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Tourism in Deqin, China : a cultural, economic, and environmental assessment

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TOURISM IN DEQIN, CHINA: A CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, AND
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Environmental Studies

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

by

Pete Parker

May 2006

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TOURISM IN DEQIN, CHINA: A CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, AND
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

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ABSTRACT

TOURISM IN DEQIN, CHINA: A CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

By Pete Parker

Conservationists are increasingly turning to tourism to provide economic alternatives to natural resource consumption. Tourism can be a less environmentally damaging form of economic development than traditional extraction practices, however there are often drastic accompanying adverse social effects. Developing a sustainable form of tourism necessitates identifying and incorporating local social, cultural, economic, and environmental values and goals. This research assesses the attitudes and perceptions of local residents toward tourism and conservation efforts in Deqin, China, a community that is 80% Tibetan and part of a World Wildlife Fund biodiversity hotspot. Local residents in the Deqin area generally have a positive perception towards the effects associated with tourism development; however, equal and democratic participation in the planning and management of tourism has been minimal. This case study research utilized interviews, informal surveys, and participant observation to identify the underlying beliefs behind participation in the tourism industry in Deqin and the surrounding area.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

China has a total of 1,276 nature reserves covering 12.4% of its territory. Ninety-seven percent of these reserves were established over the past two decades (CEPF 2002). This rapid designation has led to management lagging far behind in the creation of necessary conservation strategies. Effective management for most of the country's protected areas has been lacking for many years due to insufficient funds, weak scientific research for backing tourism development, absence of a unified planning initiative, lack of qualified staff, deteriorating environmental quality, and little tourism revenue available for repaying the cost of environmental protection (Nianyong and Zhuge 2001; Li and Han 2001). For example, China's nature reserve funding in 1999 was only US \$113.3/km², even less than the average developing country (Li and Han 2001). The World Bank-sponsored National Forestry Nature Reserve System Plan study of 217 nature reserves found that 25% have no patrols, 75% have no monitoring programs, and 70% lack comprehensive inventories of resources. Only 16% of Chinese reserve staff managers in 1997 held a college degree (Li and Han 2001).

The Chinese government has recently begun heavily promoting nature tourism to stimulate economic development in economically deprived areas previously dependent on natural resources consumption. Nature tourism in China is regarded as travel for the purpose of enjoying undeveloped natural areas without providing the essential associated conservation, community development, education and sustainability components

(Nianyong and Zhuge 2001). This rapidly growing tourism sector has created high hopes for both development agencies and environmentalists looking for alternatives to extractive industries. While there is a potential for nature tourism to support sustainable management of these protected areas, mass tourism as currently practiced in China is harmful to both local environment and culture (Nianyong and Zhuge 2001). Ervin (2003) identified tourism as one of the five most detrimental land use activities threatening effective management of protected areas within China. Therefore, CEPF (2002) state that particular care must be used to limit the negative impacts associated with mass tourism in China if the natural resources, particularly in biologically sensitive areas, are to be sustained in the long run.

Northwestern Yunnan in southwest China contains 15 protected areas and is bordered by Myanmar on the west and Tibet on the north. In 2003, the area was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site because of outstanding value for: 1) its ability to display geological history, 2) its dramatic expression of ecological processes, 3) its superlative natural phenomena, natural beauty, and aesthetic importance, and 4) its biodiversity and number of threatened species. The area contains the richest biodiversity in China and may be the most biologically diverse temperate region on earth (UNESCO 2003). Because it is both high in elevation and close to the equator, a stunning array of animals and some 7,000 plant species found nowhere else on earth are located there (CEPF 2002). These unique and significant resources are currently threatened because government policy has been encouraging rapid economic growth in the region, stimulating the demand for the resources of the area, especially timber (UNESCO 2003).

In an effort to ease the pressure, the Chinese government is now promoting tourism as an alternative to natural resources extraction and consumption (TNC 2002).

Yunnan province, the larger region which Deqin County is located, is also culturally diverse. Twenty-five out of China's fifty-five ethnically non-Han groups including the Tibetan, Naxi, Yi, Bai, Hani, and Dai reside in the area (CEPF 2002). Similar to other countries in Asia, minority peoples have been residing in the area and utilizing its accessible resources (mostly on a subsistence basis) for thousands of years. Those activities included agriculture, timber cutting, fuel wood gathering, charcoal making, bamboo harvesting, and hunting and gathering. In their scramble for survival, these communities have wreaked increasing havoc on the environment. Unfortunately, as is the case in many areas, laws against illegal firewood collecting, logging, poaching, and trading of endangered species are weakly enforced in Yunnan (Nianying and Zhuge 2001). Therefore, one would expect that the government would support policies and strategies that encourage minorities to engage in alternative economic activities including tourism in order to sustain natural resources in the long run.

Tourism to Deqin has only been allowed since 1999 and despite the remoteness of the area, its unparalleled scenic, geologic, and ecological variety, rare flora and fauna, and the cultural diversity of its peoples have begun to attract tourists. Visitor statistics for 1999 - 2001 indicate that overall visitor numbers have been steadily rising for most protected areas within the region, totaling 188,560 in 2001 (TNC 2002). However, unplanned, uncontrolled tourism development often detrimentally impacts local community structures, degrades the natural environment, and erodes traditional values

(McLaren 2003). In the context of Deqin, there is a need for strategies that ensure tourism benefits local communities and is developed in a sustainable manner in the long run before the area sees more tourists.

Study Purpose and Research Objectives

Most research conducted within or around protected areas in China has primarily focused on empirical biodiversity evidence (Tisdell 1996). By examining how newly existing tourism practices affect a community it is possible to determine the cultural costs and benefits of tourism and thus the sustainability of the introduced program. The central purpose of this study is to assess the current status of tourism-related impacts in Deqin, China through an examination of the current park/people relationships and resulting community impacts, to explore the extent to which tourism is sustainable in the long run.

Three general objectives form the organizing framework for this investigation:

1. Explore the current level of tourism activities in Deqin County, China.
2. Identify the major economic, social, and cultural impacts of tourism in Deqin County, China.
3. Assess residents' perceptions of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism.

Thesis Organization

This thesis is comprised of 10 chapters. Chapter 2 provides contextual background information on protected areas, communities, and development within China. Chapter 3 discusses the adopted theoretical framework for the study and provides

working definitions of the terms utilized within the framework. Chapter 3 also describes the methodology used to carry out this research project, including site selection and justification, data collection and analytical techniques. Chapter 4 provides an outline of the protected area system in Deqin and the surrounding area while exploring interpretations and expectations of tourism as revealed by various officials and protected area managers in the area. Chapter 5 presents the overall study results and discusses data dissemination. Chapters 6 through 9 present and discuss research results associated with the adopted theoretical framework dimensions of community viability, including well being, culture, participation, and knowledge. Chapter 10 presents a discussion of the implications of study results and offers recommendations for future tourism development.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In Asia and other developing regions, it is widely known that problems of environmental degradation are linked to poverty and the uneven distribution of resources (Weaver 1998). Protection of nature in developing countries is increasingly acknowledged as requiring the addressing of interrelated environmental and social concerns with particular needs, concerns, and priorities of the local people involved (Davy 1993; Stevens 1997). To realize these goals calls for strategies and policies to create favorable conditions for an impoverished community with rich natural resources and scenic beauty to protect its biodiversity and culture while concurrently receiving economic benefits from its conservation efforts.

The idea of linking nature conservation and community development emerged in opposition to the generally ineffective Western-based approach to conservation, consisting of building fences to keep local residents out and then fining those who enter without prior permission (Brandon 1997). Under this top-down natural area conservation approach, local people have often been forced to move away from their traditional lands with no compensation or consideration for their economic or cultural well being (McLaren 2003). As a result, these local communities have a negative view of protected areas and choose not to cooperate with authorities. Realizing local participation is crucial to the long term success of conservation measures; the idea of linking conservation and development emerged and was widely adopted (Bookbinder et al. 1998).

There is a possibility that tourism development in marginalized communities will have overall positive results, merging the interests of developing economies, local populations, cultural and environmental sustainability, and the tourists themselves (Boyton 1997; Brohman 1996; Browne and Nolan 1989; Stephen 1991; Zeppel 1998). However, most scholars disagree. They believe most tourism practices exploit locals, pollute the environment, and erode traditional values and ways of life (Brandon 1997; Cohen 1988; Greathouse-Amador 1997; Steinberg 1997). Unfortunately, there is still little understanding of which conditions of tourism development produce positive impacts and which only lead to negative impacts (Harron and Weiler 1992; Snow and Wheeler 2000). The question of whether tourism provides sufficient incentive for local people to safeguard natural resources can only be answered on a site-specific basis (Brandon and Margoulis 1996). This research intends to assess site-specific incentives provided by tourism and whether available incentives are sufficient to stimulate or maintain natural resources conservation.

External forces or factors frequently drive tourism development. External factors connected with tourism can be extended beyond the strictly economic context; tourism introduces important social and cultural features (Cocossis and Nijkamp 1995). By definition these elements are not easily valued using economic standards, but they are nonetheless important indicators, considering economics is but one measurement of a society's well being (Fossati and Panella 2000). Tourism has the potential to affect the social and cultural fabric of local communities (Boo 1990; Brandon 1997). For example, tourism introduces mixes of culture and can lead to cultural enrichment; however, mass

tourism can also lead to a loss of cultural identity and traditions, which is a considerable negative impact (Greathouse-Amador 1997). Furthermore, Brandon (1997) identifies cultural commodification, in which local people and their culture become marketable commodities, as potentially being tourism's most serious impact. Thus, awareness of residents' perceptions of tourism development and its impacts can help planners and developers to identify real concerns and issues for appropriate policies and action to take place, optimizing the benefits and minimizing the problems (Andriotis and Vaughan 2003). Following is a review of the history of tourism development in China in relation to the elements presented above.

Tourism in China

Before the terrible wars of the late 1930's and 1940's completely ceased all leisure travel within China, wealthy or adventurous foreigners, scholars, and religious people dominated the industry. The formation of the Peoples Republic of China in 1949 brought an end to the disruptive civil and international wars that wreaked havoc on the country. China's Great Cultural Revolution over the 1966 to 1976 period left many parts of the country with serious shortages of economic capital and backward economic conditions (Zhang, Chang, and Ap 1999). China's "open door" policy was introduced in 1978 in response to the financial crisis and in hopes of earning dearly needed foreign exchange (Tisdell and Wen 1991). After 1978 the co-leaders of the Communist Party of China, Deng Xiao-Ping and Chen Yun, began to realize the potentially significant economic contribution tourism could bring to China and thus broadened political

promotion and diplomacy to include concern for economic advancement (Zhang, Chang, and Ap 1999).

Over the next decade China received an increasing influx from tourism and foreign exchange earnings, signaling accomplishments of economic goals (Zhang, Chang, and Ap 1999). However these gains proved to be unstable with large fluctuations from one year to another (Lew et al. 2002). Further decreases in tourism numbers stemming from the Tiananmen Square incident of 1989 only strengthened notions of the tourism industry's volatility (Guangrui 1995). Even with these fluctuations, tourism's overall growth out paced China's ability to manage the industry and resulted in several problems, including insufficient transportation infrastructure, limited educational facilities and opportunities resulting in poorly trained staff and low service quality, uneven distribution of tourism development focused on only a few urban centers, and an absence of environmental protection (Lew et al. 2002).

The 1990's brought economic and management reforms toward tourism development. Emphasis shifted from politics to economics; the doors were opened even wider and China secured a more stable, long-term growth (Lew et al. 2002). A major priority shift from inbound only to both international and domestic travel has resulted in increasingly balanced tourism accounts (Zhang, Chang, and Ap 1999). Three different weeklong holidays and five-day workweeks have the stated purpose of encouraging domestic travel and vacation. During the three weeklong holidays of 1999 over 145.8 million domestic trips were made with a spending of over 5.2 billion dollars (Lin 2000).

In response to environmental degradation this same time period saw growing support for nature conservation and interest in methods of linking tourism development and environmental protection (Nianyong and Zhuge 2001; Tisdell 1999). In 1978 there were only 34 nature reserves covering 0.13% of China's landmass. By 1999, 1146 protected areas and 8.8 % of the total land with 136 national level nature reserves had been created with sixteen of those being listed on the UNESCO Global Man and the Biosphere Program. In further pro-environmental actions, China's *Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan* stated a need to provide local communities located within or close to protected area's with economic opportunities to offset pressures resulting from natural resource consumptive practices (Tisdell 1996). Tourism development within China over the past two decades has clarified opportunities and needs for investigation into nature tourism.

Tourism in Yunnan

Yunnan province, richly endowed with both natural and social capital, has a substantial tourism industry. Located in the southwest of China, it is situated on a plateau that borders Tibet and the Himalayan ranges in the north, Myanmar (Burma) in the west, and Laos and Vietnam in the south. ('Yunnan' in Chinese means "South of the clouds"). The province has a north-south distance of 900 km and contains permanently snow-covered mountains in the northwest and tropical lowland rain forests in the south. Over 95% of the province is classified as mountainous. Three of Asia's most powerful rivers flow through Yunnan: the Yangtze, the Irrawaddy, and the Mekong. There are

volcanoes, thermal springs, karst formations, caves, and pinnacles. Over 65% of the province is still forested, the largest such tract in China (Solfield and Li 2003).

Although amounting to only 4.1 percent of China's total area, the variety of landforms, climatic zones and environments provide habitat for a biodiversity unmatched in China (Table 1) (Solfield and Li 2003). Yunnan is home to over 55% percent of China's vertebrates (1,704 species of a total of 3,099); over 200 of these are listed as endangered and/or rare and include the Asian elephant, Asian leopard, the Yunnan golden monkey, and the hornbills along with other birds. Yunnan also contains 90,000 of China's 130,000 insect species and some 18,000 (62.5%) of China's 30,000 plants species (the most for any one province in China) (Solfield and Li 2003).

Table 1. Biodiversity in Yunnan

Group	Number of Species	As % of China	As % of World
Plants	18,000	62.5 (Highest in China)	8.1
Mammals	300	73.5	7.5
Birds	686	58.8	7.6
Vertebrates	1,704 (200 listed)	55.1	7.1
Insects	90,000	69.3	9.0

Source: Adopted from Solfield and Li 2003; McNeely et al. 1990

In an attempt to conserve these rare and fragile environments spread throughout Yunnan, the provincial government has been busily designating protected areas. Since

1983 over 20 reserves covering more than ten percent of the province have been created. Seven of these are designated class-A nature reserves (having national importance) because of outstanding natural features and biodiversity. Within China, nature reserves rank higher than national parks in importance and signify large tracts of virgin old growth forests (Solfield and Li 2003). However during the creation of these protected areas, more than 800 minority nationalities communities¹ had their previous access to natural resources and traditional means of survival revoked (Weyerhauser, Wilkes, and Kahrl 2005).

