

Tourism for Poverty Alleviation

Issues and Debates in the Global South

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Introduction

Tourism has become a large-scale socio-economic activity which has a major capacity to influence the lives of numerous people around the globe. Various policy discussions have strongly emphasized the ability and prospects of the tourism industry to contribute towards the global scale goals and challenges such as sustainability and poverty alleviation (UNWTO, 2006; World Bank, 2012). In this respect, the recently initiated United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN's SDGs) have been evaluated from the tourism industry's perspective and how the industry could contribute to them and especially poverty alleviation (see Hughes and Scheyvens, 2016). In academic research the nexus between tourism and poverty alleviation has also been under increasing interest and examination (Goodwin, 2009; Scheyvens, 2011; Saarinen et al., 2013; Hampton et al., 2018). The academic interest has its origins in a traditional tourism research focus aiming to analyse the developmental capacity and contributions of the industry, especially in peripheral regions and the global South (Turner and Ash, 1975; De Kadt, 1979; Britton, 1991) with the current special emphasis on the roles and needs of the poor in tourism development (see Holden, 2013; Saarinen et al., 2017).

In contrast to policy discussions, however, there is a considerable amount of hesitation, doubts and criticisms in academia concerning the capacity and willingness of the global tourism industry to meet these high expectations. Critical key questions are related to the issues of whether the tourism industry can contribute significantly to the lives and well-being of the poor and why this private-sector-driven industry would have an 'ethical commitment to ensuring that their businesses contribute to poverty-alleviation' (Scheyvens, 2009: 193). Sinclair (1998) has also stated that the economic contributions of tourism should eventually be placed in an equation consisting of both the benefits and costs of tourism-related development. However, in spite of the challenges and uncertainties and risks in managing the costs and benefits of global tourism locally, tourism development is increasingly seen as a promising tool for poverty alleviation (Mitchell and Ashley, 2010; Spenceley and Meyer, 2016). This is especially the case in the global South where tourism has become a key target for governments, regions and transnational policy-makers searching for economic and social development and employment creation avenues (Telfer and Sharpley, 2007; Holden, 2013). This chapter introduces the key issues and contexts in which the tourism industry operates with the poverty alleviation goals. First, the key concept of pro-poor tourism (PPT) is briefly overviewed as it reflects the emergence of poverty alleviation aims in responsible tourism discussions. After that the chapter turns to tourism and poverty alleviation issues in rural and urban contexts. Finally, instead of positioning the poor only as objects of and recipients in tourism operating in rural and urban environments, the chapter discusses the poor as tourists with a specific active agency in a tourism system.

Pro-Poor Tourism

The key concept in tourism and poverty alleviation studies and policies has been PPT (Scheyvens, 2011). According to Goodwin (2009: 90), the idea originates from the governmental policy reorientation in the UK in the late 1990s with emphasis on supporting economic growth which benefits the poor. PPT was a specific application of 'pro-poor growth' (Mitchell and Ashley, 2010) aiming 'to secure benefits for the economically poor living with

the impacts of international and domestic tourism' (Goodwin, 2009: 90). Thus, PPT focuses on the creation of net benefits for the poor, and these benefits may go beyond the economic and include social, environmental and cultural issues (Ashley and Roe, 2002; Meyer, 2008).

In addition to general pro-poor growth thinking, the ideological origins of PPT are linked to responsible tourism. It refers to tourism with a focus on the ethical and moral responsibility of those engaged in tourism operations, namely tourists and entrepreneurs (Blackstock et al., 2008). Hence, there is an assumed market context for responsibility, and recently burgeoned interest on corporate social responsibility (CSR) in tourism, for example, can be seen as an indication of this market for responsibility. In general, CSR principles and practices refer to the private sector's interests in responding to externally (and/or internally) created pressures and motivated ethical obligations towards their operational environment (Holcomb et al., 2007). Indeed, according to Goodwin (2009: 91), 'the radicalism of the PPT approach was seeking to use main stream tourism to achieve the objective of poverty elimination'. Thus, PPT is an outcome of a private sector venture and market-oriented development strategy that aims to create net benefits for the poor.

