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Monterrubio, C., Osorio, M. & Benítez, J. (2017) Comparing enclave tourism's socioeconomic impacts: A dependency theory approach to three state-planned resorts in Mexico. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2017.08.004>

## ABSTRACT

Based on a dependency theory approach, this study examined enclave tourism's socioeconomic impacts. A survey assessing residents' perceptions of the economic and social impacts of tourism was conducted in three state-planned destinations in Mexico. A review of the literature revealed that enclave tourism has been largely criticised as an ineffective socioeconomic development strategy on a macro level. However, the empirical evidence obtained from the survey showed that tourism brings significant benefits on a micro or personal level – a phenomenon clearly recognised by locals. At the same time, from a dependency theory perspective, the results indicate that enclave tourism reinforces unequal power relationships between state-planned resorts and locals. The associated socioeconomic costs are shaped by this type of tourism development and by the locals' economic dependence on it. Unlike previous research, this study contributes a new application of the dependency paradigm to understand more fully tourism's socioeconomic impacts on a micro rather than on a macro level.

**Keywords:** Enclave tourism; tourism impacts; local perceptions; comparative research; dependency theory; Centro Integralmente Planeado (CIP)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Enclave tourism development has taken place – and continues to occur – in many places worldwide. Particularly in developing countries, it is largely characterised by foreign investment, repatriation of tourism revenues and social and spatial regulation. Through enclave tourism strategies, developing countries thus become involved in a globalised economic system over which they have little control (Britton, 1982). Because of the predominance of foreign capital in enclave tourism, developing countries experience domination and control by the international tourism industry. Through this kind of tourism, emerging economies develop a dependence on foreign capital and international tourism flows. Enclave

tourism has, therefore, been frequently criticised as a socioeconomically unsustainable form of tourism development due to its limited economic benefits and the associated social costs for local communities (Davis & Morais, 2004; Mbaiwa, 2005; Shaw & Shaw, 1999).

The enclave tourism model has been adopted in many developing economies and remains the prevailing development model in some countries. Despite the socioeconomic importance of this model, it also encourages a dependence on foreign tourism in economically depressed areas, as well as bringing other associated costs and the likely proliferation of resort enclaves. However, except for quite specific cases in Mexico (see, for example, Brenner, 2005; López-López, Cukier & Sánchez-Crispín, 2006; Manuel-Navarrete, 2012; 2016; Torres & Momsen, 2005a; 2005b), relatively little attention has been paid to enclave tourism's socioeconomic impacts, particularly in Latin American contexts. By incorporating new empirical evidence on these impacts of enclave tourism in contexts not yet studied, a broader, worldwide understanding of this tourism phenomenon could be achieved.

Comparative studies on the socioeconomic impacts of enclave tourism can be quite useful as a way to fill this gap. Through comparative research, differences and similarities in these impacts in varied contexts can be identified. Because comparative studies help to detect underlying general processes across different contexts (Mills, 2008), they can, in turn, help to develop new conceptual or theoretical propositions in tourism impact studies. However, despite this research method's significant contributions, there still appear to be some limitations in previous attempts to carry out comparative studies of enclave tourism's impacts.

Based on a comparative methodological framework, the present study sought to analyse enclave tourism's socioeconomic impacts as perceived by residents in different local communities. To meet this objective, research was carried out on three state-planned destinations with enclavic tourism in Mexico. The interpretation and analysis of results were grounded in a dependency paradigm, which has often been used to explain dependency relationships between 'centres' and 'peripheries' on a macro level (i.e. between countries). However, its underlying propositions appear to be useful when explaining relationships at a meso and micro level, in this case, between local communities and enclave resorts and their associated impacts. This study, thus, aimed to contribute a new application of dependency theory to develop a fuller understanding of tourism's socioeconomic impacts on a micro rather than macro level.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Enclave tourism**

Enclave tourism is a well-established concept within analyses of tourism development mainly in developing countries. The concept has been broadly applied to the spatial concentration of tourism in resort areas where large numbers of tourists consume a homogenous set of products and services (Naidoo & Sharpley, 2016). Therefore, it refers to a type of tourism development featuring social and

spatial regulation of tourism-related mobilities and relationships between tourists and locals (Saarinen, 2016). Enclavic spaces tend to receive financial support from development agencies and local government organisations (Edensor, 2000). Although most of these spaces are marked by intensive foreign hotel chain participation, in some cases, this type of development is characterised by the entry of several dominant domestic business groups of the hospitality sector (Clancy, 1999). In enclave destinations, many businesses are foreign-owned, and, thus, tourist revenue is either retained or repatriated (Anderson, 2011). Foreign capital is used to create and maintain ownership of most tourism and hospitality companies, leading to a leakage of foreign exchange earnings (Brohman, 1996). Manuel-Navarrete (2016, p. 3) reports that enclave tourism spaces 'are carefully staged and designed, regulated, planned, commoditised and privatised'.

As such, enclave tourism is characterised by a minimal local economic impact, and, in some cases, this form of tourism is regarded as being socioeconomically unsustainable (Mbaiwa, 2005). According to Shaw and Shaw (1999, p.68), these 'enclaves are operated by global capital and transnational organisations through a series of spatial networks, which, unless they are strongly regulated by the local state, allow only limited economic benefits to accrue to the host communities'. Manuel-Navarrete's (2016) research integrated an analysis of historical structural patterns of segregation with the categories, canons and narratives extracted from the life stories of tourism agents. The results reveal that, through exclusionary enclave tourism, tourism business owners generate economic benefits by controlling tourism spaces and monopolising appropriations of tourism revenues. However, the cited author also argues that boundary-work practices are not solely a consequence of tourism but, instead, are historically entangled with past boundaries and their associations with practices of domination, resistance or collaboration.

The presence and operations of transnational organisations pose significant threats to small local businesses. Small and medium-sized enterprises provide the most employment in regional economies, and these firms are more likely to develop reciprocal links with other local businesses in comparison with large foreign corporations (Hall & Lew, 2009). Thus, enclavic entrepreneurial activity may reduce local businesses' significant contributions to local and regional employment and to links with other economic sectors.

Nonetheless, enclave tourism development can also lead to strategic entrepreneurial responses. Small local entrepreneurial activities – either formal or informal – may react to enclavic tourism development by both seeking opportunities and engaging in behaviours that create competitive advantages and sustain performance. This may result in a series of distinctive sales strategies whereby local sellers seek to maximise their scant opportunities. These strategies are used particularly by informal sector organisations in order to survive within the highly competitive market environments that enclavity imposes (Shaw & Shaw, 1999).