Culturally, Yunnan is also among the most diverse provinces in China. In a 1995 survey, 108 million people in China were registered as belonging to an ethnic minority (9% of the total population). Yunnan province had the greatest number of minority people (25 million) and also the most diverse population (26 different minority nationalities) (China State Council Information Office 1999). A provincial government statement in January of 1999 stated that 73 of Yunnan's 128 counties are "poor" and 3.5 million of the total 44 million people are "below the poverty line" (Yunnan Province 1999).

Containing both cultural and ecological resources, Yunnan is one of the most popular tourism destinations in China, ranking only behind the six main coastal provinces in travel receipts (Lew et al. 2002); however, economic opportunities being generated from tourism for impoverished areas in the high mountain areas have been limited. The tourist arrivals in the whole province of Yunnan in 2000 was 36 million, of which 96%

¹ Community of people sharing a common territory, language, economic life, and psychological makeup which express itself in a common culture.

were domestic tourists (Xinhua 2001), resulting in over 800 million dollars in travel receipts; however, only 1.7 million of those tourists traveled into the mountainous area of northwest Yunnan (Cater 2001). Still predominately rural, Yunnan is also one of the poorest and most environmentally damaged areas in China. A variety of sites throughout Yunnan have been selected for further tourism development. In light of the above considerations, an evaluation of the current status of tourism in Yunnan protected areas, and the impact on surrounding communities, is needed.

International Organizations Working in Yunnan

Currently, several non-government organizations and multi-lateral financial institutions are working in Yunnan. Non-government organizations include The Nature Conservancy, Conservation International, Global Environmental Facility, United Nations Development Program, World Wildlife Fund for Nature, and Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ). Multi-lateral financial institutions include World Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, and the United States Agency for International Development (CEPF 2002).

The Nature Conservancy manages the Yunnan Great Rivers National Parks System Project (YGRP), which spans an area of 66,970 km and is home to over three million people. The World Bank, through the Global Environment Facility, is spending 17.5 million dollars to improve management in ten different nature reserves. The World Wildlife Fund has written two reserve management plans.

All these agencies recognize the global significance of the region and are implementing conservation programs in the area, exploring sustainable means of economic development, however minimal effort has been spent attempting to include the perceptions and attitudes of the local disenfranchised ethnic groups during the planning and evaluation processes (Tisdell 1996).

Tibetan Buddhism and Environmental Thought

Tibetan Buddhists share an interconnected existence with nature. This research takes place within a predominately Tibetan community. The following is a description of how Tibetan Buddhists view the environment within a religious context. Within Buddhist thought, all beings share fundamental conditions: birth, old age, suffering, and death. The core of Buddha's teaching is the existence of a universal suffering (Einarsen 1995). The capstone of an enlightenment experience, essential to reaching nirvana, is the realization and cessation of suffering. Buddhism teaches that a mindful awareness of suffering creates compassion for all beings, beyond people and animals to include plants and the earth itself. The conclusion of many Buddhist rituals states, "May all beings be free from enmity; may all beings be free from injury; may all beings be free from suffering; may all beings be happy" (Swearer 1998).

Tibetan Buddhists believe all beings participate in a karmic continuum. "Being connected with the process of taking birth, one is kin to all wild and domestic animals, birds, and beings born from the womb" (Lankavatara Sutra). Each action one takes toward another being is rewarded with either positive or negative karma depending on the

intent of the action. Rebirth to a higher existence is dependent on the level of positive karma accumulated through a being's lifespan. All beings have an opportunity to be reborn to higher or lower existence (Yeshe 2002).

Buddhism teaches about an original human existence similar to that of Eden in the Bible. It teaches that the negative impact of humans on the earth was created by selfishness and greed. Within the story, greedy desire leads to division and ownership of land that leads to violent conflict, destruction and chaos (Swearer 1998). Buddhist lamas conduct a spiritual environmental impact assessment based on dreams, and divination or clairvoyance to decide where and if a new construction can be permitted to begin (Yeshe 2002). Based on the religious context provided, one would assume the Tibetan population within the research area would hold a moral obligation to protect the surrounding environment.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methods used to carry out this study. The chapter first outlines the adopted research paradigm and conceptual framework. Secondly, this chapter introduces the study location and a rationale is provided for its selection. Thirdly, the chapter details data collection process, methods, and phases. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the study's methodological strengths and weaknesses.

Research Paradigm

Conceptual Framework

This research was conducted under the broad framework of sustainable development. Michealidou, Decker, and Lassoie (2002) provide a theoretical framework based on sound research outlining essential factors for the successful integration of conservation and development, illuminating elements that have been previously ignored and have hindered the success of past efforts. The framework consists of three interdependent dimensions: *ecosystem viability*, *community viability*, and *external forces*. The three dimensions that form the theoretical framework for ecosystem and community viability are shown in Figure 1. The ecosystem viability dimension includes four main categories of species diversity, water, soil, and ecological processes. Community

viability includes culture, well being, participation, and knowledge. The external forces dimension includes social forces, economic forces, and political forces.

Fig. 1. Theoretical framework for ecosystem and community (adapted from Michealidou, Decker, and Lassoie 2002).

This framework, unlike previous approaches, is based on the hypothesis that “ecosystem viability and community viability are interconnected” (Michealidou, Decker, and Lassoie 2002, p 602). Ignoring one of the two will inadvertently compromise the other. Therefore, tourism development projects that are insensitive to local communities risk causing loss of cultures, and local environmental knowledge that could have been incorporated into management plans. Projects insensitive to the environment risk endangering local communities that depend on natural resources for their economic and cultural survival (Michealidou, Decker, and Lassoie 2002). Since local communities and associated natural areas are a part of a larger social, political, and economic system, they are often subject to external forces exerted by these larger systems. Such external forces include the international trade of timber and non-timber forest products, for instance collection matsutake mushrooms for sale in Japan is highly profitable. These are issues for policy makers, project managers, and scholars to consider. This research assessed community viability (i.e. culture, well-being, participation, and knowledge). Although this research did not intend to investigate ecosystem viability from a physical science base, it did measure local attitudes and perceptions of conservation management practices and tourism’s impact on them.

Many integrated conservation and development projects often emphasize in protecting a single species or natural feature and inadvertently sacrifices *ecosystem viability* or integrity. Based on this framework, such projects should focus on maintaining viable populations of all species that make up the ecosystem. Many smaller plant and animal species are essential to ecosystem integrity, providing a more valuable

service to overall natural health than larger, more well-known species. Often these smaller plant and animal species have significant aesthetic, spiritual, and cultural value to the resident community. The water category focuses on being aware of not pitting the needs of people against that of wildlife due to a lack of water quantity and quality during project implementation. The soil category focuses on including soil quality and fertility characteristics into project planning phases. The ecological processes category emphasizes maintaining native nutrient cycling and water and soil dynamics, allowing for a continuation of processes essential to sustaining a healthy state in which native diversity can thrive.

The *community viability* dimension of this framework consists of the categories of well being, culture, participation, and knowledge. Well being consists of the factors economic well being, physiological, and psychological well being. To be sustainable, integrated conservation and development projects need to provide an economic alternative to natural resources consumption while maintaining a sensitivity to local physiological well being, including health care, access to clean water, and basic nutrition needs. When such fundamentals of a healthy community are threatened, long-term goals are also at risk and improbable. The participation category is associated with a project's ability to promote meaningful community participation in decision making while attempting to enhance the local capacity to manage natural areas. The knowledge category definition of this framework pertains to a project's ability to incorporate a local community's environmental and cultural knowledge. Sustainable projects should not

only incorporate local knowledge into current management decisions, but should also establish means in which local knowledge can be passed on to new generations.

The *external forces* dimension of this framework is associated with determining the external environment's ability to support and enable local communities and natural areas to thrive. This dimension is meant to describe what forms external forces may take and also emphasize awareness that attempts to implement integrated projects should acknowledge and address these forces. These forces may originate from social forces, economic forces, and political spheres. Examples of such forces are national level laws and regulations, social values, international trade of endangered species, and regional economic crises.

In an evaluation of tourism, it is also important to recognize that the impacts will differ according to the perspective taken. From an industry perspective, tourism's impacts are mainly assessed in economic terms using quantitative figures such as gross domestic product (GDP), per capita income, and disposable income. National governments are also prone to evaluate strategies on a similar level. A community based approach is concerned with economic figures, but also local people (Brandon 1992). Impacts are broadly defined through evaluating resultant socioeconomic, cultural and environmental costs and benefits. In doing so, researchers need to look at what jobs are being offered, are these jobs skilled or not, are these jobs desirable, and is any gender discrimination or capital leakage occurring. All these impacts are intricately linked (Mitchell et al., 2001; Ross et al., 1999). This study evaluated tourism from a community-based perspective.

A Qualitative-Quantitative Approach

The central purpose of this study was to assess the current status of tourism-related impacts in the mountainous area of northwest Yunnan through an examination of the current park/people relationships and resulting community impacts to explore the extent to which tourism is sustainable in the long run in this region. Given the exploratory nature of the project, this research utilized a mixed method analysis approach. Mixed method approaches have a significant history of use in travel and tourism research within certain disciplines (Decrop 1999). Interviews, observations, surveys, and secondary sources were the main tools used in this study. Utilizing macroeconomic, quantitative methodology (e.g. input-output analysis) as is often performed when evaluating tourism's economic impacts from an industry perspective, is usually inappropriate and not very efficient at the local community level (Walpole et al. 2000). On Komodo Island, Indonesia, Walpole et al. (2000) utilized surveys, key informant interviews and secondary sources to evaluate the impacts and distribution of benefits and costs of tourism stemming from a local national park. This study adopted a similar approach. Finally and most important is the adaptive approach this study utilized, considering little to nothing was previously known about the existing tourism development structure and its resulting effects. I also dealt with language and cultural barriers, which somewhat limited data collection.

Research Methods

Study Site Selection

Deqin and the surrounding area was chosen as the focus of this study, based on the presence of multiple international non-government organizations, recent tourism development activities, logging bans, high percentages of disenfranchised minorities, both socially and economically, and my previous United States Peace Corps experiences in Nepal with Tibetans and national parks. Deqin is the name of the central city, county, and prefecture. Deqin is situated in the Hengduanshan Range in northwest Yunnan and the southern part of Qinghai-Tibetan plateau. It is located 889 kilometers from Kunming, the capital of Yunnan Province (Figure 2). The Yunnan-Tibet Highway (National Highway 214) is the main road stretching through the whole county. Deqin is the last city along the highway before reaching Tibet.

Fig. 2. Map of Northwestern Yunnan (TNC 2003)

Snow-capped peaks and long rivers characterize Deqin. Winding through mountains and valleys from north to south, the Jinshajiang River and the Lancangjiang River have shaped its highland beauty. Baima Snow Mountain is a 180,000-hectare national-grade natural reserve region. The Meili Snow Mountains extend over hundreds of miles with its main peak, Kawagebo peak, standing 6,740 meters above sea level, the highest point in Yunnan. Mingyongqia, an unusual low-altitude high-temperature glacier, is a popular tourist attraction. The mountainous topography hosts ecosystems ranging from humid subtropical in the river valleys to alpine at higher elevations, and contains a tremendous richness of species. The area is also listed as one of Conservation International's (IUCN) Global Biodiversity Hotspots, based on endemic plant species, endemic non-fish vertebrates, and degree of threat. The hotspot is the most biologically diverse temperate forest ecosystem in the world. More than 12,000 species of higher plants, of which 29 percent are unique to this hotspot, have been identified, including 230 species of rhododendron (IUCN 2002). Half of the rhododendrons are endemic in the region. Other endemic plant species include *Kingdonia uniflora* and two species of *Cycas*.

Deqin and the surrounding area is also culturally diverse. Deqin became an important corridor for ancient "tea and horse trading" between China's inland territory and Tibet 2,000 years ago when civilization gradually spread over the county. While only 9% of China's overall population is not from the majority race of Han, Tibetans comprise over 80% of Deqin County's sparsely populated, almost all from minority races, 60,000 residents. Many of these minority nationalities experienced intense persecution during the Chinese revolution. In 2002, about 49% of Deqin Prefecture's population

(159,800 people) were considered “low-income,” 68,600 (43%) of whom were categorized as living in “extreme poverty (TNC 2003).” Within Deqin County, per capita ownership of farmland is only 0.103 hectare and food deficits affect around 40% of households for three to six months per year. Rare and fragile cultural and biological characteristics make Deqin a highly marketable tourist destination; however, currently most of Deqin’s people live on incomes of less than US\$80 a year (TNC 2003).

Data Collection

For this study I used a mixed method, case study approach to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of tourism in the study area of Deqin, China. Case study methods involving ethnography are appropriate for studying contemporary phenomena within a cultural context and when real-life processes are too complex for survey or experimental manipulation (Yin 2003). I drew on methodology proposed by Lewis (1993) and elaborated by Hobbs (1996) and Young (1999), which involves speaking with residents of a protected area in order to assess their views and needs. Data was collected in two distinct phases.

This research employed four data collection methods: 1) informal semi-structured surveys of local residents, business owners and reserve staff, 2) semi-structured oral interviews of local residents, business owners and reserve staff, 3) participant observation of local residents, business owners and reserve staff, and 4) review of project records and other published literature. First, project reports were reviewed for information on currently existing projects, and their past and current policies, programs and other

management issues. As part of this research, I employed participant observation methods to develop a picture of the community's perspective and behavior. Participant observation and semi-structured interviews are techniques commonly combined in field research (Babbie 1998; Singleton, Straits, and Straits 1993). It is the responsibility of the researcher to insure all voices in the study are included and understood (Schensul, Schensul and LeCompt 1999). Lewis (1993, p 126) concluded the most powerful way to include people "is simply to ask them what they think, what they want, and what their concerns are."

To improve the validity of the data collected I utilized a triangulation method wherever possible. Triangulation is described as collecting information from multiple different sources using multiple methods of inquiry (Denzin and Lincoln 2000). This method reduces the chance of researcher bias while improving research validity. There are four types of triangulation: data, method, investigator, and theoretical (Denzin 1989). I utilized both data and method types of triangulation. Both primary and secondary sources of data were drawn on during the data triangulation process. Primary sources of data included interviews, surveys, and observations. Secondary sources were project and government documents. Method triangulation is defined as the use of multiple methods to study a single problem (Decrop 1999). Differing methods carried out through this research included document reviews, observation (site and participant), semi-structured interviews, casual conversations, and quantitative interpretations of results.

