacts/ Sustainable Tourism/ Historic Cities/ Vigan City/ Ayutthaya City/ Philippines/ Thailand

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Introduction

Tourism and heritage conservation have become tools of development. As a heritage site is conserved and preserved, more and more tourists are attracted to the place, thus, stimulating economic activities therein. This is the case of the Heritage City of Vigan, Philippines and Ayutthaya City, Thailand which are both inscribed in the UNESCO's World Heritage list. Tourism and cultural heritage are among the notable attractions of tourists in these two cities.

Vigan City was established in the 16th century. It is considered as the best-preserved example of planned Spanish colonial town in Asia. Its architecture is a creative mix of the cultural elements from the Philippines and China and those from Mexico and Europe. The urban plan of the town reflects the Renaissance grid plan specified in the *Ley delas Indias*, for all the new towns of Spanish Empire. There is, however, distinct difference between Vigan and the Spanish colonial towns in Latin America. In Vigan, its historic core zone known as the Mestizo district is permeated by strong Chinese, Ilocano and Filipino influences. "The district contains the ... historic footprint of 233 historic buildings tightly strung along a grid of 25 streets." In May 2015, Vigan City was officially recognized as one of the New7Wonders Cities together with Beirut, Doha, Durban, Havana, Kuala Lumpur, and La Paz

Ayutthaya City is the capital of Ayutthaya province in Thailand. It was founded by King U Thong in 1350 along the valley of the Chao Phraya River. Ayutthaya became the second capital Siam after Sukhothai. The city was destroyed by the Burmese army in 1767, causing the collapse of the kingdom. "The ruins of the old city are preserved in the Ayutthaya historical park, which is recognized internationally as a UNESCO World Heritage Site; the ruins, characterized by the *prang* (reliquary towers) and gigantic monasteries, give an idea of the city's past splendor

Generally, the paper aimed to compare and contrast the social impacts of tourism in Vigan City, Philippines and Ayutthaya City, Thailand. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of the respondents in terms of the following: sex, monthly income, distance of residence from the heritage site, whether or not born in the city, home ownership, residence, whether or not a year round resident, employed in the tourism industry, relationship of employment to tourism industry?
2. What are the positive and negative social impacts of tourism as perceived by respondents in Vigan City, Philippines and Ayutthaya City, Thailand?
3. Is there a significant difference between the perceptions of the respondents in Vigan City, Philippines and Ayutthaya City, Thailand?
4. Are the perceived social impacts of tourism influenced by their socio-demographic variables?



Methodology

The research design is descriptive correlational. A descriptive design is “...any scientific process (that) begins with description, based on observation, of an event or events, from which theories may later be developed to explain the observations” (<http://www.cliffsnotes.com>). Second, it is correlational because it makes use of statistical measure to establish a relationship between two or more variables, giving an indication of how one variable may predict another.

Two hundred Metro Vigan residents and 200 residents from Ayutthaya City were considered as respondents. A survey questionnaire was used for both cities. It was adapted from Haley and Miller (2005). The instrument for Thais was translated into Thai from English by Ms. Chiara Ayn Lamarca with the help of a professional translator.

Mean was used to determine the level of agreement of the respondents on the social impacts. T-test was utilized to test the significant differences of the perception of the two sets of respondents. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between the social impacts and demographic variables.

Related Literature

Studies on social impacts and their relationship on some socio-demographic variables are reviewed.

Social Impacts of Tourism

The study of Hutasin (2008) aimed to investigate the impacts of tourism development at Baan Tawai, the first One Tambon One Product (OTOP) Tourism Village in Thailand. It attempted to examine the relationship between demographic factors and Baan Tawai residents' perceptions of the social impacts of tourism development. It was found that the residents positively perceive social impacts in term of job creation for women in the village. Moreover, the respondents do not see tourism to cause social changes. Further, they do not think that tourism result to an increase in prostitution, vandalism, burglary, or drug abuse.

