**Module Title: International Tourism in the 21st Century**

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**Introduction**

According to Holloway and Humphreys (2022), international tourism in the twenty-first century is a dynamic and ever-changing sector including the movement of people across borders for pleasure, commerce and other reasons. Overtourism refers to the negative effects of excessive tourism on a place, such as congestion, resource and infrastructural pressure, and environmental and cultural heritage deterioration. Heritage towns and communities, which frequently have limited capacity, are especially sensitive to these influences and risk losing their distinct cultural character (Szromek, Kruczek and Walas, 2019). In addition to that, this following essay will discuss case studies, management practices, community involvement, and sustainable tourism as a method for guaranteeing tourism's long-term viability.

**Main Body**

According to Żemła (2020), as travel becomes more accessible and affordable more tourists are flocking to old cities and towns. Moreover, in general Overtourism is the unsustainable and harmful phenomena of a large number of tourists overwhelming a destination's resources and infrastructure (Lee, Hunter and Chung, 2020).

***Implementing Tourism Limits***

According to Camatti *et al*. (2020), implementing tourist limitations is one technique for addressing overtourism in heritage cities and towns. The practice of limiting the amount of tourists that a place may handle at any given moment is referred to as tourism limitations. The goal is to avoid congestion while also protecting the destination's natural and cultural assets. One of the primary benefits of imposing tourist limitations is that it can aid in reducing the harmful effects of tourism on the environment and local populations. In addition to that, overcrowding can also negatively impact the environment as well as it can also damage the environmental system. In interference, it can also impact on the local infrastructure including transportation as well as water supply and garbage disposal. However, tourist sites that have a limit the number of tourists may help in protecting the environment as well as reduce the strain on the local resources.

Heritage cities and towns might have limited physical area, and a large flow of visitors can endanger ancient structures and cultural treasures (Chandan and Kumar, 2019). By imposing tourist restrictions, destinations may safeguard their cultural legacy and ensure that it is preserved for future generations. Imposing tourist restrictions, on the other hand, might have a lot of unforeseen consequences. One of the most challenging difficulties is enforcing visitation limitations. Many tourists may be ignorant of or disregard the restrictions, resulting in congestion and other negative results. Furthermore, tourism restrictions may not be well received by tourists or local companies, who may regard them as a hindrance to economic success. Another consequence of imposing tourism restrictions is that it may result in a financial loss for the place. Heritage cities and towns rely on tourism for revenue, and limiting the amount of visitors may result in lower tourism profits (Szromek, Kruczek and Walas, 2019). This revenue loss can negatively impact on the local economy as well as it will also particularly affect small businesses that rely on tourism.

***Diversifying Tourism Offering***

According to Zubiaga *et al*. (2019), diversifying the tourism offering is another technique for reducing overtourism in historic cities and towns. This is broadening the range of activities and attractions accessible to tourists in order to relieve pressure on popular areas and distribute tourism more equally across a place. Diversifying the tourism offering can assist to alleviate overcrowding at famous tourist destinations and distribute the economic advantages of tourism across a larger region. A heritage city or town, for example, may create new cultural or recreational activities, such as guided walks, gourmet tours, or outdoor festivals, to draw people to diverse sections of the location. As it has been seen in the paper of Więckowski (2021), this can assist to alleviate congestion at major tourist destinations while simultaneously promoting a more sustainable and responsible kind of tourism that is less harmful to the environment and local populations.

Additionally, broadening the tourism offering may have unintended repercussions. One issue is that creating new tourism goods and attractions may be expensive and time-consuming. This can be especially difficult for small businesses and communities that lack the necessary financing and experience to develop and market new tourism offerings (Bernardo and Rodrigues, 2020). Another possible issue is that expanding a destination's tourism offering may result in a loss of identity. Heritage cities and towns are frequently identified by their historical and cultural assets, and diversifying tourist offers can dilute this identity and make the destination less distinct. This might result in a drop in tourist numbers since visitors may no longer regard the place as distinctive or exceptional (Bui *et al*., 2020).

