



# Effects of tourism on the consumption environment: Management and potential practice in Malindi, Kenya

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## Abstract

This paper examines the impact of tourism on the consumption environment of residents of Malindi, Kenya. Since the positive impacts of tourism are fairly well known, our study focuses on socio-cultural and environmental impacts. Our research shows that there have been some changes to the structure of what is available for residents to consume in Malindi. Second, there is duality of existence on the part of tourists as well as locals. Third, there has been a major change in moral values as well as change in some cultural values. Drawing upon the paradisaal discourse as conceptualized by Costa in her 1998 study of Hawaii, we analyze the changes to the consumption environment of the residents. Finally, we present the coping strategies being employed by the residents and the potential emancipatory actions possible.

**Keywords:** Tourism impact, consumption environment, Kenya.

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become one of the most important economic activities for countries around the globe. Tourism is one of the world's largest and fastest-growing industries. It is estimated that in 2007, there were 898 million outbound tourists (UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, 2008). The World Tourism Organization's 2020 vision forecasts that by the year 2010, tourism movement to Africa will increase to 47 million arrivals (World Tourism Organization, 2007). Many developing countries such as Kenya have developed tourism as a way to earn needed foreign exchange. The development of tourism brings with it changes in the consumer culture of the tourists as well as the hosts. These changes in consumption result from the gradual development of the area into a tourism destination. Costa (1993) has suggested that when the tourists' journey involves crossing cultural and societal boundaries, important consumption changes occur among both hosts and their guests. Mathieson and Wall (1982) have noted, "The consequences of tourism have become increasingly complex and contradictory. . . (and)

are manifested in subtle and often unexpected ways" (Mathieson and Wall, 1982)

Research on the impacts of tourism on the structure of society is wide and varied. For example, Ryan (1991) suggests that the greatest impacts of tourism will be where there is a greater gap between the culture and income of both host and tourist. As such, an American tourist in Canada will have very little impact, but that the same American tourist in a developing country will have a far greater influence. An important way in which tourism affects the destination area is seen through the demonstration effect Nurske (1953). There is no univocal definition of the term "demonstration" and the term is employed loosely to describe copying western consumption patterns, changing upscale occupational preferences and declining community cohesion and morals (McElroy and De Albuquerque, 1986).

Hence the development of tourism results in changes in the consumption environment of the hosts, with their free choice in this process seemingly at question. There is

strong evidence to suggest that human beings are forced into contemporary consumption patterns rather than freely select them. Dholakia and Dholakia (1985) term this as "choicelessness." Macro consumption patterns seem to move inexorably in predestined directions and societies, let alone individuals, appear to have very little choice in the pattern to be adopted (Dholakia and Dholakia, 1985). As such individuals within a society can only deviate from the dominant consumption pattern at very high, social, economic and psychological costs (Dholakia et al., 1983; Wilson, 1980). Tourism as a macro-level phenomenon results in changes in micro consumption patterns. The purpose of this paper is to examine this phenomenon in this context and then to question the inevitability of it. This research examines tourism's effect on the consumption environment of hosts in Malindi, Kenya. It then examines the current coping strategies being employed and the potential emancipatory actions possible.

## **Background literature**

While an emphasis on the socially constructed consumption environment of hosts is a relatively new research topic, the impact of tourism in forming tourist destinations is not. The tourism literature offers many empirical and theoretical studies which document the complex and contradictory nature of tourism expansion. Studies that examine these contradictory changes include, among many others, Husbands (1989); Perdue et al. (1990) and Jamison (1999). Conceptual frameworks have been developed that illustrate the coping mechanisms of residents to these changes. For example, Doxey (1975) developed an index of tourist irritation which suggested that as the impacts of tourism increased, communities passed through predictable sequences of responses. These responses ranged from euphoria, enthusiasm, and hope to apathy and irritation to antagonism. Tourist-area life-cycle models have also been proposed (Christaller, 1963; Butler, 1980; Lundberg, 1990; Smith, 1992). The most well-known lifecycle model is Butler's (1980). This model, which is very much akin to marketing's product life cycle, has six stages. The first stage is the exploration stage which is characterized by a small number of visitors. There are no specific facilities provided for visitors, therefore, the use of local facilities and contact with local residents is very high. As such, the physical fabric and social milieu is unchanged with the arrival and departure of tourists of relatively little significance to the economic and social life of the permanent residents.

The second stage is involvement, and the host community responds to the increasing number of visitors by beginning to provide facilities primarily or even exclusively for visitors. Interaction between the visitors and the locals is still high, especially for those locals

involved in tourism. A tourism destination and season emerge. Also, advertising efforts by the country's tourism organization or by intermediaries (e.g., tour organizers) is initiated. The third stage is the development stage which represents a well defined tourist market area that is shaped by intensive and extensive advertising in tourist-generating areas. Outside investment is attracted to the area and this results in rapid decline of local participation and control. External organizations replace local facilities with more elaborate and up-to-date ones, particularly for visitor accommodation. There are noticeable changes in the physical appearance of the area and cultural and natural attractions are supplemented by man-made imported facilities.

