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Tourism partnerships: Harnessing tourist compassion to 'do good' through community development in Fiji

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ABSTRACT

Hotels create opportunities for tourists to 'do good' whilst on holiday, for example through participation in hotel-led programmes involving environmental clean-ups or donations to schools, the purchase of community-made products, or taking community and school tours. These initiatives foster in tourists a sense of compassion for communities in tourist destinations, but at the same time, effectively commodify the desire to 'do good'. Critically, initiatives centre predominantly on the gifting of tangible donations whilst precluding any engagement with either the structural causes of inequalities or the broader priorities of destination communities. Case studies are used to explore community perspectives of initiatives led by luxury hotels to support schools in Fiji. Findings highlight the tension between the commodification of tourist desire to give back to destination communities and their limitations in addressing community development priorities. We consider whether tourist compassion can be harnessed to work for communities through tourism partnerships, and reflect upon the kinds of tourism partnerships that might be effective mechanisms for realising the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, highlighting the need to delink addressing community needs from the feel-good tourist experience.

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1. Introduction

Hotels and resorts – especially in the Global South - create opportunities for tourists to 'do good' whilst on holiday, for example through participation in hotel-led programmes involving environmental clean-ups or donations to schools, the purchase of community-made products, or buying locally-made handicrafts when on a village tour. Such initiatives often contribute to meeting hotel commitments to local communities and appeal to guests who may be challenged by the disjuncture between their luxurious accommodation and the everyday living standards of those living outside of the hotel or resort. The World Values Survey has shown how this is part of a wider phenomenon whereby existence of inequalities '…can trigger feelings of empathy and compassion, thereby increasing altruism' (Mastromatteo & Russo, 2017, p. 136). Intriguingly, initiatives have evolved beyond the early endeavours to fundraise by accumulating tourists' loose change in a donation box, or adding fixed dollar donations to bills: now, tourists are increasingly seeking active involvement and sometimes driving charitable activities whilst on holiday (Chilufya, Hughes, & Scheyvens, 2019).

To date, much research on tourists involved in charitable ventures has focussed on voluntourism, examining the motivations and impacts of such engagement from the voluntourist's perspective (Schwarz & Richey, 2019; Wearing & McGehee, 2013b). Critical perspectives hold the benefits of development and global citizenship up to scrutiny (McLennan, 2019), along with critiquing the idea of the voluntourist as a 'rescuer' and communities as passive recipients of their largesse (e.g. Mostafanezhad, 2013, 2014). Little research has addressed the distinct phenomenon of tourists engaging in some form of charitable activity whilst on holiday, even though this is increasingly common as part of luxury vacations. Brown distinguishes between 'volunteer-minded' and 'vacation-minded' travellers, with the latter taking the opportunity to participate in 'brief encounters' with local people whilst on holiday (2005, p. 480). Furthermore, research to date has not delved into the development impact of such encounters. The increasing visibility of the tourist desire to help or give back and actively do something whilst on holiday obscures the perspective of the supposed 'beneficiaries', that is, the local communities. It does not question the nature of community involvement, whose needs are being addressed, what the development impacts might be, and nor does it problematise the desire to help.

We contend that attention to destination community perspectives has the potential to create opportunities for more meaningful

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interactions between tourists and community members, and better development outcomes. This echoes critical voluntourism approaches (e.g. Wearing & McGehee, 2013a). We therefore aim to examine the impacts on communities of the harnessing of tourist compassion to 'do good', and the implications of the commodification of the desire to give back to destination communities. We adopt a community-centred approach to explore the potential of tourism-community partnerships to address the development concerns of local communities in a meaningful way. Whilst the contribution of the tourism industry to employment, tax revenue and GDP is widely understood (UNWTO, 2019), hotels are also increasingly claiming to directly assist local communities through sustainability practices and development initiatives (Hughes & Scheyvens, 2016). The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015), further envisages that the private sector will create significant positive development impacts in tourism destination areas. We argue that if hotels and tourists are seeking to contribute to community development, it is vital to be aware of both the potential and the limitations of tourism as a force for development. The importance of the tourist experience and the 'feel-good' factor (Goodwin & Francis, 2003; Malone, McCabe, & Smith, 2014) must be weighed against the ability to mobilise meaningful, long-term development.

This article begins by examining the basis for tourist engagement with destination communities, focusing on the twin drivers of responsible tourism and feel-good experiences. We suggest that this engagement fundamentally relies on the commodification of tourist compassion which is problematic for the realisation of meaningful community development outcomes. We then examine the significance of tourism partnerships for communities, and outline the expectations of partnerships articulated in the 2030 Agenda. We go on to present examples from Fiji of two tourism-community partnerships, illustrating how tourist compassion is fostered, harnessed and commodified for the benefit of tourists and communities. An actor-oriented approach (Long, 2001) focuses on the points of interface between tourist companies, tourists, communities and other tourism stakeholders in order to understand the dynamics of the relationships between the different actors. By emphasising the intersection of context-specific relationships and priorities, an analysis of everyday practices is thus used to inform our understanding of the larger processes of international development. In making the case for a community-centred approach we also identify evidence of opportunities to harness tourist compassion to the benefit of host destinations, focusing on the potential for partnerships between the tourism industry and mediating organisations such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government entities.