This emphasis on the market-driven approach of utilizing the mainstream tourism industry, without clearly indicated governance targets or control mechanisms in respect of other local and global impacts of the industry, has caused criticism (Hall, 2007; Saarinen, 2016). Harrison (2008: 858), for example, has stated that PPT thinking implicitly accepts 'the neoliberal approach' in tourism development (see Scheyvens, 2009). The PPT approach does not necessarily involve a critical evaluation of power relations and control over local, natural and/or cultural resources, for example. From the PPT perspective the success requires 'engagement with the mainstream industry' and it is measured based on how 'tourism can benefit the poor' (Goodwin, 2009: 93). Obviously, this requires a solid operationalization of the understanding of who the poor are and what poverty means in different socio-spatial contexts. This has been a major challenge in PPT research and (tourism) development studies, in general (see Addison et al., 2009; Mitchell and Ashley, 2010; Scheyvens, 2011).

Tourism and Rural Poverty

'Poverty is not only widespread in rural areas, but most poverty is rural'. Ashley and Maxwell (2001: 395)

Tackling the challenges of rural poverty is one of the most important policy issues concerning the achievement of the UN's SDGs by 2030, which aim at reducing inequalities between and within countries, and at promoting the sustainable use of ecosystems and resources. Several scholars maintain that livelihood diversification in terms of expanding off-farm activities represents the key policy challenge for rural households in order for them to escape from poverty (Rogerson, 2012; Adiyia et al., 2017a). Maximizing the opportunities around tourism development in rural regions is one option for non-farm livelihood diversification in several parts of the global South (Scheyvens, 2011; Spenceley and Meyer, 2012). In particular, tourism as a sectoral driver for rural local development has attracted increased attention across the region of sub-Saharan Africa, which must be the global frontline for initiatives around poverty reduction (Mitchell and Ashley, 2010; Saarinen and Rogerson, 2014).

The most distinctive feature of debates around tourism and local development impacts in rural areas of the global South is the sector's potential to be a driver for pro-poor development and specifically pro-poor rural development (Mitchell and Ashley, 2010; Rogerson, 2012, 2014a; Hall and Zapata Campos, 2014), which are not necessarily representing PPT. Several international development organizations, including the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), advocate the role of tourism in poverty reduction and towards attaining UN's SDGs (Saarinen, 2018; Scheyvens, 2018) and its predecessor Millennium Development Goals (Saarinen et al., 2013). The transformative role that tourism potentially can play in local economies and societies of sub-Saharan Africa is highlighted by the World Bank (2012), which asserts that as tourism can empower women, young people and marginalized populations it therefore is a powerful potential vehicle for poverty alleviation (Christie et al., 2013). Most recently, the UN's Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has

endorsed the role that tourism can play in Africa's development processes, contending that within the appropriate policy context it can be an engine for inclusive growth and economic development and that it, at the very least, can complement other rural development strategies which are targeted at fostering economic diversification and structural transformation (UNCTAD, 2017).

Since the late 2000s, a substantial amount of tourism scholarship has explored aspects of the impacts of tourism development for rural communities (see Mitchell and Ashley, 2010; Rogerson, 2012). Issues of concern have encompassed, inter alia, community development impacts, employment implications, the empowerment of women and youth, and perhaps most importantly its local economic development implications, including for rural poverty alleviation (Holden, 2013; Lenao and Saarinen, 2015). From several investigations in the global South, Mitchell (2010: 3) argues that there is 'mounting empirical evidence [which] shows that tourism can transfer significant benefits to local economies and communities around tourist destinations'. The argument is simply that tourism embodies the capacity to generate incomes and livelihoods, geographically spread income opportunities and consequently exert potentially catalytic spillover effects for poverty reduction (UNCTAD, 2017). This has resulted in numerous community-based tourism projects supported by community-based natural resource management programmes in the global South (Blaikie, 2006), which include both success stories and socio-economic disappointments (see Blackstock, 2005; Lapeyre, 2011; Kavita and Saarinen, 2016).