PHASE I

For the first phase of the study I traveled to the site during the beginning of May 2005 to collect information on the main issues of concern, to identify different sources of data, and to establish contacts with potential key informants and interviewees. This stage lasted two weeks. I first met with local government and project contacts to determine if any archival or secondary data had been collected on tourist characteristics. Secondary and archival data is qualitative or quantitative data collected for governmental, research, education or service purposes and available to researchers in usable raw data forms and formats (Schensul, Schensul and LeCompte 1999). Available project documents and literature were photocopied and then translated into English.

As a participant observer, I went trekking and participated in other tourism excursions. I also attended meetings and gatherings of local residents and non-local tourism operators. I was an active participant with tourists and tourism operators. This strategy allowed me to experience daily life firsthand. The insights gained through participant observation are the basis for developing themes around which subsequent interviews are probed and are conceptualized. Relationships with local residents facilitated my interviews. Ongoing participation also allowed me to corroborate information gathered through interviews. Firsthand observation also allowed me to learn about any activities that people may have been reluctant to discuss during interviews.

Preceding all interviews a Human Subjects Institutional Review Board approved Agreement to Participate in Research document (Appendix A) was signed by the interviewee, interviewer, and a witness to the signature. All participants who agreed to

participate in this research were informed of their ability to refuse participation without any negative effects. Participants were also able to refuse further participation at any time throughout the research. All willing participants were informed of the research title, intentions, and aim of the project. All information given was kept confidential.

Participant observations, selection of informants, and the interview process for this type of research tend to be time consuming and thus restrict the number of possible interviewees (Babbie 1992; Schensul, Schensul and LeCompt 1999; Singleton, Straits, and Straits 1993). Local community members formed the sample population for this study. A semi-structured interview (Appendix B) was conducted with a sample of sixteen selected informants. Informants were selected using a sampling technique that chose informants who represented key differences within the population in terms of participation within the tourism industry. Through a snowball technique, initial key informants selected based on prominence within the community or reputational case selection were asked to identify other relevant individuals to interview (Denzin and Lincoln 2000; Schensul, Schensul and LeCompt 1999). The population sample targeted individuals with a strong to minimal level of involvement within the tourism industry. Each informant was an adult person eighteen years of age or older. Key informants are people who have a vested interest in ensuring that the results of the research are used to solve the problem the research is addressing (Babbie 1992). Key informants are an integral component of a study, often working side by side with the investigator, interpreting, and providing social introduction into segments of the community (Schensul, Schensul and LeCompt 1999). Table 2 provided in the Results section gives a detailed

breakdown of associated characteristics of those residents and business owners who participated in interviews. To obtain a voice from hotel owners I purposefully sampled owners from a budget hotel in Deqin as well as the most expensive hotel in Deqin, and one budget hotel from Feilasi village, Meili Snow Mountain Nature Reserve and Yubeng village. Feilasi, Meili Snow Mountain Nature Reserve and Yubeng village only have budget hotels.

An English language master's degree student studying at Yunnan Normal University was hired and trained to help administer the interviews. I attended, observed, and participated in all interviews. Interviews were conducted in the interviewee's place of employment or home, whichever was most convenient. The semi-structured interview guide helped confine interviewees to the topic of interest. The interviews lasted up to one hour depending on how much the interviewee had to say. All interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed by an English master's student at Yunnan Normal University.

Interview questions were spoken in Mandarin. In translation, local words were used wherever possible and technical jargon avoided. An informal, semi-structured interview format let interviewees describe and explain their attitudes, behaviors, and experiences. I tailored each interview through questions and direction according to the personal history, interests, and views of each informant. The interview structure was pre-tested with a local assistant and initial informants. As a result, some questions were modified to improve their clarity. To ensure consistency among interviews for subsequent comparison, the questions were structured around five basic themes:

- 1) Attitudes and perception of tourism in general,
- 2) Perception of the economic opportunities that tourism offers at the household level,
- 3) Perception of the reserve and tourism impacts on attitudes towards environmental conservation at a community level,
- 4) Perception of the abilities of tourism to create social benefits and infrastructure improvements, and,
- 5) Reasons that the informant is participating or not in the tourism industry.

A second interview guide (Appendix C) was used to collect data from three nature reserve staff in nearby offices. Research questions elicited nature reserves goals and management issues. I tailored each interview to the personal history, interests, and views of each informant. Questions about the structure of the operating staff and local involvement in planning and management were included. Sampling of respondents was purposeful, seeking respondents knowledgeable about reserve operations. Table 3 (given in the results section) provides the dates, organizations, and positions of those government officials interviewed. These three interviews were conducted at the respective reserve office. Interviews lasted up to one hour depending on how much the interviewee had to say. As with the local residents and business owner interviews, during the government interviews questions were spoken in Mandarin. During translation from English to Mandarin, local words were used wherever possible and technical jargon avoided. An informal, semi-structured interview format let interviewees describe and explain their attitudes, behavior, and experiences. The interview structure was pre-tested

with a local assistant and initial informants. As a result, some questions were modified to improve their clarity.

PHASE II

The second phase of the study involved collecting data using a questionnaire administered to local residents and business owners. This portion of data collection lasted two weeks. The questionnaire (Appendix D) was adapted from Andriotis and Vaughan (2003) and Akis, Peristianis and Warner (1996) and included specific questions pertaining to this research. These authors prepared the questionnaire following a review of existing literature pertaining to residents' perceptions of tourism development and tourism development issues that were identified by past research as important for local residents. The questionnaire consisted of a total of fifty-five questions. Thirty-five of the questions utilized were Likert-scale based statements that asked respondents to respond in terms of a continuum from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Ten statements were designed to assess residents' perceptions of the economic impacts of tourism, thirteen statements dealt with the social impacts of tourism development, eight statements dealt with the environmental impacts of development, and five statements focused on local community involvement and empowerment. The clustering of statements into the four categories (i.e., economic, environmental, social, and involvement) emerged from the identification of the main issues past researchers have identified as key factors associated with local perceptions and attitudes. Seven questions were included to elicit socio-demographic characteristics including age, education and occupation. Surveys

were written in Mandarin with technical jargon avoided as much as possible. An English professor at Yunnan Normal University reviewed a translated version of the survey to assess translation precision and cultural sensitivity.

Respondents were selected, similar to phase I, using a sampling technique that selects informants who represent key differences within the population in terms of participation within the tourism industry. Relevant stakeholders in the tourism industry in Deqin include government officials, business owners, local residents and environmental non-government organizations were sampled to complete a survey. Each participating stakeholder then provided contact information for other potentially relevant stakeholders to be surveyed. A total of 100 surveys were completed. Each respondent was an adult person (eighteen years of age or older) and personally surveyed at his or her residence or place of employment. Some of the respondents to the survey were the same as those who participated in phase I. A local Tibetan was hired to help administer the surveys. Due to the high percentage of illiteracy and cultural preference to avoid paperwork, most of the surveys were read to the informant, and the assistant filled out the survey according to given answers. Having a local assistant also eased potential informant reluctance to participate in the survey.

Preceding all surveys a Human Subjects Institutional Review Board approved Agreement to Participate in Research document (Appendix A) was signed by the interviewee, interviewer, and a witness to the signature. All participants who agreed to participate in this research were informed of their option to refuse participation without any negative effects. Participants could have also refused further participation at any

time throughout the research. All willing participants were informed of the research title, intentions, and aim for use of results. All information given has been kept confidential.

Data Analysis

The aim of the analysis was threefold: 1) to give a *descriptive* picture of tourism activities in the region from the recent past (i.e. about 10 years ago) to the present, 2) to provide an *explanation* of how tourism is affecting cultural resources, and 3) to give a *descriptive* picture of the attitudes and perceptions of the local population towards tourism industry participation. Comparing households actively participating in tourism with households with minimal involvement in the tourism industry illuminates discrepancies between actual and perceived attitudes and beliefs.

Interviews were tape recorded, transcribed and then translated into English. Transcribed interviews were then entered into a qualitative analysis software program, QSR N6, to be analyzed looking for dominant domains and themes. QSR N6 is the sixth version of the over twenty year old NUD*IST program created by a software development company based in Melbourne Australia named Qualitative Solutions and Research. NUD*IST stands for Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theorizing. N6 provides multiple means of helping researchers develop and relate categories, store ideas about those categories, and test, explore and modify those categories and their coding incrementally as understanding grows (Richards 2002). Concepts and themes emerging from the data were coded into broad representative categories. The unit of analysis within the interview analysis was set at a sentence level.

The quantitative survey was analyzed through use of the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS version 13). To assist in determining dependent variables and aid in the interpretation and presenting of survey results impacting the economy, social and cultural structure, and the environment, descriptive statistics were utilized.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study Design

This research employed questionnaires, interviews, observations and secondary sources to evaluate the existing tourism-park-people relationships in Deqin. While the information collected is believed to be factual, reproducible and objective, a consideration of the study design's potential weaknesses and strengths is, nevertheless, important.

Overall, this was a reliable study. The structure of this study was flexible and adaptive. I made several contacts representing multiple social groups and stakeholders, used multiple methods and thus limited interviewer and method bias. The study sought a broad range of representatives including hoteliers, business owners, local residents, government officials, and NGO members. Members from all sought after stakeholder groups participated, thus making the research sound and strong.

Language is one of the most significant barriers this research had to overcome. Although hiring a research assistant allowed the interviews to be successfully completed, the nature of translation is such that the possibility still remains that some responses were simplified and/or misinterpreted. In the absence of complete information there is a risk of drawing erroneous observations and conclusions.

While interviews are one of the most widely used methods in social science investigation, they also potentially suffer from a number of problems. In a developing world context, where educated, typically white, foreign males conduct interviews, intimidating power relationships may exist resulting in a distorted reality or response bias (Chambers 1997). The potential for politically correct responses is perhaps even greater in a socialist country like China, and where the government largely controls tourism.

CHAPTER 4

TOURISM IN DEQIN

This chapter presents and discusses the insights provided by officials from park management and staff at Meili Snow Mountain Nature Reserve and Baima Snow Mountain National Park. A study site description for Baima Snow Mountain National Park is given first, followed by site descriptions of Meili Snow Mountain Nature Reserve, Deqin city, Feilasi village, and Yubeng Village. Site descriptions include means and costs associated with tourism activities at each site. These sections provide the context for a discussion of the results of the interviews and surveys presented in subsequent chapters.

The proceeding site descriptions were garnered through interviews with protected area government employees utilizing the questionnaire provided in Appendix C. Between May 17 and 21, 2005, three interviews were conducted in the office of the interviewee asking questions associated with park operations, staff, and local community relations (Table 2). In addition to interview results, this chapter also provides analysis of participant observation in the Deqin area tourism sites. Figure 3 is a map of the Deqin area providing visual representation of tourism activity centers, including Baima Snow Mountain National Park, Meili Snow Mountain National Reserve, Deqin city, Feilasi village, Mingyong village, and Yubeng village.

Table 2. Government Officials Interviewed

Date	Age	Gender	Occupation	Nationality
6-17-05	46	Male	Director of Baima National Park	Tibetan
6-17-05	34	Male	Employee of Meili Snow Mountain Reserve	Tibetan
6-21-05	43	Male	Director of Deqin Tourism Bureau	Tibetan

Fig. 3. Map of Deqin Area

Summary of Tourism in Deqin

Tourism in the Deqin area is still in the early stages of development. Baima Snow Mountain National Park has access to government funding, however does not allow tourism within the park boundaries. Local residents, left with no economic alternative to natural resources consumption, are still illegally taking resources found in the park. Although the staff of the park is actively providing community outreach programs, local

lack of understanding conservation goals and a need to survive are presenting a constant pressure on the park.

Meili Snow Mountain National Reserve obtains all financial support via the sale of entrance permits. Tourism to the area is providing a constant source of economic revenue to the local population. Local residents are confident that economic returns will remain constant and increase in the future. Tourism development has provided the area with increased access to transportation and communication infrastructures. Although illegal forest product taking continues, the amount and impact is minimal. The staff of the reserve lack training and education in management activities. A reserve management plan, needed to gain government funding, still needs to be compiled.

Deqin City is a growing small city anxious to receive benefits associated with tourism development. Infrastructure needed to accommodate tourism is currently sufficient, including multiple hotels, restaurants, dance clubs, and bars. Currently though, tourists spend little time in the city itself. The majority of tourists are associated with large groups that travel in large buses directly to the glacier trailhead at the reserve. Independent travelers design their itineraries to limit their stay within the city to a day or less. Surrounding villages, such as Feilasi, Mingyong, and Yubeng are experiencing increasing tourist numbers. As services improve, the potential for longer stays by tourists will also increase.

Site Description – Baima Snow Mountain National Park

Baima Snow Mountain National Park (BSMNP) is located in the mountainous area of Northwest Yunnan Province, south of Deqin. The park comprises a total area of 180,000 hectares, of which 65% is forested. It lies 163 km from Deqin and can be reached by bus in about six hours. Travelers pass through it while coming to Deqin via Zhongdian. Established in October 1983 by the State (national) Forest Administration (SFA), this park consists largely of temperate forest. The highest peak reaches 5,429 meters above sea level.

There were no residents displaced during Park establishment. Currently, approximately 9,000 people are living within the designated Park boundaries. Local residents living within or having close proximity to the boundaries of the park are allowed to access natural resources within the Park only on a subsistence level. The Forest Bureau manages a permit system allowing residents to only harvest enough timber for housing construction needs. This system is also limited to only one or two houses per village per year. Administration also allows collection of common medicinal plant species for personal needs only, while hunting is not permitted (Baima 2005).

The main purpose of the Park is currently to protect the existing biodiversity. It is also the home of the critically endangered Yunnan Golden Monkey. In order to preserve biodiversity to the fullest extent, tourism has yet to be allowed within Park boundaries (Baima 2005). Thus, there are no concessions offered at the Park. In the future tourism might be allowed, but for now only park managers and Chinese university researchers are permitted entrance.

All funds utilized for BSMNP management are procured through the national and provincial governments. Budget needs are set at two million yuan (\$241,000 USD) per year (Baima 2005). A total of 40 people work at BSMNP, of which 14 are women. All the women work in the position of community mobilizers. These women are the face of the Park management staff, assisting with community outreach and development programs. Male employees perform and manage all administration tasks. All employees are local residents and all are Tibetan. The majority of Park staff have at least a high school education, although some have only completed primary education.

