

Deniz Tuna Onguner

22001788

Class 102, 057

28/10/2021

Essay 1 Draft

### Possibilities and Choices in Tourism

“There is nothing impossible to him who will try,” said Alexander the Great once.

There are several ethical dilemmas and issues related to the tourism industry. Because of these problems, many do not believe that becoming ethical tourists respectful to nature, history, and cultures is not possible. However, like Alexander the Great said, there is no such thing called impossible. On the contrary, what many consider, becoming an ethical tourist and a sustainable way for tourism are possible. Moral issues result from people's choices; morally argued wildlife tourism might be an ethical activity by making right decisions, similar decisions may reduce the environmental damage of the tourism sector's side effects, and even ethically misunderstood slum tourism can become a mutually beneficial process for both visitors and hosts.

Controversial wildlife tourism can become an ethical and sustainable activity for all; moreover, it can also benefit non-domestic animals. To explain its importance, wildlife tourism significantly impacts the tourism industry economically; it employs many people and accounts for 20% to 40% of all tourism industries. It has an even more significant impact on the economy, especially for specific countries, like Tanzania and the Maldives. In such countries and others, the principal source of tourism incentive is the wildlife tourist attractions (WTAs) (Moorhouse et al., 2016). There are just six WTAs that have made a beneficial impact on animal welfare. Even standards differ from one type to another, and there are also

some WTAs that provide care for rescued wildlife (Moorhouse et al., 2016). Because there are various options for tourists to choose from, they can make their own choices, whether ethical or not; but, there are always ethical choices. For instance, there are many elephant parks where people can see and touch elephants in Thailand; most are morally questioned and considered unethical (Daly, 2019). However, there are ethical choices, like Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp & Resort, which is more ethical and animal friendly (Daly, 2019). Even though Anantara's services are considered expensive compared to all others, tourists are still free to choose. They can choose their pocket or the welfare of animals and the balance of nature. In addition to all these, as animal welfare improves, tourists enjoy the experience more (Moorhouse et al., 2016). For example, according to Grennan & Fielding (2008), when tourists interacted with animals they believed were well cared for, their vacation was enhanced; yet, when animals appeared to be mistreated, the interaction detracted from the trip and gave visitors an unfavorable impression of the island (as cited in Moorhouse et al., 2016). Furthermore, people may also enjoy the wildlife experiences avoiding direct interaction with animals, such as safari tours. As long as there are various choices, but people still prefer the other ones, there is no impossibility for ethnics and tourism; it is just a matter of choice. However, people are not always self-aware enough to fully understand the consequences of their choices. "Tourists may have little information about what negative impacts could result from their attendance of such attractions or may lack the experience to assess whether animals' welfare (especially as distinct from animals' physical health) is being compromised," noted Moorhouse et al. (2016, p. 510). Thus, increasing tourists' self-awareness and informing them about their choices might open the front of ethical wildlife tourism.

The negative impacts of tourism-related transportation on nature constitute a global danger for the earth. Only in Europe, tourism-related transportation munches 3% of all energy produced. Moreover, it is also responsible for half of nitrogen oxide emissions (Polyxeni & Ourania, 2008). Compared to all other ones, air transportation, meaning planes, has the most significant percentage of emissions. Nitrogen oxide also emits other detrimental gases, including greenhouse gases (Polyxeni & Ourania, 2008). Nevertheless, tourists do not have to fly by plane. There are many other ways to travel around the globe, which damage the environment less than airways. Such as trains emit ten times fewer greenhouse gases compared to planes. Also, the ships emit 190 times less (Polyxeni & Ourania, 2008). Hence, planes are not the only way to cross oceans and continents. Maybe, ships and trains are much slower than planes, but tourists can choose eco-friendly and ethical options. If people continue to prefer air transportation to others, this is not an impossibility; they have freedom; it is a choice.

Slum tourism might be the most criticized type of tourism overall, and there are numerous moral conservations about it. However, even slum tourism may also become a sustainable and morally acceptable activity. In order to understand the concept of slum tourism, it is good to understand the reasons tourists visit slum neighborhoods. Meschkank (as cited in Kieti, 2013) claims that “Slum tourism turns poverty into entertainment as it is experienced momentarily and then escaped from permanently” (p. 40). As a result, slum residents have been reduced to commodities, serving as a business product; according to Lefevre (as cited in Kieti, 2013). Considering the present situation, it is hard to say there is sustainability and ethical approach for slum tourism. On the contrary, what people believe, visitors do not bring so much benefit to the residents. Still, ethical and tenable slum tourism is

more than just an impossible dream. For instance, in Kibera (Kenya), slum tourism's greatest beneficiaries are now the tour firms that have continued to operate in a way that prevents confrontations between slum dwellers and visitors (Kieti, 2013). Eliminating these tour firms and building direct connections between dwellers and tourists might be a good start for ethical slum tourism. By altering the conditions of slum areas, achieving a new kind of slum tourism, so-called "creative tourism," maybe also be possible; for example, making tourists "active participants and co-creators of the experiences they consume" (Booyens et al., 2019, p. 58). Again, current controversial slum tourism does not constitute an impossibility for an ethical version of it; it is more than possible by making alterations and regulations.

To conclude, some people do not believe the idea of an ethical tourist; moreover, they think such a thing is impossible. However, accomplishing this challenge is up to people and their decisions. Tourists might ignore ethical decisions when they want to get away from their real-life vacation (Dwan, 2001). It may be good to remind them all. Tourists may also choose to spend their money on ethical places, like Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp & Resort, instead of other controversial places in wildlife tourism. Alternatively, tourists may prefer eco-friendly transportation ways instead of making airline companies richer. Even slum tourism may become a beneficial concept for all by enough regulations and alterations. When considering all these, it is impossible not to believe in ethical tourism. Just like Audrey Hepburn said, "Nothing is impossible, the word itself says 'I'm possible!'".

## Bibliography

- Booyens, I., & Rogerson, C. M. (2019). Re-creating slum tourism: Perspectives from South Africa. *Urbani Izziv, Supplement*(30), 52–63. <https://doi.org/10.5379/urbani-izziv-en-2019-30-supplement-004>
- Moorhouse, T., D'Cruze, N. C., & Macdonald, D. W. (2016). Unethical use of wildlife in tourism: What's the problem, who is responsible, and what can be done? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 25(4), 505–516. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2016.1223087>
- Daly, N. (2019). Suffering unseen: The dark truth behind wildlife tourism. *National Geographic*. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/article/global-wildlife-tourism-social-media-causes-animal-suffering>
- Dwan, S. (2001). Ethical Issues on Vacation. *The Furrow*, 52(7/8), 428–430. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27664342>. JSTOR
- Kieti, Damiannah. (2013). The ethical and local resident perspectives of slum tourism in Kenya. *Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research*, (1), 37-57. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275340561\\_The\\_ethical\\_and\\_local\\_resident\\_perspectives\\_of\\_slum\\_tourism\\_in\\_Kenya](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275340561_The_ethical_and_local_resident_perspectives_of_slum_tourism_in_Kenya)
- Polyxeni, M & Ourania, K. (2008). Ethics in Tourism. 20<sup>o</sup> National Congress Hellenic Society for Business Research, 289-306. [https://polyxenimoira.weebly.com/uploads/3/0/4/6/30464652/ethics\\_in\\_tourismmoira-katsoula.pdf](https://polyxenimoira.weebly.com/uploads/3/0/4/6/30464652/ethics_in_tourismmoira-katsoula.pdf)