In addition, the regulation of tourist-resident interactions in enclave tourism is largely dependent on travel patterns shaped by external capital and control. In enclave tourism development, '[t]he collective nature of Fordist tourism also contributes to the relatively undifferentiated nature of mass tourists. Mass tourism consumers often demand [W]estern amenities provided in a protected "tourism bubble" (Torres, 2002, p. 91). Tourists are characteristically cut off from social contact with the local population (Edensor, 2000). These developments contain all or the great majority of facilities and services needed by tourists who have little desire or limited possibilities to leave these enclaves (Saarinen, 2016).

Thus, these tourists characteristically seldom visit other places in the countries to which they travel. This is because, through their prepaid trip, they are supplied with almost everything they might need, including accommodation, food, transportation, sporting activities, entertainment and other items (Anderson, 2011; Britton, 1982). Within enclave tourism space, tourists' performance is socially and spatially regulated. Tourists are subject to control, and their activities and movements are arranged to facilitate maximum expenditure and to keep them away from potentially offensive and uncomfortable environments (Edensor, 2000; 2001). This, of course, limits tourists' movements and reduces their spending and sociocultural interactions with locals in the destination. As a result of its limited economic and social impacts, enclave tourism has been regarded as a problem in Third World tourism development, in particular (Brohman, 1996).

Nonetheless, due to its expected socioeconomic significance for and adoption by tourism dependent economies, this form of tourism has been analysed mainly in the context of developing countries. Shaw and Shaw (1999), for example, have highlighted the emergent links and inevitable tensions between external capital and local entrepreneurship in and around different enclave resorts in Indonesia. The cited authors report that enclave tourism means that local people and informal enterprises are relegated to a marginal 'other' status, as local businesses are generally limited to peripheral locations both geographically and economically. Shaw and Shaw (1999) also found empirical evidence that enclave tourism is associated with exclusivity, external control and limited or structured interactions between tourists and locals, thereby widening social and cultural gaps between them.

In a similar vein but using the concept of sustainable development, Mbaiwa (2005) examined the expansion of enclave tourism in the Okavango Delta in Botswana. The cited study's results reveal that this form of tourism's advantages is relatively few compared with its disadvantages, having a minimal economic impact on rural development mainly because enclaves have weak links with the domestic economy. Anderson (2011) similarly explored the socioeconomic impacts of enclave tourism in Zanzibar, Tanzania. In line with previous studies, the cited author reports that enclave tourists spend more in their origin country than any other type of tourists do and enclave guests spend less in the destination versus other types of tourists, especially in terms of buying items from local businesses.

## **2.2. Perceptions of enclave tourism's impacts**

Enclave tourism's impacts have been studied mainly from a socioeconomic perspective. As tourism impact studies in general have found, local people have reported enclave tourism's socioeconomic impacts as both positive and negative. These individuals' perceptions and attitudes have, for decades, been the most accepted and established method to identify tourism's benefits and costs because local people witness changes in their everyday life and environment and they can describe their relationship to tourism (Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Dyer, Gursoy, Sharma & Carter, 2007; Getz, 1994; Husbands, 1989; Monterrubio, 2016; Pizam, 1978; Tosun, 2002; Tyrell & Spaulding, 1984; Vargas-Sánchez, Porrás-Bueno & Plaza-Mejía, 2011). At an individual level, indicating changes as positive (i.e. benefits) or negative (i.e. costs) is certainly a subjective process, but, according to the Interorganizational Committee on Guidelines and Principles for Social Impact Assessment (1995, p.16), 'some of the most important aspects of social impacts involve not [only] the physical relocation of human populations, but [also] the meanings, perceptions, or social significance of these changes.'

Assessing enclave tourism's effects through benefits and costs is a major challenge for decision makers. In most cases, taking care of certain segments may signify generate a disadvantage for others. All members of a society cannot always receive benefits from projects, and one group's benefit may become another's cost. Thus, decisions about which vulnerable communities need to become a priority for projects are hard to make, and they need to be part of social impact assessment (SIA) processes.

There is a wide consensus that potentially affected communities need to be involved in projects' SIA process. The involvement of local communities in this process, on the one hand, minimises local resistance to projects – thereby reducing potential disruption – and, on the other hand, increases the likelihood of projects' success. In addition, these communities' involvement prevents major planning disasters and associated costs (Burdge & Vanclay, 1996), which are clearly relevant benefits in enclave tourism development.

However, in many developing countries, locals are seldom involved in tourism planning processes. Tosun (2000) highlights the operational, structural and cultural limitations that local communities face when seeking to participate in tourism planning and management in developing countries. Limitations at the operational level are associated with obstacles embedded in operational procedures. These include the centralised public administration of

tourism development and the lack of co-ordination between public and private parties and of information made available to locals.

Structural limitations to community participation are associated with institutional power structures and legislative and economic systems. Structural constraints are, in particular, associated with elite domination, professionals' role in shaping tourism policies, a lack of professional expertise in managing community participation, the absence of an appropriate legal system and a deficiency of qualified human resources in the tourism sector. Other constraints are the high cost of community participation in terms of time, money and skills, and locals' lack of financial resources. Cultural constraints, in turn, arise from cultural factors such as poor people's limited capacity to respond to development effectively, as well as apathy and low levels of awareness in local communities. These constraints reflect the dominant sociopolitical, economic and cultural structures in many developing countries.

When compared with its positive impacts, enclave tourism's negative outcomes appear to dominate, especially as opposed to other forms of tourism. Because foreign capital is usually a component of enclave tourism, not surprisingly, the limited economic benefits for local communities are a major concern. The enclave tourism model generates profits for the government, transnational corporations and entrepreneurial elites but fails to achieve significant backward linkages or to improve socioeconomic conditions for the surrounding regions' most marginalised populations (Torres & Momsen, 2005b).

In their study on residents' attitudes towards a proposed enclave resort in Isabela, Puerto Rico, Hernandez, Cohen and Garcia (1996) found that residents can be optimistic about the potential positive effects on local employment, but, at the same time, locals are concerned about the future redistribution of economic benefits to foreigners and other outsiders. Mbaiwa (2005) also reports that, in the case of some African countries, this type of tourism can lead to the development of infrastructure and facilities, but, in many cases, enclave tourism has been unable to promote socioeconomic development and poverty alleviation. Recent studies such as Anderson (2011) and Naidoo and Sharpley's (2016) work found further confirmation that the economic benefits of enclave tourism do not spread to include the local population.

From a more sociological perspective, the spatial configuration of enclave tourism can emphasise environments with social exclusion and segregation between tourists and locals. In order to intensify tourists' consumption of planned spaces, enclave tourism promotes the commoditisation and private physical and symbolic appropriation and use of space. In this way,

non-elite social groups are subject to specific patterns of access and social segregation from public spaces (Manuel-Navarrete & Redclift, 2012). Empirical research has demonstrated that this type of development limits interactions between tourists and local populations in order to improve enclave resorts' internal profits (Freitag, 1994). Studies have also revealed that enclave tourism generates extreme levels of spatial segregation in favour of tourists and locals with high purchasing power (López-López et al., 2006).