Value chain analysis (VCA) has been applied widely to unpack the local development potential of tourism in rural areas (Mitchell, 2012; Spenceley and Meyer, 2016). In this respect, Mitchell and Ashley (2010) have identified three critical pathways in VCA by which the benefits of tourism are transmitted to the poor: direct effects, secondary effects and dynamic effects. Essentially, the direct effects involve labour and non-labour income in which the former refers to individual earnings while the latter relates to community income. In addition, the direct effects include non-financial elements such as improved infrastructure which can benefit and support other (non-tourism) livelihoods at the local scale. The secondary effects of tourism for

the poor are based on indirect earnings from non-tourism sectors which are linked to tourist activities. Further, the so-called induced impacts, such as tourism workers' consumption based on their earnings in local economies, can represent secondary effects to the poor (depending on the target of income spending). Finally, the dynamic effects are further significant pathways to poverty reduction and incorporate long-term shifts in the local economy in terms of trajectories of growth such as expanded entrepreneurial motivations and skills enhancement. Indeed, recent work undertaken in Uganda indicates how tourism can be a stimulus for local entrepreneurship and small enterprise development albeit without inducing major skills leakages (Adiyia et al., 2017b).

In terms of these three pathways, it is stressed that the economic contribution of secondary effects can be as much as between 60 to 80 per cent of the primary effects (Mitchell and Ashley, 2010). In addition, there is mounting evidence that the secondary effects can be more important in spatially diffusing the impacts of tourism beyond the destination and in particular 'reaching-out' to impact poorer households (Adiyia et al., 2014; Rogerson, 2014a). Among others, Daly and Gereffi (2017: 20) stress that underdeveloped linkages between tourism and sectors such as agriculture and construction can limit local economic impacts as well as potentially constrain tourism development. By contrast, the encouragement of strong and thick networks of local linkages can trigger a multiplier effect that can contribute towards a broader-based or inclusive economic benefit at national level as well as expand local job opportunities and reduce poverty in rural areas. In those countries where tourism is an important potential stimulus for rural development the retention within a local economy of revenue generated by tourism is a critical policy issue for national and local economic development (UNCTAD, 2017).

Accordingly, the building of linkages between tourism establishments and local enterprises in, for example, agriculture or construction becomes one of the central tenets or action points of the PPT practitioners (Lacher and Nepal, 2010; Rogerson, 2012, 2014a; Rylance and Spenceley, 2017). This said, in many African countries there is evidence that tourism linkages remain weak and under-exploited for their potential impact on rural poverty

reduction (UNCTAD, 2017). For example, the governance structure of cultural tourism in Uganda essentially excludes local communities from accessing value chains as tour operators seek to confine international tourists within a ‘tourism bubble’ (Adiyia et al., 2015). According to Lee et al. (2015), in the Seychelles a combination of fiscal and economic policy reforms has severely impacted local tourism supply chains such that there appears little opportunity for frugal innovation to exist or for local agricultural producers to exploit forward linkages. Arguably, the poor confront several barriers to expanding their involvement in the participation in the economies of growing tourism destinations, most importantly lack of capital, education and business skills (Mitchell and Ashley, 2010).

Linkage formation is impacted by an array of complex and often interacting mechanisms which retard local enterprise establishment or growth. Actual levels of leakage are associated with the presence/absence of local capacity to furnish necessary skills, food and other supplies which are demanded by tourism enterprises (Scheyvens, 2011; Rogerson, 2012). Often the inability to link local economic activities to rural poverty alleviation is an outcome of the fact that destinations are usually ‘unable to supply the tourism industry with the goods it needs to sustain itself at a competitive price’ (Lacher and Nepal, 2010: 82). In terms of tourism-agriculture linkages, it has been demonstrated that the establishment or maintenance of local linkages has failed or been constrained by an array of demand-, supply-, marketing- and institutional-related factors which have been documented in a range of investigations (Torres and Momsen, 2004; Rogerson, 2012, 2014a; Rogerson and Rogerson, 2014; Butler and Rogerson, 2016). The establishment and consolidation of local economic linkages is necessary, however, for maximizing tourism’s potential for achieving broadly based patterns of economic and social development or inclusive growth (Scheyvens, 2011; Saarinen and Lenao, 2014; Butler and Rogerson, 2016). A service-oriented approach to local food supply chains is emerging as a promising model for advancing linkage formation and strengthening between local agriculture and tourism establishments (Thomas-Francois et al., 2016). Overall, resolving the challenges of strengthening tourism-poverty linkages is critical for livelihood

diversification and addressing rural poverty and ultimately for the extent to which tourism can be a vehicle for transformative and inclusive growth across the global South (UNCTAD, 2017).

