**BEYOND DOXEY, BEYOND BUTLER: BUILDING UPON INSIGHTS IN SMALL ISLAND TOURISM RESEARCH TO EXTEND TOURISM THEORY**

**Abstract**

*Research in three small islands finds highly positive resident attitudes towards tourism. This is influenced by several factors. Aware of their peripherality, island communities may be willing to tolerate inconveniences of tourism. Residents adapt to the industry. General sustainability of local tourism means that tolerance and adaptability is not exceeded. Findings challenge pessimism regards sustainability of small island tourism, and assumptions of both the Index of tourism irritation and tourism area life cycle; concepts which have, and continue to underpin, much tourism theory. A new model is proposed, which attempts to better reflect the nuances of resident attitudes.*

**Keywords**

Resident Attitudes, Small Island Tourism, Index of Tourism Irritation, Tourism Area Lifecycle, Sustainable Tourism,

**Track**

Sustainable and Responsible Business

**Word Count**

6786 words

**Introduction**

Tourism management has for the past three decades been dominated by two theoretical frameworks; Doxey’s (1975) Index of Tourism Irritation (Irridex), and Butler’s (1980) Tourism Area Lifecycle (TALC). The former is arguably the most familiar theoretical perspective on how hosts and guests interact (Irandu, 2004). The latter is the most widely adopted model in tourism research (Ivars i Baidal et al, 2013). Irridex characterises attitudes towards tourism as evolving, through stages, from initial euphoria, eventually to antagonism, as tourism develops (see figure 1). TALC refers to the evolution of destinations through a typical process of touristic discovery, growth, and maturity, as a location is found to be attractive to visitors, made accessible, and increasingly developed. Over time, growth tends to decline as markets are saturated, fashions change, competitors establish, and destinations stagnate. Subsequent efforts can be made successfully or not at rejuvenation, or a resort may fall into decline (see figure 2).

As a result of their ubiquity, lack of other theoretical frameworks in tourism study, and overlap in terms of describing the evolution of destinations, Irridex and TALC are often studied together (Oppermann, 1995, Faulkner and Tideswell, 1997). To illustrate, lifecycle stage is often associated with positive or negative resident attitudes, in terms of the pervasiveness of tourism development it indicates. Areas at an early tourism lifecycle stage, where carrying capacities are less stretched, tend to have more positive resident assessments of tourism, than at later development stages, where negative impacts, such as crowding, are more common (Lawson et al, 1998). Level of tourism development or pervasiveness, is closely linked to perceptions, with the literature consistently finding that residents of more touristic areas, tend to have more negative attitudes than those from less developed (Murphy, 1985), as do those more proximate to the central tourism zone (Glasson, 1994, Jurowski and Gursoy, 2004). Although cases find the opposite (Sheldon and Var, 1984, Mansfeld, 1992), Madrigal (1993: 349) concludes that: “It appears that the consequences of living with tourism on a daily basis cause residents to be more acutely aware of its negative aspects than its positive aspects.”

As such, the models provide a foundation for development of much tourism theory, location, comparison, interpretation, contextualisation, and understanding of research findings. There is for example, an established tradition of research in small islands, often, as is generally the case for tourism studies (Vargaz-Sanchez et al, 2009), broadly applying and structured around TALC and Irridex, (itself part developed by Doxey from case study in Barbados). Small islands are often highly dependent on the tourism industry, and hence are useful locations for studying tourism phenomena (Milne, 1992). They moreover, have long histories of hosting tourism, in many cases for well over a century, with the islands of Northern Europe for instance, pioneering many early forms of domestic tourism (Walton, 2000, Rawcliffe, 2007). Consequently, there exists a wealth of lifecycle based case studies within (e.g. Cooper and Jackson, 1989, Cooper, 1995, Baum, 1998, McElroy, 2006, Rodriguez et al, 2008). These generally uphold and reaffirm many of the fundamental aspects of the TALC and Irridex models, and inform many of the theoretical and practical assumptions within tourism studies, in particular, regards the sustainability of development (Sharpley and Vass, 2006).

Nevertheless, weaknesses of the two models have been highlighted, notably their over-simplistic nature. Despite implication, Irridex stages are not inevitable (Irandu, 2004). TALC meanwhile, is arguably too generalised to be actionable (Lim and Cooper, 2009), descriptive rather than prescriptive (Choy, 1992), or overly deterministic (Brooker and Burgess, 2008). Ivars i Baidal et al, (2013: 187) conclude: “The dialectical interplay between external and internal factors underlies the uneven evolution of tourist destinations, which are not necessarily fated to decline. Tourist destinations are able to adapt to circumstances and can influence their future evolution”. Both models furthermore, have failed to investigate resorts in positions of post-maturity (Canavan, 2013c). It has been argued the appeal of these models lies in their universality (Oppermann, 1995, Butler, 2004). However, universality of the models is doubtful in light of gaps in underlying literature. It has been illustrated for example, how residents in a declining resort, might experience nostalgia for a more touristic past associated with greater atmosphere, facilities, and overall landscape diversity and quality (as per Getz, 1994, Twining-Ward and Baum, 1999, Canavan, 2013c). This return to positive attitudes, the valuing of tourism it demonstrates, and management consequences implied, is currently little discussed.