The fourth stage is the consolidation where a significant portion of the local economy is tied to tourism. The total number of visitors continues to rise although the rate of increase is declining. The large number of visitors and the facilities provided for them can be expected to arouse some opposition and discontent among permanent residents, particularly those not involved in the tourist industry in anyway. The fifth stage, stagnation, occurs when peak numbers of visitors are reached and capacity levels for many of the important factors are reached, resulting in social, economic and environmental problems. Even though the destination has a well established image, it is no longer considered fashionable and surplus capacity exists. Genuine cultural and natural attractions will have been replaced by imported and "artificial" facilities. The sixth stage is decline, and the destination usually faces a declining market because tourists are drawn away by newer destinations. Tourism facilities are replaced by non-tourism related structures as the area reduces its dependence on the tourism industry. Local involvement once again increases as residents are able to purchase facilities as a result of the decline. The area either loses its tourist function completely or becomes a tourist slum.

According to Butler (1980) if the destination does not go into decline, it can enter the rejuvenation stage. However, Butler notes that this stage is very unlikely without a complete change in the attractions on which the original tourism was based. This can be done by adding a man-made activity or alternatively, the area can utilize previously unexploited natural resources. Ultimately, even the attractions of a rejuvenated area will lose their attractiveness and competitiveness, resulting in decline.

In sum, these life-cycle models state that destinations move from an initial period of discovery to a period of increased visitor interest and finally to decline or rejuvenation. A change in the residents' attitudes from approval to opposition is associated with each stage of the cycle (Ap and Crompton, 1993).

Tourism researchers have conducted studies that examine the impacts of tourism on the environment, economy, society, culture, and political environment. These studies have demonstrated that tourism results in

both negative and positive impacts (Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Ap and Crompton, 1998; Tosun, 2002) . Likewise, the positive and negative impacts of tourism have been noted in macromarketing studies (Belk and Costa, 1995; Jamison, 1999).

The degree to which a tourism destination is impacted by tourism is dependent upon: 1) the cultural and economic distances between the tourists and the hosts (for example, Dogan (1989) emphasized that tourism from developed countries to developing countries has negative sociocultural impacts, such as the decline in traditions and materialism); 2) the capability of the destination and its population to physically and psychologically absorb tourist arrivals without undermining or squeezing out desirable local activities, and 3) the rapidity and intensity of tourist development (Mathieson and Wall, 1982). Tosun (2002) stated, "further, tourism development may create social conflicts at the destination community due to the sociocultural differences, economic welfare, and purchasing power gaps between the host community and tourists" (Tosun, 2002) Since Kenya receives most of her tourists from western nations, the gap between the hosts and tourists is quite large. In 2007, Kenya received 2 million visitors (Ministry of Tourism, 2008), and the majority of these visitors were from Europe and North America. Most tourists spend an average of seven to twelve days in Kenya, and many tourists visit the coastal regions of Kenya, therefore, Malindi is an appropriate location to study these impacts.

Although researchers examined the impacts of tourism on the hosts, there is still a paucity of research that seeks to understand the hosts' consumer behavior as a result of tourism development. This is surprising since tourism changes the consumption environment of the hosts. As shown by Ryan and Wheeler (1982), shopping can easily account for 25% of tourists' expenditure. Other studies have shown that the net income of locals from tourism expenditures range between 10 to 75%, dependent upon national interest in tourism (Peppelenbosch and Tempelman, 1989).

Belk and Costa (1995) have noted that virtually every guidebook written for foreign tourists has a section on shopping and what to buy, implying that the acquisition of mementos is an essential part of tourism. Since shopping is so important to the tourist, the nature of the retail provision to be found in a tourism destination changes with increased souvenir shops and changes in ownership of the shops (Ryan, 1991) . According to Butler (1980) , by the time a destination is in the development stage, new retail businesses appear, some of which may be owned by local people and some by foreign nationals. Thus in changing the structure of the retail environment for tourists, the retail environment for locals is also changed.

Clearly, tourism impacts the consumption choices of residents of a tourist destination. To-date, there is

conflicting evidence about the impact of tourism on consumption choices of the hosts. Tourism has been shown to result in more business activity (Prentice, 1993), such as increased availability of recreation facilities/opportunities and availability of entertainment (Liu et al., 1987). In contrast, Bystrzanowski (1989) found that tourism does not increase availability of entertainment. This research conducted in Malindi, Kenya, furthers the discussion on tourism's impacts to the consumption environment of residents.

### **Tourism in Malindi Kenya**

Malindi is a small coastal district with a population of roughly 345,872 people, and the Malindi municipality's territory encompasses an area of 7,751 square kilometers (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2008). Malindi offers visitors tropical beaches, deep-sea fishing opportunities, year round surfing and a rich history. According to Butler's (1980) tourism life-cycle model, Malindi would be in the consolidation stage since a significant portion of the local economy is tied to tourism. As noted by Jamison (1999), the locals have begun to express some discontent with tourism and its effects. Malindi was once an important Swahili settlement, which is reflected in the architecture of the town. Malindi has progressed as an administrative center and in 1997 was categorized as a district. Tourism is not only important to the economy in Malindi, but it is also extremely important to the Kenyan economy. According to the Kenyan Government, tourism continues to play a major role in the economy and it is now the leading economic sector. In 2007, there were approximately 2 million visitors to Kenya and this was up from 1.6 million in 2006. In addition, consolidated tourism earnings expanded from Kenya Shillings, (KShs.) 56.2 billion in 2006 to about KShs. 65.4 billion in 2007, reflecting an 11.6% growth. Tourism contributes about 12% of the gross domestic product and accounts for over 9% of total wage employment (Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, National Tourism Policy, 2008)

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Before research could begin, a government license to conduct research in Kenya was required. As stipulated by the licensing requirements, the field researcher had to consult with the district commissioner of Malindi regarding the research. Once these two administrative tasks were accomplished, the research was officially commenced.