The biggest constraint for BSMNP is not money for management purposes, but rather the local people. Local residents are very poor and need to make a living. Park management believes a lack of understanding of park goals and vision adds to the park-people conflicts, which include illegal timber and non-timber extraction. Managers said that locals do participate in resource management programs. The staff is only an implementing organization, they are not affiliated with planning activities. They are currently only trying to implement laws and regulations of nature protection, trying to do community development in hopes of relieving pressure on the Park. As was stated by a park manager, “We are currently focusing on serving the community and implementing environmental protection laws and regulations. We are trying to help the local community prosper by investing more money in hopes of reducing management pressures. For example, when local people become rich they don’t steal pigs or cut trees. Poor people will ignore regulations and even risk losing their lives in order to make a living and survive. Even if you put your gun to his head” (Baima 2005). He did add

though that local residents do not use natural resources unwisely like they did in the past, but back then “they had to make a living depending on timber and hunting animals” (Baima 2005).

Site Description – Meili Snow Mountain Nature Reserve

Meili Snow Mountain Nature Reserve (MSMNR) is located fifty-three km directly west of Deqin. The Reserve comprises a total of 120,000 hectares, of which approximately 60% is considered forest cover. The Reserve contains Yunnan’s highest point, Mount Kawagebo which stands at 6,740 meter above sea level (Figure 4). Kawagebo is thought to be the guardian god of the Ningma sect of Tibetans, and during the Tibetan New Year thousands of Tibetan pilgrims converge on the mountain to pay respect. Expeditions to the pinnacle of the mountain are currently not permitted due to its spiritual importance (Meili Official 2005).

The main purpose of MSMNR is to protect the environment while still developing tourism to raise money that will be used to protect the reserve. National and provincial governments do not contribute to the reserve. An overall reserve management plan needs to be compiled before the national and provincial governments will financially assist in management.

Fig. 4. Mount Kawagebo (Author 2005)

The biggest constraint facing management at MSMNR is funding. Total annual financial needs to effectively manage the Reserve are estimated at more than one million yuan (\$120,500 USD). However, current budgetary expenses are for salaries only and are currently set at 400,000 to 500,000 yuan annually (\$48,200 to \$60,240 USD) for the ten employees (Meili Official 2005). The staff of the reserve numbers around ten, depending on season, with half of those working at the ticket office at the entrance to the Reserve. All are local Tibetans. There are no tour guides currently employed at the reserve. Only two employees have a high school education; all the rest have only finished primary school.

Money needed to pay salaries is provided solely through the collection of entrance fees. Annual visitor arrivals range between 20,000 and 30,000, of which only 5% are foreigners, with neighboring countries constituting the majority of those foreign arrivals (Bureau Official 2005). Seasonal fluctuations in tourist arrival numbers do exist. The current cost of an entrance fee is 60 yuan (\$7.23 USD), thus totaling about 500,000 yuan (\$60,240 USD) in revenue earned from ticket sales (Bureau Official 2005). But if 20,000 to 30,000 tickets are sold for 60 yuan each annually, tickets sales should raise between 1,200,000 and 1,800,000 yuan annually (\$145,000 to \$217,000 USD). During the time of research there were approximately fifty domestic Chinese tourists per day renting and riding horses up to the glacier. Most domestic tourists arrived via big air-conditioned buses in large organized group tours. Western tourist arrivals were approximately five per week, limited to individual travelers.

While talking about future development activities, a manager said,

We are trying to develop the tourism infrastructure within the reserve while preserving the environment as it was originally, in hopes of obtaining national level status. Doing so will improve the local economy and the lives of the local people. But if we overdevelop the reserve, like turning it into a modern park or cutting down trees to build buildings, it will just get worse. This won't tempt tourists to come visit. Proper environmental protection is essential to the development of tourism within the reserve. They both connect. Once we develop it and open it to the public, we can earn money. That money will then be used to protect the park's natural resources again. (Meili Official 2005)

Permitted uses of natural resources located within the Reserve differ according to management zone. MSMNR is separated into three preservation zones, 1A-level, 2A-level, and 3A-level (Table 3). The 3A-level area, consisting of villages and the surrounding areas, allows free access to resources while the 2A and 1A-level areas

prohibit natural resources uses (Bureau Official 2005). Free access is limited only to areas where common plant and tree species exist. The Forest Bureau controls the amount of timber harvested through a permit system similar to that being applied at Baima Snow Mountain National Park. All concessions are located within the 3A-level zone. The reserve manages all concessions.

Table 3. Management Zones of Meili Snow Mountain National Reserve

Zone	Permitted Uses
1 A-Level	Core areas, no entrance allowed except for research purposes
2 A-Level	Areas between populated and core areas, entrance permitted, however no natural resources consumption allowed
3 A-Level	Populated areas, allows free access to common species

Source: Bureau Official 2005

There were no residents displaced during the formation of the reserve; existing villages were incorporated into the plans. Community outreach is being initiated through outside agencies. There is currently a program assisting and training local residents in alternative energy concepts is hopes of alleviating pressure on timber and fuel wood needs (Meili Official 2005). However, there are no other community outreach or training programs currently in existence. Officials said that suggestions were solicited and those that were helpful, were utilized (Bureau Official 2005).

Benefits gained by local residents due to the establishment of the reserve and tourism development were reported as being improved transportation infrastructure, communication systems, and local economy. A new road has been constructed up to the trail head village on Mingyong and the trailhead leading to Meili Glacier. Locals can

also provide meals to tourists and rent out horses to those who do not want to hike around the reserve. Incomes derived from providing horses can be over 30,000 yuan annually (\$3,615 USD) (Meili Official 2005). Most of the residents within the Deqin area live on annual salaries of less than 665 yuan (\$80 USD) (TNC 2003). These horses are all managed under a cooperative where duties and profits are shared.

Expressed negative effects associated with tourism development were the negative influences it has on traditional values and some environmental pollution created during the development stages (Bureau 2005; Meili 2005). But managers expressed that they are actively trying to limit such associated pollution (Bureau 2005; Meili 2005). On the Mingyong side of the reserve, locals are actively trying to keep the area free from litter; however, the farther up the trail one travels, the higher the frequency of litter. Tourists expressed discontent with the way local residents treated them. Grocery goods in Mingyong are exorbitantly priced and locals are not very friendly. Tourists get the feeling in Mingyong that most local residents do not want them there, but since tourists are there they might as well charge a lot for what is available to offer.

Feelings on potential future benefits provided by tourism development for local people are positive. “Every year local standards of living are increasing and employment opportunities are growing. Local environmental conservation attitudes will become more positive as they realize how environmental conservation activities can increase tourism revenues. And then when the local people participate in tourism they will learn something about both tourism and nature protection” (Bureau 2005). Members of the

horse cooperative feel revenues are increasing annually. More hotels are being built each year. All residents believe tourist arrivals to Meili are only in their infancy.

Infrastructure to facilitate further tourism activities in MSMNR is currently adequate, although further development would help with tourism capacity and even encourage further activities. The road from Deqin to the last village of Mingyong has been repaved within the last couple of years. The trip from Deqin is smooth and takes about two hours to reach Mingyong village by bus, the fare is 15 yuan (\$1.80 USD). It is possible to also hire a taxi from the center of Deqin to Mingyong to make the journey in around an hour and a half for 150 yuan (\$18 USD). Mingyong was originally a small village, but after the road was completed, solely to accommodate tourism, the village has become a major community of about 15 hotels. These hotels range from six room, two-story, traditional Tibetan architecture buildings to 40 room four-story cement box hotels. All hotels offer restaurant facilities. Prices for rooms range from 30 yuan (\$3.60 USD) for double bed, shared bath, rooms to deluxe rooms with their own bathrooms and heated water for over 350 yuan (\$42 USD).

From Mingyong, tourists can either walk up a trail for five hours or hire a horse to take them up the hill for around 100 yuan (\$12 USD) round trip. Guides are available for hire in Deqin, but the trail is well marked thus negating the need for a guide. The trail is also well maintained and is lined most of the way with planted flowers. On the way up the trail to the glacier there are several signs along the way written in both Chinese and Tibetan explaining local environmental processes and cultural history. At the top of the trail is the Mingyong Glacier (Figure 5). This is the southern-most glacier in China and it

reaches down to 2,700 meters above sea level. The glacier is being protected from further anthropogenic degradation by preventing further tourists to go near it. In an attempt to alleviate environmental pressures caused by foot traffic, there are metal walkways fastened to the rock ledges reaching up to a beautiful lookout over the glacier. From the lookout tourists can look down onto the glacier or up to the top of Mount Kawagebo at 6,740 meters above sea level. Another option once to the top of the trail is to further head up the hill on a side route to a small Tibetan monastery. From there, tourists can also observe the glacier while standing in a prayer flag laden forest.

Fig. 5. Meili Glacier. (Author 2005)

There is a small, dilapidated guesthouse at the top of the trail, although it is a little difficult to find. There are no signs to aid the discovery of this little place of rest. This guesthouse was originally built by the Chinese government ten years ago and was primarily frequented by VIP guests. Five years ago a local family bought the guesthouse. The guesthouse holds thirty double rooms, however only five of those rooms are still in operation due to fallen through floors and sinking roofs. Currently only about ten guests a week stay at the guesthouse during the peak tourist season of May to September. Rooms cost 30 yuan (\$3.60 USD) and all share one common bath with no warm water. When asked about the condition of the guesthouse, the owners replied that they are not interested in repairing the rooms, nor do they care for improving business. The stated reason for not wanting to increase business was that with more guests the local environment would suffer.

Site Description – Deqin City

The city of Deqin has around 5,000 residents; 90% of those are Tibetan living under the poverty level of 640 yuan annually (\$77 USD) (UNESCAP 2002). As mentioned above, the local population previously obtained over 90% of their gross domestic product through logging activities until the logging ban in 1998. Now tourism is being promoted as an economic substitute. The road from Zhongdian to Deqin is 300 km long, takes eight hours, is very bumpy, and only half of it is paved. The land around Deqin is very steep, allowing for little in the way of agricultural activities. Most of the buildings in Deqin are newly constructed cement box types (Figure 6). A small river

flows through the middle of Deqin. The entire length of the river within city limits has been cemented and serves as the municipal dump for city residents.

Fig. 6. Deqin Area (Author 2005)

Tourist arrivals to Deqin City are currently very limited, however, the number of hotel rooms, restaurants, and bars is sufficient to accommodate a lot more tourists. Most tourists are domestic and only travel through Deqin on the way to stay the night in Feilasi or Mingyong villages. During the time of research, the peak tourism season, western arrivals amounted to only two or three people per day. Deqin city itself is rather polluted and does not offer any activities for tourists. There are no museums, cultural building (e.g., monasteries), nor any short nature hikes. There are no sources of information for the tourist to learn about local history of current events. This lack of activities has caused

stays to remain short, and has actually led to most tourists avoiding having to spend the night in Deqin if at all possible.

Streets running through Deqin are paved, in good condition, and most have sidewalks on both sides (Figure 7). Throughout the day the streets are busy with local residents visiting and shopping. The center of town contains most of the restaurants, stores, and shops while the outer parts of the city are reserved for housing and government offices. Table 4 provides a list of businesses found within the city of Deqin, including thirty-eight restaurants, forty-one hotels, four dance halls, and eight music and video stores.

Fig. 7. Deqin City (Author 2005)

Table 4. Types of Businesses Operating in Deqin

Type of Business/ Facility	Number Counted	Type of Business/ Facility	Number Counted
Restaurant	38	Hotel	41
Clothing and Shoes	26	Bar	12
Hair & Beauty	17	Dance Hall	4
Tailor	4	Hospital	1
Music/ Video Store	8	School	3
Grocery Store	6	Bank	3
Farmers' Market	1	Post Office	1

Site Description – Feilasi Village

Feilasi Village is a small cluster of eight hotels, and is enjoying expanding economic benefits provided by tourism development. Feilasi can be reached from Deqin by either bus or taxi for 15 yuan (\$1.80 USD) in thirty minutes time. Feilasi has garnered attention from tourists by offering an inspiring view of Mount Kawagebo and having four white Tibetan stupas (temples). The village lies along the first ridge leaving Deqin. From there tourists have a panoramic view that reaches out for miles. The hotels in Feilasi are all newly constructed within the last seven years and construction was still occurring during the time of research. Rooms at the hotels range from 20 yuan (\$2.40 USD) for a dormitory room, 40 yuan (\$4.80 USD) for a double with shared bathroom, to 350 yuan (\$42 USD) for nice double rooms with bathroom and heated water. All hotels have restaurants and associated souvenir stores.

Most tourists stay the night in Feilasi because of the village's close proximity to both Deqin and Meili Snow Mountain National Reserve. Tourists are avoiding the busy, noisy, and dirty streets of Deqin and choosing the new hotels and unobstructed views of

Meili Glacier and Mount Kawagebo. Compared to Deqin and even Mingyong, Feilasi has just as nice hotels without the negatives of a commercial city. Tourists can eat in balcony restaurants while photographing the landscape, something Deqin and Mingyong can not offer. As is common to the area, most tourists to Feilasi are domestic, with only two to three western tourists arriving per week.

Site Description – Yubeng Village

On the southern side of Mount Kawagebo, in a steep valley, sits Yubeng village with its six hotels. To reach Yubeng (Figure 8), travelers must take the bus or rent a taxi from Deqin to the small uninteresting village of Xidang. From there it is a twelve-hour hike, six hours uphill and six hours downhill. Horses are available for hire and cost 200 (\$24 USD) yuan one-way. Once in the valley containing Yubeng, tourists have the opportunity to hike seven hours to a glacial lake or six hours to Princess Waterfall. Yubeng lies along the Tibetan pilgrimage route. Tibetans converge on the area during the Tibetan New Year to circumambulate Mount Kawagebo. Drinking the water around Mount Kawagebo serves as a blessing that brings future health and happiness. Pilgrims carry water containers to fill up with water from the waterfalls to take back to relatives not able to take the pilgrimage.

The hotels in Yubeng are all two-story and are built in traditional Tibetan architecture. Prices range from 20 yuan (\$2.40 USD) for a dormitory bed to 60 yuan (\$7.20 USD) for a double bed room. All hotels only have a shared, detached, bathroom, although three of the hotels have solar water heaters for showers. Each hotel also offers

food services. Based on personal observations, living in Yubeng is simple, but life is well appreciated. Locals are very happy to have you there.