Haley and Miller (2005) examined the attitudes of residents in Bath, United Kingdom, towards tourism development. They identified positive social impacts such as: more tourism improves the economy; the benefits of tourism outweigh its negative impacts; tourism should play vital role in the future; tourism provides good jobs for residents, etc. among the negative social impacts include: tourism increases traffic; tourism leads to more litter; tourism development increases council tax; tourism unfairly increases property prices.



The study of Haralambopoulos and Pizam (July 1996) investigated the impacts of tourism, as perceived by the residents of Pythagorion, a well-established tourism destination on the Greek island of Samos. The findings show that the residents not only supported the current magnitude of the tourism industry but also favored its expansion. Despite this, the respondents identified a number of negative tourism impacts such as high prices, drug addiction, vandalism, brawls, sexual harassment and crimes. “The study reconfirmed that those respondents who were economically dependent on tourism had more positive attitudes towards the industry than those who were not dependent on it.”

King et al. (1993) investigated the perceptions of the residents of Nadi, Fiji, towards the impacts of tourism. They conducted a survey of 199 households. The results show that “that residents of communities dependent on tourism can clearly differentiate between its economic benefits and the social costs, and that awareness of certain negative consequences does not lead to opposition towards further tourism development.”

Socio-demographic variables and impact

Haley and Miller (2005) examined the attitudes of residents in Bath, United Kingdom, towards tourism development. They used factor and regression analyses to determine whether the attitude of the residents on impact of tourism development was influenced by socioeconomic and demographic characteristics.

The study of Perdue, Long and Allen (1990) aimed to determine the relationships among perceptions of rural residents of tourism impacts, support for additional tourism development, restrictions on tourism development, and support for special tourism taxes. It was found that, when controlling for personal benefits from tourism development, perceptions of its impact were unrelated to sociodemographic characteristics.

In their study, Belisle, F. J., & Hoy, D. R. (1980) identified the positive and negative aspects of tourism as perceived by the Santa Marta, Colombia residents, and the influence of selected variables on resident response. It is hypothesized that the perception of tourist impact varies with the distance a person lives from the tourist zone and with the resident's socio-economic status. It is found that despite the perception of some serious negative aspects, Santa Marta residents consider the overall impact of tourism to be beneficial.

McGehee, N. G., Lee, S., & Perdue, R. R. (2010) examined tourism-related social capital and its relationship with other forms of capital. The researchers found that length of residence relates significantly with tourism-related social capital and that tourism-related social capital relates significantly with cultural capital, political capital, human capital, private built capital, and financial capital.



Analysis and Interpretation of Data

1. Profile of the Respondents

In both cities, there are more female respondents than male. In Vigan City, Philippines, there are no respondents with income more than P30,000 while in Ayutthaya City, Thailand, there are nine or 9.5 percent whose income is more than B30,000. Thailand indeed is more economically developed than the Philippines. The GDP per capita Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) of the former in 2015 is US\$16,097 while that of the latter is only US\$7,254 (<https://knoema.com/sijweyg/gdp-per-capita-ranking-2015-data-and-charts>)

Table 1.1. Sex and Monthly Income of Respondents

Socio-demographic Factors	Vigan City		Ayutthaya City	
Sex				
• Male	91	45.5	76	38.0
• Female	109	54.5	123	61.5
• No answer	0	0	1	0.5
• Total	200	200	200	200
Monthly Income				
Below 5,000 (pesos and baht)	27	13.5	12	6.0
• 5,001 to 10,000	3.0	15.0	48	24.0
• 10,001 to 15,000	30	15.0	33	16.5
• 15,001 to 20,000	32	16.0	36	18.0
• 20,001 to 21,000	20	10.0	17	8.5
• 21,001 to 25,000	25	12.5	18	9.0
• 25,001 to 30,000	36	18.0	17	8.5
• Above 30,000	0	0.0	19	9.5
• Total	200	100.0	200	100.0

Seventy six and half percent of the respondents and 61.5 percent of the respondents in Vigan City and Ayutthaya City, respectively live within five kilometer radius. Moreover, more than one half of the respondents in the two cities were not born there.