To examine the changes in the consumption environment of Malindi residents, in-depth interviews were conducted during the period from December 1997 to February 1998. A return visit to the site was made in

**Table 1.** Demographic Information of Informants

Name*	Gender	Age	Works in Tourism	Occupation	Years in Malindi
Wambugu	Male	48	Yes	Hotel Manager	22
Musyoki	Male	23	Yes	Beach Boy	23
Bashiri	Male	47	No	Entrepreneur	30
Rafiki	Male	52	Yes	Hotel Manager	52
Muthuri	Male	26	No	Professional	5
Mutumia	Female	24	No	Homemaker	10
Mundia	Male	55	Yes	Hotel Manger/Entrepreneur	25
Nyachae	Male	45	Yes	Hotel Manager	13
Ted	Male	27	No	Building Contractor	6
Onyango	Male	35	Yes	Supervisor	4

\* Pseudonyms have been utilized.

August 2005. While no additional interviews were conducted during this visit, the continued development of tourism in Malindi was noted. Existing transcripts were annotated with new observations related to the trajectories of tourism.

In-depth interviews have been employed in different types of settings in order to gain insight into consumer behavior patterns and meanings of consumption (Hirschman, 1992; Penalzoza, 1994). Informants were identified by a key informant at the field site. The key informant was the son of a local businessman/politician. His family was intimately involved in the tourism industry; therefore, the majority of his contacts were people involved in the tourism industry. Ten interviews were conducted (9 men and 1 woman). Table 1 provides demographic information on the informants. Although attempts were made to recruit female informants, these efforts were mainly unsuccessful due to social traditions. Tosun experienced similar problems, and he states, "... due to sociocultural reasons, male informants dominated the sample and the relatively small numbers of female informants were not very informative" (Tosun, 2002). Although our sample was relatively small, previous researchers have endorsed using samples of ten or fewer to identify emergent themes as is done in this research (Geertz, 1973; McCracken, 1988; Thompson, 1996). Our sampling strategy is consistent with the views expressed by McCracken, who states, "The purpose of the qualitative interview is not to discover how many, and what kinds of people, share a certain characteristic. It is to gain access to the cultural categories and assumptions according to which one construes the world .....

qualitative research, does not survey the terrain, it mines it. It is in other, words, much more intensive than extensive in objectives" (McCracken, 1988).

The interviews were conducted in the homes or work environments of the informants and lasted forty-five minutes to an hour. Permission was sought to audio-tape each of the interviews and informants were assured of anonymity. Interviews were conducted in three different

languages based upon the respondent's comfort level with the languages. The field researcher is fluent in Kikuyu, Kiswahili and English. Kiswahili is the national language of Kenya and is therefore spoken by the majority of people, while English is the official language. Also, as is typical of most bilingual/trilingual individuals, informants used multiple languages in their responses (that is, they would mainly speak English, but interject with Kiswahili or Kikuyu words). When the interviewing began, informants were asked to speak in general about the impact of tourism on Malindi. As the interview progressed, more specific questions about the impact of tourism on transportation, food, beach accessibility and entertainment were posed. During the course of the interviews, clarification was sought by asking probing questions and closing questions were asked to ensure that relevant untargeted information was obtained.

Consistent with Wallendorf and Belk (1989), triangulation across sources and researchers was undertaken to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. Triangulation across researchers was ensured through the presentation of emerging interpretations to co-authors. The field researcher kept a daily researcher and reflexive journal to record the researcher's mental states, thoughts, personal biases as well as emergent interpretations and planned research activities. The data collection effort resulted in ten audio-tapes which were transcribed. Also, over 40 photographs were taken and several marketing brochures and restaurant menus were obtained. The data was analyzed by means of coding patterns and themes with the use of the constant comparative method (Glazer and Strauss, 1967). This method calls for the researcher to explicitly compare each incident in the data with other incidents appearing to belong to the same category and exploring their similarities and differences.

The residents of Malindi cited many benefits of tourism. The vast majority of the positive aspects of tourism fell into two well documented categories: increased employment and development of infrastructure. This is

consistent with other research that has shown that economic benefits of tourism are seen as positive while the legal, sociocultural and environmental impacts are seen as negative, or at best neutral (Tosun, 2002). Since the positive impacts of tourism are fairly well known, we will limit the discussion of our findings to the socio-cultural impacts.

In the presentation of our findings, very minimal attempts are made to edit the informants' words even in instances where the English, grammar and verbosity would have benefited from editing. Throughout the discussion, transcript excerpts will be used as examples.