2. Tourist engagement with communities: The commodification of doing good

The last three decades have seen an increased interest in responsible tourism, with tourists seeking greater sustainability (Mowforth & Munt, pp. 126-128, 2009; Poon, 2003), ethical tourism options (Lovelock & Lovelock, 2013; Scheyvens, 2011) and voluntourism opportunities (Christie, Fernandes, Messerli, & Twining-Ward, 2014; McGehee, 2014; McLennan, 2014). 'New' tourists were characterised by Poon in the 1990 s by their pursuit of more authentic experiences and greater concern for the environment (Poon, 1994), with Goodwin and Francis reviewing the shift from sun, sand and sea holidays towards 'experiences' in the early 2000s (Goodwin & Francis, 2003). Clearly reflecting the maxim that tourist expectations drive company decisions (Sharpley, 2015, pp. 358-359), tourist companies have generated opportunities to deliver tourist desires for 'a way to do good but have a good time doing it' (Wearing & McGehee, 2013a, p. 138). Opportunities range from slum tours (Mekawy, pp. 385-393, 2012; Mowforth & Munt, 2009) or, more controversially, orphanage tours (Guiney, 2018), to helping out at schools or health clinics (McLennan, 2019).

Goodwin and Francis contend that the 'aspiration to feel good is one of the main drivers of responsible tourism' (2003, p. 273); this has been echoed by others (Caruana, Glozer, Crane, & McCabe, 2014; Malone et al., 2014). A study into tourist perspectives identified a 'reciprocal relationship' between the tourist and the host destination which was perceived by tourists as an 'exchange relationship'. In the tourists' words they express 'giving something back' and refer to an outcome 'that is good for everybody' (Malone et al., 2014, pp. 249-250). However, the concern for the wellbeing of others centres on the concern experienced by the tourist rather than the actual experience of wellbeing of the other, with Ingram et al., noting the inherent expectation from tourists for their experience 'to involve profound personal, social and/or ecological transformation' (2017, p. 23) . Examining tourist engagement with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, Tran, Yu and Yoo discovered that guest satisfaction was derived primarily from personal interests and expectations being met, but also observed that where the action is taken by the tourism company, rather than the tourist personally, satisfaction can be experienced vicariously (2018, p. 3043).

The paradox of tourist-community engagement revolves around the coexistence of the consumption of tourism as a luxury commodity with altruistic and ethical concerns for people and places (Gössling, p. 130, 2018; Wearing & McGehee, 2013a). This is aligned with decision-making to 'do good' based on highly individualised and often self-interested moral principles which allow the tourist to 'feel good'. The role of empathy, with a greater focus on understanding or stepping into the shoes of another, signifies potential to shift the focus away from the tourist to the host destination residents. Tucker (2016) explores the links between tourism and empathy from a critical tourism perspective but contends that whilst empathy can generate 'intersubjective understanding' between tourists and communities, tourist empathy for the 'other' is also linked with neoliberal discourse and a market-oriented logic. The imperative for tourists 'to care' effectively transfers responsibility away from the tourism company to address inequalities as a result of tourism, and puts the onus on the tourist as consumer (2016, p. 35). Mostafanezhad similarly notes the capacity for empathy to be coopted by the market referring to 'cosmopolitan empathy' as a corollary of global capitalism (2014, p. 86).

As tourist desire to 'do good' is commodified in the drive to create new tourist experiences, this is linked to tourist satisfaction. Hotels thus also benefit: channelling tourist desire to care enables hotels to demonstrate responsibility towards destination communities, building their brand by both 'doing good and looking good' (Enghel & Noske-Turner, 2018), particularly in the Global South. There is, however, little focus on the involvement of local communities in ethical tourism practices or indications of how tourist responsibility can be aligned to host destination priorities. The following section explores the potential for a community-centred approach to shift the emphasis from the tourist experience to community-driven outcomes and in so doing disrupt the relationship between doing good and feeling good.

3. Decommodifying doing good? a community-centred approach

Given the problematic nature of tourist-community engagement highlighted above, how can the tourist capacity for compassion and drive to do good effectively be harnessed for the benefit of both tourists and destinations? We can begin by drawing on

ethical tourism research on commodification and material culture. For example, whilst travel can support transformative learning with the potential to foster processes of sustainability (Ballantyne & Packer, 2011), Gössling's (2018) research highlights the need to create sustainable learning opportunities that disrupt materialistic patterns of consumption. In relation to voluntourism, Wearing and McGehee propose a decommodified approach to tourism research, by which they mean a focus on alternative, more holistic community-based approaches which are linked with community development strategies and demonstrate community inclusion in their decision-making (2013a, p. 129).

We can also look to Cole's research on Flores, Indonesia, which illustrates that while in some cases touristic commodification leads to disempowerment of communities, in others it can become a powerful resource (2007, p. 944). Cole identifies for example, how 'tourism turns culture into a commodity, packaged and sold to tourists' (p. 945) including performances and the arts. Tourists, in turn, sometimes describe tourism as 'spoiling' villages. However, Cole goes on to demonstrate that community participation in tourism on Flores gave villagers access to political and economic capital. A sense of pride in cultural heritage and empowerment sometimes resulted from cultural commodification: thus Cole's work reorients the analysis to situate host communities as active engagers rather than passive respondents. She suggests that 'a better understanding is needed of how cultural tourism is used by marginalized groups to gain power and how they can use the identity and pride that commodifying their cultural identity appears to bring. The interface between cultural commodification and ownership may be crucial to marginalized people gaining or maintaining control of tourism in their midst' (p. 956).

In approaching the commodification of tourist compassion, questions need to be directed towards examining the impact on destination communities and under what circumstances communities are able to effectively use this as a resource – how can this be harnessed to generate positive outcomes for communities? As with the commodification of culture, ownership may be key, both of resources, and of planning processes and decision-making capability (Scheyvens, 2011). The role of relationships – and partnerships – is therefore critical.