Researchers have further found that, when enclave tourism development rapidly expands, communities are not always able to adapt to the growth of tourism operations, particularly in small towns, and, therefore, local positive attitudes towards tourism may sharply decrease over time (Davis & Morais, 2004). In summary, when compared with other types of tourism, enclave tourism is perceived to have fewer positive outcomes, including that it damages the environment, restricts entrepreneurship and favours local elites, while excluding less wealthy locals from resorts (Naidoo & Sharpley, 2016). Enclave tourism models, thus, have been frequently criticised as an ineffective socioeconomic development strategy.

Enclave tourism destinations differ in terms of structure, function, internal control and geographical form and size (Shaw & Shaw, 1999). Anderson (2011) suggests that enclave products are not always uniform but, instead, often adapted to the location and operations of the resorts running the enclaves, as well as depending on the destinations involved. Because of these different conditions among enclave resorts, the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of enclave tourism should not be expected to be the same in all destinations. Due to the specific characteristics of each enclave, impacts need to be assessed in terms of type and intensity in the context of the specific destination studied. Therefore, if a more integrated knowledge of enclave tourism in different socioeconomic contexts is required, more rigorously empirical studies – especially in understudied contexts such as in Latin America – need to be carefully incorporated into the general conceptual, theoretical and empirical discussions of enclave tourism and its impacts.

### **2.3. Dependency paradigm**

Dependency theory has its intellectual roots in Latin America, gaining prominence in the 1960s. This theory basically argues that developing countries have external and internal political, institutional and economic structures that keep these countries dependent on developed countries (Telfer, 2002). The dependency paradigm further maintains that development occurs in developed countries, referred to as 'the centre' or 'the core', while, simultaneously,

underdevelopment occurs in developing countries, known as 'the periphery'. By suggesting that uneven development is the result of capitalist accumulation, the paradigm maintains that dependency originates from and, eventually, reinforces unequal power relationships between wealthy countries (i.e. the centre) and poor countries (i.e. the periphery) (Telfer, 2002). This paradigm continues to be influential among left-wing organisations and movements within global justice, anti-globalisation and anti-capitalist campaigns (Saad-Filho, 2005).

Dependency theory implies an analytical division of the world into developed and underdeveloped areas (i.e. nations) and highlights de-accumulation and accumulation processes – mainly of economic resources – that occur in this context. According to Clancy (1999), this theory distinguishes between the terms 'undeveloped' and 'underdeveloped'. Poor societies generally are classified as underdeveloped as they have experienced negative consequences associated with imperialism, colonialism, Marxism and other ties to advanced Western nations. Dependency theory argues that development is not a linear process but, instead, a holistic one in which wealth and poverty are intimately linked on a global scale. In other words, development in 'the core' comes at the expense of 'the periphery', and, thus, greater economic integration can only lead to greater poverty and misery (Clancy, 1999).

According to Weeks (1981, p. 120), 'dependency theory explains the rise of capitalism and the division of the world into developed and underdeveloped areas by surplus transfer; this uneven development is reproduced by the continuation of such transfers (in a more "purely economic" form).' Although the dependency paradigm has been mostly applied in analyses of dependency between nations, this theory is equally applicable within countries because wealth and poverty – and the dependence generated – exist simultaneously within countries. 'Centres' and 'peripheries' can be identified at different geographical, sociopolitical and economic levels. Dependency theory can, thus, be applied in macro, meso and micro-level analyses.

In development studies, many traditional development theories have tended to offer one-sided interpretations of the sources of development – having a blind spot to either internal or external factors (Caporaso, 1980). As has any other theory that seeks to explain a given social phenomenon fully, dependency theory has been criticised for this limitation. While it recognises external factors, the dependency paradigm ignores the potential significance of internal factors' power to shape dependence. According to Milne and Ateljevic (2001), this theory fails to acknowledge that what occurs within an area may be just as important as what influences that area from outside its boundaries. The paradigm does not acknowledge that internal



stakeholders such as local governments, industries and individuals can be active in creating an area's dependence and can thus exert some degree of control over their area's destiny.

Based on a political economy perspective, Bianchi (2002) similarly argues that global capitalist dynamics lead to reconfigurations of dependency. According to the cited author, capitalist restructuring and economic globalisation have reconfigured power relations so that they now challenge the validity of state-centric approaches to tourism's political economy. The increasing dominance of transnational tourism corporations and the growing structural power of market forces at a global and regional level has been central to these changes. Thus, an increasingly complex and differentiated geography of tourism production, distribution and exchange is emerging that is supported by the forces of economic globalisation and market liberation. This process has challenged the straightforward north-south power relations articulated in the dependency model of international tourism.

In addition, Bianchi's (2002) analysis of dependency and its associated antagonistic forces and sociopolitical drivers led the cited author to conclude that capitalism is undoubtedly the driving force within the global tourism economy. However, the global reach of capital is constrained by geography and politics in different ways. The extension and consolidation of transnational tourism corporations' power is not reducible to the pure forces of economic restructuring brought about by post-Fordist capitalism.

The tourism industry's organisation is also conditioned by the actions of governments and, in particular, dominant political classes within each nation. Government involvement in tourism, therefore, varies considerably according to domestic political and ideological conditions. Both the direct and indirect participation of the central state in tourism plays an important role in the regulation of public and private accumulation of capital – and thus of dependence – in accordance with domestic political priorities. However, governments' participation is not always active since, as Saad-Filho (2005) states, the central state's weak involvement can also contribute to perpetuating underdevelopment and dependency features.

Some experts have argued that dependency theory can neither claim empirical verification nor theoretical validity (Weeks, 1981) when it makes the prediction that the flow of capital should overwhelmingly be from developed to underdeveloped areas. Nonetheless, the dependency paradigm has still been used to understand tourism as a significant global economic force in developing countries. In other more simple terms, tourism is viewed from this perspective as a

global transaction process driven by the priorities of multinational corporations, geopolitical forces and broader dynamics of economic change (Milne & Ateljevic, 2001).

Dependency theory has thus helped to understand why international tourism in developing countries largely relies on demand and organisers from developed countries (Mbaiwa, 2005). This perspective on tourism understands that large-scale mass tourism development in poor countries, including enclave tourism, has created a dependence on export markets and an increased degree of foreign domination and control of the tourism sector. According to Clancy (1999), when developing countries promote tourism, they necessarily embrace greater integration into the world economy. International tourist flows are mostly from developed countries to economically deprived developing countries. Mass tourism development is characterised by large numbers of tourists consuming highly standardised, packaged and inflexible tourism products (Torres, 2002), as well as control by local elites and transnational corporations and high levels of economic leakage (Torres & Momsen, 2004). Through tourism, developed areas have influenced host communities on a large scale and appropriated them into the global capitalist economy, which helps the development of core developed countries (Khan, 1997).