Poverty as Tourist Attraction

A critical aspect in tourism and poverty discussions has been the issue that the intensified connections between tourism and socio-economically marginalized people can frame the poor as tourist attractions (Frenzel et al., 2015). While tourism may not necessarily (aim to) maintain poverty per se, it uses and commodifies it in tourist products. This is especially the case with urban poverty. Indeed, since the late 1990s, visits to slums or ghettos have emerged as a 'new' form of tourism which is mainly consumed or 'performed' by tourists from the global North within poverty areas of cities in the global South (Steinbrink et al., 2012; Frenzel and Koens, 2016). As observed by Dovey and King (2012), international tourists have developed 'a taste for slums'. Increasingly urban poverty tours are a tourism product with visits to slums a 'must do' item on the bucket list of Western tourists (Freire-Medeiros, 2013; Frenzel et al., 2015). This said, it is acknowledged that while slum tourism in the global South emerged only relatively recently, there is a long-established tradition in the global North of a tourist gaze on urban poverty and slums (Steinbrink, 2012; Frenzel, 2016). Of interest is the re-emergence of slum tourism in parts of the global North with the tourist gaze expanded to a range of stigmatized neighbourhoods in Northern cities including homeless tent cities and even refugee camps (Burgold, 2014).

At its core, however, slum tourism represents the touristic valorization of poverty-stricken urban areas of the global South (Steinbrink et al., 2012; Frenzel, 2016). Essentially, the activity of slum tourism 'describes organized tours to deprived areas' (Frenzel, 2012: 49). In the growth of global slum tourism destinations, the relationship between tourism and poverty is reconfigured as tourism is no longer simply a vehicle to combat poverty, but poverty now becomes an attractor for tourists (Frenzel et al., 2015). The origins of the modern phenomenon of slum tourism usually are situated in the 1990s social justice movements of Brazil and South

Africa. Following its successful establishment in these countries, it subsequently has spread and burgeoned into a highly popular practice for tourists looking for experiences off the so-called 'beaten track' in several other destinations (Freire-Medeiros, 2009; Frenzel et al., 2012; Frenzel, 2016). The geographical travels of slum tourism have witnessed its appearance in several other countries of the global South, including Egypt, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico and Namibia (Frenzel et al., 2015; Frenzel and Koens, 2016). Recent estimates by Frenzel (2016: 1) point to an annual volume of over 1 million slum tourists that visit 'a township, a favela or slum in some part of the world'. Slum tourism with visitation to areas of urban poverty now is a global trend albeit manifesting distinct local forms (Frisch, 2017).

Focusing on the global South, tour groups of (mainly) international tourists started to visit the favelas or the apartheid-engineered spaces of townships in order to observe and 'experience' people living in situations of poverty (Rolfes 2010; Frenzel, 2013). In addition, beyond a three- or four-hour guided tour of slums, tourists in these poverty areas have opportunities to stay overnight in a range of small-scale accommodation establishments, experience local restaurants, bars and occasionally even participate in festivals or concerts. Arguably, as noted by Frenzel (2016: 98), the growth of slum tourism is 'putting slums on the map, sometimes literally'. Indeed, while a place like Soweto was formerly known mainly for its role in the anti-apartheid struggle, it is currently also associated with music and wine festivals, cycling tours, local markets by fashion designers and even bungee jumping. On a global scale the largest numbers of slum tourists remain concentrated in touring South Africa's townships or the favelas of Brazil. Dharavi in Mumbai – made famous by the film *Slumdog Millionaire* – is another highly significant destination for international slum tours (Diekmann, 2012; Dyson, 2012). Therefore, as Frenzel et al. (2015: 237–8) record, slum tourism is 'a mass tourism phenomenon occurring only in few destinations and a niche form in a growing number of other destinations'.

