Social Impacts of Tourism in a Post-Conflict City: Examining Collective Pride
Research conducted by Jada Lindblom

Problem

The city of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, experienced some of the worst physical destruction and human casualties during the Bosnian War, 1992-1994. It remains an ethno-religiously divided city between the East and West sides. Tourism has been promoted as a pathway toward reconciliation and recovery, but war memories and identity politics are deeply entwined with regional heritage and tourism offerings. In a city still widely known for its war history, collective pride may be an important way for residents to move on from past hardships, but pride can have both positive and negative manifestations: *authentic* (linked with self-esteem) or *hubristic* (linked with narcissism or arrogance). Socially, pride can be segmented as *self-inflating* (based on positive perceptions of oneself), *other-distancing* or *other-devaluing* (based upon negative evaluations of others). As tourists show interest and appreciation for a place and its cultures, residents may experience greater community pride.

Research

Inspired by social psychological experimental design, this quantitative research employs construal level theory of psychological distance (CLT; Trope & Liberman, 2010) as a framework for understanding residents' senses of pride pertaining to tourism and touristic places in a post-war city still facing internal social divisions. A questionnaire was developed with Likert-type scaling incorporating previously-tested attitudinal items and a newly-developed CLT-based instrument measuring affective responses to three locations under a general scenario and a tourism visitation scenario: Mostar (general city), the Old Bridge (famous, centrally-located historic site), and Park Fortica (new Eastern adventure park). The questionnaire was distributed to adult Mostar residents using probabilistic cluster sampling, resulting in 408 valid surveys.

Findings

All attitudinal items scored high, with respondents from the Eastern neighborhood tending to score items highest. In testing construal levels, the overall sample's pride scores were high. The tourism scenario scores were higher for Mostar and Park Fortica, but not the Old Bridge (Figure). All differences between construal scenarios, per location, were statistically significant (Table). Between neighborhoods, means ranged from 4.90 (Other neighborhood, Park Fortica) to 6.46 (East neighborhood, Old Bridge). Again, the East tended to report higher pride scores.

Attitude variable	KWt	p	Group 1	n	Mdn	Group 2	n	Mdn	Adj. p
Happy_proud	$\chi^2(2) = 9.458$	0.009*	East	215	7	Other	33	6	0.036*
Future_promise	$\chi^2(2) = 12.839$	0.002*	East	220	$7^\dagger$	West	147	$7^\dagger$	0.007*
Future_promise	$\chi^2(2) = 12.839$	0.002*	East	220	7	Other	33	6	0.031*
Enjoy_attractions	$\chi^2(2) = 8.871$	0.012*	East	218	7	West	146	6	0.032*
Improve_QOL	$\chi^2(2) = 10.182$	0.006*	East	219	7	Other	34	6	0.007*

KWt = Kruskal-Wallis H test statistic. Adjusted *p* reflects pairwise results of Dunn's post-hoc test, with Bonferroni correction.
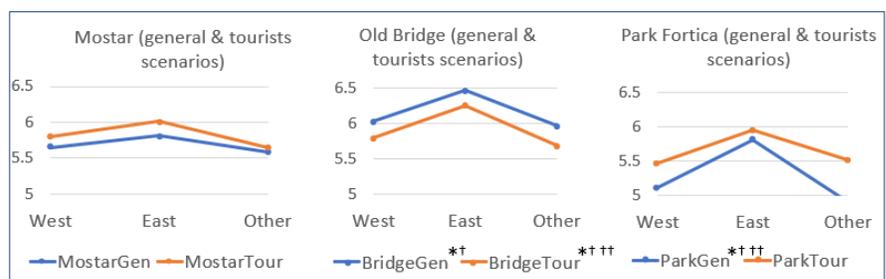†For the tied median scores, the East group had a mean of 6.45 and the West group had a mean of 6.07.
*significant at p < 0.05
Happy_proud = "I am happy and proud to see tourists coming to see what my community has to offer"
Future_promise = "Tourism holds great promise for Mostar's future"
Enjoy_attractions = "There are many enjoyable or interesting activities and attractions for tourists in Mostar"
Improve_QOL = "Tourism development increases residents' quality of life in Mostar"

Implications

- Analysis of a variety of specific local sites can illuminate ways tourism can influence residents' perceptions of pride.
- Tourism may be instrumental in post-conflict settings in contributing to "authentic," self-inflating pride across residents.
- While residents' neighborhood affiliation can significantly influence levels of pride associated with local sites and tourism, this pride can still be widespread across a population, even in a city with known social-geographical divisions.

†significant difference found between East and West, using Dunn's post-hoc test with Bonferroni correction
††significant difference found between East and Other, using Dunn's post-hoc test with Bonferroni correction
*significant at p < 0.05

Recommendations

- Resident input can help tourism planning and promotion professionals understand how touristic sites may be perceived differently across the resident population, helping to establish a more ethical and sustainable industry.
- Tourism planners and community development professionals should work collaboratively to design tourism offerings that may enhance community relations rather than emphasize divisions.
- CLT can provide a useful framework with quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods approaches, helping planners and developers gain a more in-depth understanding of residents' opinions and affective relationships with places.

Researcher

Jada Lindblom graduated with her Ph.D. in Community Resources and Development in December 2020 under the direction of Dr. Christine Vogt. She would like to thank Tourism Cares and the Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA) for helping to fund this dissertation research.

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