There is therefore value in efforts to explore together, two closely linked models so fundamental to tourism study, in order to test the value of their continued application, and where relevant, propose adjustments, that might better reflect the experiences of the numerous tourist destinations in, or reaching, decline.

**Figure 1: Irridex (Doxey, 1975)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Euphoria** | Initial phase of tourism development, visitors and investors are welcome, little planning or control mechanism. |
| **Apathy** | Visitors are taken for granted, contacts between hosts and visitors become more formal (commercial), planning concerned mostly with marketing. |
| **Annoyance** | Saturation is approached and local people have misgivings about tourism industry, planners attempt to control via increasing infrastructure rather than limiting growth. |
| **Antagonism** | Open expression of irritation, visitors seen as cause of all problems, planning is remedial yet promotion is increased to offset deteriorating reputation of destination.  |

**Figure 2: TALC (Butler, 1980)**



**Theory**

Small islands, as peripheral locations, isolated from wider economic and population centres, with access barriers, and limited local human, natural, and infrastructural resources, face a range of socio-economic restrictions. Typically, these include limitations on employment (Tsartas, 1992; Andriotis, 2005; McElroy, 2006), facilities (Keane, 1992; Buhalis, 1999; Ayres, 2000), and socio-cultural variety (Duffield and Long, 1981; Wilkinson, 1989; Brown, 1998). The undiversified landscapes of small islands are linked to high levels of outward migration, particularly of young people, in search of greater opportunities elsewhere (Peron, 2004; Marjavaara, 2009; Chaperon and Bramwell, 2013). Many small islands worldwide have been abandoned, with corresponding loss of their endemic, mutually evolved, cultural and natural landscapes (Royle, 2007; Berry, 2009; Rouan *et al*, 2010).

In this context, tourism development may be a vital source of economic and social diversification. Indeed, small islands worldwide have often pioneered, pursued, and are highly dependent on the industry (McElroy and Albuquerque, 2002). Economically, the foreign exchange earnings, employment, and other social benefits tourism brings, are particularly felt in regional areas (Eagles, 2002). They can be used to pay for resources not available locally, thereby increasing quality of life and potential for further economic expansion (Ayres, 2000, Andriotis, 2005). Tourism may also stimulate infrastructure development (Buhalis, 1999), whilst tourist attractions and infrastructure may also benefit local residents (Selby, 2004; Mundet and Coenders, 2010). Tourism also brings indirect support to other elements of the economy (Duffield and Long, 1981; Latimer, 1985). As such, tourism can be a pioneer industry, helping to stimulate wider, long-term, economic transformation (Mansfeld and Winckler, 2008). Social impacts meanwhile, include rising civic pride and social cohesion due to the improved economic prospects of a place (Aitchison and Evans, 2003), as well as through the cultural interest and understanding generated by hosting visitors (Simpson, 1993). Generally, cultures benefit from interaction, including celebrating local identity, increases in self esteem and opportunities for mutual learning (Brown, 1998; Smith, 2003; Pennington-Gray *et al*, 2005; Stronza and Gordillo, 2008). Marcouiller (1997: 353) summarises: “(the) effects of tourism (are) in developing a sense of place and pride, increased awareness and appreciation of environmental, historic and cultural resources, provision of recreational activities for lower income residents and political benefits.”

 Nevertheless, alongside such diverse benefits, many negative impacts can be caused or worsened by tourism development. Mass tourism is oft associated with overly large scale physical infrastructure damaging scenic vistas, degrading natural sites, replacing vernacular architecture, and consuming habitats (Hall and Zeppel, 1990; Weaver, 1993; Wheeler, 1993; Ioannides, 1995). Of particular consequence to small islands, are issues of water pollution as a result of sewage run off where local infrastructure cannot cope (Buckley, 2002; Sharpley, 2003). The physical pressure of tourist crowding meanwhile, causes social change, congestion, resource damage, acts as a physical burden on everyday life, and subsumes integrity and traditions of the local culture (Smith, 1989; Orams, 1999; Rodriguez *et al*, 2008). Such pressure may be especially felt in the fragile and confined environments of small islands (Briassoulis, 2004). Development may additionally increase competition for limited resources, leading to inflation beyond the means of local people (Sharpley, 2003; Marjavaara, 2009; Canavan, 2011).