## FINDINGS

The effects of tourism on the consumption environment in Malindi can be characterized in the following way. First, the residents experience very high prices and limited entertainment options. Second, there is duality of existence on the part of tourists as well as locals such as in dual pricing, dual taxis among other things. Third, there has been a major change in moral values as well as change in some cultural values. We discuss each of these effects in the following sections.

### High prices

In general, informants stated that life in Malindi was too expensive. They indicated that overall prices of goods and services were a lot higher than in other metropolitan areas such as Nairobi or Mombasa. Since prices are so high in Malindi, the local people have learned to sacrifice and to make do without some things, which they would have otherwise consumed in their daily lives.

**“Nyachae:** Things are expensive, say for example, if you compare to your salary compared to goods in the market you find that one has to be very careful to live, because the salary cannot buy all those things. You have to sacrifice actually in some other areas to have life go on and I would say this was caused by, I don't want to mistake and I wouldn't want you to misquote me wrongly. When the Italian market was introduced in Malindi that was the beginning of prices being hiked.”

There has been a change in the availability and price of food in Malindi. Although most of the food consumed by the tourists is imported, the locals experience higher prices of goods that are sourced locally by the hotels. Informants spoke about the commercialization of local foods and the abstinence of the locals from the consumption of highly priced local foods.

**“Onyango:** When we have high season, Malindi becomes very expensive. Malindi becomes very

expensive. Everything goes up. I mean everything goes up, costs very much. Even from the locals view. They don't appreciate it. It affects even when there is low season because when there is low season, these commodities, they are very scarce, even the suppliers are not bringing them any more and with the scarcity the price has to go up.”

**Researcher: Specifically, what kind of commodities are severely affected?**

**Onyango:** Most of the seafood. And you see seafood is the local staple food. The prices fluctuates as per the season.

**Mundia:** It does affect coz you see the prices here are very high apart from the shortages but you find when there is high season, the hotel will buy these things in big quantities at a high price leaving the common Mwananchi (citizen) with less to buy.

**Wambugu:** People don't eat a pineapple because it is expensive, exactly for the foreign market, if a pineapple which costs 3 shillings which actually you were being given free by a farmer, the farmer, now they are selling for 50 shillings a piece. So, actually you see the locals not eating a pineapple.

The inflationary pressures that the hosts experience as a result of the development of tourism have been well expressed by Belk and Costa (1995) who suggested that the development of a large scale tourist industry may set rapid inflation into motion which ultimately results in lower standards of living for the locals. In response to these inflationary pressures, the informants indicated that they have to sacrifice in order to make ends meet. Firat and Dholakia (1982) state that in most societies, it is not very likely that informal or formal groups would be able to choose and sustain a radically divergent pattern, independent of social choices. Therefore, unless the residents move from Malindi, they have to make their consumption choices from the structure of available alternatives for consumption in their social environment.

### Entertainment

Since Malindi is a tourist town, most of the entertainment is geared towards the needs of the tourists and informants clearly articulated this fact. There are many disco/dance halls in Malindi.

Wambugu: "Entertainment for locals, it is nil. It does not exist at all. Entertainment for locals except for beer drinking if you call that entertainment does not exist at all. So, they tend to go where the tourists are to see how the tourists are being entertained and they end up going to hotels which provide entertainment for tourists so, you

will see a local person seeing the Giriama dances or Duruma dances or Masai dances, (these are traditional dances) dancing to the tourists and he also gets to see how the tourist are entertained.”

Entertainment options in Malindi can best be understood by utilizing the western paradisaal discourse as utilized by Costa (1998) in her study of Hawaii. Costa states, “Western paradisaal discourse privileges the European/Western as superordinate and dominant, while local residents of the paradisaal tourist site are other, subordinate and dominated” (Costa, 1998). As a result, the types of entertainment found in Malindi place the tourist in a superordinate position since the entertainment choices available cater mainly to the tourists’ taste.

In addition, the comments of Wambugu highlight the staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1973) or the social construction of unreality (Duncan, 1978) that is evident in the performance of “traditional” dances for the tourists. Belk and Costa (1995) have suggested that there are differences in the expectations and goals of tourists while visiting core versus periphery nations. Indeed, it has been documented that tourists visiting third world countries seek the primitive and exotic (Phillips, 1987). In their study of Hawaiian music, Schroeder and Borgerson found “typical racist representations: the ‘exotic’ other” and that in general Hawaiians were depicted as primitive, pre-literate, happy, unconcerned with pressing matters” (Schroeder and Borgerson, 1999). As such, the traditional dances are a manifestation of the locals’ interpretation of themselves by utilizing the definitions imposed upon them by the tourists. The reinterpretation of the self and the resulting behavior is in keeping with Costa (1998) who states, “Thus, as other perceives the definitions placed upon it by Europeans, other changes its own self-definition. With respect to tourism marketing, members of host societies often adopt the ascribed and expected behaviors, perspectives and representations envisioned by tourists to be associated with the host society as a tourist destination (Basu, 1995; Costa, 1998; Firat, 1995).” Thus tourists to Kenya expect to see some traditional African dances and the hotels provide these “spectacles” for them.

We turn our discussion to the existence of duality in Malindi. We will discuss this duality with regards to a) pricing, b) shopping environment, c) taxis and d) hotels.