The voluntourism literature suggests the importance of the relationship between volunteer tourism organisations and local communities, in tandem with the importance of partnerships between multiple sectors and organisations in enabling this (Wearing & McGehee, 2013a). In the voluntourism sector, particular issues for communities include the lack of opportunities for involvement in tourism-related decision making in general, and lack of connection to government decision-making processes in particular, in addition to the lack of financial, social and vocational benefits generated through use of community resources (Wearing, 2001, p. 146). Furthermore, there is 'no mechanism to check the local community's assessment of volunteer impacts' (Wearing & McGehee, 2013a, p. 134) and there is inadequate understanding of long-term impacts (p.140). In particular, we need to consider the impact of tourism on communities in a holistic way: we know that communities see Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in terms of the broader immanent effects of the corporate presence rather than intentional programmes – for example, they might care more about jobs created by tourism and procurement of local produce by the resort restaurant than about a few dollars earned from village tours (Banks, Scheyvens, McLennan, & Bebbington, 2016; McLennan & Banks, 2019). Research on other forms of tourist-community engagement such as slum tours also indicates that the key to enabling a positive impact for communities is collaborative and responsible planning which honours citizens' rights (Mekawy, 2012). In light of these findings, the next section considers partnerships in more detail, examining the potential for private sector – community partnerships to contribute to sustainable development outcomes for communities, and the expectations for partnerships in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

4. Partnerships and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

A focus on multi-stakeholder partnerships in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development emphasises the opportunity for collaboration between private, public and civil society organisations to lead to positive and sustainable community development outcomes (United Nations, 2015). It is widely acknowledged that achieving the ambitious framework of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets will require the collaboration of a wide range of actors across multiple sectors (Haywood, Funke, Audouin, Musvoto, & Nahman, 2018). While partnership is by no means a new concept in development circles, the way that the 2030 agenda elevates private actors as having equal status in delivering on the goals is somewhat novel (Scheyvens, Banks, & Hughes, 2016). Many assert that the private sector has particular strengths to bring to bear in delivering on the SDGs, including business knowledge, innovation, agility, creativity, efficiency and provision of specific skills and resources (Lucci, 2012; Porter & Kramer, 2011). Partners are specifically called upon to 'mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources' and to 'encourage and promote effective public, public–private and civil society partnerships' to facilitate the implementation of the goals (United Nations, 2015). This, consequently, places considerable responsibility at the hands of the hotels and resorts planning community development initiatives.

The word "partnership" is generally evoked to describe various forms of collaboration between or among a range of development actors. In the world of sustainable development this can include multilateral or bilateral donors, government departments, private sector entities, philanthropic organisations, NGOs and other civil society organisations, and communities. Certainly partnerships offer much potential for channelling more resources to development and achieving more effective outcomes, but this does not happen automatically. "Partnership" can be highly complex to operationalise where there are diverse organisations with competing interests at play, across richer and poorer countries (Schaaf, 2015). It is important to be aware of the pitfalls, and for development partners to strive to ensure they are genuinely working together to serve the needs or support the rights of those who are vulnerable, poor, and disadvantaged. The very real power differentials that exist between various institutions working in the development field can suggest that partnership is a misnomer. Kamphof and Melissen, for example, warn that the rhetoric of partnership does not '...prevent friction, lack of mutual understanding or cultural clashes with the private sector' (2018, p. 327).

It is suggested that all partnerships to achieve the SDGs, whether driven by the private sector or others, will need '...to be accountable, as well as people- and planet-centred' (Haywood et al., 2018, p. 1). This aligns with our interest in a community-centred approach to hotel and tourist resort efforts to contribute to local development. A way forward might be multi-stakeholder partnerships that involve profit-centred entities, such as hotels and resorts, working alongside either government entities (whose mandate is to serve the people and regulate development) or NGOs (whose mandate is to serve people and/or planet).

There is evidence that partnerships in tourism can be effective for community development outcomes through collaborations between tourism companies, NGOs, government agencies and communities. Partnership models such as shared equity for the

community, as in the case of Wilderness Safaris in South Africa (Ashley & Haysom, 2006), ensure the benefits to communities are enduring. In Fiji, the Coral Gardens Initiative was a community-based model for marine resource management, developed in conjunction with the landowning community, a resort, an NGO, government departments and a tourism consultancy (Clark, 2008; Robinson, 2002, 2008). The Marine Protected Areas established in 2001 through this initiative have largely remained in place to date. There is less evidence, however, of the direct involvement of tourists in community partnerships (with the exception of Chilufya et. al (2019)). By investigating a community perspective of hotel-tourist-community partnerships we examine the potential for these partnerships to address the development concerns of local communities in a meaningful way.

5. Methodology

In order to unpack the dynamics of tourist compassion and their compulsion to 'do good' whilst on holiday, we examine examples of two tourism partnerships from Fiji. Fiji is the largest tourist destination in the South Pacific and there is therefore a heavy reliance on tourism, with the sector contributing 40 percent of Fiji's Gross Domestic Product and 14 percent of direct employment (SPTO, 2019). Benefits of tourism extend beyond employment and income to support education, infrastructure, community development and revitalisation of culture and traditions (Scheyvens & Russell, 2012). Tourism is concentrated in four main areas, namely the Coral Coast, Nadi, the Mamanuca and Yasawa Islands and Suva (Harrison & Prasad, 2013, p. 747), whilst international hotel chains are located almost entirely in Nadi and the Coral Coast, the two areas of focus of this study. Transnational companies dominate premium tourism in Fiji, with hotels most often located on land leased from indigenous landowning communities on 99-year leases. As an upper middle-income country, poverty in Fiji is declining, but over one quarter of the population of around 900,000 still remain below the poverty line (Ministry of Economy, 2017). There is a high literacy rate and access to primary and secondary education, but schools are often poorly resourced, making them a popular target for hotel interventions.

