Impact of Travel on Local Children
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Travel is big!
Global
• 1.4 billion international travellers
  World Tourism Organization, 2018
Australia
• 10.5 million short-term departures
  Over half to developing countries
  ABS 2019
US
• 78.7 million short-term departures
  Over half to developing countries
  U.S. Department of Commerce 2019

Tourism is big!
• ≥4% increase/yr in international tourist arrivals
• $17.43 trillion USD in exports from international tourism in 2017
• 10% of world GDP

World Tourism Organization

Travel
• Relentless search for ‘new’ places
• Places become ‘touristy’
• People wanting more ‘authentic’ and challenging experiences - destinations become more remote

Impact
• Environmental
• Sociocultural
• Economic
• Health
Environmental impacts - pos

- Development of infrastructure
- Increased awareness of pro-environmental behaviour
- Conservation of wildlife and natural resources - regarded as tourism assets

Ecotourism

- Coined in 80s by Héctor Ceballas-Lascuráin
- Allows a person to ‘study, admire and enjoy’ scenery, plants, animals, cultures in undisturbed places
- Hope that tourist will eventually ‘acquire a consciousness and knowledge of the natural environment together with its cultural aspects, that will convert him into somebody keenly involved in conservation issues’

Environmental impacts - neg

- Overdevelopment
- Overconsumption
- Damage to formerly pristine regions
- Land acquisitions in name of tourism - resettlement of locals
- Increased air traffic, petrochemicals, sewage
- Pollution
Sociocultural impacts

• “...when there is large contrast between the culture of the receiving society and the origin culture, then it is likely that impacts will be greatest.”


Sociocultural impacts - pos

• Positive attitudes and learning about each other’s culture and customs
• Preservation of traditional customs, handicrafts and festivals
• Tolerance
• Helps raise global awareness of issues such as poverty and human rights abuses

Sociocultural impacts - pos

• Promotes social development through employment creation, income redistribution and poverty alleviation
• Strengthens communities
• Facilities developed for tourism can benefit residents

Sociocultural impacts - neg

• Crowding and congestion
• Drugs and alcohol problems
• Prostitution and increased crime
• Erosion of traditional cultures and values

Economic impacts

• Tourism employs >100 million people worldwide
  – up to 265 million people directly and indirectly
  – many are migrants and women
  – 50% are ≤25 yo

International Labour Organisation
Economic impacts - pos

- Creation of employment
- Better welfare, hygiene, health, etc

International Labour Organisation

Economic impacts - neg

- Benefits may leak back to foreign countries (travel agents, hotel chains, etc)
- Increase in local property prices and the cost of goods and services
- Average wages rarely constitute living wage
- Women often have lowest paid, lowest status jobs
- Inadequate provision for their children

International Labour Organisation

Economic impacts - neg

- Children often required to supplement family income
- 13-19 million children working in an occupation tied to tourism e.g. selling goods on beaches, carrying luggage

International Labour Organisation

Global Slavery Index

Economic impacts - neg

- Modern slavery
  - >45 million people globally - >5 million children
  - Sweatshops
  - Domestic work
  - Prostitution

International Labour Organisation

Global Slavery Index
Health impacts - pos

- Improved health and hygiene
- Improved nutrition
- Expansion of medical facilities
- Increased training opportunities for healthcare workers
- Retention of HCWs

Health impacts - neg

- Pressure on local healthcare facilities
- Increased wait times, increased costs
- Lack of attention to the health needs of the local population
- Obesity
- Mental health issues

Voluntourism

- Growing trend of tourism activities featuring visits to local schools and orphanages, or businesses arranging short-term volunteer opportunities
- Volunteers are generally well-intentioned - don’t realise they may inadvertently be causing harm to children
Voluntourism

• In some cases, children deliberately separated from their families and placed in orphanages so they can be used to attract fee-paying volunteers and donors

Orphanage tourism

• Globally, up to 8 million children live in institutions
  >80% of these children have parents or family
• Risk of children becoming tourist attractions
• Tourists become agents for orphanages as business enterprises rather than as sites of care

Example - Phuket

• Tourism has become the region’s biggest industry
• >3 million visitors every year
• Influx of thousands of Thais looking for jobs
• Prices pushed up - on par, if not higher than Bangkok
• Many Thais living in camps and working long hours
• Many children abandoned - cared for in orphanages
• Funding for orphanages has dwindled

CHILDMEND ARE NOT TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

THINK before visiting an orphanage. Visit www.thinkchildsafe.org

LUMOS

Lumos works to help the millions of children in institutions worldwide regain their right to a family.

J.K. Rowling: Isn’t it time we left orphanages to fairytales?

J.K. Rowling

Children are not tourist attractions.

tmasd

#10andChange

Lumos

Lumos Jacket by Insight Design

Children are not tourist attractions.

THINK before visiting an orphanage. Visit www.thinkchildsafe.org
10 principles

1. Mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies
2. Individual and collective fulfillment
3. Sustainable development
4. Enhancement of cultural heritage
5. Beneficial activity for host countries and communities

5 key areas

1. Inclusive and sustainable economic growth
2. Social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction
3. Resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change
4. Cultural values, diversity and heritage
5. Mutual understanding, peace and security
Conclusion

- Tourism has the potential to improve the lives of millions of children
- Need to ensure the sustainability of the destination, not just the visit