The degree of developing areas' dependency on developed countries is a consequence not only of these nations' domination and the influence of wealth but also of particular internal conditions of peripheries. Dependency and its negative socioeconomic effects on local communities can be intensified by host countries' weak control of external capital and interventions. Khan (1997) writes:

In many Third World countries that promote mass tourism, there is no control over foreign investment or ownership, with capital controlling the mode of production and choking local development. . . . [W]ith mass tourism there is always a threat of economic leakage through imports of goods and services that curtail the multiplier effect within . . . local economies. (p. 990)

Both dependency and enclave development belong to the same historical capitalist process that is reinforced by conditions of inequality. The enclave concept thus refers back to the historic conditions in which organisations generated comparative advantages from resources available in another geographic area in which development had not reached local populations. Therefore, as Cardoso and Faletto (1978, p.48) put it, 'enclave-based economic development manifests central economies' dynamism and the role that capitalism plays in such economies regardless

of local groups' initiatives.' In this way, governments ensure the conditions required for guaranteeing both certainty and security for investors, thereby reinforcing dependency on the global market and generating conditions of inequality among societies.

### **3. STUDY METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Comparative studies**

This study used a comparative method grounded in dependency theory, with the goal of conducting a comparative analysis of enclave tourism's socioeconomic impacts in three enclave destinations in Mexico. Comparative research is a broad term that includes both quantitative and qualitative comparison of social entities. More simply put, this method's underlying goal is to search for similarities, differences and associations between the entities under study. Comparisons not only uncover differences between social entities but also reveal unique aspects of these entities that would otherwise be virtually impossible to detect (Mills, van de Bunt & de Bruijin, 2006).

Mills (2008) reports that comparative research is often used to separate more general patterns and isolate regularities or discrepancies from a context-laden environment. Although universal patterns are difficult to identify in social phenomena, comparative studies search for universals or underlying general processes across different contexts. In this regard, comparative research has served as a tool for developing classifications of social phenomena and for establishing whether shared phenomena can be explained by the same causes. This methodological approach is thus helpful in examining and explaining social and cultural differences and specificities (Hantrais, 1995).

#### **3.2. Selected destinations**

To meet the present research's objective, three Mexican resorts characterised by enclavic tourism were studied. Through the Tourism Ministry (SECTUR) and the Fondo Nacional de Fomento al Turismo (FONATUR) (National Fund for Tourism), the Mexican government took the lead in the late 1960s by planning and implementing a multi-year tourism master plan for the country (Clancy, 1999). FONATUR is a Mexican federal organisation that seeks to identify and implement sustainable investment projects in the tourism sector. Geared towards attracting international mass tourists (Clancy, 1999), these projects seek to encourage regional development, generate employment, attract foreign capital and increase economic development and social well-being in order to improve the local populace's quality of life

(SECTUR, 2012). Three state-planned destinations with what are known as Centros Integralmente Planeados (CIPs) or 'comprehensively planned resorts' in Mexico were selected: Cancun, Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo and Nayarit. CIPs are funded by FONATUR.

The state-planned tourism development model is considered one of Mexico's most successful economic strategies, which has been replicated in other parts of the world such as Southeast Asia and the Middle East (Torres & Momsem, 2005b). Since the 1970s, eight CIPs have been developed: Cancun, Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo, Los Cabos, Loreto, Huatulco, Nayarit, Espiritu Santo and Marina Cozumel (see Figure 1). These resorts are a result of 'a business model that promotes investment, creates employment, improves quality of life, and improves regional and national development through a respectful focus on the environment' (FONATUR, 2016, p. n/p). From the federal government's perspective, this model has been successful. Over 38% of hotel rooms in sea and sun destinations in Mexico are located in these developments, and they capture 50% of foreign tourists that visit sea and sun destinations in Mexico (FONATUR, 2016). CIPs, thus, boast the highest room occupancy in the entire country (SECTUR, 2017).

Seen from a dependency paradigm perspective, FONATUR has facilitated land property processes in order to attract foreign capital investment as this federal institution is responsible for expropriating agricultural land and putting it on the real estate market. In addition, FONATUR acts as a financial manager, and it is responsible for creating enclave destinations including infrastructure construction and equipment supply (Clancy, 1999). A further contribution of FONATUR to dependency is the spatial concentration of hospitality businesses. In the case of Cancun, for example, FONATUR's original plan called for a resort that segregates tourists from workers who inhabited a service city (Torres, 2002).

From an academic point of view, state-planned tourism projects in Mexico have not noticeably fostered socially sound regional development as these projects have failed to incorporate regional capital, know-how and entrepreneurial initiatives. The developers had unrealistic expectations that locals would be able to cope with radical and rapid socioeconomic changes, so local participation was not enhanced (Brenner, 2010). Therefore, not surprisingly, these developments began to show clear signs of social marginalisation, the formation of enclaves, the development of shantytowns and environmental deterioration soon after the projects' inception (Brenner, 2005).



**Figure 1:** Location of Centros Integralmente Planeados (CIPs), Mexico  
 Source: Carlos Viesca, personal communication 27 June 2017.

**Cancun.** Located in the Caribbean region, Cancun was the first CIP, with construction starting in 1974. It was carefully planned to segregate tourist spaces from the living space of locals (Torres & Momsen, 2015a). Widely regarded as an archetypal Fordist mass-tourism destination, Cancun is characterised by the dominance of large-scale luxury hotels catering to sun-and-sand tourists (Torres, 2002). In only four decades, it has become the most popular Mexican destination internationally. Cancun is famous for its night life, marine sports, fishing, golf and natural resources. It has the second most important coral reef in the world, and it is near to other natural and cultural tourism destinations. This CIP includes international hotels, commercial and residential zones, convention centres, an international airport and golf courses (SECTUR, 2012).

In 2016, Cancun's airport received 6,987,764 foreign visitors, which is the greatest number of international arrivals in the entire country (SECTUR, 2017). Since there are no agricultural or industrial activities in Cancun, tourism is the main economic activity of its residents – around 743, 626 people in 2015 (INEGI, 2015). Because of this CIP's economic importance, Cancun has been a magnet for rural populations in search of better income-earning opportunities (Torres & Momsen, 2015a; 2015b). Consequently, unlike other similar projects, Cancun has experienced rapid urban growth and one of the highest demographic growth rates in Mexico.

Its population is thus largely made up of immigrants with different sociocultural backgrounds who have faced challenges integrating on a personal, family and societal level and establishing a local community identity (Jiménez & Sosa, 2008).

Conventional large-scale mass-tourism development in Cancun has had detrimental environmental and sociocultural impacts. These include the destruction of lagoon systems and the coral reef, uncontrolled urban growth, a labour deficit in the agrarian sector and income inequalities between rural and urban populations. In addition, social value changes have led to a loss of local indigenous language and cultural practices and increased prostitution and drug addiction (Torres & Momsen, 2005b).

***Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo.*** This was one of the four FONATUR projects developed in the 1970s. The project's aim was to offer an alternative tourism destination to what was then the traditional mass tourism destination of Acapulco, in order to attract and serve a more exclusive international tourism segment. The 2,016-hectare development is located 8 kilometres from Zihuatanejo. The project also began in 1974, and the construction of an international airport was started in 1976 to facilitate greater connectivity and serve international tourism flows.

In 2010, Zihuatanejo's population was 68,652, and it had a low level of social marginalisation (Ayuntamiento de Zihuatanejo, 2014) and a high level of social well-being (Marquina, Juárez & Castells, 2015). The dominant tourism segments are family, weddings, sports and social tourism. Because of the region's poor security image, international tourism has decreased considerably in the last decade, so domestic tourism is currently the destination's most significant market.

***Nayarit.*** Litibú is one of FONATUR's most recent projects as its development only started in 2005. It is still in the first development stage – out of two planned – of the larger Nayarit project. Unlike other CIPs, it was originally planned for, and is strongly orientated towards, highly exclusive and high-spending tourism: mainly golf tourism, marine activities and second homes (SECTUR, 2012). The resort encloses 167 hectares, including two kilometres of seashore, a golf course and multiple hotels and second homes. It is physically demarcated and separated from the local community by a wall surrounding the resort. Because services and facilities are all included within the resort, tourists need not go outside, and contact with locals is practically non-existent.

Higuera Blanca is the closest community to the resort. Its total population is 1,360, and this town has reported significant social marginalisation and poverty (Sedesol, 2010). The traditional economic activity in the community is agriculture, which has been slowly replaced by tourism. Within the community's boundaries, an important neighbourhood on the coast is made up of second homes owned mostly by foreigners.

### **3.3. Methodological procedures**

No particular methodology has been associated with previous comparative research. In social science, in general, both quantitative and many different types of qualitative techniques can be applied (Mills, 2008). This flexibility has been evident in the few existing comparative studies of tourism impact perceptions since both qualitative (Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Cooke, 1982) and quantitative methods have been used, but quantitative approaches have clearly dominated (Diedrich & García-Buades, 2009; Jafari, Pizam & Przeclawski, 1990; Murphy, 1981; Tosun, 2002). To meet the objectives of this study, a primarily quantitative approach was adopted. Based on the existing literature on perceptions of tourism's social impacts, a questionnaire was especially developed for the three cases to be compared. This instrument mostly used a five-point agree-disagree scale, and the questionnaire was divided into five sections: 1) sociodemographics and tourism's 2) economic, 3) social, 4) cultural and 5) environmental impacts.

In the present paper's discussion, however, only sociodemographics and economic and social impacts are considered. Economic impacts were assessed through four items, namely, employment, the price of goods and services, substitution of traditional economic activities and tourism employment's association with the benefits required by federal laws. Social impacts were assessed with 13 items, including tourism's connection with an availability of local public services and leisure spaces, a lack of security and social problems such as drug and alcohol consumption, as well as community cohesion and participation.

The questionnaire was developed and administered in Spanish. The survey team was made up of researchers and research assistants from three public universities in Mexico. Before fieldwork, the team members participated in two seminars about the project. These sought to ensure the research team shared a common theoretical and methodological approach to the project. Survey training was also provided for research assistants. After the seminars, the team was divided into three equal subgroups, with each responsible for conducting fieldwork in one of the three destinations. In all three, respondents were selected through convenience

sampling, which has implications for the findings' generalisability. The decision to adopt convenience sampling was based on the limited financial and time resources available for the research. In addition, as discussed below in more detail, a variety of sociodemographic profiles was sought among the respondents.

In Cancun (hereafter Destination 1 [D1]), the survey was administered in June and July 2016. Unlike the other two destinations, no formal interviews were conducted in D1 due to time constraints. However, informal conversations and observations around both the city centre and the hotel area were also used to collect data. The questionnaire was mainly distributed in different areas of D1's city. All incomplete questionnaires were considered invalid and excluded from analysis, resulting in a total of 152 valid questionnaires for D1. Notably, unlike the other two destinations, informants in D1 were quite reluctant to participate because state elections were approaching, perhaps due to the fear that their information might be used for electoral purposes.

In Zihuatanejo (hereafter Destination 2 [D2]), a total of 257 valid questionnaires were returned in May 2016 (i.e. the same year as D1), in popular public places. Data were also collected in seven semi-structured interviews, one focus group and observations in different areas of the destination. In Litibú (hereafter Destination 3 [D3]), the closest neighbouring community to the enclave development, namely, Higuera Blanca, was selected for the study. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were adopted, including 10 in-depth interviews, and, after depuration, a total of 86 valid questionnaires returned in April 2016 comprised the D3 sample.

Descriptive statistics are useful because they provide a succinct picture – 'an easily digestible summary' (Schreiber, 2008) – and, thus, a useful interpretation of large numerical datasets for researchers. Given these advantages and the interest in identifying residents' opinions in reference to specific sociodemographic variables, this study's data analysis was based on descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics has often been used to assess residents' perceptions of tourism impacts (Casado-Diaz, 1999; Getz, 1993; Jackson, 2008; Liu & Var, 1986; Mason & Cheyne, 2000). Based on previous research methods reported in the literature, the survey items in the present study were first categorised into tourism's benefits (i.e. eight items) and costs (i.e. nine items). Separate graphics of frequencies and percentages were obtained for each destination and variable to facilitate analysis. With the goal of quantifying informants' clear, strong responses about their overall agreement or disagreement on benefits and costs, 'totally



agree' and 'agree' percentages and 'totally disagree' and 'disagree' percentages were grouped into general 'agree' and 'disagree' categories, respectively.

Next, similarities and differences in response frequency and type for each variable and each destination were identified. Both benefits and costs were ranked based on response coincidence into the most dominant reactions of the three destinations' samples. The findings were in turn classified according to tourism's benefits and costs. In each classification, the variables were categorised as 'coincidence', 'divergence' and 'ambivalence'.

The coincidence category comprised the variables on which respondents in the three destinations agree. The divergence group included those items about which there is a clear difference in perceptions among the destinations. The ambivalence category comprised variables about which respondents belonging to the same destination have ambivalent opinions, that is, similar amounts of informants in a single destination both agree and disagree with regard to tourism's impacts. Because formal interviews and observations could not be carried out only in two destinations, qualitative data did not substantially inform this study.

### 3.4. Sample characteristics

Table 1 shows information on the demographic profile of the informants in the three selected destinations. Although a variety of sociodemographic profiles were sought while conducting the survey, the results show a balance of gender and length of residence across the samples. Respondents in D1 and D2, as compared with D3, reported a smaller average length of residence, which could be due to greater heterogeneity in their demographic composition. The destinations' composition in terms of educational level also differs significantly. In D1, most respondents have a bachelor's degree, but, in D2 and D3, high school and middle school levels, respectively, are the highest education level among the majority of informants.