The authors were both part of a project that explored the role of the private sector in doing community development. The research presented here was designed to investigate how hotel-led community development initiatives benefitted communities, employing methodologies to prioritise community perspectives and examine interactions between hotel management, tourists and communities. A qualitative approach was adopted as most suited to development research seeking 'understanding of complex social phenomena that takes place in a naturalistic setting, where the goal is to both understand and find meaning, and perhaps bring about change' (Stewart-Withers, Banks, McGregor, & Meo-Sewabu, 2014, p. 60). This approach is able to implicitly recognise unequal power relations (between community members and hotels) as well as cultural protocols in the South Pacific and enables in-depth investigation to gather detailed and rich responses from participants.

To foreground community perspectives in a Fijian context the research was guided by Nabobo-Baba's Vanua Research Framework to allow for the incorporation of 'Fijian world views, knowledge systems, lived experience, representations, cultures and values' (Nabobo-Baba, 2008, p. 143). This framework shaped the research process, from project inception to returning knowledge to communities, and relied on the support of Fijian mentors, advisors and research assistants throughout.

An actor-oriented approach (Long, 2001) was used to emphasise the importance of context-specific social relations and networks of relations, making it ideally suited to an analysis of community-level partnerships. The focus is on the points of interface 'where different, and often conflicting, lifeworlds or social fields intersect' (Long, 2001, p. 65) and the negotiations and interactions that occur in these spaces. 'Lifeworlds' here incorporates an individual's actions, interactions with others and the meanings they attribute to these. The social interface, then, becomes the space where we can view the linkages, intersections and conflicts between lifeworlds, or as Long expresses it, the point where '*social discontinuities*, based upon discrepancies in values, interests, knowledge and power, are most likely to be located' (p. 243, emphasis in original). One key feature of this approach is the connection made between local level actions and global processes and 'the ways in which "micro-scale" interactional settings and localised arenas are connected to wider "macro-scale" phenomena and vice versa' (Long, 2001, p. 50). Investigation explores how individual actions are shaped by larger forces, for example class or power, and how these same social practices and interactions can affect larger-scale systems (pp. 64–65). In relation to tourist involvement in community development, and the processes of 'doing good' whilst on holiday, this allows an examination of the interfaces between tourists, hotels with programmes supporting local communities, and the communities themselves, how these are shaped and where the discrepancies might lie between intent and outcomes. A community-centred perspective considers development interventions and what 'these same "projects" might mean for the "beneficiaries", the implications of recipients' *agency* upon the project, and its everyday outcomes' (Villarreal, 1992, p. 258, emphasis in original). Those living in destination communities are seen as active participants rather than passive beneficiaries of interventions (Long & Long, 1992, p. 21), with their own 'self-organising' processes and strategies (Long, 2015, p. 39). This perspective is also connected to a decommodification approach to tourism that prioritises community-defined development (Wearing & McGehee, 2013a) and views communities as active engagers not passive respondents, therefore recognising the potential for communities to harness tourism as a resource (Cole, 2007).

A case study approach was used as it provides the opportunity to 'shed empirical light on some theoretical concepts or principles' (Yin, 2018, p. 38). Specifically, an exploratory, instrumental case study approach was adopted because the issue explored (that is, hotel-led community development) was more important than the case itself (O'Reilly, 2009, p. 25). Sites were therefore purposefully selected in order to build broader knowledge and understanding because of the issues they highlight. The findings from each site allowed the authors to 'illuminate themes or draw inferences' (O'Reilly, 2009, p. 23) from experiences of hotel-led community development programmes in two different communities, and how tourism compassion is harnessed to 'do good'.

The first author did the majority of primary research of tourism enterprises for this project. Research sites chosen were two of the most popular tourist locations in Fiji, the Coral Coast and Denarau (as indicated above), where tourists at large (100 + rooms) internationally-owned resorts have the opportunity to participate in community initiatives such as school and community tours. Research involved a period of 2 months spent in villages neighbouring each resort during 2015, documenting the everyday practices of hotel involvement in community development projects in order to determine the extent of hotel, tourist and community involvement in initiatives and understand how communities benefit.

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with resort management, staff and volunteers involved in the programmes, as well as communities involved in initiatives. These included members of landowning and neighbouring communities and school principals from four primary schools and one secondary school. Observa-

tional visits were made to four primary schools and three kindergartens. Interviews were also held with staff in the provincial education offices and the Deputy Permanent Secretary Education, and with partnering NGOs. Interviews with hotel staff explored the types of support organised and how initiatives are resourced, carried out, monitored and reported. Community interviews investigated local involvement in the initiatives and how the support aligned with community development priorities, whilst schools and NGOs were asked about their involvement in planning and decision-making as well as the benefits of initiatives. This study prioritised community perspectives and tourists were not interviewed, which would make a valuable complement for future research. In total 86 interviews were undertaken: 17 with landowners, 14 with non-landowning community members, 20 interviews with resort management and staff, 6 with tourism organisations, 6 with school staff, 11 with government employees, and 12 with third sector organisations (including hotel unions, NGOs, private sector organisations and tertiary institutions). The majority of hotel and organisational interviews were voice recorded whilst at most village interviews participant preference was note taking. Interviews were carried out in English; where Fijian language was used by participants during an interview this was interpreted by a Fijian research assistant. Interviews were then either transcribed or written up and NVivo was used to manage, categorise, code and analyse the data.