## **Duality**

### **Prices**

Costa has suggested that “in the situation of tourism from the west to paradise-like sites, the power bias, the asymmetry, typically skews in the direction of the guest, giving the tourist a superordinate position vis-à-vis the host” (Costa, 1998). In the vast majority of cases,

because of economic power, the tourist is in a superordinate position, yet there are those “instances in which the local knowledge and experience of residents place them in a more powerful position vis-à-vis tourists, overcharging tourists for services and goods, taking advantage of monopoly provision of products, or utilizing other forms of power.” The comments of Ted and Mutumia below highlight the existence of dual pricing mechanisms in Malindi.

**Ted:** It does not really matter what sort of season it is, but prices are different here, there are prices for tourists and prices for locals.

**Mutumia:** I see as if everything here is expensive ... and then if you remember there are the Whites, but at least they have prices for Whites and prices for Africans. Like fruits, sometimes you can find that they sell a banana to you at five shillings but if a White person comes, they sell it at ten shillings, but those Whites who have come many times know. They have already found somebody to tell them, they know how to bargain.

Overall, the informants have adjusted to the dual prices by expecting to pay non-tourists prices for goods and services. While tourism results in inflationary pressures, the informants were relieved that service and goods providers recognize the economic disparities between locals and tourists and adjust their prices accordingly. It is noteworthy that tourists who have visited Kenya before have learned to bargain. Jamison (1999) discusses the differences in the bargaining behavior of tourists (from different regions of the world), and it is notable how curio dealers in Malindi have learned to deal with these typical tourists. Even though tourists have learned to bargain, they do not receive the local prices; therefore, tourists always pay a higher price than the locals. While restaurant food did not have dual pricing, the food in hotel restaurants was very expensive and mainly catered to the tourists’ taste. Thus, most locals do not eat at these restaurants. Because of the increased number of tourists from Italy, the hotels have incorporated Italian cuisine, as well as the language, in their menus.

## **Shopping environment**

Informants highlighted the fact that foreign entities now own some of the key businesses in the town. For example, the Italians have opened up supermarkets that sell goods imported from Italy. Therefore, many of the product labels are written in Italian which means that the average local cannot buy the products with confidence since few know Italian.

**Wambugu:** You will see a lot of imported items which are actually because of the needs of the foreigners who now

live over here. They have brought in things which you only heard of them in books, like olives, salami which is completely unheard of, or cucumber, for example, I mean the young ones in salt, pickles, exactly which is something that is unheard of here, or like salami, you see things like salami, you know foreign foods, and dried meat.

Informants also mentioned that supermarkets have products that the locals do not consume.

**Ted:** In the supermarket, there is a mixture of items that are strictly for the Whites, some written in German and others that the locals do not know of.

The supermarkets either cater to the locals or to the tourists.

**Musyoki:** We have some supermarkets that cater to the tourists and others that cater to the locals. For example, [name] is predominately stocked with Italian merchandise.

In their discussion of Hegel's myth of the 'Lord and Bondsman,' Desmond et al. have stated, "The other thus becomes an object of intense desire in that consciousness wants to strip the foreignness away and make the object at one with itself" (Desmond et al., 2001/2002) This myth enables us to understand the transformation of Malindi into, in the words of one of the informants, "a small Italy." Paul Theroux comments that many people travel for the purpose of "home plus" – Spain is home plus sunshine, India is home plus servants, Africa is home plus elephants and lions" (Theroux, 1986). In describing much of present day tourism, Hannerz states, "Indeed, there is no general openness here to a somewhat unpredictable variety of experiences, the benefits of mobility are strictly regulated... Much present-day tourism is of this kind. ...But the "plus" often has nothing whatsoever to do with alien systems of meaning, and a lot to do with facts of nature such as nice beaches" (Hannerz, 1990: 241). To cater to the needs of the modern-day tourists, Malindi has inevitably excluded locals by developing these tourists shopping zones.

## Taxis

Although most metropolitan areas in Kenya have an established within city transit system, at the time that this research was conducted there was no bus system or matatu system within Malindi town. (Matatus are privately owned vans, pickup truck, etc. that are used to transport people within and out of towns). Musyoki spoke of the duality of pricing and delivery of taxis.

predominantly for the mwananchi [means Kenyan citizen] and besides if you know that you want a taxi, definitely you know where to get a taxi, you wouldn't go to a place like "Umoja Taxis", those are basically, they wait for calls to go operate in the hotels, so you are not likely to go to

"Umoja Taxis" to get a taxi, you go to "Yolanda", or maybe elsewhere where you are likely to get cheap taxis.

In this case, the locals clearly take on the underclass position since they recognize that they cannot afford the expensive taxis. While this same situation may exist in other everyday situations, this acceptance of the underclass position is extremely important because of the economic disparity of the hosts versus the tourists. This situation is further exacerbated by the traditional format of tourism in most developing countries, where the majority of the tourists are of a different race and class from the locals. Thus, the interpretation of the meaning of using second-class taxis calls to bear the historical questions of race relations and imperialism.