Burgold et al. (2013: 101) point out that while 'research on slum tourism began to develop only 10 years ago [early 2000s], it has already become an established field'. Clearly, slum tourism is a controversial research theme and is consolidating in international tourism

scholarship with contributions about a range of destinations (Rolfes, 2010; Dovey and King, 2012; Dyson, 2012; Frenzel and Koens, 2012; Magio, 2012; Steinbrink et al., 2012; Frenzel, 2013, 2016; Aseye et al. 2015; Frenzel et al., 2015; Holst, 2015; LeBaron, 2015; Frisch, 2017). As Frenzel et al. (2015) reveal, slum tourism is a new, dynamic and growing field of scholarship. The earliest investigations were case studies of the development and workings of township tourism in South Africa, of favela tourism in Brazil and of similar activities in India (Rogerson, 2004; Freire-Medeiros, 2009; Dyson, 2012). In particular, scholarly attention centred on whether this form of tourism exerts pro-poor impacts and therefore contributes to improve the poverty situation in slum areas (Rogerson, 2008; Booyens, 2010; George and Booyens, 2014). Frenzel (2013: 117) makes clear that ‘slum tourism promoters, tour providers as well as tourists claim that this form of tourism contributes to development in slums by creating a variety of potential sources of income and other non-material benefits’. With a maturation of international research around slum tourism there has appeared a widening of the spatial extent of slum tourism destinations as well as a broadening of the themes investigated in slum tourism scholarship (Steinbrink, 2012; Frenzel and Koens, 2016; Frisch, 2017).

In the mounting corpus of writings around it, the practice of visiting slum areas is not only viewed as a specific type of tourism ‘but as empirical phenomena that bridge a number of interdisciplinary concerns ranging from international development, political activism, mobility studies to urban regeneration’ (Holst et al., 2017: 1). Regarding urban development, the case of Rio de Janeiro stands out because it reveals the most sophisticated attempt at adapting and adopting tourist valorization of the favela in relation to wider planning goals. Frenzel (2016: 124) stresses that favela tourism has consolidated as ‘part of an urban policy aiming at the pacification and securitization of the favelas, also leading to sharp rises in real estate value and processes of displacement of residents’. In the example of South Africa, also, the promotion of township tourism has been incorporated more broadly into programming for tourism-driven place-based economic development in the country’s major cities (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2017). Of interest, however, is that township tourism has received relatively little policy interest within the most recent initiatives for township economic regeneration, which are focused more

upon industrial development. Nevertheless, as a whole, Frenzel (2016: 6) contends that slum tourism 'matters' for scholars and policy-makers alike, not least because 'it offers an important example of the power of tourism to shape discourses, alter perceptions and make worlds'.

Intense controversy has been raised around the moral, economic and social implications of slum tourism (Steinbrink et al., 2012; Frenzel et al., 2015; LeBaron, 2015). Overall, it is observed that slum tourism is 'sometimes cast as a laboratory where the relationships and interactions between the global North and South appear as micro-sociological encounters framed by the apparent concern over inequality' (Holst et al., 2017: 1). Steinbrink (2012), Frenzel (2016) and Holst et al. (2017) show slum tourism as embedded in post-colonial patterns of discourse in which 'North' and 'South' are specifically reproduced in practices of Othering. Indeed, sometimes local inhabitants can imagine themselves as being a 'wildlife' when 'big safe high-sprung safari vehicles' with protective bars and full of camera holding customers from the North are 'driving through the township' (see Saarinen, 2010: 719).

It is obvious that different narratives surround slum tourism alternatively as philanthropic travel or the organized exploitation of poverty. It is contended that by turning people's lives and miseries into a spectacle slum tours are inherently exploitative (Magio, 2012; Frenzel, 2016). For Dovey (2015: 8), the rise of slum tourism signals that 'urban informality can be picturesque with elements of nostalgia and a quest for authenticity' and is accompanied by 'elements of the sublime, the shock of the real, a spectacle of hyper-intensive urbanity and an uneasy voyeurism'. Iqani (2016) explores how poverty is narrated as a natural feature of slum tours in Cape Town, Mumbai and Rio de Janeiro, and low-income communities and their lifestyles are commodified for and by the gaze of Western visitors as an 'authentic' adventure experience. Frenzel (2016: 173) spotlights concerns that activists have about slum tourism in terms of 'voyeurism and questions about the ethics of opening slums to the tourist gaze, when this gaze might be seeking dark enjoyment'. Often local residents express particular frustrations about the commercialization of poverty, especially when on occasions tourists intrude on their privacy, and at other times the limited freedom to interact with tourists is criticized. It is suggested that core barriers to interaction encompass 'the language barrier, with few residents

speaking English, and the mediating role of tour guides who may prevent interaction between residents and tourists due to time limitations or fear of tourists “tipping” the locals at their own expense’ (Frenzel et al., 2015: 247).