Such a position, caught between risks of development and decline respectively, has been termed the peripherality balance (Chaperon and Bramwell, 2013). Linearity of development and attitudes evolution, are associated with the peripherality balance. There is an established basis within the small island tourism literature that complements many of the assumptions of Irridex and TALC. At times these models are applied and tested directly and explicitly (i.e. Isle of Man: Cooper, 1995; Baum, 1998), more often, they are implied (i.e. Greek Islands: Tsartas, 1992; Andriotis, 2005). Thus nascent destinations may typically have resident enthusiasm for tourism development, in order to bring desired socio-economic inputs (Keane, 1992; Tsartas, 1992; Connell, 2005). Nevertheless, research highlights such attitudes are likely to be more complex than the simple representation of Irridex or TALC. For instance, destinations may face a difficult path of balancing desired economic expansion, with incipient environmental threats, and of maintaining resident enthusiasm for tourism development in light of increasing negative impacts (i.e. Kontogeorgopoulos, 2005). Balancing different goals, assessments, and definitions of sustainability between community (Almeyda *et al,* 2010), industry (Rodriguez *et al,* 2008), and local or outsider (Puhakka *et al*, 2009), groups meanwhile, further complicates.

Mature destinations investigated in the literature, tend to be characterised as having suffered various negative impacts of tourism development. Such damage calls into question their attractiveness to both hosts and guests (Mihalic, 2000). Moreover, as a consequence, resident attitudes tend to have become more ambivalent towards the industry, if not outright antagonistic (Briassoulis, 2004). Resulting discussion of small island tourism, tends to emphasise the progressive destruction linked to increases in tourism in small islands (i.e. Ioannides, 1995; Sharpley, 2003, Briassoulis, 2004; Spilanis and Vayanni, 2004; Theuma, 2004). The cautionary tale of such a research tradition is that tourism development in small islands may provide an initially welcome source of needed economic and social diversity, but that over time, environmental damage will accrue, erode positive resident attitudes, destroy unique landscapes, and undermine touristic attractiveness. As such, authors warn tourism in small islands may be inevitably destructive, at best a short term route to development, to be moved beyond wherever possible (Wheeler, 1993; Arremberri, 2005; Agarwal and Brunt, 2006).

However, a growing body of literature emphasises that such pessimism may be inaccurate, over-applied to tourism, and serve to undermine sustainable management of the sector (Butcher, 2003; Hampton and Christensen, 2007; Tao and Wall, 2009; Canavan, 2013a, 2013b). Research has demonstrated development need not necessarily be unsustainable. Rather, tourism may be compatible with protection of species and habitats (Reimer and Walter, 2013), and generate significant and equitable distribution of community wide benefits (Almeyda *et al,* 2010).This may moreover be the case over long time periods, with for instance, the Frisian Islands hosting continuously successful domestic tourism industries since the beginning of the 20th century (Bergsma and De Haan, 2006; Brandt and Wollesen, 2009). Likewise, there is increasing appreciation that resident attitudes need not follow a traditionally deterministic path (Irandu, 2004). It has for instance been suggested that destinations with long histories of hosting visitors may develop a ‘tourist culture’, whereby tourism becomes a part of everyday life (Sindiga, 1996). Cultures may evolve alongside and adapt to tourist hosting, co-opting many aspects of the industry into local tradition, practise, and identity (Smith, 1989). Tourism might furthermore become an integral part of local economic and social traditions and landscapes (Lim and Cooper, 2009). Post mature destinations therefore, might see a return to longing for tourism, where residents perceive loss of benefits brought by the industry (Canavan, 2013b). Many post mature locations exhibit signs of socio-economic decline related to downturns in tourism (i.e Agarwal and Brunt, 2006). This might lead to a sense of disappointment, or nostalgia amongst residents (i.e. Getz, 1994; Canavan, 2013b). Such findings indicate disagreement with traditional linear models. Yet a lack of evidence from post-mature cases restricts the ability to draw conclusions from.

Lastly, there have been increased nuances in understanding of the peripherality balance in general, across destination stages. For example, highlighted is that small island communities are often highly resilient and adaptable, and thus well placed to cope with and exploit impacts of tourism (Campling and Rosalie, 2006; Scheyvens and Momsen, 2008). To elaborate, it is suggested that island cultures have long traditions of flexibility, self sufficiency, innovation, entrepreneurship, and utilising individual and community resources imaginatively; attributes which may help to control, exploit and shape tourism developments (Briassoulis, 1979; Baldacchino, 2005; Berry, 2009; Chaperon and Bramwell, 2013). In this way, tourism development may be more likely to be sustainable. Furthermore, there is recognition of the fact that without tourism, often the only option for economic development in peripheral locations (Ayres, 2000), many small islands would face total depopulation (Peron, 2004; Berry, 2009; Rouan et al, 2010). In light of such a stark position, even the negatives of tourist hosting, such as elements of cultural pastiche, may be preferable to cultural abandonment (Keane, 1992; Portrait of the Islands, 1994; Royle, 2008).

As such, many contrasts exist within attitudes and peripheral area development research. Irridex and TALC models do not appear to adequately accommodate such a diversity of findings, accurately represent increasing nuances of understanding, or reflect potential variety of attitudes and development processes. Nonetheless, they remain the basis for much theory development and practical recommendations. Risks exist of over, or misapplication, of such models. These include overly pessimistic conclusions regards the sustainability of tourism development, patronising small island communities as vulnerable, underinvestment in tourism, misrepresentation of indigenous communities, and concentration on other sectors not necessarily more beneficial or less intrusive, to island societies (Brown, 1998; Saarinen, 2006; Hampton and Christensen, 2007; Scheyvens and Momsen, 2008; Tao and Wall, 2009).