## Hotels

Tourism has an impact on the availability of services and products. For example, at some tourist destinations, beaches that were publicly available for the general populace are converted into private beaches that only the tourists can use (Mathieson and Wall, 1982) . There is also a pervasive and expanding duality of access to facilities. This is evidenced by the fact that some hotels have converted their facilities into "clubs" whereby access to the hotel is only through club membership. Several informants complained about these new clubs and their restrictions.

**Wambugu:** A new market has come in, in the tourism industry called club. This new marketing whereby a tourist pays for whole package, even pays for his drinks in Europe and they only come down here with a voucher. So since the whole hotel is a beach club, you as a local person have to pay the whole package in order to enter there. Well if you are just going in there for one day, it is not worth it. If they are telling you that that is discrimination, it is a marketing gimmick which actually has worked and I know 3 clubs in Malindi there is one [name], [name] and [name]. Like today if you go to [name] they will tell you sorry you are not a club member. So what do you do? They will not accept your one shilling for a beer. Because they are not accepting money on the cash bar."

**Musyoki:** There are those ones which are specifically for the tourists and like we have lots of junks around. Those are the ones you find at the town center and those are Onyango, another hotel manager, talked about the measures that his hotel takes to restrict the number of locals at the hotel.

**Onyango:** Our hotel is open to every class of human being. It is only that when our tour operators have more guests, we caution our reservations to be careful not to

accept local bookings. But if the bookings are not that impressive, the hotel is very much open to anybody.

From the above comment it is apparent that locals are discriminated against at the hotels, yet the manager does not see the discrimination that exists at his hotel. This is obvious from the fact that he says that his hotel is open to anybody and yet, when they have more guests they caution against local bookings. This would suggest that the locals are not the preferred guests and they only fill-in if there is excess capacity; the real guests are the tourists.

## Values

Tourism changes value systems in tourism destinations. Mathieson and Wall (1982) state that in locations where contacts between hosts and guests are more continuous or permanent, changes to the norms, values and standards of hosts may occur and may be passed on to subsequent generations. The locals feel that tourism has resulted in decreased morality in Malindi. Of interest is the fact that residents now tolerate misbehavior from the locals because they have internalized these behaviors as an inevitable by-product of tourism. Examples of immoral behavior include prostitution, sex tourism, consumption of drugs and related behaviors. Kibicho (2005) has shown a significant relationship between tourism and the growth of the sex trade in Kenya's coastal region.

## Beach

An interesting finding of this research is that the beach has been redefined by the locals. Most locals do not go swimming at the beach because they do not want to witness immoral behaviors. What was particularly interesting was the fact that nudity by the tourists was somewhat accepted, but nudity by the locals was considered abhorrent.

**Rafiki (male):** Okay, during our days, before tourism played a major role in Malindi, you never used to see our local children, local boys and local girls, mothers and fathers, local girls, walking with bras and their bikinis. Okay for instance, this has not been accepted. ....I cannot take my mother-in-law to a beach whereby ladies are with only bikinis and bras. She will not be able to appreciate that. But things have changed now, you can see...that is the way of life because traditionally it's not been this way.

This comment is surprising since some of the tribes in this area have had topless traditional dresses. It is important to note that in-laws are treated with the utmost

respect, especially mothers-in-law and fathers-in-law and exposing them to 'nudity' would be disrespectful.

The beach is an important "contact zone" of the locals and tourists. Pratt has defined "contact zones" as "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination or subordination" (Pratt, 1992). There is definitely culture clash at the beach as evidenced by the comments of Rafiki, who notes that traditionally people did not walk with bikinis and bras. The change in the definition of the beach can be understood by examining the "social relationship dimension" of consumption patterns. Firat (1977) notes that the social relationships that a consumer has with other consumers during the act of consumption can range from individual to collective consumption. Therefore, in the past when people went to the beach, there were particular modes of dress that had to be adhered to in order for individuals to collectively consume the beach. In the absence of these norms, the beach has been redefined because the relationship with the other consumers as well as the consumption object has changed.

Overall, the beach is no longer considered a place to relax and swim, but has been redefined to a commercial space. The commercial activities evident at the beach range from the selling of drugs, curios and other merchandise. Beach boys set up their merchandise every morning and they try to sell these products to tourists, as well as locals. The locals resent this intrusion into their relaxation time since they are familiar with other places to obtain the merchandise that is on display at the beach. Informants expressed how this redefinition of the beach has resulted in young people dropping out of school in order to engage in commercial activities at the beach.

**Bashiri:** why would anybody want to go to school the whole day when he can make 100 shillings a day from selling bhang (bhang is marijuana) on the beach.

Onyango summarized the overall impact of tourism on children, their education and future prospects:

It affects mostly the locals, the young ones, you find that they don't want even to go to school, the young ones, go to the beach as beach boys this whatever. Tourism it has its advantages and disadvantages, now you find even the kids, they don't want to go to school. Yeah because we have this, I don't know beach boys and beach women. They go there with their young kids when they are still breast feeding them. This kid grew up at the beach. If you tell him about the school after he has grown up a bit to understand about tourism, he will never want to go to school. They start learning these foreign languages like say French and Italian, and then they start following Wazungu (Whites) at the beach. They start selling these curios at the beach. They don't want to go to school. So, this one affects the locals mostly.



Similarly, Bashiri (*entrepreneur*) said that the easy money from tourism really impacted the education of young people in Malindi.