Table 1.2 Distance of Residence from Heritage Site and Whether or Not Born within the City

Socio-demographic Factors	Vigan City		Ayutthaya City	
Distance				
• Less than 1 km	42	21.0	25	12.5
• 1 to 2 km	44	22.0	44	22.0
• 3 to 4 km	45	22.5	18	9.0
• 4 to 5	22	11.0	36	18.0
• More than 5	47	23.5	77	38.5
• Total	200	100.0	200	100.0
Whether born in the city				
• Yes	76	38.0	66	33.0
• No	123	61.5	134	67.0
• No answer	1	0.5	0	0.0
• Total	200	100.0	200	100.0

Table 1.3. Home Ownership and Residence of Respondents

Socio-demographic Factors	Vigan City		Ayutthaya City	
Home Ownership				
• Renting	12	6.0	60	30.0
• Owned	138	69.0	103	51.5
• Living with others	44	22.0	27	13.5
• Others	6	3.0	10	5.0
• Total	200	100.0	200	100.0
Residence				
• Core Zone	36	18.0	47	23.5
• Buffer Zone	72	36.0	60	30.0
• Outside the Buffer Zone	92	46.0	93	46.5
• Total	200	100.0	200	100.0
Year Round Resident				
• Yes	167	83.5	178	89.0
• No	32	16.0	22	11.0
• No answer	1	0.5	0	0.0
• Total	200	100.0	200	100.0



Residence is categorized into living in the core zone, buffer zone or outside the buffer zone. In Vigan City, the core zone encompasses the old structures such as the cathedral, archbishop's palace, provincial capitol, city hall and the ancestral houses. In Ayutthaya City, the core zone contains the ruins, characterized by the *prang* (reliquary towers) and gigantic monasteries. Any renovation or repair of old monuments must reflect the old Vigan and Ayutthaya architecture. The buffer zone refers to the area surrounding the core zone. It is sufficient that any repair in this area has a feature of the old architecture. In both cities, most of the respondents live outside the buffer zone. More than 80 percent of the respondents are year round residents of the place.

Table 1.4. Employed in Tourism Industry and Relationship of Employment to Tourism

Socio-demographic Factors	Vigan City		Ayutthaya City	
Employment in Tourism Industry				
• Yes	56	28.0	51	25.5
• No	144	72.0	149	74.5
Total	200	100.0	200	100.0
Relationship of employment to tourism	Vigan City		Ayutthaya City	
• Very Important	76	38.0	32	16.0
• Important	79	12.0	120	60.0
• Not important	24	12.0	38	19.0
• No idea	22	10.5	0	0.0
Total	200	100.0	200	100.0

In Vigan City, 28 percent of the respondents are employed in tourism industry like owners and salesladies of souvenir shops, hotel and restaurant attendants, tour guides, among others. In Ayutthaya City, a little less at 25.5 percent are respondents employed in the tourism industry.

With respect to the relationship of their employment to the tourism industry, 38 percent of respondents in Vigan City find their employment to be very important to tourism development while 12 percent claim that it is important. In Ayutthaya, Thailand, 16 percent consider their employment to be very important in tourism development while 60 percent claim that it is important.

Take note that even if they are not directly employed in the tourism industry, their employment such as teachers in the Department of Education, faculty and non-teaching personnel of Higher Education Institutions, employees of national government agencies relates significantly to tourism industry since their institutions



are partners of the City Government of Vigan and Ayutthaya in their heritage conservation and tourism development.