**Table 1:** Respondents' sociodemographic characteristics (%).

<b>Variable</b>	<b>D1</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>D2</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>D3</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Gender</i>						
Male		42		51		60
Female		58		49		40
<i>Age (mean)</i>						
	33		38		28	
<i>Length of residence in years (mean)</i>						
	16		18		24	

<i>Education – top three</i>	University	32	High school	30	Middle school	32
	High school	28	Middle school	22	Elementary	30
	Middle school	20	University	21	High school	18
<i>Occupation – top three</i>	Public servant	22	Trader	28	Housewife	30
	Tourism employee	20	Labourer	23	Trader	30
	Student	17	Fisherman	10	Tourism employee	11
<i>Income reliance on tourism (top three)</i>	None	40	Total	24	None	32
	Total	20	More than half	24	Total	26
	More than half	16	Less than half	21	Half	11
<i>Host-guest relationship – top three</i>	No relationship	39	Commercial	60	No relationship	46
	Commercial	37	No relationship	18	Commercial	31
	Visit same places	16	Friendship	15	Friendship	16
<i>Contact with tourists – top three</i>	Every day	35	Every day	59	Never	45
	Never	30	Twice a week	14	Every day	22
	Less than once a week	7	Less than once a week	12	Less than once a week	16

Valid questionnaires per destination: D1=152; D2=257; D3=86.

As can be inferred from the above results, the three destinations differ in their sociodemographic and economic components. Notably, in D1, 20% of the respondents were tourism employees, a much higher figure than in D2 and D3. Since local economic and sociocultural characteristics have been found to shape the type and intensity of tourism impacts (Wall & Mathieson, 2006) and residents' perceptions of these (Almeida-García, Peláez-Fernández, Balbuena-Vázquez & Cortés-Macias, 2016; Broughman & Butler, 1981; Sheldon & Var, 1984; Xu, Barbieri, Anderson, Leung & Rozier-Rich, 2016), different impacts, both real and perceived, were thus to be expected in the destinations under study. At the same time, these differences highlight the issue that the same tourism development model (i.e. CIPs) is being implemented in Mexico regardless of local sociodemographic and economic structures.

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1. Tourism's benefits

The findings reveal that the enclave tourism model has brought individual and collective benefits to the three communities on both an economic and social level. Overall, four main benefits – out of the eight included in the survey – were similarly perceived by residents in the three destinations (see Table 2). The majority of respondents from these destinations reported that tourism has positive impacts: employment, their community's quality of life, their family's living conditions and the benefits that tourism jobs offer. Over half of informants in the three destinations mostly agreed on these benefits. Percentages of respondents in each case were quite similar, except for D1, in which the contribution of tourism to the local communities' quality of life and families' living conditions was acknowledged by a smaller but still quite significant number of respondents compared with the other two destinations.

**Table 2:** Residents' perceptions of tourism's benefits in selected destinations (% respondents).

Variables	D1	D2	D3	D1	D2	D3
	Agreement			Disagreement		
<i>Coincidence</i>						
Tourism has created employment opportunities.	91	93	93	6	4	3
Tourism has improved my community's quality of life.	57	71	72	18	16	11
Tourism has improved my family's living conditions.	57	64	71	22	20	20
Tourism jobs offer the benefits required by law.	68	53	55	16	22	26
<i>Divergence</i>						
Tourism has increased leisure opportunities.	68	53	37	17	24	22
Tourism has promoted the construction of schools, medical clinics and airports.	33	32	57	40	42	44
<i>Ambivalence</i>						
My community is more integrated because of tourism.	19	32	37	47	35	31
Tourism has brought more and better public services to my community.	42	44	45	30	37	41

Notes:

\*Valid questionnaires per destination: D1=152; D2=257; D3=86.

\*Percentages per destination do not total 100%, and, in each case, the remaining percentage not listed corresponds to the 'neither agree nor disagree' category. This category was, however, included in analyses.

However, respondents from all three cases acknowledged tourism benefits in terms of job quantity and quality and living conditions on a collective level. Therefore, enclavic tourism in these communities is contributing to communities' quality of life and employment levels. While the type and nature of jobs offered in the tourism industry – low-end and seasonal (Torres & Momsen, 2005b) – can be questionable, these benefits are still significant given the local population's limited economic opportunities.

Tourism's role in increasing leisure opportunities for locals has been previously reported in other contexts (Aguiló & Roselló, 2005; Getz, 1993; Perdue, Long & Allen, 1990). Both D1 and D2 respondents concurred with this assertion, but D3 informants were not as sure of this benefit. This could be explained by how, unlike the other two destinations where public leisure spaces are open to both tourists and locals, the D3 community's physical exclusion from the resort does not allow locals to be part of the leisure facilities developed exclusively for tourists. Eventually, locals' exclusion from leisure spaces may lead to resentment and negative attitudes among residents towards tourism development and tourists.

This suggests, therefore, that, in enclave tourism, the physical and/or symbolic demarcation between tourists and locals' areas could be quite important in preventing locals from receiving social benefits from tourism. In addition, in D3, tourism has clearly contributed to motivating the government to construct public schools, hospitals and airports. However, in interviews, informants reported that the construction of local schools and clinics took place only when the resort project first began, so this type of benefit has not continued over time.

While it appears that, in the three destinations, both a clear coincidence and divergence was found for some tourism impacts, the results suggest that communities in the three destinations are quite ambivalent about two specific issues: community integration and better public services. In D2 and D3, almost the same percentage of informants perceived each issue to be a consequence of tourism as the percentage who reported the opposite. In the case of D1, most respondents do not perceive that their community is more integrated as a result of tourism, which may largely be explained by the local population's high heterogeneity – including a considerable number of immigrants – and the resulting lack of community attachment and social integration (Jiménez & Sosa, 2008). By considering the possibility of the simultaneous presence of positive and negative views of tourism benefits within communities, the present study found both tourism 'haters' and 'lovers', and their corresponding categorisations in the

three destinations, confirming the findings of previous empirical studies (Davis, Allen & Cosenza, 1988; Fredline & Faulkner, 2000; Madrigal, 1995; Weaver & Lawton, 2001).

#### 4.2. Tourism's costs

Respondents in the three destinations were asked to assess the costs of tourism in their respective communities. Table 3 shows the agree-disagree distribution of informants in each case. Three costs were cited the most frequently by residents in each destination: reduction of time spent with family, increases in the price of goods and services and substitution of traditional economic activities. These impacts have been reported previously by Duffield and Long (1981), Ross (1992) and Villela (2009), respectively. With regard to the substitution of traditional economic activities, the link between tourism and agriculture is further explained by Torres and Momsen's (2004) work. The cited authors report that, while tourism has the potential to stimulate local agricultural development, tourism can also cause significant harm to local farming due to competition for land and labour. Torres and Momsen (2004) showed that, in the case of Cancun, agriculture was not integrated into the original state-planned tourism projects, so local farmers have had difficulty breaking into already fixed supply networks.