Beyond these moral debates the local economic impacts and benefits from slum tourism have ignited most attention from researchers. The central narrative is that the anticipated pro-poor local impacts of developing slum tourism have been elusive for impacted communities. In the case of Kibera in Nairobi, Kieti and Magio (2013) highlight residents’ concerns that notwithstanding the growth of tourism, the local economy is little changed and that the ‘real’ beneficiaries of slum tourism are non-residents. The disappointments around slum tourism exist even in cases, such as South Africa or Brazil, where visitor numbers have been (at least for certain slum destinations) impressive (Rogerson, 2008; Koens and Thomas, 2015). Essentially, the limited local benefits relate to underlying structures and geography of control of slum tourism, which result in high levels of economic leakage (Frenzel et al., 2015). External control is characteristic of the supply chain of slum tourism such that in terms of organized tours, most operators – across nearly all leading slum tourism destinations – are enterprises or actors (NGOs) who are based outside the slums. Where local entrepreneurs have established small businesses to enter the slum tourism value chain, successes have been few. At the heart of the disappointing performance of locally owned micro-enterprises are a range of factors that encompass poor product quality and oversupply of certain products, lack of trust between local entrepreneurs such that effective cooperation is limited, weak policy support by national and local governments, and above all, the existence of fundamental imbalances of power between local entrepreneurs and external intermediaries such as tour operators and travel agencies (Rogerson, 2008; Koens and Thomas, 2015, 2016).

The Poor as Tourists

Arguably, a major unexplored research theme within the rising level of scholarship around tourism and poverty is that of the poor themselves as tourists. The poor are often invisible and without agency in tourism statistics or related discussions and this oversight of the discretionary

mobilities of the poor in part is a reflection of ‘Anglo-Western centrism’ in tourism scholarship (Winter, 2009). Indeed, there remains an underlying and persistent assumption in certain tourism scholarship that the activity of tourism remains an essentially Western phenomenon and that ‘tourists’ emanate from and reside in advanced Western societies of the global North (Gladstone, 2005; Winter, 2009). As noted by Harrison (2000: 37), the tourism industry in Africa (and the global South, in general) has traditionally been developed by ‘colonialists for colonialists’.

Gladstone (2005: 16) contends that once we acknowledge poor people in the global South ‘do in fact make frequent journeys for various reasons, our concept of the relative magnitude of global tourism changes considerably’. Cohen and Cohen (2015a) emphasize that in much tourism research the mobilities within and from the world’s ‘emerging tourism regions’ as a whole are mostly ignored, especially the discretionary mobilities of the poor. In exploring these neglected mobilities a useful conceptual distinction is offered by Gladstone (2005) and by Cohen and Cohen (2015a, 2015b) between a formal and an informal sector of travel and tourism. Poor tourists occupy much of the informal sector of tourism, which is viewed as that part of the travelling public which usually does not make use of (formal) tourist-oriented means of transport or accommodation services and which in many ways represents a modification of ‘pre-modern’ forms of travel (Gladstone, 2005; Cohen and Cohen, 2015a).

Visits to friends and relatives (VFR) and pilgrimages to sacred spaces are the oldest and certainly the most important reasons for the poor to become tourists across the global South (Singh, 2004; Cohen and Cohen, 2015a, 2015b). VFR travel occupies the meeting point of debates concerning migration, mobilities and tourism in the global South. Significant flows of VFR travel must be understood in relation to urbanization and shifting migration dynamics which result in close connections between urban areas and the second rural ‘homes’ of migrants (Rogerson and Mthombeni, 2015; Rogerson, 2017). Morupisi and Mokgalo (2017) draw attention to Botswana culture which involves only a limited amount of domestic leisure travel in Botswana as opposed to regular visits back to home villages, farms and cattle posts mainly

for the purpose of visits to relatives. In South Africa large flows of VFR travel are explained in relation to the role of multi-locational households and the persistence of circulatory migration flows even after the ending of apartheid influx control restrictions. Together these shape the detailed patterns of VFR mobilities in the country between geographically stretched households as members move between rural and urban bases or 'homes' (Rogerson, 2014b, 2017). Considerable 'volumes of VFR travel are triggered by these structures with VFR flows dominated by "ordinary" or working class travellers including the country's poorest communities' (Rogerson, 2015a, 2015b).