They drop out of school, some run away from school just to go around to see the tourists and get some money out of them. And they end up stealing, those kind of things. The other things are the drugs." "let me tell you so many primary school leavers (elementary school dropouts), are around as beach boys because they like that easy money that they get from the tourists.

These findings are consistent with other researchers who have found that tourism resulted in drug addiction, crime and organized crime (Tosun, 2002).

## Prostitution

In Malindi there is a clearly developed sex tourism industry (Kibicho, 2005). Despite the HIV/AIDS epidemic, tourists and locals still engage in commercial sexual activity. Speaking about the development of sex tourism in Malindi, Wambugu (hotel manager) had the following to say:

Now, I don't want to touch on, coz this is not, I don't think so, it has happened and so let us face it, sex tourism. It is there. There are some foreigners who just come to have sex.

In a study in Thailand, Belk et al. (1998) showed that tourists frequent certain destinations for sex tourism despite the threat of AIDS. Morals have been so eroded in Malindi that locals have come to accept the existence of prostitution. In fact, in some cases, informants spoke about the economic benefits of prostitution. The comments of Musyoki (*beach boy*) show the tolerance for prostitution in Malindi.

Morality in general has been compromised coz you see like in Malindi lately the local community has kind of tried to institutionalize some of these evils. You know like in Malindi, prostitution is not in the public eye, it is not anything bad as such. It does not have that stigma it used to have some time back. Of course owing to its economic benefit, coz I understand most of these people are well placed financially, coz most of the nice houses we have in Malindi are owned by one-time prostitutes. Belk et al. (1998) suggest that while the Thai government has tried to reduce prostitution that this has had little impact "one reason is the economic incentive for prostitution, which benefits not only prostitutes and their poor village families, but various business people, pimps, police, military and government officials as well" (Belk et al., 1998). Additionally, Belk et al. (1998) found that the stigma of prostitution is slowly disappearing in Thailand and that parents were proud of their daughters for becoming prostitutes. This was attributed to the material

gains that these daughters were able to provide to their families. Our study of Malindi also demonstrates that prostitution has become less stigmatized because of the economic benefits to the participants. Individuals have come to accept prostitution as a by-product of tourism (Kibicho, 2005). This has happened in other regions of the world as well. In a New York Times article, Cauvin states, "spurred by the growing number of visitors inquiring about Cape Town's thriving illegal sex trade, the tourism manager here has begun talking not about stamping out prostitution, but about helping tourists find safe sex by identifying brothels that are well run" (Cauvin, 1999).

In summary, the erosion of cultural values can be directly linked to the economic empowerment of the locals. In the case of prostitution, the participants see the economic benefits to be attained, and as stated elsewhere, drug trafficking has bigger short-term payoffs than going to school in order to attain a clerical position.

## How locals navigate the new consumption environment

Clearly, the consumption environment of Malindi residents is impacted by tourism. Indeed, the changes to the consumption environment result in some unanticipated stresses for the hosts thereby necessitating the need to develop appropriate coping mechanisms. We utilize Duhachek's (2005) definition of coping to illustrate the coping mechanisms that have been adopted by the residents of Malindi. Duhachek (2005) defines the construct of coping in consumption as "a set of cognitive and behavioral processes initiated by consumers in response to emotionally arousing, stress inducing interactions with the environment aimed at bringing forth more desirable emotional states and reduced levels of stress" (Duhachek, 2005). In general, coping has been conceptualized as problem focused or emotion- focused (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Duhachek (2005) defines eight dimensions of coping factors: 1) Action coping, which is direct, objective attempts to manage a source of stress. 2) Rational thinking, defined as deliberate attempts to prevent subjective emotions from directing behavior. 3) Emotional support –seeking coping, defined as attempts to marshal social resources to improve one's emotional and/or mental state. 4) Emotional support seeking, instrumental, defined as attempts to marshal social resources to take action towards ameliorating a stressor. 5) Positive thinking strategies, defined as attempts to psychologically reconstruct a source of stress in order to make it more tolerable. 6) Avoidance, defined as attempts to create psychic or physical distance between one-self and a stressor. 7) Emotional venting coping, defined as attempts to recognize and express one's emotions. 8) Denial coping, defined as attempts to completely close off oneself mentally from a source of

stress. These dimensions have been found to be sufficiently abstract and generalizable to other coping contexts. Therefore, we adopt some of Duhachek's categories to illuminate the coping behaviors that have been adopted by residents of Malindi. In general, the informants were found to engage in active coping behaviors as well as avoidance coping behaviors.

### **Active coping - Positive thinking**

Duhachek defines positive thinking strategies as "attempts to psychologically reconstruct a source of stress in order to make it more tolerable. Positive thinking is coping marked by efforts to reconstruct stressors so that they are less damaging. The consumer tries to look on the bright side of things" (Duhachek, 2005). Overall prices of goods and services in Malindi are very expensive. Informants have accepted the nature of these prices and have learned to sacrifice in some areas in order to survive. The locals have also accepted the existence of dual prices in Malindi. They have internalized the dual pricing mechanisms and expect to pay the local price on goods and services. Consequently, when locals go shopping, they usually bargain very hard in order to get a price reduction since they are not tourists. While the residents experience increased prices due to tourism, they are able to cope with higher prices because they pay non-tourists rates. Hence even though the prices are higher in Malindi than in other non-tourists location, the locals can relieve their stress by using positive thinking to illustrate that at least they are not paying the tourists rates.