The limitations, objections, and gaps, which exist in the literature, underline a need for fresh investigative research. This paper will now examine resident attitudes towards tourism in three small islands at different stages of tourism development, including the neglected post maturity stage. This is done in order to address such research weaknesses, and hence draw further conclusions regards the continued application of Irridex and TALC models.

**Materials and Methods**

This paper aims to assess the continued relevance of Irridex and TALC. Three small island case studies were chosen to achieve this: Lewis & Harris, Belle Ile, and the Isle of Man. Cases were selected to represent small islands at various stages of the TALC: expansion, maturity, and post-maturity respectively. Islands were also selected to represent secondary, cold water locations, serving somewhat niche audiences. Key attributes of cases are summarised in table 1.

Briefly speaking, the three islands are characterised by beautiful coastal and interior landscapes, and distinct local cultures, manifest in a range of historic sites, crafts, traditions and events. Lewis & Harris is the largest and most northerly island in the Outer Hebrides archipelago, located off the coast of northwest Scotland. Economically the Outer Hebrides lag behind other Scottish islands and regions. The public sector in 2001 accounted for nearly 32% of jobs and GDP per head is 66% of the UK average ([http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk](http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/)). Belle Ile is the largest and most populous of the French Atlantic islands, situated off the southern coast of the Breton peninsular. The economy is dominated by tourism, with some 23,000 guest bed spaces and around 450,000 visitors per annum (insee.fr). Located in the centre of the Irish Sea, the Isle of Man was from the 1890’s to the 1960’s a major British tourism destination. Since then however, visitor numbers have fallen to around one third of past levels, with tourism today creating around 5% of GDP and 14% of jobs (Isle of Man Digest 2010).

Research was an inductive process based upon pragmatic use of principles of social constructivism to explain how data is created, and grounded theory to frame the interpretation of data. Mixed-methods were the selected research paradigm; itself a pragmatic approach incorporating qualitative and quantitative methods, in the belief these are not incompatible, and together mutually beneficial. A mixed methods research approach was adopted in light of the strengths of the approach itself (see Johnson *et al*, 2007). Mixed methods suit the broad perspective required of tourism researchers (Simpson, 1993), where a plurality of equally valid research strategies exist (Walle, 1997). Such plurality can deal with the complexity and challenges facing tourism study (Hartmann, 1988). Research comprised an initial stage of depth interviews of key tourism stakeholders, and island residents. This was then used to develop, interpret, and enrich, results from a subsequent quantitative postal survey (as per Connell, 2005), distributed between May 2011 and June 2012, to addresses randomly drawn from the list of voters. Likert scale questions based upon established attitudes survey criteria (Madrigal, 1993, Haley et al, 2005), made up the majority of the questionnaire. Demographic and open ended questions, allowing for personal input, made up the rest. A response rate of 44% overall was obtained in the Isle of Man, with 355 usable questionnaires returned. The figures were 34%, 135, and 26%, 64, for Lewis & Harris and Belle Ile.

**Table 1: Case Studies Key Data**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Case Study** | **Lewis & Harris** | **Belle Ile** | **Isle of Man** |
| **Population\*** | 20,000 | 5,000 | 80,000 |
| **Geographic size (km²)** | 2187 | 84 | 520 |
| **Visitor Numbers\*** | 150,000 | 450,000 | 287,000 |
| **Employment at least somewhat dependent on tourism (%) \*\*** | 31% | 48.5% | 28% |
| **TALC Stage** | Expansion | Maturity | Late Decline |
| **Primary Industry\*** | Public Sector | Tourism | Finance |
| **Qualitative Interviews** | 8 | 12 | 33 |
| **Questionnaires Distributed** | 400 | 250 | 800 |
| **Questionnaires Returned** | 135 | 64 | 352 |
| **Response Rate** | 34% | 26% | 44% |

\* Peron, 2004, Isle of Man Digest, 2010, cne-siar.gov.uk

\*\* Postal survey results

**Results**

Summaries of descriptive statistics are provided in figures 3-6 at the end of this section. Detailed statistical analysis is beyond the scope of this paper, which instead seeks to portray an overview of resident attitudes towards tourism in the three cases. Tables are used to provide a quick summary of the key data gathered during postal surveys regards. Some key quotes from qualitative interviews have been used to illustrate general patterns and themes that emerged during research and discussed here.

The key finding of research was that highly positive attitudes towards the tourism industry were found in all three islands. Increases in tourism were favoured in each case by majorities of respondents. Such favourable attitudes were underpinned by resident assessments of the significant, relevant, widely distributed, and diverse impacts of tourism across economic, social, and environmental landscapes.

Tourism was widely seen to provide economic opportunities, such as increased employment, government revenues, and business demand. Significant numbers of respondents considered their jobs at least partially related to tourism (49% Belle Ile, 31% Isle of Man, 29% Lewis & Harris). Many described entrepreneurial activity associated with the industry, such as providing accommodation during peak seasons. Moreover, tourist spending was believed to help to support quality and diversity of facilities, services, and infrastructure.