Attendance at funerals is one special form of discretionary mobility which can be added to the category of VFR travel by the poor. Throughout much of Africa attendance at funerals is a strict social obligation on the living, a cultural norm and expectation on extended networks of relatives as well as friends of the deceased. In Ghana, Yeboah et al. (2017: 2) observe that the funeral 'is one of the traditional weekend activities on the domestic front that sends many Ghanaians to many parts of the country on a regular basis'. Elsewhere, funerals are one the drivers of the large volumes of regular VFR travel to South Africa's impoverished rural (former Bantustan) slumland areas where much of the elderly of split households spend their final years (Rogerson, 2014b, 2017).

In respect of pilgrimages, the region of South Asia is a particular focus for large-scale pilgrimage tourism which involves substantial numbers of the poor (Gladstone, 2005; Ihalanayake, 2009). In the case of India, Singh (2004: 36) estimated that pilgrimages represent as much as 80 per cent of national domestic tourism, with two-thirds of this concentrated on holy sites in only three states. In Sri Lanka, domestic tourism connected closely to religious places, festivals and activities has existed for centuries (Ihalanayake, 2009). For sub-Saharan Africa, large-scale pilgrimage tourism by the poor has been documented as occurring widely both in parts of Nigeria (Ukah, 2016; Ele, 2017) and South Africa (Rogerson, 2015b; Rogerson and Mthombeni, 2015).

Business travel is further critical motivation for the poor to be tourists. In the context of the global South, however, the character of business tourism differs markedly from the

characteristics of Northern business tourism (Rogerson, 2015c). In 2005, Timothy and Teye highlighted the activities of traders and vendors who cross borderland spaces in West Africa and yet were not enumerated as tourists. They revealed that these cross-border traders represent a 'form of business traveller that is unique to the developing world' (Timothy and Teye, 2005: 83). Different variants of cross-border trading have been documented throughout sub-Saharan Africa (Peberdy, 2007; Afrika and Ajumbo, 2012; Rogerson, 2014c; Tichaawa, 2017). Although such networks of informal cross-border trading encompass most of the African continent, they have become particularly dense in South Africa since the 1994 democratic transition and the creation of a deregulated environment for informal trading which facilitated cross-border business travel as a livelihood strategy (Peberdy and Rogerson, 2000, 2003). Indeed, Southern Africa is the region where the greatest volume of cross-border trading is recorded. It is shown that this kind of informal business tourism is dominated by poor and often survivalist entrepreneurs. Essentially what are for many Northern business scholars 'invisible tourists' – many of them women traders – emanate from several countries including Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi, with communities of cross-border informal traders travelling mainly to South Africa in order to conduct their precarious business activities (Peberdy, 2000a, 2000b; Peberdy and Crush, 2001; Peberdy and Rogerson, 2003; Rogerson, 2011, 2014b; Rogerson and Rogerson, 2015).

Informal sector business tourism is a domestic as well as a regional tourism phenomenon in Africa with cities the major axes for spatial flows. Mitchell and Ashley (2010: 8) observed that a trader from a small town or rural area 'who comes to the capital city to buy goods to take home and sell is a business tourist'. This said, until recently, an investigatory void surrounded informal sector domestic business flows in African cities. One exception is research on Maseru, Lesotho's capital city, which disclosed a vibrant informal economy of business tourism encompassing farmers and herders coming into the country's major urban area in order both to sell livestock and purchase supplies, as well as cohorts of informal shoppers, craft producers and sellers, traditional herbal vendors, and the makers and sellers of traditional Basotho weapons (Rogerson and Letsie, 2013). Tichaawa (2017) shows for urban Cameroon the

emergence of a vibrant economy of informal sector domestic business travel. This includes the groups of 'buyam-sellam' – informal shopper traders many of whom are the country's poorly educated and unemployed youth – as well as craftsmen (and women) selling indigenous artefacts (such as masks and royal stools) to hotels and curio shops in Douala and Yaounde, and a stream of farmers temporarily in the cities in order to sell in local urban markets their crops of bananas, cocoa as well as livestock (Tichaawa, 2017).