**Table 3:** Residents' perceptions of tourism's costs in selected destinations (% respondents).

Variables	D1	D2	D3	D1	D2	D3
	Agreement			Disagreement		
<i>Coincidence</i>						
Tourism has increased the price of goods and services.	74	65	81	16	21	11
Tourism has increased security issues in my community.	36	26	29	45	63	61
Tourism has substituted traditional economic activities.	59	44	58	23	35	24
Tourism has decreased my community's participation.	26	24	24	46	49	60
Tourism jobs have reduced the time spent with family.	58	47	48	28	29	37
<i>Divergence</i>						
Tourism has increased social problems.	54	31	26	27	51	59
Tourism has reduced public leisure spaces.	64	33	55	21	46	38
Tourism has divided my community.	47	33	14	28	47	65

<i>Ambivalence</i>						
Those working in tourism have reduced their participation in my community.	50	37	40	27	38	38

## Notes:

\*Valid questionnaires per destination: D1=152; D2=257; D3=86.

\*Percentages per destination do not total 100%, and, in each case, the remaining percentage not listed corresponds to the 'neither agree nor disagree' category. This category was, however, included in analyses.

In most cases, over half of the sample in each destination perceived an impact of tourism on these socioeconomic issues. Respondents, thus, agreed on some negative impacts of tourism, but the majority also disagreed with the idea that tourism is the causal factor in other social costs. Informants in the three destinations did not believe that tourism causes security issues and a decrease in community participation. In all cases, nearly half or more of the sample disagreed with the corresponding statements.

The relationship between tourism and social problems such as alcohol consumption, drug use and prostitution has been reported since the early stages of tourism impact studies (Pizam, 1978; Pizam & Pokela, 1985). In the present study, only D1 informants perceived tourism as a causal agent of social problems (54%). This finding concurs with Torres and Momsen's (2005b) findings on social problems directly related to tourism development in Cancun. In D2 and D3, most respondents (51% and 59%, respectively) disagreed with this relationship. The local residents in D1 may perceive more tourism-related social problems because of the higher level of tourism development and urban and population growth that this destination has experienced for a longer period as compared with the other two cases.

From participants' answers, access to public leisure spaces – especially beaches – has clearly been reduced as a consequence of tourism in D1 and D3. This appears to be because both destinations are enclave resorts that are physically demarcated and that have taken over large expanses of beachfront. As in other tourism enclaves such as Los Cabos (López-López et al., 2006), this renders beaches inaccessible to the local population and, in practice, prohibited. Local leisure spaces have thus been 'appropriated' by tourism corporations. Edensor (2000) claims that a quite important characteristic of enclave spaces is the continual maintenance of clear boundaries demarcating which activities may occur and who may be admitted. By delineating tourist spaces, enclave tourism has led to locals' exclusion from public leisure spaces.

Divisions within the community (Weaver & Lawton, 2001) have also been reported as a perceived consequence of tourism. D1 respondents support this assertion as 48% agreed with the statement that 'tourism has created divisions within my community'. This, however, was rejected by D2 and D3 informants. D3 respondents largely disagree with this assertion since 65% do not believe that tourism has had this consequence in their community.

Finally, the results also reveal that, as with benefits, ambivalence exists within communities about one particular cost. While half of D1 respondents perceive that tourism-related work reduces people's participation in their community, D2 and D3 informants are split on this issue. Almost 40% of respondents in each destination agreed, and the same amount disagreed on this issue. Therefore, with regard to only this variable, a similar amount of both tourism 'supporters' and 'opponents' can be found in D2 and D3.

## **5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

This section discusses the results in terms of the literature on enclave tourism and dependency theory and offers practical implications for the development of enclave resorts. The previous research focused on this topic has suggested that tourism enclaves are usually associated with foreign capital, repatriation of tourism revenue and social and spatial regulation. This form of tourism appears to reinforce socioeconomic disparities rather than reducing inequalities between developed and developing areas. As such, this model has been strongly criticised as an inappropriate strategy for socioeconomic development, and it has been regarded not merely as socioeconomically unsustainable (Davis & Morais, 2004; Mbaiwa, 2005) but even as problematic in terms of tourism development in developing countries (Brohman, 1996). From a dependency theory perspective, this kind of project can be viewed as more for the benefit of capitalist, tourist-generating countries and as non-self-generating development for host countries.

Certainly, enclave tourism's benefits in terms of foreign revenue may be significantly limited on a macro (i.e. national) level. However, the impacts of enclaves also need to be assessed in terms of their socioeconomic benefits on a micro level. Bianchi (2002) argues that an inherent tension exists between theoretical generalisations of the dependency model and historical-geographical specificities of destinations. This conflict has encouraged an incomplete understanding of the ways that local and regional experiences of tourism development articulate with wider capital and decision-making circuits.

Based on the three cases included in the present study, tourism is perceived as a quite important source for employment for local people. Although, in some cases, the best jobs go to expatriates and immigrants from other parts of Mexico (Torres & Momsem, 2005b), the significance of tourism in these destinations and in many other economically depressed countries is quite clear for the everyday lives of local residents. In tourism, transnational corporations' impacts thus interact with specific local socioeconomic conditions, and, while still maintaining enclavic spaces, this interaction results in specific positive contributions to locals' well-being.

Clancy (1999) argues that, in a classic dependency situation, local élite groups share the majority of benefits while subordinated classes receive the smallest proportion. For societies in which access to economic resources is quite limited, however, even a small proportion is significant. Notably, in many developing countries experiencing high unemployment rates, tourism jobs – either formal or informal – are one of the few or even the only alternative ways to generate income (Wilson, 2012), and tourism helps to solve unemployment and underemployment problems (Wilson, 2008). Therefore, in areas where poor socioeconomic conditions restrict employment opportunities for locals, enclave tourism jobs become a viable choice on a personal and family level. The impacts of this type of development, however, do not depend only on economic issues because social benefits, including collective well-being, are also recognised as a tourism benefit in the three destinations under study.

The analysis of this study's results was based on dependency theory. In the context of tourism, this paradigm has been used to understand how enclave resorts, on an international level, have created dependence on foreign capital and foreign tourism flows from developed to developing countries (Mbaiwa, 2005). However, the dependency paradigm can also be used to understand tourism dependency realities on a micro level. The enclave tourism model in the three destinations under study here replicates the 'core-periphery' division and dependency patterns on a local level. The 'centre' is represented by the resorts themselves and the 'periphery' by the community. Resorts are generators of local resources (e.g. jobs) that local people need. In many ways, this creates dependence for and domination over locals. From a dependency theory perspective, enclave tourism, while contributing to improved socioeconomic conditions, encourages unequal power relationships on a micro and local level.