### **Active coping - Rational thinking**

Informants were also found to utilize rational thinking as a way to cope with the changes to their consumption environment. Duhachek suggests that "this form of coping is defined as deliberate attempts to prevent subjective emotions from directing behavior. Consumers attempting to cope by being rational are trying to control their feelings" (Duhachek, 2005). For example, by using rational thinking, the informants noted that one would not go to get the expensive taxis that were mainly for the tourists while there were "junk" or cheap taxis available for the mwananchi (that is, citizens). This would seem to suggest that the residents are making rational economic choices, yet this rational thinking begs the question of why the locals are relegated to only the cheap and junk taxis. However, the informants cope with these questions by using rational economic thinking.

### **Avoidance coping - avoidance**

Duhachek states "the coping behavior of avoidance is defined as attempts to create psychic and physical distance between oneself and a stressor. The person

coping using avoidance tries to take their mind off the problem and distracts themselves by doing other things" (Duhachek, 2005). In Malindi there are many restaurants that cater to the tourists. These restaurants sometimes advertise in languages that are foreign to the residents of Malindi. Because of this type of explicit restriction, the locals indicated that they did not patronize these restaurants since they did not understand the restaurant's offerings. The locals therefore discount the existence of these restaurants by avoiding them all together. Also, in instances where the local food has become very expensive, the locals do not consume the food.

### **Avoidance coping – denial**

Denial has been defined as "attempts to completely close off oneself mentally from a source of stress. Denial consists of complete abnegation of stressors so that their negative effects on the consumer are reduced" (Duhachek, 2005). While there were no direct statements of denial (e.g., we have no sex industry in Malindi), the locals' behaviors went further than simple avoidance. For example, from the informants' perspective, there is increased immorality and hawking at the beach. Therefore, the majority of the locals have stopped going to the beach to swim and to relax. As such, the locals not only deny the existence of the beach for entertainment at a psychological level, but they also manifest this denial through their physical absence from the beach for relaxation.

### **Possible praxis and the future**

Murray and Ozanne (1991) and Murray et al. (1994) have argued for action oriented programs of research that aim to improve society and the lives of individual consumers. Murray and Ozanne (1991) argue that "social problems often result from groups in society being constrained by social structures and processes that they themselves construct and maintain" (1991, p. 129), although perhaps without a clear understanding of their own contribution.

The problem of concern is a trajectory of tourism development that leaves in its wake a qualitatively inferior consumption environment as viewed by the local inhabitants. The trajectory, having already been traced by Butler (1980), eventually holds the demise of the very thing it once offered to the tourist: experience of the other. With this multifaceted destruction comes some temporary improvement in economic standing for a select few. The dialectic contradiction is obvious - tourism development of the kind found in Malindi, Kenya is self-destructive in the many ways that this term may be interpreted. This has been recognized by the informants in this study. What then are the alternative paths and how can they be recognized as such?

Breaking the nexus between self sustaining individual micro behaviors and the accepted macro socio-behavioral outcomes now occurring requires that locals are empowered in their individual choices. Empowerment must come from individuals seeing how their behaviors contribute to the whole and in their vision to imagine an alternative tourism trajectory. At the individual level, empowerment will stem from engaging the consumption environment rather than disengaging from the environment. This engagement can take the form of individuals in Malindi reclaiming the beach. They can reclaim the beach by going there to swim and to relax. The reclaiming of the beach as a place of fun and enjoyment might enable the residents to refashion the beach as a place for this type of activity rather than as a commercial space for the sale of merchandise and drug trafficking. Further citizens can take action by petitioning the Kenyan government to better police the drug -trafficking, prostitution and the non-attendance of schools by young children. Through actions such as these, the residents of Malindi can begin to reverse these negative social impacts.

In addition to these types of individual actions, the Kenyan government must take the necessary action to enable tourism to develop in a different way. For example the government can require all tourists' hotels and restaurants to have translated versions of their menus and billboards in order to cater to the tourists as well as the local people. Further, the Kenyan Tourism Board and the Ministry of Tourism should strive to educate the tour operators, the hotels and other tourism providers about their role in mitigating the effects of tourism on the residents of Malindi. Public policy combined with private citizen actions will result in the development of tourism that minimizes the impacts identified in this research. Perhaps one of the most disturbing findings of this study was the acceptance of a changing moral fabric. In particular, the view that degradation of local moral codes of behavior was inevitable and could not be resisted. One possible emancipatory outcome of this study might indeed be a change in the view of the locals that degradation of local moral codes of behavior is not inevitable and could instead be resisted. It should also be noted that these changes, while associated with tourism in this study, have many sources and are decidedly complex.

Cornwell and Drennan (2004) have recently argued that market structures and "dark side" behaviors emanating from them should be a focus of cross-cultural consumer behavior research. Clearly, additional research on tourism development such as that found in Malindi, Kenya would respond to this call and potentially provide the opportunity for true praxis. It is expected that publication of this paper and its dissemination is a first step to support change.

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