2. Social Impacts of Tourism

a. Positive

Both sets of respondents strongly agree that more tourism improves the economy. In Vigan City, revenue collection in 1995 was only P27 million. At present, it is P349,000,000 (*Treasurer's Office, Vigan City*). Chiefly, this is because of tourism and heritage conservation. In Ayutthaya City, tax revenue collected in 1998 was only 5,498 million THB. In 2014, tax revenue increased by 382% to 21,007 million THB over the past 16 years.

Table 2.1. Perceptions of Respondents in Vigan City and Ayutthaya City as to the Positive Social Impacts of Tourism

Items	Vigan City		Ayutthaya City		Average	
	Mean	DR	Mean	DR	Mean	DR
1. More tourism improves the economy	4.55	SA	4.41	SA	4.48	SA
2. The benefits of tourism outweigh its negative impacts	4.09	A	4.03	A	4.05	A
3. Tourism should play vital role in the future	4.37	SA	4.31	SA	4.34	SA
4. Tourism provides good jobs for residents	4.42	SA	4.26	SA	4.34	SA
5. The city should try to attract more tourists	3.82	A	2.73	NI	3.28	NI
6. Tourism improves the appearance of the city	4.33	SA	4.23	SA	4.28	SA
7. Tourism increases recreational opportunities	4.30	SA	4.25	SA	4.28	SA
8. The city should become more of a tourist destination	4.17	A	3.98	A	4.08	A
9. Tourism development increases the quality of life	4.11	A	4.14	A	4.13	A
10. When I talk to fellow residents I am positive	4.17	A	3.88	A	4.03	A
11. I would support a local tax levy for tourism	3.68	A	3.61	A	3.65	A
12. I can personally influence tourism decisions	3.73	A	3.66	A	3.70	A
13. When I talk to fellow residents, I am positive about tourism	4.02	A	3.91	A	3.97	A
Average	4.14	A	3.95	A	4.05	A



Legend:

4.21 – 5.00 – Strongly Agree (SA)

3.41 – 4.20 – Agree (A)

2.61 – 3.40 – No idea (NI)

1.81 – 2.60 – Disagree (D)

1.00 – 1.80 – Strongly disagree (SD)

They strongly agree that tourism should play vital role in the future as tourism provides good jobs for residents. The souvenir shops in the heritage city of Vigan and Ayutthaya have employed a lot workers. Tourist guides have also been hired to attend to the tourists. Hotels have proliferated and employed attendants, front desk personnel, chefs, etc.

Likewise, they strongly agree that tourism improves the appearance of the city and increases recreational opportunities. In Vigan City, the latest attraction is the dancing fountain. In Ayutthaya City, the main attraction is the Ayutthaya Historical Park which comprises four temples – Wat Phra Ram, Wat Phra Sri Sanphet, Wat Mahathat and Wat Ratchaburana.

They agree that the benefits of tourism outweigh its negative impacts. While they see traffic congestion and littering of the streets as problems, they find the growth in the economy and increase in employment as very important.

They strongly believe that tourism development improves the quality of life. Interestingly, in Vigan City, a City Council Resolution was passed commending the University of Northern Philippines for its role in improving the quality of life of the Biguenos (people from Vigan City) as it has participated in the heritage conservation of the place. Whereas, Ayuttaya Historical Park is gazetted and protected by Thai law under the Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Objects of Art and National Museums, B.E. 2535 (1992), enforced by the Fine Arts Department, Ministry of Culture. There are other related government units such as the Ratchaphatsadu Land Act, B.E. 2518 (1975), the City Planning Act B.E. 2518 (1975), the Enhancement and Conservation of National Environmental Act No. 2, B.E. 2535 (1992), and municipal regulations that work on preserving and conserving the infrastructures of the City of Ayutthaya. In addition, one of the targets proposed by TAT (Tourism Authority of Thailand) is to improve the local standard in the tourist area and promote their way of living as another part of tourism. Local products are promoted and sold at higher price. With more income to the local, they believe that they could have a better quality of life.