***Encouraging Responsible Tourism***

According to De Luca *et al*. (2020), another strategy to reducing overtourism in heritage cities and towns is to promote responsible tourism. This method entails encouraging tourists to engage in sustainable and responsible tourism practises in order to reduce the negative effects of tourism on the local environment, culture, and community. In addition, it is one of the most essential advantages to promote responsible tourism as it can assist to educate visitors about respecting the local culture as well as the environment. In addition to that, this can assist to lessen the danger of heritage site damage while also preserving a destination's natural beauty and biodiversity. Furthermore, responsible tourism practices may assist local companies and communities by fostering economic sustainability and helping the local economy (Cannas, Argiolas and Cabiddu, 2019).

There are numerous ways that may be used to encourage ethical tourism in ancient cities and villages. One option is to educate visitors about sustainable and ethical tourism behaviours, such as following local customs, minimising litter, and conserving energy (Hofman, Hughes and Walters, 2020). In interference, there are several obstacles to promoting ethical tourism. One of the key challenges is that many travellers are either unaware of or do not prioritise sustainable tourism practices throughout their journeys. Furthermore, this can be especially difficult in a competitive tourist business, as visitors may choose the most convenient or luxury alternatives rather than the most sustainable.

According to Barišić and Bučar (2022), to overcome this issue, it is critical to engage tourists and promote responsible tourism practises in a friendly and approachable manner. In addition to that, this might involve developing interactive displays or tours that emphasise the local environment and culture, as well as emphasising the advantages of sustainable tourism for both tourists and the local population. Furthermore, strong collaboration with local companies and tourist organisations is required to guarantee that sustainable tourism services are cheap and accessible to visitors.

***Promoting Off-Season Tourism***

Off-season tourist marketing is a successful strategy for mitigating the consequences of overtourism on ancient cities and towns. High seasons of tourism can exert tremendous pressure on local infrastructures, resulting in overpopulation, environmental degradation and cultural disintegration (Su *et al.,* 2022). Convincing tourists to explore during off-peak periods would disseminate the influx of visitors and counterbalance the adversarial outcomes of excessive tourism. During off-season periods, embarking on travels provides numerous benefits. It could aid in easing the strain on renowned tourist hotspots, enabling visitors to relish a more pleasant and genuine experience. The off-season presents an opportunity for tourists to explore cultural heritage towns and villages without having to contend for space or resources. Additionally, modern technology may play a crucial role in the conservation of cultural heritage by reducing the damage inflicted on historical structures and landmarks.

The facilitation of out-of-season tourism has the potential to enhance the local economy by guaranteeing year-round employment for tourism-dependent enterprises. In various towns and cities of cultural significance, the tourism industry is notably seasonal, with a majority of businesses operating exclusively during the peak season. By promoting travel during the off-season, local authorities may encourage businesses to operate throughout the year, resulting in a more consistent and sustainable economy (Li *et al.,* 2021). It can be inferred that travelling during the off-season may proffer substantial economic benefits to tourists on account of reduced expenses on flights, lodgings, and attractions compared to the peak tourist seasons. This can effectively attract a wider spectrum of tourists, including those with financial constraints and those who are unable to travel during the high season. Local governing authorities can implement a wide range of strategic policies and approaches to augment the number of tourists who opt for off-season travel (Lama and Rai, 2021). By way of illustration, corporations may offer exclusive discounts or special promotional packages to tourists who travel during the off-season. By marketing these packages to different segments of the market, local governments may attract a diverse range of tourists interested in experiencing heritage cities and towns during the off-season.