Fig. 8. Yubeng Village (Author 2005)

Current tourist arrivals to Yubeng are not as plentiful as Feilasi and Mingyong. Most domestic Chinese tourists do not want to hike the twelve hours to Yubeng. While I was there, from May 24 to 28, 2005, approximately ten tourists arrived each day. Currently tourism promotion to Yubeng is extremely minimal. To become aware of Yubeng village, tourists have to educate themselves. No hotels in nearby cities and villages have information on Yubeng, and very few tour agencies even know about it.

There is a government proposal to build a road to Yubeng, in order to bolster tourism development in the village. Local residents want to have access to transportation,

but are wary of the detrimental environmental effects associated with building a road to their village. Locals expressed a feeling that an increased ability to utilize healthcare facilities outweighs the resultant environmental degradation. If this road project is completed, tourism arrivals to Yubeng will easily surpass that of Feilasi and Mingyong. The surrounding area is pristine and there are several day hike options to waterfalls, lakes, and small glaciers.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Increasing numbers of researchers are asserting that community development projects should shift away from simply increasing income and accumulating material goods to incorporate qualitative changes in exchange for quantitative changes in community characteristics, such as democratic participation in decision making and cultural sustainability (Brechin and West 1991). In opposition to this realization, numerous integrated conservation and development projects are still emphasizing mere economic alternatives as a substitute for environmentally destructive activities (Brandon 1997). Although *economic well being* is a crucial component of community viability, there are several other elements that also contribute to a healthy community, such as *physiological* and *psychological well being*, *local culture*, *knowledge*, and *participation* in community activities. These terms were further detailed in chapter 3. This chapter provides descriptive characteristics about those individuals interviewed and surveyed during the process of research and gives an introduction to the system of subsequent analysis. Chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9 are the results of the community residents and business interviews and surveys coded according to the identified elements of community viability. Table 5 provides a list of those sixteen local residents interviewed including date interviewed, age, gender, occupation, and ethnicity. Interviewees were sampled based on representations within differing tourism development stakeholders including those residents with no affiliation with tourism activities.

Table 5. Local Residents and Business Owners Interviewed

Pseudonym	Date	Age	Gender	Occupation
1. Deqin Hotel	6-19-05	32	Female	Hotel Owner (Deqin)
2. Meili Hotel	6-19-05	18	Male	Hotel Owner/ Student (Meili NR)
3. City Hotel	6-19-05	32	Male	Hotel Owner (Deqin)
4. Fun Times	6-19-05	32	Male	Dance Hall Owner
5. Good Eats	6-19-05	36	Female	Restaurant Owner
6. Government Worker	6-20-05	26	Male	Forest Bureau/ Forester
7. Lhasa View	6-20-05	32	Male	Restaurant Owner
8. Grandma	6-20-05	52	Female	None/ Retired
9. Lucky's	6-21-05	31	Male	Director of Culture NGO/ Hotel Owner
10. Curtains	6-21-05	35	Female	Curtain Shop Owner
11. Jewelry	6-22-05	26	Male	Silver Smith
12. Student	6-22-05	23	Female	None/ Recent University Graduate
13. Feilasi Hotel	6-23-05	33	Male	Hotel Owner (Feilasi Village)/ Tour Guide
14. Trekker Hotel	6-23-05	30	Male	Hotel Owner/ Tour Agency Owner
15. Yubeng Hotel	6-27-05	38	Male	Hotel Owner (Yubeng Village)
16. Tony	6-28-05	32	Male	Conservationist/Former TNC Employee

A total of 100 surveys (Appendix D) were administered in Deqin and the surrounding area. Within each survey, there were 35-attitudinal statements. All attitudinal statements utilized a Likert scale that ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Within a scale as is used here, 3 would be a midpoint, all answers between 1 and 3 will be considered positive, and those responses above 3 are all negative. Therefore, the lower the score, the more positive the attitude held by the respondent. Throughout all the questions there was a general positive feeling toward tourism development held by local residents within the Deqin area. Questions were clustered

according to previously identified essential elements for a successful integrated conservation development project by the Michealidou et al. (2003) framework.

In addition to the 35-attitudinal questions, the survey instrument utilized two open-ended questions to elicit residents' attitudes towards the greatest contribution of and the biggest damage caused by tourism within the Deqin area. Contributing to economic development was the most frequently listed positive contribution (48%), followed by improving the local community and culture (8%), and protecting the environment (6%). However, a third of people (33%) stated there were no great contributions provided by tourism. The most common response to the biggest damage caused by tourism was how it pollutes the environment (34%) and degrades the culture (4%). Tourism having no negative effects was reported by 54% of respondents.

Two questions within the survey assessed residents' attitudes toward interactions with tourists. The survey asked, "How often do you talk to tourists during the peak tourist season?" Responses ranged from daily (5%), almost every day (10%), a couple of times a week (19%), once a week (25%), to seldom or never (35%). To assess the feelings of local residents while talking to tourists, the survey asked them to rank the experience from being a very positive experience to a very negative experience. A very positive experience was reported by 13% of people and a positive experience by 39%. The experience gave no effect to 35% of respondents. A negative experience was held by only 2% of people and 4% of people reported a very negative experience.

As reported in table 6, respondents were asked to provide their occupation. The survey also asked what their occupation was five years ago to determine if there has been

a shift in the job market during the previous years. During the previous five years there has not been a significant shift in the job market. The only changes reported in the survey, presently versus five years ago, were that now there are four fewer students/teachers, one more hotelier, two fewer farmers, one less driver, and one more person now does not have a job.

Table 6. Demographic Distribution of Those Sampled to Participate in the Survey

Demographic Characteristic	Male	Female	Total
Current Job Related to Tourism	Yes 19	Yes 28	Yes 47
	No 26	No 17	No 43
Occupation			
Student/ Teacher	25	13	38
Government/ NGO	4	10	14
Restaurant/ Store	3	4	7
Hotel/ Tour Agency/ Guide	4	6	10
Farmer	3	4	7
Driver	3	3	6
None	2	2	4
Ethnicity			
Tibetan	38	37	75
Han	4	4	8
Bai	0	1	1
Hui	2	0	2
Naxi	1	0	1
Age			
18 – 20	19	6	25
21 – 30	11	24	35
31 or older	15	15	30
Education			
Middle school or less	7	9	16
High school	23	15	38
2 Years or more of college	15	21	36

To assess if there has been any type of immigration into the area or an emigration out, the survey also asked how long residents have been living in the area and where they came from before living in Deqin. Only 13% of people said they had moved to the Deqin area within the last five years. The rest had been living in the area for over ten years and 48% had been in the area for over twenty-six years. Having been living in the area their whole lives was reported by 65% of people; 5% of respondents moved to Deqin from Zhongdian, and 17% of respondents came from other places throughout southern China. Thirteen people did not answer the question.

In addition to presenting simple response frequencies and percentages, cross-tabulations were conducted using all socio-demographic variables against the 35-attitudinal questions. Those cross-tabulations representing close to significant relationships are provided in the following four chapters along with associated Pearson chi-squared values. Chi-square compares the observed cell frequencies to those expected by random chance. It is a non-parametric statistic in that it makes no assumptions about any population parameters or about population variables being normally distributed (SPSS 2004). In other words, chi-square measures what the chances might have been to arrive at the same result by mere circumstance. Nor does a chi-square compare any sample statistic to a known population parameter. Instead, it compares the sample data to hypothetical frequencies dictated by random chance. As such, researchers can make no attempt to compare sample data to population measures. Chi-square will calculate useful significance levels even without truly random samples. The Pearson p-value represents the probability of resultant cell frequencies occurring by random chance. It does not

represent a measure of how much a sample statistic (in a representative sample) deviates from a known population figure.

In the following four chapters (6 through 9), I present and discuss research results associated with the adopted theoretical framework's four dimensions of community viability, including well being, culture, participation, and knowledge. The individual chapters focus on presenting research results pertaining to one of the four dimensions. Chapter 6 focuses on well being, chapter 7 on culture, chapter 8 on participation, and chapter 9 focuses on knowledge. Each chapter begins by contextualizing the primary dimension and providing definitions of the factors that comprise the given dimension. Each chapter then provides an overall summary of results related to the theoretical dimension. Chapters conclude by presenting the interview results followed by survey results pertaining to the given individual theoretical dimension.

CHAPTER 6

WELL BEING

Integrated conservation and development projects are often based on the assumption that if the local people are provided an economic alternative to natural resources consumptive practices and increase their standard of living, they will reduce environmental degradation. In situations where local people were excluded from accessing resources in protected areas that were traditionally utilized, populations were often left with no option but to continue utilizing those restricted resources, an obvious conflict with conservation goals. Addressing the economic needs of populations within or nearby protected areas is extremely important considering they are the ones who absorb the largest burden of nature conservation.

Well being consists of the factors *economic well being* and *physiological and psychological well being*. Along with providing an economic alternative, integrated projects should aim at improving local health standards and stress the safety and security of local people within their communities. Within the interview portion of this research sixteen local residents, both those who participate in tourism and those who do not, were chosen to assess local attitudes towards tourism development's effect on local well being. The survey portion of this research asked seventeen questions pertaining to tourism's impact on local economic, physiological, and psychological well being.

Summary of Results Related to Well Being

Tourism development within the Deqin area is providing an economic alternative to natural resources consumptive practices and is increasing the local standard of living. Residents feel their standard of living is increasing year by year. Some residents believe that without tourism their family would not be able to survive. Local people are continually realizing that the natural environment is a product that attracts tourism and thus tourism-related financial profits. The psychological and physiological well being of local residents is also improving. Residents share an attitude that the area's transportation and communication infrastructure is improving because of tourism development. The general population also feels positive about the effect tourism is having on community development. There is a sense that as economic returns increase, outside derived business competition will gain increasing shares of profits.

Interviews

All sixteen people interviewed expressed positive attitudes toward tourism development in the Deqin area. They all agree the positives outweigh the negatives. All insist the more development the better. When asked the question "What are the potential benefits offered by tourism?" all respondents mentioned an improved economy and opportunities for employment. The only interviewee who believes his/her family does not receive economic benefits from tourism was a government employee. He does believe that tourism development "can make a foundation for our people to shake off poverty and build up fortune" (Government Worker 2005). All sixteen interviewees

believe the formation of local protected areas, nature conservation, and tourism development have impacted the community in a positive way by increasing the amount of tourist arrivals and thus increasing the local economy. Of the ten interviewees who actively participate in the tourism industry, all ten said that the reason why they have chosen to participate is to earn money.

Several strong attitudes about tourism development's associated economic benefits were expressed when asked, "Why do you choose to participate?" One hotel owner replied, "Because living is most important" (Deqin Hotel 2005). Another hotel owner added, "The more tourists that visit here the better. If there were no tourists there would be no more money, my life would be a lot worse. My family would not be able to survive without tourism" (Meili Hotel 2005). Within the Deqin area there are high hopes that tourism will continue to grow and bring further economic gains. However, economic gains are not shared equally.

While respondents reported that the overall impact of tourism development has been positive, ten of the sixteen residents interviewed expressed concern about how the economic benefits associated with tourism development are not being distributed equally throughout the whole Deqin area. "Well maybe in our village we haven't found any positive effects yet, but in villages like Feilasi the people's living level now has improved because of tourism. And because there are more and more tourists going there that village has become richer and richer. And our village has not changed at all yet. Because few people know about this place, just a few local people will travel around here. But the people of Feilasi, they have all become rich because tourism brought profits to

them” (Lhasa View Restaurant 2005). Although there is some resentment towards the villages of Feilasi, Yubeng, and Mingyong for capturing the majority of economic returns associated with tourism, all interviewees believe that the city of Deqin will also eventually gain economic benefits. For example, “In the Deqin area, there are only four villages, Yubeng, Xidang, Mingyong, and Feilasi, that have really received economic benefits from tourism. But they are just examples of what will come to the rest of the area in the future. This is the situation around the whole Meili Mountain or those areas connected by the three rivers, because this whole region is auspicious” (Feilasi Hotel 2005).

Factors of physiological and psychological well being were also mentioned by respondents. Increased efficiency of infrastructure aids in improving a community’s physiological well being. Ten of those people interviewed agree that tourism development has increased the traffic infrastructure within the area. “Before it would cost 500 yuan to rent a bus, now it only costs 200 yuan because the road was rebuilt and became convenient” (Deqin Hotel 2005). Two others mentioned that, “The transportation situation was very bad before tourism development started, but now it is getting better” (Fun Times 2005) and “where there is tourism there is better traffic infrastructure, such as Mingyong village. That village is rich” (Lucky’s Hotel 2005).

Tourism development having a positive effect on the community’s psychological well being, informational and cultural exchange was mentioned by twelve of the sixteen interviewees. Through a sharing of information, people can improve their own self-awareness. “Through information exchange we will know more about the outside world.

So then we can conduct ourselves accordingly” (Deqin Hotel 2005). Introducing tourism to the area has also helped residents become happier. “The people who come here for tourism are very happy. The mountains, water and so on can make them feel happy. So we feel happy too” (Grandma 2005). Participating in tourism was also mentioned as increasing cultural confidence, raising spiritual awareness, learning about different cultures, and making friends. “We participate because we like it. It is fun. I like to make friends” (Trekker Hotel 2005).

One educated interviewee expressed how all the residents of the Deqin area share tourism-derived economic benefits:

You have to have a broad view about the benefits of tourism. People normally think tourism is linked only to hotels, restaurants, and transportation, nothing else. Actually tourism is related to many fields, like supermarkets, groceries, animal husbandry, everything. So lots of people benefit from tourism, not only the owner of the guesthouse. So sometimes people have a very narrow understanding of tourism. My father has his own job, my mother has her own job, but all those, tourism benefits all those jobs in many ways. So, people in this township, there are 10,000 people, in this county there are 60,000 people. These people in this township benefit more than the people living in the surrounding lands. But the whole county is still linked more or less to the tourism industry. You can’t say ‘my village has no resources so it is not linked to tourism.’ You can’t look at it this way. Tourism is still doing something to this village. (Tony 2005)

The same interviewee answered the following difficult question about economic leakage and cultural commodification more specifically. I asked him:

I have had locals tell me that governmental control is better than local because locals aren’t smart enough to control tourism development, and loss of culture caused by tourism is good because Tibetan culture isn’t good enough, it is backwards, so any change is a good change. Selling of culture is good. Han people making money is good, even if all the hotels, bars, tour agency owners live outside in big cities it is good. There is still money that reaches locals, even if there is only a little, that is enough. What do you think of all that?

