

Research Hypothesis

Tourism development has socio-cultural benefits for the residents of Rotorua.

Analysis of the findings:

The cultural benefits ... the Māori are able to promote and preserve their culture, practices and beliefs, Māoritanga; and international tourists will be able to learn and experience Manaakitanga while they are in Rotorua.

While the socio-cultural benefits were acknowledged there was conflicting responses to questions relating to the direct impacts of tourism... The data presented in graph 4 clearly shows that 28% of respondents indicated that they were adversely affected by tourism. This anomaly made it necessary to identify the different perspectives of the respondents which led me to examine the data presented by each respondent rather than each question (1).

The people employed in the tourism industry responded the most positively to the other question relating to the socio-cultural benefits...

Question 7 focused directly on the effects of the tourism industry on the residents... Due to estimates of 20% of residents being directly employed in the tourism industry and a further 5% indirectly employed, interaction between the tourism industry (including the tourists) will occur daily for many residents in the district... The analysis does not differentiate between the positive and negative effects on individual respondents and requires further analysis to more convincingly answer the hypothesis. The findings clearly highlight the polarity between different occupations and the perception of tourism impacts on individuals based on occupation (2)...

Further analysis of the comments made by respondents will highlight the socio-cultural benefits and costs due to tourism development. For example, respondent N°7 answered.... Also secondary evidence of Council developments (information involving community based activities and public projects) have been collected from the Rotorua District Library and the District Council. Within the District plan there are predictions (3) of inflation, rates ...schemes to improve lake quality, roading and other aspects of infrastructure ... These are examples of sustainable development for both residents and the tourism industry.

Evaluation of the research process

The hypothesis... is clear and concise and allowed me to develop appropriate research methods to investigate the socio-cultural effects of tourism development. The data collection methods including... resulted in sufficient valid evidence to accept the hypothesis. Thorough planning and pre fieldwork research gave a clear understanding of the data which was available and the methods which were realistically achievable in the time available...(4)

One variable not considered in the planning was that we were in Rotorua in an 'off-peak' time, which may not have had a significant impact on my results as the focus was benefits of tourism development, but perceptions may have been different... If I were to investigate

short term affects caused by tourism development, a holiday weekend would be the most appropriate time to conduct the research... (5)

The questionnaire provided a range of relevant data that could be clearly displayed and interpreted....The time of day and week did influence this data...

Alternate methods could be conducting other geographic research processes. For example, a people count to highlight whether congestion of pedestrian traffic is an issue for certain areas in the CBD, and if there were differences in density in mall entrances compared with in/outside the mall. This is provided evidence to further validate the resident responses relating to their impression of the impacts...(6)

Other alternate methods include spatial representation of the CBD. This would involve sketching a section of Tutanekai Street and grouping certain stores or businesses into whether their target market is locals or tourist. This would highlight whether the CBD is really meeting the needs of the residents. This data could be presented using a choropleth technique or précis sketch. Although these diagrams are not accurate representations, it is a spatial representation of the facilities available for residents (7).