

The Accelerated Growth in Global Tourism as a Cause for Concern for Developing Countries: A South African Case

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The global tourism industry has experienced accelerated growth in the past few decades, one that continues in an upward trajectory. This growth is confirmed in the international tourist arrivals which increased from a modest 25 million in 1950, to 940 million in 2010. It is projected that this growth will reach a momentous 1.8 billion by the year 2030. As a result, developing countries have positioned themselves strategically, to tap into this growth for their economic growth prospects. South Africa, a developing country, has identified tourism as a key driver to economic growth and inclusion. Attributed to its scenic beauty, affordability, relatively good infrastructure, favorable weather conditions, cultural diversity, fauna and flora and deep history, South Africa has become a destination of choice for many international tourists, particularly from developed countries. As this market has proven to be lucrative, mainly due an increase in foreign exchange earnings, South Africa's efforts to developing the tourism industry have been intensified. As the focus is mainly on economic development, the consequences of increased tourism activity are often overlooked. The impacts of the tourism industry on the environment, the local people and the economy still need more rigorous research. The social impacts, the focus of this paper, have displayed an alarming trend in recent years. These include human trafficking, prostitution, cultural dilution, exploitation of marginalized groups to name a few. This study, adopting a qualitative systematic review method, seeks to explore the possible extent to which the latter can be exacerbated, if the development of tourism is executed without caution. The method will employ evidence mapping and evidence synthesis, to yield valuable findings in the data analysis process. The research will contribute to literature, presenting valuable insights into the informed development of the tourism industry in South Africa, in a sustainable manner

Index Terms—Tourism, Impacts, Social Impacts, Sustainable Tourism