He responded:

I agree with them because locals don't have... this area was only opened to the outside recently, so locals don't have a very good concept of real service. Service is not only serving people. There are a lot of things you have to understand. So in this stage of transition present in Deqin, outsiders are from big cities or tourism cities that opened to the outside many years ago, so they already have a lot of experience to serve people. So in this transition period, it is better for outsiders to come here and do this business, they have their own benefits they have to hire local people because they can't bring employees from outside it is stupid it is expensive. They have to find locals as waiters, waitresses, and cooks, and they have to teach them how to do their duties. Then eventually, the outsider will leave. (Tony 2005)

The entire population I spoke with generally agrees with Tony. They all feel as if it would be better for someone else to manage all tourism-related activities because they are not fit to do so themselves. Based on personal observations, tourism to the Deqin area will continue to grow and as this growth continues, more business people from outside locations will attempt to capitalize on this growth. Although tourism is a new industry in Deqin, only a small amount of training is needed for locals to be able to provide services related to tourism. Nearby tourism centers in the region have and continue to realize increasing tourist arrivals and receipts. Within these locations, original citizens have been marginalized to subsidiary positions. Deqin residents are capable and should be the main beneficiaries of the newly introduced tourism industry.

Responses to Survey Questions Related to Well Being

Economic Well Being

Generally the residents of Deqin who participated in the surveys agree that tourism development has brought economic benefits to the area (Table 7). Only 3% of those surveyed do not believe their standard of living is increasing because of tourism in the region. There were only 19% who stated that they believe the money brought in through tourism activities does not benefit the whole community. An overwhelming majority of respondents (94%) believe tourism attracts more investment and spending to the region. Almost half of those surveyed (46%) think tourism is providing a ready market for the product of local farmers.

There were some negative feelings toward the economic impacts associated with introducing tourism to the area. Over two thirds (68%) of respondents feel as if the prices of many goods and services in the region have increased because of tourism. But in places where the standard of living increases, usually prices of goods follow suit. Slightly more people (12%) feel as if money earned from tourism ends up going to non-locals than those who do not.

Table 7. Economic Well Being Attitudinal Statement Responses

	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I. Well being							
A. Economic							
1. Our standard of living is increasing because of tourism in the region.	52	36	9	0	3	1.66	.88
2. The money that tourism brings in benefits the whole community.	21	29	30	13	6	2.51	1.17
3. Tourism attracts more investment and spending to the region.	69	25	2	1	3	1.44	.84
4. The tourism sector provides a ready market for the product of local farmers.	15	31	31	16	6	2.64	1.13
5. Prices of many goods and services in the region have increased because of tourism.	19	49	23	5	2	2.16	.93
6. Most of the money earned from tourism ends up going to outsiders.	10	23	21	42	2	3.00	1.11

Note: The Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree)

There were two different questions that measure economic well being and produced differing results when cross-tabulated with how often respondents talked to tourists. The money that tourism brings in benefits the whole community is a statement that 33% more of those people who talk to tourists a couple of times a week agreed with compared to those respondents who talk to tourists seldom or never (Table 8). In other words, this result indicates that people who have more frequent interactions with tourists are more likely to feel that tourism brings significant economic benefits. The Pearson Chi-Square value (p-value) is 0.13, indicating that there is a 13% chance this difference would occur randomly. The second cross-tabulation with significantly differing results occurred within the attitudes toward local residents' standards of living are increasing because of tourism (Table 9). Among those respondents who talk to tourists at least a couple of times a week, 73.5% agree tourism is increasing local standards of living.

However, 40% of respondents who talk to tourists seldom or never disagree with the statement. This indicates that people who more frequently interact with tourists are more likely to believe tourism is increasing local standards of living compared to those who rarely interact with tourists. This cross tabulation has a p-value of 0.022, representing a 2.2% chance the results were random.

Table 8. Cross-Tabulation, Talking to Tourist Frequency vs. Tourism Economically Benefits the Whole Community

			Money for Everyone			Total
			A	N	D	
Talk Frequency	Couple of times a week	Count	23	6	5	34
		% within Talk Frequency	67.6%	17.6%	14.7%	100.0%
	Once a week	Count	12	7	6	25
		% within Talk Frequency	48.0%	28.0%	24.0%	100.0%
	Seldom or never	Count	12	15	8	35
		% within Talk Frequency	34.3%	42.9%	22.9%	100.0%
Total	Count	51	30	19	100	
	% within Talk Frequency	51.0%	30.0%	19.0%	100.0%	

Table 9. Cross-Tabulation, Talking to Tourist Frequency vs. Tourism is Causing Local Standards of Living to Increase

			Our SOL inc			Total
			A	N	D	
Talk Frequency	Couple of times a week	Count	25	4	5	34
		% within Talk Frequency	73.5%	11.8%	14.7%	100.0%
	Once a week	Count	11	8	6	25
		% within Talk Frequency	44.0%	32.0%	24.0%	100.0%
	Seldom or never	Count	18	3	14	35
		% within Talk Frequency	51.4%	8.6%	40.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	59	16	25	100	
	% within Talk Frequency	59.0%	16.0%	25.0%	100.0%	

Overall, those residents surveyed have a positive attitude toward the effect tourism development is having on the community's physiological well being (Table 10). The majority of respondents feel that because of tourism the road system and other public facilities are maintained at a higher standard than they otherwise would have been; only 20% disagree. Of the four questions pertaining to physiological effects the most agreed upon aspect (only 13% disagree) was that tourism has improved the quality of public services in Deqin. Over half of the respondents (54%) feel tourism has led to an increase in the availability of recreational facilities for local people. Only 17% of those surveyed believe a local person has a lower quality of life because of tourism introduction into the Deqin area.

Table 10. Physiological Well Being Attitudinal Statement Responses

	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
<u>B. Physiological</u>							
7. Because of tourism our roads and other public facilities are kept at a higher standard than they otherwise would be.	26	34	20	16	4	2.38	1.15
8. The quality of public services in Deqin is better due to more tourism.	26	42	16	12	2	2.16	1.07
9. Tourism has led to an increase in the availability of recreational facilities for local people.	16	38	18	18	7	2.53	1.24
10. Local residents living in tourist areas have a lower quality of life.	2	15	27	28	25	3.50	1.24

Note: The Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree)

There was only one notable difference apparent after utilizing cross-tabulations within the attitudinal statements dealing with the community's physiological well being.

Although only 20% of respondents do not believe tourism is keeping the roads and other public facilities at a higher standard, 20% more of the male respondents agree with the statement than females (Table 11). The p-value for this cross-tabulation is 0.116. This gender discrepancy could be attributed to general observation that males spend more time away from the vicinity of the house and more time visiting friends in town than females.

Table 11. Cross-Tabulation, Higher Standard of Roads and Public Facilities vs. Gender

			Infrastructure			Total
			A	N	D	
Gender	Female	Count	22	11	12	45
		% within Gender	48.9%	24.4%	26.7%	100.0%
	Male	Count	31	9	5	45
		% within Gender	68.9%	20.0%	11.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	60	20	20	100
		% within Gender	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%

Psychological Well Being

The seven questions measuring psychological effects associated with tourism development pertain to whether or not residents have positive experiences and if tourism is positively affecting local culture. Table 12 shows that overall, respondents have a positive attitude toward the effect tourism development is having on the local psychological well being. Only 10% of those surveyed do not support further development of tourism facilities. Meeting tourists from all over the world is definitely a valuable experience to 72% of respondents. As an economic alternative, tourism must also provide highly desirable jobs to local people. Currently only 15% of those asked feel the jobs tourism provides are not highly desirable.

Table 12. Psychological Well Being Attitudinal Statement Responses

	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
C. Psychological							
11. I support the development of new tourism facilities.	21	49	19	5	5	2.21	1.03
12. Meeting tourists from all over the world is definitely a valuable experience.	31	41	9	6	12	2.24	1.31
13. The jobs tourism provides are highly desirable.	22	40	21	13	2	2.27	1.07
14. Tourists have an undesirable effect on the way of life in the region.	9	23	26	30	10	3.03	1.22
15. Tourism results in crowded public places for the local population.	14	24	23	29	8	2.87	1.26
16. Tourists greatly add to the traffic congestion, noise and pollution in the region.	8	10	27	26	7	2.90	1.12
17. Overall, the benefits of tourism are greater than the costs to the people of the area.	31	45	13	2	6	1.98	1.09

Note: The Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree)

The tourists that visit a place can also have an impact on a community's psychological well being. Within those sampled, 32% believe tourists have an undesirable effect on the way of life in the region. Tourism resulting in crowded places and greatly adding to traffic congestion, noise and pollution was felt by 38% and 18% of those surveyed respectively.

With all the economic, physiological, and psychological advantages and disadvantages associated with introducing tourism to an area, residents had an overall positive feeling towards tourism. Only 8% of those surveyed disagree with the statement, "Overall, benefits of tourism are greater than the costs to the people of the area." While tourism does have acknowledged negative impacts, overall feelings toward it are positive.

After completing cross-tabulations among the psychological well being related attitude statements, four statements showed differing responses. Although 72% of respondents feel meeting tourists from all over the world is definitely a valuable experience, 83% of the people who disagree with the statement are female (Table 13). The p-value for this cross tabulation was 0.002, giving a 0.02% chance results are random, representing a statistically significant response. Males agreed 18% more often than females that the jobs tourism provides are highly desirable (Table 14). This response has a p-value of 0.009. This attitude difference within gender may be associated with the types of jobs tourism offers males versus those available to females. Males can be mountain guides, drivers, translators and other positions that offer a sense of freedom or higher social status; females are generally only able to fill positions related to restaurants, stores, bars, and hotels. Believing tourists have an undesirable effect on the way of life in the region was related to the age of the respondents. Over half of the respondents under the age of twenty disagree, while only a quarter of those over the age of thirty disagree (Table 15). The effect age has on the attitude of tourism affecting traditional way life may be attributed to the fact that younger people may generally want to experience a more Western way of life. While older residents are more accustomed to the traditional way of life that existed before there was any significant tourism in the area. The p-value for this cross-tabulation was 0.120. Six more males than females agree that tourism results in crowded public places for the local population, while nine more females than males disagree (Table 16). This cross tabulation has a p-value of 0.190.

Table 13. Cross-Tabulation, Meeting Tourists is a Valuable Experience vs. Gender

			Meeting			Total
			A	N	D	
Gender	Female	Count	28	2	15	45
		% within Gender	62.2%	4.4%	33.3%	100.0%
	Male	Count	35	7	3	45
		% within Gender	77.8%	15.6%	6.7%	100.0%
Total	Count	73	9	18	100	
	% within Gender	73.0%	9.0%	18.0%	100.0%	

Table 14. Cross-Tabulation, Tourism Jobs are Highly Desirable vs. Gender

			Tourism Jobs Desirable			Total
			A	N	D	
Gender	Female	Count	25	11	9	45
		% within Gender	55.6%	24.4%	20.0%	100.0%
	Male	Count	36	7	2	45
		% within Gender	80.0%	15.6%	4.4%	100.0%
Total	Count	64	21	15	100	
	% within Gender	64.0%	21.0%	15.0%	100.0%	

Table 15. Cross-Tabulation, Tourists Have an Undesirable Effect on the Way of Life vs. Age

			Poor Life			Total
			A	N	D	
Age	18-20	Count	6	6	15	27
		% within Age	22.2%	22.2%	55.6%	100.0%
	21-30	Count	12	11	16	39
		% within Age	30.8%	28.2%	41.0%	100.0%
	Over 30	Count	14	9	8	31
		% within Age	45.2%	29.0%	25.8%	100.0%
Total	Count	32	26	42	100	
	% within Age	32.0%	26.0%	42.0%	100.0%	

Table 16. Cross-Tabulation, Tourists Cause Crowds in Public Facilities vs. Gender

			Crowds			Total
			A	N	D	
Gender	Female	Count	15	8	22	45
		% within Gender	33.3%	17.8%	48.9%	100.0%
	Male	Count	21	11	13	45
		% within Gender	46.7%	24.4%	28.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	40	23	37	100
		% within Gender	40.0%	23.0%	37.0%	100.0%

CHAPTER 7

CULTURE

If local customs and traditions are ignored while implementing an alternative development project, the alternative development may have a negative cultural effect on the resident population. Culture as defined within this research, consists of the factors of cultural sustainability and social and environmental values. The following sections provide the results of the interviews and questionnaires conducted in the Deqin area that focused on attitudes and beliefs pertaining to tourism development's effect on local culture.

Summary of Results Related to Culture

Overall, the population of the Deqin area has a positive attitude towards the effects that tourism is having on the local culture. Locals are appreciating their own culture more, exchanging cultures, and increasing cultural activities (e.g., crafts, arts, music). Younger residents have a more positive attitude than older residents. Those individuals who interact with tourists frequently generally have a more positive attitude toward tourism's cultural effects. The male population has a more positive attitude than females about tourism's effect on the local culture. There is a belief shared among those residents more knowledgeable about tourism that it is having a negative effect on the younger population and that the government has not considered local culture during planning and managing tourism development.

Interviews

Of the sixteen local residents interviewed, eight people spoke of tourism development having an effect on local culture. There were eleven positive references to tourism development and the resultant effect on local culture. Tourism development reinforcing local culture was mentioned seven times. Cultural exchange as a primary resource for tourism development and thus a means of receiving economic returns was expressed four times. When asked, “Why do you wish to enter the tourism industry as a profession?” one young lady responded, “I think I can get a deep understanding of my own culture through tourism. Then we can spread it to other places. But now I don’t have a deep understanding of my own culture” (Student 2005).

Tourism development in the Deqin area has had a positive effect on local Tibetan culture by reinforcing self esteem in the culture and even stimulating the adult population to learn about their forgotten ways of life. “In recent years, many Tibetan cultures have been protected. Now many people collect funds from abroad to protect it. Some even take out their own money to protect it. There used to be only one school here, now you can see many primary and middle schools for minorities. Before few people choose Tibetan language as their major, because their families were very poor. But now many people are studying Tibetan language because tourism has provided enough money to parents so they can send their children to these schools” (Lucky’s Hotel 2005). Another interviewee mentioned how through participating in tourism he became aware of his own loss of culture. “It is sad that I, a Tibetan, can speak the Tibetan language but can not

write it. I find I did not cherish the good things during my adolescence. Now I am old. I have no high expectations, I only want to learn how to spell out my name and some simple names of places. Only by doing so can I have a sense of being a Tibetan person” (Feilasi Hotel 2005).