Based on the above evidence, dependence in enclave tourism contexts may mostly involve economic issues, yet analyses also need to be done of the social consequences of the structures



and functions of tourism enclaves and the resulting dependence relationships. Torres and Momsen (2005a, p. 332) suggest that, in transnational tourism spaces, 'inequities involve not only power and economics but are also evident in the subordination of local cultures, social structures, and the environment.' The three enclave tourism cases compared here show that social costs need to be taken into account – a finding confirmed by other studies developed around the same enclave model, such as research on Huatulco (Brenner, 2005; Long, 1991) and Los Cabos (López-López et al., 2006) in Mexico. Local communities' dependence on tourism enclaves, together with a lack of effective government control and local active participation, has led to undesired consequences. Increases in the price of local goods and services, substitution of traditional economic activities, social problems, reduction of public leisure spaces and social and spatial segregation have become serious negative effects of these tourism projects, increasing the locals' dependence on them.

The implications of this study are relevant mainly to the enclave tourism model adopted by the Mexican government. This research has proved that, while this type of tourism development has in some ways benefitted local populations, locals are also aware of its negative social impacts. The results include evidence that some socioeconomic issues can be experienced differently in each destination. While a significant percentage of one destination's (i.e. D1) locals reported an increase in alcohol and drug use as a consequence of tourism, the remaining cases (i.e. D2 and D3) did not. Similarly, two destinations (i.e. D1 and D3) have experienced a reduction of leisure spaces for locals, but one (D2) has not experienced this consequence.

Given that issues such as economic and social structures, social and political organisation and the level and type of tourism development influence the form tourism-related change takes (Wall & Mathieson, 2006), context-specific tourism development models need to be applied according to the specific characteristics of each location. This, thus, calls for critical reflection on the undifferentiated replication of the enclave tourism model by the Mexican government (i.e. FONATUR) in contexts that differ economically, environmentally and socioculturally.

Bianchi (2002) argues that, while global capital is a significant driving force in the world capitalist economy, this capital's reach can be considerably influenced by government intervention. Therefore, a significant reorientation and implementation of context-specific tourism policies are needed to maximise the benefits of FONATUR's current tourism development model. The repositioning of this model appears to be immediately necessary

because the application of the same tourism development strategy in new destinations is on the federal government's agenda.

According to Clancy (1999), tourism development in Mexico is largely the product of the original statist vision, and this approach is expected to guide projects for some time. FONATUR (2016, p. n/p) has stated that it 'will continue searching paradisiac places that can be prepared, urbanised and be promoted as big investment opportunities'. If this organisation's current enclave tourism policies and models are not reoriented and adapted to the local socioeconomic and cultural conditions of each new destination, the costs reported thus far and perhaps many other negative effects will most likely be replicated in more 'comprehensively planned resorts' (i.e. CIPs).

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

This study sought to analyse from a dependency theory perspective tourism's socioeconomic impacts as perceived by the local communities' residents in enclavic tourism destinations. Based on an empirical analysis of data on three state-planned destinations, the research revealed that, while enclave tourism has been largely criticised as an untenable socioeconomic development strategy on a macro level, it brings significant economic and social benefits on a micro level. From a macroeconomic perspective, enclave tourism's benefits may be extremely limited because international tourists' expenditure is eventually repatriated. Torres and Momsen (2005b) argue that this tourism development model has failed to stimulate balanced regional development. Instead, enclave tourism has reinforced existing domination and subordination relationships and produced new patterns of uneven development and socioeconomic inequity. Enclave tourism has, therefore, been regarded as unsustainable for developing countries.

However, on a micro level, enclave tourism is quite significant in locals' everyday personal and family lives. In cases in which employment opportunities are scarce, this form of tourism becomes one of the few if not the only choice for locals. Without a doubt, enclave tourism's benefits can be maximised and diversified for locals, but this requires effective government interventions and, in the case of Mexico, a reorientation of tourism development policies. Meanwhile, enclave tourism is, for many local communities, the only beneficial choice available.

In terms of tourism flows, the enclave tourism strategy and the creation of CIPs has led to Mexico being ranked as one of the countries with the highest number of international tourists

worldwide. Tourism represents the third most important economic source of foreign exchange for the national economy. While this model's micro-level costs have been critiqued, at a macro-regional level, this strategy has meant that Mexico is part of the global tourism economy. As Clancy (1999) points out, the tourism demand growth rates achieved over the past three decades would have been difficult without the heavy involvement of the central state.

This study contributes a new application of dependency theory to gain a fuller understanding of enclave tourism's socioeconomic impacts on a micro rather than a macro-level. The results reveal that dependency as a notion – as it is commonly understood and used in development research – can be applied to more relationships than those between countries. Relationships between the 'core' and 'periphery' and the associated capitalist domination and control also apply on a micro level. By adopting the dependency paradigm, this study facilitated an understanding of how enclave resorts, especially those run by large foreign firms, determine residents' economic dependence on foreign capital. This leads to imbalanced power relationships between tourism enclaves and locals and to other associated costs such as social and spatial segregation. In this way, this study's insights can be used to broaden and diversify the use of dependency theory on different levels and in varied contexts.

This study's limitations need to be taken into consideration. As in any other study on tourism impacts focusing on residents' perceptions as a methodological strategy, the present findings, discussion and conclusions are based on perceived rather than factual tourism impacts. Locals' perceptions may not always be an accurate representation of real changes induced by tourism. Alterations may thus be more or less significant than how respondents perceive them. However, the way local communities' changes are perceived and signified by residents matters for tourism planning and management. Perceptions of tourism induced transformations shape residents' attitudes towards tourism (Getz, 1994).

Furthermore, while this study's results were mainly based on numeric data, the use of convenience samples in the three destinations does not allow generalisations to other destinations. The findings, therefore, should be considered as indicative rather than representative. In addition, because qualitative data were not incorporated in the analysis, the results cannot extend beyond the descriptive statistics presented above, and the research could have benefited from listening to the informants' own voices and, thereby, gaining a deeper understanding of their perceptions.

Moreover, the present findings and conclusions were derived from enclave tourism projects planned by Mexico's federal government. This could mean that the socioeconomic conditions and tourism policies in other developing countries may result in different socioeconomic impacts of this type of development. While these findings largely concur with those reported in previous studies, further empirical research in diverse enclave tourism destinations is still needed to develop a broader and context-diverse understanding of enclave tourism's impacts.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was supported by Programa para el Desarrollo Profesional Docente (PRODEP - Mexico) given to the 'Tourism, sustainability and community development' research network.

## DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTERESTS

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

## CONTRIBUTORS

All authors have actively participated in the research and article preparation.

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