Such increased diversity of facilities helps to make the islands more interesting and easy places to live. Respondents described for example, using tourist orientated facilities for their own amusement (see also Canavan, 2013b). Greater diversity of shopping and transport options available locally, was perceived to increase choice and lower prices. Socially, increased diversity of facilities was linked to more vibrant and entertaining communities. Tourism additionally provided chances for interactions, and an increased sense of anonymity, in otherwise small and at times homogenous communities. Young residents in Belle Ile and the Isle of Man discussed parties, events, friendships, and sexual encounters, involving tourists. Others described increased space for expressing their self and sexual identities. Several participants in each case detailed that they had met their romantic or business partners through tourism. And generally, the atmosphere and variety generated by visitors, was valued by residents of otherwise quiet and isolated communities.

Environmentally meanwhile, the sector was believed to provide protection for cultural and natural landscapes through the income and awareness generated. Key stakeholders believed that tourist attention helped to promote conservation agendas. Additionally, that the interactions and exchanges engendered by tourism, helped to stimulate revivals and reinterpretations of cultural activities. General residents meanwhile, discussed their increased appreciation of local cultural and natural quality and variety. This was as a result of both observing tourist regard for these, and through participating in domestic tourism themselves.

*“I have friends now all over France who I can go to stay with. I have been to Nantes, St Lo...” (F, Resident, Belle Ile)*

*“I think the pubs depend on it (TT festival) really to make most of their money.” (K, Conservationist, Isle of Man)*

*“Without the TT a lot of things would change... Strand Street would probably half close, the, pubs, cafes, transport.” (N. Tourism employee)*

*“That is why you need the visitors... There aren’t enough of us (island inhabitants) to keep things going.” (V, Accommodation manager)*

*“There were two of them (tourists) in the pub... Took him home with me (laughs). The next night went back and got his friend!” (R, Resident, Isle of Man)*

*“I like the visitors. They give the place a bit of spark.” (C, Accommodation Manager, Isle of Man)*

 *“Yeah and also awareness, that’s also the key. If people don’t know there is anything there to look after then why the hell would they look after it?” (K, Conservationist, Isle of Man)*

*“It is the fact that you can say this is something tourists visit that is something they enjoy which makes them (government) have to appreciate and look after more.” (J, Conservationist, Isle of Man)*

Thus tourism was held in high regard, and seen as contributing to island communities. What is more, a lack of negative impacts of tourism, further supported such positive attitudes. Limitations and negative impacts were perceived. Lifecycle factors reduced the ability of tourism to adequately meet economic expectations of residents. The small scale, seasonality, or decline of the industry in the respective cases, made somewhat unpredictable the economic benefits brought. For example, quality and desirability of tourism jobs was seen as low. Those who worked or had worked in the sector discussed low wages, seasonality, and uncertainty of future employment. Negative impacts of tourism were also related to lifecycle stage, with concern for changes to traditional ways of life in Lewis & Harris, and pressures resulting from large tourist numbers during the summer in Belle Ile, such as crowding or resource competition. More generally, complaints existed of litter and noise.

Nevertheless, such complaints about tourism were only observed by a small minority of participants in each case. Frequently, qualifications were stated, emphasising that only minorities of tourists, or specific policies, created problems. Residents furthermore, were found to adapt routines in order to accommodate inconveniences of tourism. For example, observed and described during fieldwork in Belle Ile, is that residents tend to attend beaches and locations for leisure purposes that are not known to or popular with tourists. Negative impacts also tended to be tolerated in light of wider community gains, with beneficial impacts of the industry viewed as outweighing negatives. Hence whilst a number of participants in each case stated that they did not personally gain from tourism, or disliked certain aspects, they put up with it.

*“You get some difficult ones (tourists) of course... making impossible demands... However most (tourists) are nice.” (A, Tourism Employee, Belle Ile)*

*“It is difficult sometimes. (Pause) If you just want to go shopping; there are so many people. It is slow. However, you adjust your routine, local people go out earlier and later when they (tourists) have gone, we go to the supermarket on the hill where they do not visit. And you know, most of life takes place in the office or the home and they do not come in there.” (B, Resident, Belle Ile)*

*“Worst thing about living here is the TT (and its) noise disruption; I know we have to have it though.” (S, Resident, Isle of Man)*

*“I’m not that bothered about (local tourism) really. Like I don’t notice it very much... but I think it is a good thing like, just generally.” (K, Conservationist, Isle of Man)*

*“The work isn’t very good. I remember when I was in the (hotel) sector the pay was pretty bad for what you were expected to do... a lot of work physically and socially dealing with people.” (C, Former manager, Isle of Man)*

Research illustrated that tourism sustainability was favourably perceived by island residents. This was in terms of both sustainability of communities, and sustainability of industry development itself. Tourism itself was considered to be largely sustainable in terms of bringing diverse, significant, and relevant positive impacts to the islands, with few negative impacts. Thus respondents believed that benefits of tourist hosting outweighed the few costs. By providing such economic, social and environmental opportunity and variety, tourism was judged, by residents in each case, to contribute to the overall sustainability of island communities.