In reference to how tourism promotes cultural confidence one interviewee said,

Over 20 years ago, people here in Deqin had a very bad life because of the harsh environment and a backwards culture, all these elements restrained their economic progress. Now since 1997, when tourism started and Deqin was opened to the world, more and more tourists come here and local people are beginning to realize they have very unique resources. These resources include a unique culture that is very attractive to the outside world and a very unique natural environment that is also attractive to the outside world. So now they have a lot of confidence. People are now very full of confidence. This is very good to strengthen minority confidence, it improves their lives. (Tony 2005)

Seven respondents mentioned tourism having a negative effect on local culture.

Those references included four people talking about how tourism is creating a loss of traditional cultures and three people mentioned a resultant disrespect for local culture. However when all interviewees were asked the same question, “What are the potential negative effects of tourism?” only four interviewees stated a negative effect on local culture, such as: selling local culture, government officials disrespecting local culture, non-local business owners disrespecting local culture, and tourists changing local culture.

One interviewee spoke about how local residents are selling their local traditions and culture:

Years ago we had some traditional dances. We danced for fun. Local citizens always danced to exchange their cultural concepts and attitudes and the whole society’s morality. We all passed them from generation to generation. From the lyrics of traditional songs you can see local people’s thoughts, lives, and attitudes. It

also involves an ecological attitude. But things have changed now since tourism came. Now many newcomers want to explore these cultures. And because these things have a potential to provide profits, more and more local people are only focusing on the money and not the content. They can dance well, but actually, they have forgotten the national culture. (Lucky's Hotel 2005)

Another interviewee talked about how regional tourism planners and government officials are blatantly disrespecting local culture:

The disrespecting of local culture is currently a high concern of local tourism related officers. Submitting Meili Snow Mountain has been prohibited, which makes local people very happy. This action has something to do with humanity. But Mount Kawagebo, which is the highest point in Yunnan and is very sacred to Tibetan people, has been open to outsiders for submitting from the beginning. Who gave them permission? We don't know. Our Tibetan people are not allowed to do so. Our government should understand how such a mountain could contain regional culture. They shouldn't make any contracts with others casually. For example, people here dislike the Japanese. Actually, not only the Japanese, we are disgusted with these organizations that give the Japanese permission to come here. Some organizations have little knowledge of the regional culture, more specifically, the culture of the mountain. If the government wants to promote tourism they must show respect to our ethnic culture, to the culture that has been here since the beginning of history. I wonder whether tourism managers and planners have ever given thought to the cultural atmosphere that has been permeating in these mountains for a long time. (Feilasi Hotel 2005)

The third negative effect tourism development has brought to the Deqin area mentioned by interviewee was how non-local business owners are moving into the area and changing local cultures:

It is the local culture that I am worried about. Tibetan people, especially the young ones, share an increasing involvement in tourism development. Not all companies here are owned by Tibetan people. It is rare to find really successful Tibetan people and we need to draw lessons from others. Our government has recently declared some limitations stating that 50% of business personnel have to be local people. But judging from current situations it is quite another matter, most people within tourism related businesses are from other places. They do not know our culture. For example, after ten years of working in a tourism business, the outsider would go away with a large sum of money. During this ten year business, he manages his company

his own way, rather than with our Tibetan people's concept. That is why our culture here is being changed. (City Hotel 2005)

Tourists having a negative impact on local culture was the fourth negative impact of tourism development mentioned during the interviews. "Tourists bring in information that has influenced the way the local people behave. Before we were all very nice. Now not everyone is nice like before. Before this place was open for tourism you could drop money and it would stay there until you found it again, no matter how long it would take to find it. Nowadays, if you drop money someone will knock you over trying to get it before it even hits the ground" (Meili Hotel 2005).

When asked how the negative cultural impacts of tourism can be limited or managed, one respondent said, "There are some relationships between cultural exploration and environmental exploration. I think an understanding of these relationships is very important in developing tourism. It will still be important while developing tourism in the future. It is not through managing tourism we can limit the negative cultural impacts, in my opinion such ability should depend on the people who manage it, not the industry. How those people do it, develop it and manage it, what positions they will lead to are the keys to the problems" (Yubeng 2005).

Another interviewee expressed his opinion on trying to protect local culture, "Protecting cultural property is really difficult. There are few people who can speak the Tibetan language here, even worse, these Tibetan people have come to enhance the education of standard Chinese, while paying less attention to their own native language. It is impossible for a good mastery of Tibetan language to lead you to a good job.

Everyone is trying to stand in line with the development of tourism. But without our ethnic culture, this area will have nothing to attract tourists” (Fun Times 2005).

Tourism development has in other parts of the world facilitated an increased awareness towards local culture and even revived diminished cultural practices. As tourism levels increase in the Deqin area, local residents will realize that their own unique Tibetan culture is a resource that will provide economic returns along with the unique natural environment of the area. In nearby tourism destinations, local cultures have been revived, even if just to promote tourism levels.

Responses to Surveys Questions Related to Culture

In this section I provide the results of the questionnaire that pertains to attitude statements concerning tourism development and the effect it is having on local culture. Important factors in determining the ability of development to become sustainable are the effects it has on the local culture, such as whether or not it changes, promotes or encourages cultural activities (Table 17). Tourism development causing a better appreciation of one’s own culture was shared by 55% of respondents and 44% of those asked feel as if tourism promotes cultural exchange. Approximately the same numbers of people feel as if tourism has caused changes in the traditional culture of the region (41%) as these that do not feel it has caused a change (43%). However, over two-thirds (67%) of respondents feel that tourism encourages a variety of cultural activities by the local populations (e.g., crafts, arts, music).

Table 17. Culture Related Attitudinal Statement Responses

	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
<u>II. Culture</u>							
18. Because of tourism I have a better appreciation of my own culture.	16	39	12	12	19	2.73	1.43
19. Tourism promotes cultural exchange.	13	31	20	29	5	2.76	1.20
20. Tourism encourages a variety of cultural activities by the local population (e. g., crafts, arts, music).	38	29	14	12	5	2.11	1.23
21. Tourism has caused changes in the traditional culture of the region.	16	25	13	28	15	2.92	1.43

Note: The Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree)

Among culturally related statements, three different variables appear to have an effect on response frequencies. Those variables were age, gender and the frequency of talking to tourists. Believing tourism does not promote cultural exchange was reported by 52% of respondents twenty years of age or younger, while only 25% of those respondents twenty-one and older feel the same, with a p-value of 0.63 (Table 18). This could be attributed to the reluctance of older residents to initiate conversations with tourists and perhaps that younger people are generally more curious about other cultures and ways of life. Twice as many respondents that talk to tourists at least once a week believe tourism promotes cultural exchange (58%) than those who do not (24%). However, over twice as many (54%) of those respondents that seldom or never talk to tourists believe tourism has no effect on cultural exchange than those who do (26%) (Table 19). This cross-tabulation has a p-value of 0.056. The reason for this variation is that those residents who initiate conversations with tourists are more likely to participate in cultural exchange. Age was a crucial variable in evaluating whether residents believe

tourism encourages a variety of cultural activities. Only 48% of respondents under the age of thirty think tourism encourages cultural activities, while 77% of respondents thirty years of age and older do (Table 20). This cross-tabulation has a p-value of 0.110.

There were three different independent variables causing fluctuations amongst response frequencies to the statement that tourism has caused changes in the traditional culture of the region. The amount of time talking to tourists (Table 21), the age of respondents (Table 22), and the gender of respondents (Table 23) were all independent variables showing differing opinions. Over 54% of respondents who talk with tourists at least once a week do not feel tourism has caused a change in traditional culture, but 63% of respondents who seldom or never talk to tourists think tourism is causing a change (p-value 0.063). This may be attributed to those residents that frequently talk to tourists are more accepting and open to changes in culture and are not aware of the cultural changes caused by tourism. Also associated with tourism causing a change in local culture, the age of the respondent caused differing opinions (p-value 0.051), with 66% of respondents aged 18 to 20 feeling tourism has no cultural effect and 50% of respondents over twenty thinking it does. Males mostly don't think that tourism is causing a change (64%), while 58% of females think that tourism does cause a change in traditional culture (p-value 0.002).

Table 18. Cross-Tabulation, Tourism Promotes Cultural Exchange vs. Age

			Promotes Cultural Exchange			Total
			A	N	D	
Age	18-20	Count	6	7	14	27
		% within Age	22.2%	25.9%	51.9%	100.0%
	21-30	Count	23	8	8	39
		% within Age	59.0%	20.5%	20.5%	100.0%
	Over 30	Count	16	5	10	31
		% within Age	51.6%	16.1%	32.3%	100.0%
Total	Count	46	20	34	100	
	% within Age	46.0%	20.0%	34.0%	100.0%	

Table 19. Cross-Tabulation, Tourism Promotes Cultural Exchange vs. Talk Frequency to Tourists

			Promotes Cultural Exchange			Total
			A	N	D	
Talk Frequency	Couple of times a week	Count	19	7	8	34
		% within Talk Frequency	55.9%	20.6%	23.5%	100.0%
	Once a week	Count	15	4	6	25
		% within Talk Frequency	60.0%	16.0%	24.0%	100.0%
	Seldom or never	Count	9	7	19	35
		% within Talk Frequency	25.7%	20.0%	54.3%	100.0%
Total	Count	46	20	34	100	
	% within Talk Frequency	46.0%	20.0%	34.0%	100.0%	

Table 20. Cross-Tabulation, Tourism Encourages Cultural Activities vs. Age

			Encourages Culture			Total
			A	N	D	
Age	18-20	Count	22	3	2	27
		% within Age	81.5%	11.1%	7.4%	100.0%
	21-30	Count	29	4	6	39
		% within Age	74.4%	10.3%	15.4%	100.0%
	Over 30	Count	15	7	9	31
		% within Age	48.4%	22.6%	29.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	69	14	17	100	
	% within Age	69.0%	14.0%	17.0%	100.0%	

Table 21. Cross-Tabulation, Tourism Causing Changes to Traditional Culture vs. Talk Frequency

			Traditional Culture			Total
			A	N	D	
Talk Frequency	Couple of times a week	Count	9	7	18	34
		% within Talk Frequency	26.5%	20.6%	52.9%	100.0%
	Once a week	Count	8	3	14	25
		% within Talk Frequency	32.0%	12.0%	56.0%	100.0%
	Seldom or never	Count	22	2	11	35
		% within Talk Frequency	62.9%	5.7%	31.4%	100.0%
Total	Count	41	13	46	100	
	% within Talk Frequency	41.0%	13.0%	46.0%	100.0%	

Table 22. Cross-Tabulation, Tourism Causing Changes to Traditional Culture vs. Age

			Traditional Culture			Total
			A	N	D	
Age	18-20	Count	6	3	18	27
		% within Age	22.2%	11.1%	66.7%	100.0%
	21-30	Count	19	7	13	39
		% within Age	48.7%	17.9%	33.3%	100.0%
	Over 30	Count	16	3	12	31
		% within Age	51.6%	9.7%	38.7%	100.0%
Total	Count	41	13	46	100	
	% within Age	41.0%	13.0%	46.0%	100.0%	

Table 23. Cross-Tabulation, Tourism Causing Changes to Traditional Culture vs. Gender

			Traditional Culture			Total
			A	N	D	
Gender	Female	Count	26	7	12	45
		% within Gender	57.8%	15.6%	26.7%	100.0%
	Male	Count	13	3	29	45
		% within Gender	28.9%	6.7%	64.4%	100.0%
Total		Count	41	13	46	100
		% within Gender	41.0%	13.0%	46.0%	100.0%

CHAPTER 8

PARTICIPATION

Participation includes the factors *community participation* and *community capacity*. Failure to account for local people's needs and promote local participation during the planning and management stages of integrated conservation and development projects has been proven to be major constraints to sustainability (Wells and Brandon 1993). More than anyone else, local people know how their community functions, and accordingly are best suited to determine what activities, if any, are most appropriate and most likely to be beneficial to the community. It is critical that community participation is democratic and benefits associated with participating are not garnered by only a small group of people. Participation should be inclusive of the entire population. Community capacity factors pertain to a project's ability to enhance community capacity, or rather encourage the local community to further participate in the planning and management levels at an increased level. The following provides the results of the interviews and questionnaires conducted in the Deqin area that focused on the attitudes and beliefs of local residents into whether the community has been able to participate in tourism's development.

Summary or Results Related to Participation

Within the survey, the majority of respondents felt as if the community has been involved in tourism planning and management activities. However, based on interviews and participant observation, local participation has been limited. Most interviewees reported that they had not participated, been asked to participate, or even knew how to participate in larger planning and management decision-making. The overwhelming belief within the Deqin area population is that the government should control all tourism development because the local residents are not capable of it at the present time. Interviews and observations indicate some resentment toward the lack of local participation and management opportunities and the uneven distribution of tourism's economic benefits.

Interviews

Of those people interviewed, all ($n = 16$) believe the government should, and is best suited to, manage and plan tourism development in the Deqin area. Means of participation in the area are limited to litter removal, trail maintenance, and environmental protection fees. Only two interviewees said the government ever solicits advice from local residents. During the interview phase of research, all interviewees were asked the question, "In which ways have local people been participating in planning and management in regards to environmental protection and tourism development in the Deqin area?" Common responses are listed below:

- "Local people have almost no say, in all of China it is the same" (Tony 2005).

- “The community itself still doesn’t know enough about tourism” (Jewelry 2005).
- “The government should supervise all these processes” (Yubeng Hotel 2005).
- “If the government takes the initial step in doing it, the local people can follow” (Lhasa View 2005).
- “Everything must follow the government” (Deqin Hotel 2005).
- “It’s the government’s job” (Meili Hotel 2005).
- “I have no idea how to participate” (Good Eats 2005).
- “Local people here don’t have much interest in participating” (Lucky’s Hotel 2005).
- “I don’t think the local people here can control it” (Trekker Hotel 2005).
- “Well, we just follow the government. That is about it” (Curtains 2005).

I asked one interviewee if he thought there were enough local people in the Deqin area willing to express their feelings and participate in the planning. He believes the locals don’t care much about participating. “They think it is the government’s job to make decisions, not theirs” (Lucky’s Hotel 2005).

There was one respondent who believed the participation process in the Deqin area is becoming more democratic. He believes the government is willing to hear representatives from villages and counties who are prepared to voice their opinions. This is in contrast to how decisions were made in the past. In the past if the government needed to resolve an issue it would “send a specialist to Tibet, but these specialists always made programs without collecting local people’s opinions. These programs always have unreasonable elements in them. I think that we should encourage the

common people to participate in planning and organizing” (Feilasi Hotel 2005). One interviewee added, “Of course if the government can listen to the locals that would be better, but in the meantime you can’t only listen to the locals, then you can’t make a decision” (Tony 2005).