***Investing in Infrastructure***

In order to manage overtourism in ancient cities and villages, infrastructure investment is important. Infrastructure refers to the physical and organisational structures that support tourism activities such as transportation, housing, waste disposal, and public facilities. Investment in infrastructure can help reduce the negative consequences of overtourism by improving the quality of life for residents, protecting natural and cultural resources, and improving visitor experiences. One of the most important infrastructure issues that historic cities and villages face is transportation (Moraci *et al.,* 2020). When a large number of tourists enter and leave an area, transportation infrastructure can quickly become overcrowded. This can lead to traffic congestion, air pollution, and noise pollution, all of which decrease the quality of life for residents. Transportation infrastructure expenditures can help mitigate these negative outcomes by expanding public transportation options, establishing pedestrian zones, and enhancing traffic control systems (Mouratidis, Peters and van Wee, 2021).

Another infrastructure difficulty that mediaeval cities and towns face is waste management. With so many visitors generating so much trash, proper waste management systems are vital to preserving public space cleanliness and conserving natural and cultural resources. Investing in smart waste management solutions, such as automated litter bins and recycling facilities, can help to reduce littering and promote environmentally aware travellers. Investment in housing and public amenities, as well as transportation and garbage disposal, is crucial for overtourism control. During peak tourist seasons, heritage cities and towns may have few lodging options, contributing to congestion and high rates (Murzyn-Kupisz and Hołuj, 2020). Investing in more housing options, such as hotels, hostels, and homestays, can help spread out tourist inflows and reduce demand on local infrastructure. Furthermore, investing in public amenities such as public bathrooms, parks, and cultural centres can help with overtourism control in historic cities and villages.

***Engaging with the Local Community***

In order to manage overtourism in heritage cities and towns, it is critical to engage with the local people. This involves communicating with and including communities in tourist planning and decision-making processes to ensure that their needs and concerns are met. Local inhabitants may cultivate a sense of exaltation and proprietorship towards their native land or district, stemming from the knowledge of the locality's chronicles. Public authorities possess diverse means of reaching out to the community (Streimikiene *et al.,* 2021). One such method encompasses the establishment of a vacationer organisation, governed by the locals themselves, which collaborates with the tourism industry and municipal administration in addressing communal predicaments. This cooperative effort also ensures that the expansion of tourism translates into the creation of employment opportunities and promotes economic growth within the local populace. Another strategy for involving the local community is to coordinate stakeholder assemblies and public gatherings where constituents can openly express their viewpoints and apprehensions concerning the proliferation of tourism in their city or town (Spadaro *et al.,* 2023). During these conventions, municipal authorities can also articulate their objectives with respect to the development of the tourism industry.

Local governing bodies can foster community engagement and interaction through the utilisation of digital communication channels, including but not limited to conventional meetings and consultations. These digital platforms may comprise social media channels that can be utilised to advertise and popularise tourist attractions and occasions, enlighten residents about the objectives and targets of tourism development, as well as receive feedback from the community (Mulyasari *et al.,* 2021). This approach holds the potential to promote a sense of community ownership and facilitate active engagement in the expansion of tourist activities. Finally, local governments may include citizens in tourism-related programmes such as historical preservation and cultural events. Residents, for example, might help to maintain ancient sites or organise cultural events.

# Conclusion

This essay presents six critical measures for dealing with overtourism in ancient cities and towns. The first approach is to impose tourist limits, which entail limiting the number of visitors to a site. While this can conserve the environment and cultural heritage, it can also result in financial losses and be difficult to implement. The second approach is to diversify the tourism offering, which entails developing new cultural or recreational activities to attract tourists to diverse parts of a place. This can help with congestion, but it can also be costly and degrade a destination's uniqueness. The third method is to promote responsible tourism, which entails supporting sustainable and ethical tourism practises in order to reduce negative environmental and community impacts. Working with the local community is the fourth approach, which comprises involving the community in tourist planning and decision-making. This can help to ensure that the benefits of tourism are distributed evenly and sustainably. The sixth method is to use technology to control tourism flows, such as smart ticketing systems or virtual reality tours. While this can improve the visitor experience, not all visitors will have access to it. The sixth and final option is tourist regulation, which comprises enacting laws and regulations to manage tourism flows while simultaneously safeguarding cultural and environmental assets. This has the potential to be beneficial, but implementing and enforcing it may be tough.

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