Participant observation included observing school tours and a school library run by hotels, a school review implemented by the hotel CSR committee, a CSR committee meeting, a Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association chapter meeting, a hotel-sponsored health and safety workshop for school teachers, two activities for hotel staff as part of their voluntary commitments to CSR, and a community *soli* (fundraising event). The interviews and observation in combination allowed in-depth investigation of the perspectives of the different groups of actors and analysis of the differing priorities. Through documenting the everyday, micro-level practices and interactions related to hotel-led community development, this enabled a better understanding of the social processes at play and how these might be connected to wider national and global processes.

6. Fostering tourist compassion: Tourists and education in Fiji

The study focused on hotel initiatives with a specific community benefit. This covered support for education and health initiatives, procurement of local food, entertainment and services, and fair employment practices for local staff. Of these, the greatest direct involvement of tourists was through education initiatives and community-based entertainment (school and village tours). Both resorts studied had CSR programmes focusing on education and in both instances the specific focus of community assistance was determined by local hotel management, with one hotel selecting three schools for ongoing long-term assistance, and the other hotel choosing to assist a wide range of schools with a commitment to assist as large a number of students as possible over time. The two hotels together supported more than 25 schools directly in addition to assistance for local kindergartens and ad hoc support for additional schools in each district. This included infrastructure, for example construction and repair of classrooms and facilities, donation of computers and vocational training (usually, hospitality) equipment, financial support for teacher training initiatives, and staff volunteer time for school clean-up, beautification and painting projects. A significant focus too is on tourist contributions to the schools. This includes donations of books, toys, stationery, clothing, musical instruments and sports and play equipment. Some of these donations are quite significant: for example, one guest donated 32 kilos of exercise books, another donated sets of ukuleles for 5 schools, another gave 150 gift packs of clothing and stationery for boarding school students, while another arranged for a 20 foot container of stationery to be shipped from Australia.

Compassion and the desire to do good by tourists is fostered by the hotels in different ways. Fiji is famous for its hospitality with the 'Bula welcome' and the friendliness of the people often cited as one of the main reasons for tourists to return to Fiji (Kanemasu, 2015, p. 76). Guests often make a connection with staff in the resorts and are motivated to give back to their hosts. Returning guests will often then bring donated goods from their home country. As part of their sponsorship of local schools, the hotels promote the opportunities for guests to donate through photos and stories of the schools and schoolchildren in guest rooms, in the foyer, in newsletters and on social media. School and community tours provide guests with the opportunity to visit in person, and at the same time this constitutes one of the tours/entertainment options for guests during their stay.

The lifeworlds under examination here therefore include hotel management, staff and hotel guests whose lifeworlds intersect with those of landowning communities, school staff, children and families. There is also an overlap between hotel employees and community members as many staff are drawn from local areas. Examination of the interactions between the different actors can reveal how development spaces are formed, how compassion is generated, harnessed and what limits or enables the resulting development outcomes.

The following sections examine the interfaces where tourists engage with communities, and the motivations, decision-making, accountabilities and development outcomes that occur as a result of these interactions.

6.1. Tourist-community interface

Much support for schools is generated by providing opportunities for tourists to 'give back' to the community. Primary schools and kindergartens are the most popular target. A typical school tour involves tourists arriving by tour bus, often as part of a longer tour, and being welcomed by the principal or another teacher and senior students. A guide, usually employed by the hotel, manages the tour and provides information to guests about the school and location. The tourists are free to wander around the school to watch classes in action, talk to students and take photographs. Students will sometimes provide entertainment, for example singing or dancing, and there is an opportunity for tourists to personally hand over donations to student representatives. A donation tin is provided for cash donations, but it is clear that tourists prefer to give tangible donations, sometimes wishing to select particular classes or even students to receive the gifts. From the tourist perspective, opportunities to physically hand over gifts are a high priority. This must be managed by hotel staff to ensure the guests feel that their donation is recognised and appreciated.

I also spend time making the donors feel special, sending thank you emails, forging relationships.... sometimes they [the donors] don't feel like they have got that recognition or gratitude so I have to create the scenarios where they can be rewarded for their efforts - this means the gifts have to go to the school tour schools rather than the more remote ones [Hotel CSR manager]

Although the hotel staff go to considerable effort to solicit the donation of particular items in advance of the tourists arriving based on a list drawn up with the schools concerned, the actual donations were ultimately the tourists' choice, including reading books, stationery, and sometimes toys. Both resorts in our study banned tourists from gifting lollies or sweets. One school principal lamented the lack of control the school had over donations:

What they bring depends on the donors. They used to bring the things to the office and we would send them where needed. Now the visitors want to decide - they want to help a particular class [School principal, primary school].

In a collective culture as in Fiji, the singling out of individual classes or students to receive gifts can be uncomfortable for recipients, and the donation experience appears to reflect the demands of the giver rather than the needs or wishes of the recipients. As a rule, management and guests exercise benevolence whilst schools are expected to practice gratitude.

The impact of school visits can be variable. They generate an important avenue of funding and donations for schools including monetary donations and gifts of toys, books and stationery. However, for many schools on the tourist trail a balance must be struck between the time dedicated to tourists and the loss of teaching time. For hotels, guest satisfaction is a priority and tours are often organised with this in mind: visits to kindergartens and primary schools are more popular than visits to high schools and as many guests want to present gifts personally this can mean that the majority of gifts are donated to schools close to the hotel, thus older students often miss out. Tourist desire to donate gifts in person also reflects a focus on the experience of giving and the imagined good the gifts will do rather than the needs of the recipient. The need for hotels to be responsive to satisfying guest demands effectively means that their accountability is to tourists, rather than to communities, whilst tourists take on the responsibility to address inequalities, but without accountability. Thus, although the partnerships established are between the hotel and the school, opportunities to do good are largely organised according to tourist preferences and meet the need to fulfil the emotional satisfaction of tourists. A preference for certain types of compassion is in evidence, in this case for children, particularly of primary and kindergarten age, and for the gifting of tangible rather than monetary donations.