Beyond business and VFR travel, in many countries of the global South the poor are compelled to engage as need-based health tourists in order to consume healthcare that 'is either unavailable, unaffordable or of low quality in their home countries' (Mogaka et al., 2017a: 1). Sustained economic austerity measures in many low-income countries led to cutbacks in public health expenditures (Mogaka et al., 2017b). The consequences are either the collapse of or the over-burdened character of health services, which can be further stretched by a sudden health emergency such as a cholera outbreak (Mogaka et al., 2017a, 2017b). Cross-border medical care usually is secured on humanitarian grounds in the public health sector of destination countries. Ormond and Sulianti (2017) identify the phenomenon of intra-regional health travel to Thailand. In particular, they observe movements of poor rural Laotians cared for on human rights grounds at subsidized cost within already debt-burdened hospitals on the Thailand side of the border. Across much of sub-Saharan Africa, the structural context of poverty and curtailed state health spending forces segments of the population to become health tourists (Crush et al., 2012; Mogaka et al., 2017a). Crush et al. (2012) and Crush and Chikanda (2015) document the flows of 'Southern' health tourists from Lesotho in search of treatment in South Africa's public sector hospitals. Across Southern Africa, the HIV/AIDS pandemic challenges health systems and results in a large informal flow of patients to South Africa from several proximate countries seeking treatments unavailable at home. The uneven geography of health care services within countries is another catalyst for domestic movements of poor health tourists. In South Africa these are of health tourists travelling from the marginalized rural areas into the country's better-serviced urban areas in search of improved access to health facilities (Crush and Chikanda, 2015). Overall, whereas outside Africa most health tourism is 'associated

more with the elites in society, in the African context, need supersedes elitism for medical travel' (Mogaka et al., 2017b: 11).

Conclusion

The tourism industry has become an important issue for many governments, regions and policy-making institutions searching tools for socio-economic development and employment creation. Especially in the global South context, the growing tourism demand is seen as highly beneficial as evolving tourism operations could also contribute to poverty alleviation goals. In many places the tourism industry can represent the only viable economic alternative for development. Being the last resort, however, does not necessarily make the industry a sustainable or risk-free avenue for pro-poor and inclusive growth. Thus, while being prospective, instrument of tourism is not a panacea for poverty alleviation.

This chapter aimed to introduce selected issues on tourism and poverty alleviation from the perspective of the global South. Based on these discussions it is easy to agree with the general goals of PPT as aiming to create net benefits for the poorest of the poor. However, for a sustainable poverty alleviation process, there needs to be an integrated and concomitant emphasis to understand the causes and roots of poverty and related power issues operating in the global-local nexus. This call for contextuality is important and evident in the discussed poor rural communities and urban slums as targets and environments for tourism operations focusing on poverty and the poor in general. It also underlines a need to consider the aspects of equity in tourism development and poverty alleviation in future research. Thus, it is crucial to understand and rethink the role of the poor in tourism. Instead of positioning the poor solely as passive recipients of the net benefits from (global) tourism, their agency or a possibility to become subjects – not only being objects – in local development should be reconsidered.

This also applies to the poor as tourists. As noted, the poor are mostly invisible and without agency in the existing debates on tourism in the global South. However, when looking at the mobility patterns beyond 'Anglo-Western centrism' in tourism monitoring and

scholarship, the picture becomes more nuanced and versatile, and much of that tourism by the poor can be understood and characterized by the historical nature and context of poverty in present situations. This is evident in (informal) business tourism or medical tourism patterns by the poor, for example, characterized by the uneven geographies of the global South. To conclude, we concur with Zhou and Richie (2007: 120) who stated that the relationship between tourism and poverty alleviation still ‘largely remains terra incognita among tourism academics’. While there may not be a consensus on what impact tourism has had on poverty (see Mitchell and Ashley, 2010; Scheyvens, 2011), there is no doubt about the need and urgency to understand better the relationships and mechanisms between tourism and poverty alleviation in the global South.

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