Habitability was a widespread concern. Research demonstrated the many challenges of inhabiting a small island, including access barriers and costs, increased sense of isolation, and concerns over a lack of local employment and social opportunities, potentially limiting future prospects regards. Perceived lack of opportunities, for young people especially, as well as a sense of isolation, in this respect particularly felt by elderly respondents, left many considering emigration overseas.

The impacts of tourism were seen as highly relevant to addressing the various limitations of small island life. As a result, majorities of residents in each case desired expansion of the tourism sector, in order to increase the benefits brought by, and to reduce outward migration. Residents additionally believed that expansion could be accommodated without detriment to natural and cultural landscapes.

*“My family live across... It can be very lonely.” (I, Resident, Lewis & Harris)*

*“There is nothing for young people to keep them here... We need employment and education opportunities on (island).” (H, Resident, Lewis & Harris)*

*“I think it (tourism expansion) can only be a good thing in terms of bringing money into the community.” (T, Attraction Manager, Lewis & Harris)*

*“Without tourists the island would shut down.” (B, Resident, Belle Ile)*

*“The only work is this (points to bar). It is not enough for a good life.” (D, Tourism Employee, Belle Ile)*

*“There is nothing to do!” (A, Tourism Employee, Belle Ile)*

*“It is so boring.” (Open comment, Belle Ile)*

*“(In the winter) it can get very lonely.” (B, Resident, Belle Ile)*

*“There is not the range of jobs on the Isle of Man... here (UK) I have potential to go into all sorts of areas with my degree; not limited to finance.” (JJ, Émigré, Isle of Man)*

*“You can’t do anything; everyone know(s) your business!” (S, Resident, Isle of Man)*

*“I think I’d like to see us moving towards that (tourism expansion) before we need to worry about (environmental protection).” (P, Attraction Manager, Isle of Man)*

By contrast, in the Isle of Man, there was widespread concern noted amongst residents regards the negative implications of a downturn in tourism. Here, attitudes were that tourism decline threatened the advantages brought by the sector. Loss of facilities, outsider attention, atmosphere, and traditional architecture, were all associated with tourism decline. This had increased a sense of isolation from and disregard by the wider world (see also Canavan, 2013c), and left residents concerned for less diversified economic and social landscapes. Noticeable was a strong sense of nostalgia, amongst older residents especially, for the more touristic past.

*“I remember it back in the 70’s – it was wonderful!” (Open comment, Isle of Man)*

*“There isn’t much for the young people to do now. It isn’t like it was.” (Open comment, Isle of Man)*

*“They closed the Grand Island (hotel) last year. It isn’t just the loss of a historic building... but it was a facility for all the community... school concerts held there... now they have nowhere to go.” (J, Conservationist, Isle of Man)*

**Table 2: Overall attitudes towards tourism averages**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | More tourists would be good for the island  | The island should become more of a tourist destination | Tourism makes the island a better place to live  |
| **Case** | Belle Ile | Lewis & Harris | Isle of Man | Belle Ile | Lewis & Harris | Isle of Man | Belle Ile | Lewis & Harris | Isle of Man |
| Disagree a lot | 2% | 1% | 0 | 3% | 1% | 0 | 0 | 1% | 1% |
| Disagree | 8% | 5% | 1% | 6% | 5% | 1% | 6% | 2% | 5% |
| N.A/Neutral | 25% | 10% | 5% | 36% | 13% | 6% | 28% | 17% | 29% |
| Agree | 52% | 47% | 49% | 41% | 46% | 52% | 61% | 58% | 49% |
| Agree a lot | 14% | 38% | 46% | 14% | 36% | 41% | 5% | 22% | 17% |

**Table 3: Economic impacts averages**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | Tourists make an important contribution to the island's economy | The island is too dependent on tourism | Tourism provides good jobs for local residents |
| **Case** | Lewis & Harris | Belle Ile | Isle of Man | Lewis & Harris | Belle Ile | Isle of Man | Lewis & Harris | Belle Ile | Isle of Man |
| Disagree a lot | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3% | 3% | 0 | 0% | 2% | 0 |
| Disagree | 4% | 2% | 3% | 47% | 39% | 1% | 10% | 3% | 3% |
| N.A/Neutral | 8% | 8% | 9% | 33% | 25% | 6% | 19% | 20% | 9% |
| Agree | 53% | 59% | 61% | 15% | 30% | 52% | 39% | 66% | 61% |
| Agree a Lot | 36% | 31% | 27% | 3% | 3% | 41% | 7% | 13% | 27% |

**Table 4: Social impacts averages**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | More tourists will spoil island quality of life | I enjoy the atmosphere tourists bring to the island | Tourism increases awareness of the island abroad |
| **Case** | Lewis & Harris | Belle Ile | Isle of Man | Lewis & Harris | Belle Ile | Isle of Man | Lewis & Harris | Belle Ile | Isle of Man |
| Disagree a lot | 14% | 11% | 18% | 2% | 2% | 0 | 1% | 0 | 0 |
| Disagree | 56% | 58% | 65% | 4% | 5% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 1% |
| N.A/Neutral | 17% | 14% | 14% | 23% | 23% | 17% | 7% | 28% | 5% |
| Agree | 12% | 16% | 3% | 56% | 61% | 57% | 69% | 64% | 65% |
| Agree a Lot | 1% | 2% | 1% | 15% | 9% | 24% | 23% | 6% | 29% |