Surprisingly, the respondents would support a local tax levy for tourism. Currently there is no tax rate proposed locally to the residents. However, most respondents provide the reason that if the local tax paid would be used to improve infrastructure and tourism, more tourist will come to visit Ayutthaya and in return would give them more revenue.



On the average, both sets of respondents agree with all the positive social impacts of tourism.

b. Negative Social Impacts

Both sets of respondents agree that tourism businesses are too influential politically. In Vigan City, the hotel owners are politicians and relatives of politicians. But it is not clear if they influence the ordinances that favor them. Similarly in Ayutthaya, according to the respondents, the hotel owners and business owners are either relatives of the politicians or partners of the politicians. Thus, the politician would gain benefits and makes decision based on their own benefit.

The respondents believe that tourism has negative effect on the environment and leads to more litter on the streets. In Vigan City, while the garbage collected and dumped in garbage sites are recycled into plastic chairs and tables for use by school children, a significant portion is incinerated and the fumes are released into the atmosphere. In Ayutthaya City, the bins are not seen frequently along the streets and roads. According to the respondents, they observed that tourist unethical behavior and the few numbers of litter bins are the two key factors that may cause the number of litter on the street to increase as tourist number increases.

They agree that tourism increases traffic. In Vigan City, immediately after its consideration as one of the Seven Wonders Cities in the World last December 2014, there was severe problem of traffic. In Ayutthaya City, traffic has also worsened because of tourism.

Table 2.2. Perceptions of Respondents in Vigan City and Ayutthaya City as to the Negative Social Impacts of Tourism

Items	Vigan City		Ayutthaya City		Average	
	Mean	DR	Mean	DR	Mean	DR
1. Tourism businesses are too influential politically	3.61	A	3.48	A	3.55	A
2. Local government should restrict tourism	2.78	NI	3.36	NI	3.07	NI
3. Tourism has negative effect on the environment	3.36	A	3.51	A	3.44	A
4. Tourism increases traffic	4.08	A	3.90	A	3.99	A
5. Tourism leads to more litter on the streets	3.81	A	3.85	A	3.83	A
6. Tourists should pay more for attractions	3.48	A	3.32	NI	3.40	NI
7. Tourism development increases local tax	3.79	A	3.46	A	3.63	A
8. Tourism unfairly increases property prices	3.67	A	3.63	A	3.65	A



9. Tourism increases the amount of crime	3.24	NI	3.69	A	3.47	A
10. Tourism reduces quality of outdoor recreation	2.97	NI	3.57	A	3.27	NI
Average	3.48	A	3.58	A	3.53	A

Legend:

4.21 – 5.00 – Strongly Agree (SA)

3.41 – 4.20 – Agree (A)

2.61 – 3.40 – No idea (NI)

1.81 – 2.60 – Disagree (D)

1.00 – 1.80 – Strongly disagree (SD)

They agree that tourism development increases taxes. In Vigan City, while there has not been much increase in tax rates, the tax bases have been increased. Today, all forms of businesses, such as transient houses which proliferated because of tourist influx, stalls which produce Vigan sausages, etc have been monitored by the City Government as sources of taxes. In Ayutthaya City, since respondents believe that politicians are also involved in tourism, they also believe that these politician may work out on the new law to increase their benefits, by increasing tax to reduce the competition with their own or their partner's business.

They agree that tourism unfairly increases property taxes. In Vigan City, the zonal value of land along Quezon Avenue has increased substantially since the municipality became a city, inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites and considered as one of the Seven Wonders Cities in the World. In Ayutthaya City, respondents observed that whenever politicians promote or announce the tourist sites, the price of the land surrounding that location will dramatically increase. According to one of the respondents, the price of the land opposite to his house increased by 2-3 times within the las two years after a park was built nearby few years ago.

In Vigan City, the respondents have no idea if crime has increased as a result of tourism. As a matter of fact, there has not been much incidence of crime in the place. In Ayutthaya, the respondents agreed that tourism has increased crimes. Haralambopoulos and Pizam (July 1996) identified a number of negative tourism impacts such as high prices, drug addiction, vandalism, brawls, sexual harassment and crimes.