6.2. Community-hotel interface

There is evidence of limited involvement of communities, including schools, in planning or managing initiatives. In relation to development outcomes, accountability is generally weak, it can be difficult to address actual needs and the nature of rapid turnover of guests, and also of hotel management, can mean that a focus on long-term structural change is absent. Where schools are recipients of donations they can be reluctant to make demands for accountability or to challenge the offers of help where they are made. Requests from schools may echo what they think hotels have to offer and, cultural practice in Fiji dictates that they be respectful towards donors and thankful for the assistance.

We don't want to impose because they are offering their services. They do it free of charge [school principal].

The distinct roles of donor and beneficiary evident in these scenarios illustrate the unequal dimensions inherent to the process of gifting and receiving support, and raise questions around the nature of the 'partnership' between communities and hotels.

Where communities are not directly involved in setting the priorities, there is also a risk that donor assumptions will drive the assistance offered. At one school, which had been provided with a new kitchen, the children's lunch was still being cooked on an open fire in the shelter outside rather than on the new stove, as that was the usual practice. At another school, computers were provided but the school's electricity supply couldn't cope with the demand so they remained unused. Where the development of amenities or equipment is undertaken based on donor priorities patterns of use may be limited, or incompatible with community norms.

Equally, however, we found instances where donations may be used in unanticipated ways to suit the recipient's needs. For example, one principal recounted how hotel support for infrastructure development had enabled them to renovate the computer space, which in addition to computer classes for school students is now used to give internet access to the community on Saturday mornings; this is highly valued as a way of connecting with family overseas. In another example, one primary school used the school tours as an opportunity to create a leadership exercise for senior students who then direct the tours and build confidence speaking to visitors. Thus unanticipated outcomes add value to the interventions. This resonates with participants in Long's studies who 'appropriate and fashion [the project] to meet their own conceptions' (Long, 2001, p. 81), and with Cole's acknowledgement of the potential of touristic commodification to become a powerful resource (2007). Greater attention to everyday local practices allows recognition of social and cultural values and their role in achieving development outcomes as well as recognising the agency of the communities to repurpose donations to fit their priorities.

In relation to structural and long-term change sought by communities, one CSR programme is committed by mandate from their hotel brand's head office, overseas, to long-term sponsorship of schools. However, despite the commitment to assistance on an indefinite basis, the school expressed concern that the donations may not continue after a change in manager. Other programmes are particularly vulnerable to changes in management.

It is also worth emphasising that several community leaders expressed that, rather than donations of library books to the local school, they had a preference for greater control over resources, as landowners, and secure employment contracts for local community members.

If they go and help out [the school], that's [the hotel's] money, but we are asking for our fair share of our resources [landowner, village elder].

The biggest need, what we have been trying to tell them, is that we need our people to be employed [landowner].

This perspective was reinforced by a union leader who emphasised that the greatest social responsibility of the hotels is the workers. These discrepancies between the intent and outcomes of CSR initiatives indicate that the partnerships in place between hotels, tourists and communities require additional support to effectively respond to community needs. The next section outlines the role of NGOs and the state in this process.

6.3. Role of partnership: NGOs and the state as intercalaries

Partnerships with intermediary organisations such as NGOs provide a potential channel to more effectively harness tourist compassion and shape it to community needs, allowing communities to exercise agency and prioritise long-term goals. Such 'development brokers' operate at the interface between donors and communities and are able to mediate between both positions (Bierschenk, Chauveau, De Sardan, & Kossi, 2002, p. 37). For example, the NGO Rise Beyond the Reef explicitly aims to work as an intermediary between hotels and tourists and communities. In their work with a remote rural community, they found that school drop-out rates were a big issue for the community. Working with the village council they identified the need for a kindergarten as the first step in improving education for the community and then approached a hotel for their support through their CSR programme. Radisson Blu financed the project in addition to contributing design skills, carpentry expertise and power tools, villagers took

responsibility for the construction whilst guests donated furniture, books and toys. An NGO manager identified the success factors in establishing an NGO-private sector partnership:

> Listening and understanding skills on the part of the expatriate donors is needed. Communities are clear about what they need, but they can't always articulate it in the way hotels can connect to, unless you spend time listening to them. They [the private sector] wouldn't know how to conceptualise it in terms of how it physically fits into the cultural fabric. [NGOs] have an intermediate role. It's about empowerment and sustainability [NGO manager, Rise Beyond the Reef].

Tourists are yet further removed from understanding community needs. The danger of tying community development outcomes to responsible tourism practices therefore lies in positioning host destination development at the whim of a tourist's ethical values. McKercher reminds us that tourists are consumers not anthropologists, thus neither they nor companies should be expected to act as development agents (1993). This makes a compelling case for the involvement of third party development agents such as NGOs within a community-centred approach. Long refers to this role as an 'intercalary' (Long, 2001, p. 70) or intermediary position which can help bridge this communication gap. In practice, a third party can be effective in ensuring that community priorities are addressed by working through village structures, as well as taking advantage of hotel skills and tourist desires to donate. Resorts are in fact well-placed to establish connections with both overseas charities and national organisations both through their guests and through their presence in Fiji. NGOs are able to invest the time and skills that industry is typically lacking and tourists have little knowledge of, for example in scoping, baseline studies and participatory planning. They can also provide a buffer between communities and industry to facilitate better communication. Although collaboration generally takes longer to establish and implement, outcomes can lead to long-term solutions.