**Table 5: Environmental impacts averages**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | Tourist interest helps to protect natural and cultural sites | Tourist’s cause damage to natural and cultural sites | Tourists increase litter and pollution |
| **Case** | Lewis & Harris | Belle Ile | Isle of Man | Lewis & Harris | Belle Ile | Isle of Man | Lewis & Harris | Belle Ile | Isle of Man |
| Disagree a lot | 0 | 2% | 0 | 10% | 17% | 13% | 8% | 13% | 13% |
| Disagree | 8% | 2% | 2% | 57% | 56% | 58% | 48% | 58% | 60% |
| N.A/Neutral | 16% | 11% | 9% | 22% | 23% | 19% | 28% | 19% | 21% |
| Agree | 58% | 77% | 61% | 10% | 2% | 11% | 15% | 11% | 6% |
| Agree a Lot | 19% | 9% | 28% | 2% | 2% | 0 | 1% | 0 | 0 |

**Discussion**

In demonstrating the consistently positive attitudes towards tourism, of three small island communities at various stages of the TALC, findings contrasted with much of the prevalent resident attitudes literature. This has a number of implications for businesses, which may be encouraged by the prospects for largely amicable and long term relationships with local communities. At the same time, highlighted, is the importance of communication with, and involvement of, those communities, in order to maintain. Communication of future development plans will help to overcome potential fears of development, (and indeed, decline), and avoid potential misunderstandings or misinformation (Ioannides, 1995; Puhakka *et al,* 2009). Involvement meanwhile might help to further foster the entrepreneurism and adaptability evident in these cases and associated with positive attitudes.

Research was broadly in line with TALC and Irridex, in that certain familiar attitudes were identified according to lifecycle stage. For instance, reservations existed in Lewis & Harris regards development altering traditions, although others argued that change would be a desirable thing, highlighting the spectrum of opinion within a community. Meanwhile, increased signs of resident antagonism were noted in Belle Ile, albeit marginally.

However, in the heretofore overlooked post mature context, resident attitudes were the most positive overall. Attitudes in the Isle of Man illustrated how tourism decline can have highly negative effects upon a community. Participants discussed a loss of traditional facilities and outside attention, which both reduced landscape diversity and heightened a sense of isolation from the outside world. Many interviewees here, desired a return to a more touristic past, and of the three cases, responses were most the favourable overall.

For the most part therefore, findings were that rather than antagonising residents, increased development resulted in only some loose signs of increased awareness of the negatives associated with, (as per Faulkner and Tideswell, 1997). As per Irandu (2004), findings were that increasingly negative attitudes towards tourism are not inevitable, where favourable underlying conditions exist: in these cases, appreciation amongst residents of community sustainability issues, local adaptability, and sustainability of the local tourism industries.

To elaborate, residents’ awareness of peripherality issues was found to moderate attitudes towards tourism. Research found these island communities were highly aware of their peripherality, and the limitations associated with, such as restricted economic opportunities. Consequent outward migration of young people was a common concern. As such, participants appreciated the impacts of tourism, and may consequently be more disposed to overlook negatives and adapt to industry hosting, in light of the benefits brought (see also Lepp, 2007, Tovar and Lockwood, 2008). Faulkner and Tideswell (1997) for instance, highlight how residents of mature resorts do not necessarily become more antagonistic towards tourism, as they are prepared to tolerate personal inconveniences for the broader community wide gains.

Resilience and adaptability of the communities investigated was evident. Examples were of communities able to cope with change (Adger, 2000), and of mechanisms used to shape lives to surrounding environments and adjust the environment to their lives and purposes (Hernandez Cruz *et al*, 2005). To illustrate, there were numerous examples across cases of formal and informal participation in tourism for financial and social benefit, and of strategies for avoiding negative aspects of tourism such as congestion. This may contribute to and be evidence of the ‘tourist culture’ which can emerge in resorts with long exposure to tourism, whereby the industry becomes part of the cultural landscape, and goes largely unnoticed by residents (Smith, 1989, Sindiga, 1996, Butcher, 2003).

Thirdly, tourism in the three islands was judged by respondents as largely sustainable. The relatively small tourism sectors in Lewis & Harris and the Isle of Man might mean that thresholds of favourable attitudes had not been breached (around 30% of local retail sales derived from tourism according to Long et al, 1990). In all three cases, there was little evidence or comment regards negative impacts of tourism, so often linked to disappointment in and hostility towards development (i.e. Tsartas, 1992, Marwick, 2000).