They do not have any idea if tourists should pay more for recreation. In Vigan City, there are a lot attractions, the latest of which is the dancing fountain with budget of hundreds of millions of pesos. Tourists enjoy this for free. The Baluarte which is like zoo is one the tourist destinations aside from the heritage site. Tourists are not required to pay entrance fees. Museums do not also require entrance fees. In Ayutthaya City, tourists do not also pay entrance fees to see the old temples. This is the reason why the respondents do not have an idea, or undecided, if entrance fees should be collected since these will be additional expense on the part of the tourists.



3. Testing of Difference in the Perceptions of the Respondents on the Social Impacts of Tourism

Table 2 presents the t-test of difference in the perceptions of the respondents on the social impacts of tourism in Vigan City, Philippines and Ayutthaya City, Thailand. There is no significant difference in their perceptions. This means that the social impacts of tourism are perceived similarly by stakeholders in Vigan City and in Ayutthaya. Both sets of respondents similarly agree that more tourism improves the economy, the benefits of tourism outweigh its negative impacts, tourism should play vital role in the future, tourism provides good jobs for residents and that tourism improves the appearance of the city, among others.

**Table 3.1 T-test of Difference in the Perceptions of the Respondents on the Social Impacts of Tourism
in Vigan City, Philippines and Ayutthaya City, Thailand**

City	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	t-sig	Decision
Vigan City	200	3.8515	.40528	.02866	.260	.610	Do not reject Ho
Ayutthaya City	200	3.7874	.375553	.02655			

On the other hand, both sets of respondents similarly agree that tourism businesses are too influential politically, local government should restrict tourism, tourism has negative effect on the environment, tourism increases traffic, and that tourism leads to more litter on the streets, among others. The reason why they have similar perception is that positive and negative social impacts of tourism are almost similar in tourist areas even if they are oceans apart.

4. Relationship between the Perceived Impacts of Tourism on Some Variables

The perceived social impacts of tourism by the respondents are regressed on some variables like sex, monthly income, distance of their residence from the heritage site, whether or not they were born in the heritage city, home ownership, whether or not he/she resides in the heritage city, whether respondent is a year round resident, whether or not he/she is employed in tourism industry, and the relationship of his/her employment to the tourism industry.

**Table 4.1 Regression of Social Impacts of Tourism on Personal Factors
in Vigan City and Ayutthaya City**

Variables	Vigan City			Ayutthaya City		
	Beta	t-value	t-sig	Beta	t-value	t-sig
Sex	.099	1.379	.170	.099	1.106	.270
Monthly income	-.024	-.243	.808	.004	.037	.970
Distance from the heritage site	.004	.045	.964	.100	.952	.342
Whether born in the heritage city	-.161	-2.062	.041*	-.104	-.818	.415
Home ownership	.082	1.003	.317	-.022	-.228	.820
Whether he/she resides in the heritage city	-.001	-.017	.986	.024	.233	.816
Year round resident	.049	.632	.528	-.069	-.652	.516
Employed in tourism industry	-.005	-.067	.947	.136	1.398	.164
Relationship of employment to tourism	-.183	-2.464	.015*	.242	2.624	.010*

Multi R = .305 F-ratio = 1.601 Multi R = .326 F-ratio = 1.362
 Rsq = .093 F – sig = .094 Rsq = .106 F – sig = .184

It can be seen from the regression table that the combined effect of the personal variables does not wield significant influence on social impacts in both cities as shown by their F-sigs which are greater than .05 level of significance.

The study of Perdue, Long and Allen (1990) is substantially similar. The study determined the relationship among perceptions of rural residents of tourism impacts, support for additional tourism development, restrictions on tourism development, and support for special tourism taxes, and found perceptions of its impact were unrelated to sociodemographic characteristics.