Government partnerships also can render tourist support more effective by aligning it with regional or national development goals. The Ministry of Education in Fiji has acknowledged that with assistance from resorts and their guests, schools are better able to meet their priorities outlined in their annual and strategic plans. Communication with the Ministry through provincial education offices can also ensure the correct permits and registrations are provided and procedures followed where project assistance is provided (e.g. for volunteers in schools and building permits for new kindergartens). Although collaboration and communication is currently uneven and could be utilised to greater effect, there is evidence of collaboration resulting in more coordinated outcomes. For example, an Australian NGO, It's Time Foundation, which donates solar panels to schools in remote locations, had provided four schools with systems before the Ministry of Education became aware of the work. Since then, the Ministry has been able to connect the NGO with other Fiji-based donors to coordinate access for other remote schools in need of solar power. The advantages of a centralised focus can also be seen in disaster management. A lack of coordination between donors and national strategies became particularly evident after Fiji's 2009 floods. The Ministry of Education reported that multiple donors were assisting schools and individual students in different ways across the country with no shared knowledge or planning. In response, the Ministry initiated a system to coordinate donors centrally, which has since worked effectively in cyclone responses.[1] With respect to school tours, the Ministry of Education has recently moved to control tourist visits to schools in order to protect students. Recognising the disruption to children's education and the potential risk to students posed by tours, the Ministry now requires school tours to be approved by the Fiji Teachers Registration Board[2].

7. Discussion

The findings shed light on how tourist compassion is fostered, harnessed and commodified through hotel initiatives such as school tours and donations to schools, and the limited extent to which this compassion is translated into community benefit. The above examples from Fiji thus raise a number of concerns. Firstly, there is a tendency for community voices to be negated and communities to be positioned as passive recipients of assistance. We have shown that recipients of tourist donations are grateful for support, but as a consequence are reluctant to make demands and can exert little agency. The limited involvement of schools in decision-making and the gaps in communication that persist reflect the unequal dynamics of the encounters between 'donor' and 'beneficiary', resonating with Rajak's discussion of the 'power of the gift' to empower the donor while oppressing the recipient (2010, p. 1). Secondly, the lack of accountability of tourists to communities and a focus on donating gifts according to tourist decision-making undermines the ability for initiatives to respond to community priorities or address long term or structural concerns. Tourist preference for certain types of compassion is illustrated through the elevation of childhood as a 'signifier of humanitarian identity' (Manzo, 2008, p. 632) with younger children in particular the target of protection and care. In general, communities exert minimal agency in the design, planning, implementation of hotel-sponsored projects, including school visits and donations, and tourists are not accountable for the outcomes of development support provided, drawing attention to the imbalance between tourism and communities as 'partners' in development. Thirdly, we see an emphasis on the handover of tangible donations as a way of giving back or expressing compassion, which is both about the resort and the tourists 'doing good' and 'looking good' (Enghel & Noske-Turner, 2018). Consistent with findings from research into unsolicited bilateral donations, this suggests that for the donor 'the tangible nature of goods makes it easier [for them] to confirm the good it will do' (Australian Council for International Development, 2019, p. 9). It also embodies the commodification of compassion, exemplifying the narrative of 'buying into development' (Ponte & Richey, 2014). Commodification occurs not only through the marketing of the opportunity to give back, but also involves the buying and giving of tangible gifts. This is very similar to other kinds of the marketisation of development (Richey, 2018) consistent with the normalised neoliberal model of helping through buying, for example TOMS shoes or Product Red, but in this case the gifts are often hand-delivered, providing a way for empathy and global responsibility to be played out in person. In a tourism context, this is explicitly linked to the feel-good tourism experience. Tucker makes the link between empathy and the appropriation of the other's cause, arguing that the 'reification of proximity and encounter' can lead to an unreflective and unquestioning empathy (Tucker, 2016, p. 41).

There is evidence of alternative possibilities to address these limitations and harness tourist compassion more effectively. Where villages are able to set the agenda, for example for school tours or community internet provision, they have been able to benefit more substantially. The benefits of co-opting projects to

[1] Pers.comm. Acting Deputy Secretary (primary and secondary education) 21 August 2014.

[2] Schools to No Longer Host Tourists: Ministry. Fiji Sun 2 November 2018. https://fijisun.com.fj/2018/11/02/schools-to-no-longer-host-tourists-ministry-2/

meet alternative priorities, or what Long would call creating 'room for manoeuvre', provides an indication of the possibilities of harnessing tourist compassion as a valuable resource. Communities elsewhere, including the Hmong in Vietnam (Turner, 2012) and Dayak communities in Malaysia (Cramb & Sujang, 2011), show evidence of setting the agenda by incorporating new economic opportunities with their own livelihood approaches to allow them to negotiate development on their own terms. Rather than positioning communities as passive, Turner points to the need for development practitioners to recognise that minority groups at times 'already have their livelihoods figured out' and do not need rescuing (2012, p. 417). Yet at the same time her analysis does not reject interventions, in this case by the state, suggesting that instead an alternative approach 'can seek to challenge the subordination of alternative knowledges and interpretations (p. 418), providing a hopeful template for tourist compassion.

Examining the intersections between hotels, tourists and communities from an actor-oriented perspective also allows reflection on the potential of partnerships to enhance the ability to meet community priorities and address the gap between making community needs known and the tourist desire to help. We have shown how the various development interfaces overlap and the significance of the coincidence or collision of interests in these spaces for community development. Actual interactions and engagement at development interfaces involve a variety of actors, including government, NGOs and other intermediaries such as international charities and other private sector organisations. Partnerships between these stakeholders have the potential to mediate tourist desire to do good to better align with national and community priorities. Communities are able to utilise support in ways that are most appropriate to them where an 'intercalary' is present to be able to best shape support to local priorities. This is more likely to lead to longer-term change, for instance the community-led early learning centre. The development interfaces between hotels, tourists and communities are also shaped by the state, which plays a critical role in shaping opportunities and behaviours and creating a conducive environment (or otherwise) for the tourist industry.