Research additionally found that the attitudes of participants in the three islands were more nuanced, adaptable and pragmatic, than Irridex or TALC allow for. Research in Lewis & Harris for instance, gave insight into the reservations that may be harboured amongst residents, who on the one hand might welcome potential opportunities for development, but also fear change to traditions (as per Ireland, 2003, Saarinen, 2006). Here meanwhile, different elements of a community were shown to welcome or object to different aspects of the same thing (as per Weaver and Opperman, 2000). Communities might also be somewhat divided, with certain residents more or less favourable regards sustainable development (Almeyda *et al*, 2010). Community and individual opinions moreover might not always be concurrent (Tovar and Lockwood, 2008). Several Isle of Man depth interviewees for instance, suggested that they did not personally like aspects of tourism, but considered them to be good for the island at large. Such findings therefore highlight weaknesses in the overly broad generalisations and categorical definitions of the Irridex and TALC models.

A more comprehensive, alternative framework is presented in figure 3. This attempts to reflect majority attitudes (the term majority is used in recognition that opinion will not be homogenous in a community, as per Irandu, 2008), using a matrix to recognise the flexibility of attitudes, subject to change and adaptation. As Ivars I Baidal *et al*, (2013) highlight, past models are overly deterministic, with theoretical frameworks requiring revision to better reflect the complex and dynamic way in which destinations evolve and interact with tourism and socio-economic environments. Research demonstrated that attitudes towards tourism do not necessarily progress in a linear fashion, towards increasing hostility. Instead they might be prone to rapid change; from doubt straight to distress for example, should a development fail to live up to promises and expectations (as per Kontogeorgopoulos, 2005), or due to external factors such as information provided (as per Ioannides, 1995). A matrix better represents this, and additionally highlights the overlapping and broad scope of attitudes, which can for example fall between categories, also the potential to hold multiple opinions about different aspects simultaneously. For instance, findings illustrated that residents can have high regard for tourism, at the same time as viewing industry employment relatively negatively.

This model attempts to more accurately reflect the broad and changeable nature of resident attitudes, and better represents the varied and unique evolution of each resort (Choy, 1992, Ratz, 2000). The two curves offer alternate lifecycle patterns, the higher being less sustainable and the lower more so. Resorts could fall at any point within the matrix, according to the variables and local attitudes recorded.

Matrix labels define various categories which majority community attitudes might fall into, depending on the key variables of level of tourism development and stage of development. Labels have been worded to reflect the more nuanced and generalised view of attitudes identified during investigation. Labels such as ‘euphoria’, may overstate attitudes that are in fact more complex, diverse, multiple, flexible, and nuanced.

Labels were established as follows. Those destinations with a lower level of development might fall within the category of ‘Desire’, in the sense that they appreciate the advantages further expansion of the sector might bring, albeit ‘Doubt’ might moderate such a view, as in Lewis & Harris. As levels of development increase, there are likely to be increasing negative attitudes, as was the case for Belle Ile. Albeit, here attitudes had not become overtly negative, despite high development, due to favourable underlying factors. When a threshold of acceptable landscape alteration and resident adaptability is passed however, attitudes may turn to ‘Distress’ with the negative impacts. A position of ‘Dependence’ could be reached in locations with economically dominant yet stagnant tourism industries (i.e. Shiel et al, 2002). Finally, ‘Disappointment’ might describe attitudes in stagnant and declining resorts, whereby residents mourn the loss of positive industry impacts (Canavan, 2013b). More severely, ‘Desperation’ might occur in those resorts in decline which have failed to diversify into new sectors, and consequently show signs of socio-economic deprivation (i.e. Argawal and Brunt, 2006).

**Figure 3: Resident Majority Attitudes Matrix**



**Conclusion**

Overall, three small island cases have revealed attitudes towards tourism to be highly positive, irrespective of lifecycle stage, due to an appreciation of the role of tourism in combating small island peripherality, which promotes tolerance and adaptability within a community, and sustainability of local tourism, which ensures that adaptability is not exceeded. As suspected at the outset, investigating the role and impacts of tourism in small islands untypical of the past literature, has produced a more favourable impression of tourism sustainability. This finding challenges dominant narratives within the tourism literature of the industry being inevitably unsustainable and generating resident hostility.

There is clearly a need to move beyond the Irridex and TALC models, as offering too rigid and prescriptive an approach. Current models fail for example, to recognise and account for factors such as community adaptability, or development of tourist culture, which together can compensate some of the inconveniences of development, and support community tolerance. They do not appreciate that communities evaluate their wider environments, and that such assessments influence attitudes. They also overlook the potential for tourism to be a genuinely sustainable industry, and as a result underplay the likelihood of this.

In response, this paper has sought to offer a new model for better capturing the evolution of resident attitudes over the destination lifecycle. The purpose of the matrix is to present attitudes of residents, set in the context of a location in terms of lifecycle stage and levels of tourism development, in a way that better reflects the complexities and changeability of attitudes, yet still provides a simple visual summary. It is hoped that the underlying familiar theory remains easily recognisable, yet built upon to incorporate some of the more detailed understandings developed over the subsequent three decades of tourism research. Such a model may be of use to tourism managers and practitioners working within the small island context.

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