On the other hand, the study of Belisle, F. J., & Hoy, D. R. (1980) seems to be different. It found that the perception of tourist impact varies with the distance a person lives from the tourist zone and with the resident's socio-economic status. In a similar vein, McGehee et al. (2010) found that length of residence relates significantly with tourism-related social capital and that tourism-related social capital relates significantly with cultural capital, political capital, human capital, private built capital, and financial capital.

In Vigan City, when the variables are taken singly, whether respondent is born in the city or not (t-sig at .041) and the relationship of the employment to tourism industry (t-sig at .015) affect significantly the social impacts. First, this means that their perception of social impacts, both positive and negative is significantly hinged



on their being born or not within the heritage site. Being born in the city gives them a sense of identity with the place. As a heritage site with universal value, they believe that they are there to protect the heritage.

Second, the relationship of their employment to tourism industry is measured by whether it is very important, important and not important. Employment is the source of life. It is life itself. The respondents, particularly those employed in the tourism sector, very much feel the impacts, both positive and negative, of tourism in their lives. Without tourism, they would not have an adequate source of income.

In Ayutthaya City, it is the relationship of the employment to tourism industry (t-sig at .010) that affects significantly their perception of impacts. Similarly, the respondents, particularly those employed in the tourism sector, very much feel the impacts, both positive and negative, of tourism in their lives. They are employed because of tourism. This finding in Vigan City and Ayutthaya City is supported by Haralambopoulos and Pizam (July 1996) who found that respondents who were economically dependent on tourism had more positive attitudes towards the industry than those who were not dependent on it.

In the same vein, King et al. (1993) showed “that residents of communities dependent on tourism can clearly differentiate between its economic benefits and the social costs, and that awareness of certain negative consequences does not lead to opposition towards further tourism development.”

Conclusions

1. The Thai respondents are more economically well-off than the Filipino respondents. This is a microcosmic reflection of the macrocosmic fact that Thailand has greater GDP per capita PPP than the Philippines.
2. While Filipino respondents are less economically well-off than the Thais, more Filipino respondents seem to prioritize home ownership.
3. Both sets of respondents strongly agree that more tourism improves the economy; that tourism should play vital role in the future as tourism provides good jobs for residents; and that tourism improves the appearance of the city and increases recreational opportunities.
4. On the downside, both sets of respondents agree that tourism businesses are too influential politically; that tourism has negative effect on the environment and leads to more litter on the streets; that tourism increases traffic; that tourism development increases taxes; and that tourism unfairly increases property taxes.
5. The social impacts of tourism are perceived similarly by stakeholders in Vigan City and in Ayutthaya City. The reason is that positive and negative social impacts of tourism are almost similar in tourist areas even if they are oceans apart.



6. In the Philippines, the perceived social impacts vary significantly with whether or not the respondents are born within the heritage site.
7. In the two cities, the importance of employment to tourism development significantly affects perception of the social impacts of tourism.

Recommendations

1. Cultural preservation and conservation in both sites should be made a priority so as to make tourism sustainable.
2. Enhanced measures to address traffic congestion and littering in the streets should be implemented.
3. Regular assessment of real properties should be done, in Vigan City as mandated by the Local Government Code, and in Ayutthaya City as mandated by the law of Thailand as increase in property taxes is perceived to be concomitant with tourism development.
4. Measures to instill sense of identification with the heritage sites even to those who were not born within the site must be instituted.
5. Community residents even if not employed in the tourism industry must be continually involved in the heritage conservation and development programs of the city governments to give them sense of universal ownership of the heritage sites, particularly in their yearlong festivities.
6. The two cities may consider each other as sister cities sharing their own priceless past and present experiences. Ayutthaya City may learn from the strategies of Vigan City of increasing its revenues tremendously. Vigan City may learn from the conservation techniques of Ayutthaya City.
7. Further research on the strategies of the government of both cities may be considered.

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