There are limitations to how well such partnerships work in practice, however. The state, for example, is restricted in terms of how it regulates forms of tourist interaction with communities because national policies are shaped by pressures, for example to maintain a competitive tourism industry. It is in this environment that the expectations for the private sector in the Sustainable Development Goals must take heed of the pressures from powerful actors (Scheyvens et al., 2016). In an environment where companies hold increasing power the state sometimes tries to manage conflicts between local communities and companies to ensure companies continue to invest (Fernando, 2003, p. 67). Wilson argues that strategies are required 'that even out…unequal power relations so that local communities benefit more from regulation relative to corporations and other powerful actors' (2013, p. 256). Similarly, it is important also to acknowledge that partnerships between NGOs, the private sector and communities do not always go smoothly: there is potential for corruption, nepotism or self-interest which can sabotage relationships with intermediaries. For instance, Fernando notes that NGO collaborations with Indigenous communities can prioritise donor goals and timeframes and ultimately serve to 'generate social capital necessary for the colonization of local communities by transnational capital' (2003, p. 69). Private sector development partnerships, in general, face difficulties in achieving effective outcomes including demonstrating accountability to communities and facilitating the inclusion of community voices and agency (Vestergaard, Murphy, Morsing, & Langevang, 2019). However, the additional element of tourist compassion presents a further challenge for partnerships between NGOs, hotels, tourists and destination communities: whilst NGOs prioritise community expectations, hotels must prioritise delivering on tourist expectations.

Tourist desire to do good is closely linked to the imperative to feel good and look good, which can also elevate the corporate brand of a hotel, however this often fails to deliver effective community development. Taking a critical tourism studies lens points towards alternative approaches which would shift the emphasis from tourists to destination communities and at the same time disrupt the association between materialist gifting by tourists towards addressing development concerns of local communities. Examples could include incorporating community decision-making, building on community knowledge and priorities, and respecting citizens' rights; this aligns with Higgins-Desbiolles' (2020) notion of a community-centred tourism framework. Similarly, critical tourism scholars have pointed to the imperative for degrowth of the tourism economy and as such, Büscher and Fletcher assert that 'tourism should move radically from a private and privatizing activity to one founded in and contributing to the common' (2017, p. 664). An approach centred on the interests and aspirations of destination communities could certainly coincide with this ethos. Critical voluntourism perspectives meanwhile suggest that the commodification of volunteering and development outcomes for communities are not mutually exclusive, with positive impacts encompassing lasting relationships, mutual solidarity and understanding, and cross-cultural learning (McLennan, 2019, p. 348). Extending these ideas then, tourists could be encouraged to develop a deeper understanding of the lives and aspirations of people in destination communities, rather than prompting the purchase of gifts to donate. For example, hotel guests could be provided with information on a local community's own development plans and their progress on this, with a donation to the community's development committee added to the tourist's bill at the end of their stay. Tourists could also be encouraged to take community-run tours whereby people represent themselves and their situation on their own terms, in line with a more inclusive approach to development (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018). Such approaches to decommodifying 'doing good' could offer the potential to foster meaningful global solidarity (McLennan, 2019) and a more reflective sense of empathy (Tucker, 2016) among tourists.

8. Conclusion

This article has explored the tension between the commodification of tourist desire to 'do good' in destination communities and a commitment on the part of tourism businesses to sustainable tourism development, adding to the literature on critical tourism studies, and extending critical voluntourism literature to the examination of tourist involvement in community development. Evidence shows that tourist compassion is commodified by tourism companies in the pursuit of meeting changing tourist demands, as well as to contribute visibly to their community support efforts and maintain good relationships with nearby communities. The drive to create opportunities for tourists to contribute to community development effectively commodifies the desire to 'to good' and shifts the responsibility from hotels to tourists to counter unsustainable development and poverty in destination communities. The assistance offered is then rather superficial and does not necessarily meet the priorities of communities. To address actual needs and the structural causes of poverty and inequality in order to produce change is likely to be too uncomfortable and difficult for tourists. It might also require addressing tourist behaviour. This is inconsistent with the notion of the 'feel-good' tourist experience.

There might, however, be opportunities for partnerships between tourists, companies and communities to be effective mechanisms for realising Sustainable Development Goals. The

'revitalised Global Partnership' is expected to bring together governments, civil society, the private sector, the UN system and others to strengthen the implementation of the goals in Agenda 2030. In terms of meeting the SDGs, we suggest that a more critical approach needs to be taken to tourism partnerships, with further research needed to examine the development impacts of tourism partnerships, and the role of tourists in these partnerships. We see some evidence of mobilising and sharing knowledge and expertise and examples of some effective private sector-civil society partnerships. There is less evidence of creating space for local leadership. Critical analysis is needed from tourism scholars to consider how tourism partnerships can best meet the SDGs.

We conclude that if tourist compassion is to be harnessed to benefit host destinations, then tourist companies must acknowledge local leadership and be open to alternative approaches that allow for community agency. By stepping outside of the imperative to feel good and look good in order to do good, tourists can also open up possibilities for increased empathy with destination communities whilst making space for community development aspirations to come to the fore.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Emma Hughes: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal a, nalysis, Investigation, Methodology, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing. **Regina Scheyvens:** Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Supervision, Project administration, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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