Results of Survey Questions Related to Participation

The framework utilized within this research states that more than anyone else, local people know how their community functions, and accordingly are best suited to determine what activities, if any, are most appropriate and most likely to be beneficial to the community. Community participation, optimally, should be democratic and benefits associated with participating should not be garnered by only a small group of people. Participation needs to be inclusive and representative of the entire local population. Table 24 provides the eight survey questions utilized to assess local perceptions and attitudes about community participation in planning and managing tourism development.

Within the surveyed group, almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents feel anyone, regardless of ethnicity, can participate in tourism. Only one third of respondents (34%) feel tourism only benefits a small group of people. Although locals feel as if most of the money earned through tourism stays within the community, almost half of the respondents (48%) believe non-Deqin owned businesses benefit more from the region’s tourism industry.

Participation in tourism as defined by Michealidou, Decker, and Lassoie (2002) entails participation in the planning, development, and managing stages. In opposition to

what was revealed through the interviews, an overwhelming 86% of respondents feel the local community has been involved in tourism planning and development. However, those surveyed have an even distribution of those agreeing and those disagreeing with the statement that the community should control tourism development. That the government should not spend public money on tourism development was a statement agreed with by only 21% of respondents.

Participation within the nature reserve is essential to the local community to share a feeling of ownership and thus respect for the nature reserve. Most of those people surveyed feel the nature reserve employs local people, while 21% do not.

Table 24. Participation Related Attitudinal Statement Responses

	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
III. Participation							
22. Anyone, regardless of ethnicity can participate in tourism.	25	39	15	17	4	2.33	1.19
23. Tourism only benefits a small group of people in the region.	14	20	15	39	12	3.15	1.27
24. Tourism creates more jobs for foreigners than for local people in the region.	10	17	24	22	25	3.29	1.38
25. Non-Deqin-owned businesses benefit more from the region's tourist industry.	16	32	17	18	15	2.78	1.37
26. The local community has been involved in tourism planning and development.	36	50	6	4	3	1.85	.93
27. This community should control tourism development.	29	10	11	21	27	3.01	1.66
28. The government should not spend public money on tourism development.	6	15	13	34	31	3.66	1.28
29. The nature reserve employs local people.	13	29	32	17	4	2.55	1.18

Note: The Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree)

Attitude statements associated with local participation in tourism development, as solicited by questions 22, 23, 25, and 28, produced significant differences when cross-tabulated with the independent variables of education, gender, talking to tourists frequency, and whether or not the respondent's job is tourism-related. Almost 78% of those respondents with two years or more of higher education agree (Table 25) that anyone regardless of ethnicity can participate in tourism, which is half of all respondents (p-value 0.120). This could be attributed to the fact that these respondents have a higher education that outweighs ethnicity. Over 88% of those respondents who also agree that anyone can participate in tourism talk to tourists at least once a week (p-value 0.006) (Table 26). One possible explanation for this might be that those respondents who frequently talk to tourists are more aware of the employment possibilities associated with tourism.

Gender (Table 27), frequency of talking to tourists (Table 28), and whether or not your job is related to tourism (Table 29) are independent variables causing discrepancies in how respondents feel about whether or not tourism only benefits small groups of people. Almost 30% more males than females believe tourism does only benefit small groups of people (p-value 0.024). The less frequently respondents talked to tourists caused people to increasingly disagree that tourism only benefits small groups of people. Disagreement rates for respondents stating they talk to tourists more than a couple of times a week, once a week, and seldom to never were 38%, 52%, and 69% respectively (p-value 0.125). Those respondents without a job related to tourism are 15% more likely

to disagree that tourism only benefits a small group of people than respondents with a tourism related job (p-value 0.370).

The more often residents talk to tourists, the more likely they are to feel as if non-Deqin owned businesses benefit more from tourism (Table 30). Those respondents that stated they talk to tourists at least a couple of times a week reported agreement 39% (p-value 0.051) more than those respondents that talk to tourists seldom or never. Having a job associated with tourism caused respondents to report an 18% higher agreement frequency (Table 31), while those respondents without a tourism related job reported a disagreement to the statement 22% more often (p-value 0.142).

The more education respondents completed, the more likely they were to agree that the government should spend public money on further tourism development projects (Table 32). Respondents stating they finished middle school or less, high school, and two years or more of higher education feel the government should spend more public money 50%, 57%, and 83% of the time (p-value 0.046).

Table 25. Cross-Tabulation, Anyone Can Participate in Tourism vs. Education

			Participation			Total
			A	N	D	
Education	Middle school or less	Count	10	4	2	16
		% within Education	62.5%	25.0%	12.5%	100.0%
	High School	Count	21	7	14	42
		% within Education	50.0%	16.7%	33.3%	100.0%
	Two year or more higher	Count	32	4	5	41
		% within Education	78.0%	9.8%	12.2%	100.0%
Total	Count	64	15	21	100	
	% within Education	64.0%	15.0%	21.0%	100.0%	

Table 26. Cross-Tabulation, Anyone Can Participate in Tourism vs. Talking to Tourists Frequency

			Participation			Total
			A	N	D	
Talk Frequency	Couple of times a week	Count	14	7	13	34
		% within Talk Frequency	41.2%	20.6%	38.2%	100.0%
	Once a week	Count	22	0	3	25
		% within Talk Frequency	88.0%	.0%	12.0%	100.0%
	Seldom or never	Count	23	7	5	35
		% within Talk Frequency	65.7%	20.0%	14.3%	100.0%
Total	Count	64	15	21	100	
	% within Talk Frequency	64.0%	15.0%	21.0%	100.0%	

Table 27. Cross-Tabulation, Tourism Only Benefits Small Group vs. Gender

			Small Groups			Total
			A	N	D	
Gender	Female	Count	8	8	29	45
		% within Gender	17.8%	17.8%	64.4%	100.0%
	Male	Count	21	7	17	45
		% within Gender	46.7%	15.6%	37.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	34	15	51	100
		% within Gender	34.0%	15.0%	51.0%	100.0%

Table 28. Cross-Tabulation, Tourism Only Benefits Small Group vs. Talking to Tourists Frequency

			Small Groups			Total
			A	N	D	
Talk Frequency	Couple of times a week	Count	14	7	13	34
		% within Talk Frequency	41.2%	20.6%	38.2%	100.0%
	Once a week	Count	8	4	13	25
		% within Talk Frequency	32.0%	16.0%	52.0%	100.0%
	Seldom or never	Count	8	3	24	35
		% within Talk Frequency	22.9%	8.6%	68.6%	100.0%
Total	Count	34	15	51	100	
	% within Talk Frequency	34.0%	15.0%	51.0%	100.0%	

Table 29. Cross-Tabulation, Tourism Only Benefits Small Group vs. Job Associated with Tourism

			Small Groups			Total
			A	N	D	
Job with Tourism	Yes	Count	19	9	22	50
		% within Job with Tourism	38.0%	18.0%	44.0%	100.0%
	No	Count	14	6	29	49
		% within Job with Tourism	28.6%	12.2%	59.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	34	15	51	100
		% within Job with Tourism	34.0%	15.0%	51.0%	100.0%

Table 30. Cross-Tabulation, Non-Deqin Owned Business Benefit Most vs. Talking to Tourists Frequency

			Non-local owners			Total
			A	N	D	
Talk Frequency	Couple of times a week	Count	24	4	6	34
		% within Talk Frequency	70.6%	11.8%	17.6%	100.0%
	Once a week	Count	12	4	9	25
		% within Talk Frequency	48.0%	16.0%	36.0%	100.0%
	Seldom or never	Count	11	7	17	35
		% within Talk Frequency	31.4%	20.0%	48.6%	100.0%
Total	Count	50	17	33	100	
	% within Talk Frequency	50.0%	17.0%	33.0%	100.0%	

Table 31. Cross-Tabulation, Non-Deqin Owned Business Benefit Most vs. Job Associated with Tourism

			Non-local owners			Total
			A	N	D	
Job with Tourism	Yes	Count	29	10	11	50
		% within Job with Tourism	58.0%	20.0%	22.0%	100.0%
	No	Count	20	7	22	49
		% within Job with Tourism	40.8%	14.3%	44.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	50	17	33	100
		% within Job with Tourism	50.0%	17.0%	33.0%	100.0%

Table 32. Cross-Tabulation, The Government Should Not Spend Public Money on Tourism vs. Education

			Gov Spending			Total
			A	N	D	
Education	Middle school or less	Count	5	3	8	16
		% within Education	31.3%	18.8%	50.0%	100.0%
	High School	Count	10	8	24	42
		% within Education	23.8%	19.0%	57.1%	100.0%
	Two year or more highe	Count	5	2	34	41
		% within Education	12.2%	4.9%	82.9%	100.0%
Total	Count	21	13	66	100	
	% within Education	21.0%	13.0%	66.0%	100.0%	

CHAPTER 9

KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge consists of the factors *environmental knowledge*, *cultural knowledge* and *business knowledge*. Communities that have lived close to and relied on nature for centuries, as is the case in Deqin, have a vast knowledge of how their local ecosystem functions. This knowledge has been learned and passed on from generation to generation. Local communities also have knowledge about local history, people, customs, and beliefs. This knowledge has also been transmitted from one generation to another. This immense body of knowledge should be incorporated into the planning and management processes of integrated conservation and development projects. While incorporating this knowledge base, managers often enhance local peoples confidence in further communicating their own needs and aspirations. This research assessed the perceptions of local residents pertaining to whether local knowledge has been incorporated into planning and management decisions in the Deqin area.

Summary: Knowledge

Local residents of the Deqin area currently do not feel as if they possess the necessary business knowledge to capitalize on the developing tourism industry. They are satisfied with the fact that business people from outside the area, and even members of the dominant Han minority, are mainly the ones building tourism businesses and profiting from the tourism industry. Residents believe these non-local business people will only

operate their businesses for a short time and then leave Deqin, allowing local residents to take over the left businesses. However, some residents of Deqin currently have the business knowledge needed to successfully manage a tourism related business. Several local residents also have the knowledge needed during the decision and management phases of tourism development.

Tibetan Buddhists share a spiritual connectedness with all beings, even plants and animals. All beings that share an experience of being born are considered kin, gathering positive and negative karma throughout ones life. Environmental conservation thought within the Deqin area is currently based primarily on the premise of receiving economic benefits from nature tourism and not religious thought. Locals realize that a preserved environment is a resource to be used in attracting tourists and tourism receipts. The monetary value of preserving the natural environment is the reason why the majority of survey respondents believe tourism promotes environmental and historical preservation. There are local citizens that have the knowledge needed to manage tourism development, however few are actively participating in such activities.

Interviews

As was shown in the previous section, local people within the Deqin area do not believe they have the necessary knowledge to participate in the tourism industry, but they do believe they can be taught how, even if that knowledge comes at the cost of losing potential economic returns to non-local business people. All residents interviewed expressed content when asked how they feel about the way Han people are the owners of

most of the hotels and restaurants in other tourist centers throughout Yunnan, and even the way these owners hire Han girls and dress them in local ethnic costumes to sell their goods. “Han people know better how to operate a hotel” (Jewelry 2005).

Local residents feel that non-locals will only temporarily own tourism businesses and then sell them to the local people whom they were previously employing. Whether that transfer of ownership actually occurs, needs to be assessed in the future. Tony discusses the thoughts held by locals pertaining to no-local ownership:

Our beautiful scenery maybe gives people a good impression, but in the meantime our service really destroys that good feeling about this land. Take this hotel for example. You have a good feeling about this land, the people, but this is a terrible hotel. The people who own and operate it are very rude, they don't know how to serve, and then you have a bad feeling about this land. It is better to give good scenery and service and that will reflect on the people. I think this stage is better. We should welcome outsiders that will show locals how we can do it better in the future. (Tony 2005)

There are some local residents who know how to manage tourism development in the Deqin area. One respondent talked about the framework of sustainable development:

I think we must follow the concept of sustainable development, otherwise it will cause some negative effects on the ecological balance and ethnic culture. Negative effects are estimated to be coming quickly. We must choose sustainable development as a guidance while building tourism. My concern is whether our common people and government can insist on this path of sustainable development while promoting tourism. In fact, Deqin can be rated as one of the most recent places to develop tourism, so it can draw some lessons from the ups and downs of tourism exploitation in other areas. That information can be used as a reference and avoid some mishaps in the way of sustainable development. But are we really going forward to sustainable development? I dare not make any comments on what is going on in our exploitation. But one fact is clear, being eager to make profits, some local people can not wait for the completion of planning. They just start their large-scale construction. Such large-scale construction is not feasible. Planning is supposed to work in a way that we explore options before acting. It is estimated that there have been some failures here similar to what has happened in other places. The government insists on

sustainable developments. Yet, it seems that the government's behavior always lags a little behind. (Feilasi Hotel 2005)

There are also local people with incredible knowledge about the environment and they have ideas about how to manage it:

We can be called specialists in these mountains, so the government should support people like us. Most of the tour guides here have a certificate, but they are unfamiliar with the conditions here. None of them can guarantee their guests' safety to any degree. We can make a more comprehensive consideration, at least we know when and where snow avalanches may happen and when and where heavy rains may cause danger. Comparatively, we can get tourism information exact and in time. These outside tour guides with government certification lack our experience and knowledge. (Feilasi 2005).

Half of those people interviewed talked about how Tibetan religion is the doctrine they follow while managing and conserving natural environments. Within the interviews all respondents were asked how they felt about the influence of natural protection and the tourism industry on the area. "Tourism development indeed puts a lot of pressure on nature, so it must be conducted on the premise of environmental protection, that is sustainable development. There are many ways to protect, some government offices use forceful measures. This is a legislative form. I think we can use religious thought to protect it because in this district all people are religious" (Lucky's Hotel 2005).

Also speaking about how Tibetan religion impacts environmental conservation attitudes, this interviewee added, "With natural protection, I don't know the situation of other cultures, but within our Tibetan culture, nature protection has been carried out for a long time. It started and has been going for many generations. We do many things to protect the environment. Because human beings live with nature, we should set up a balanced relationship between human beings and nature. That's the thinking of Tibetans,

the original thinking. We are influenced by religion, because we are a religious district” (Fun Times 2005).

Another person talked about the effect religion has on environmental protection in the area. “The Golden Monkey lives here in our forests. The government publicizes environmental protection laws and regulations, then our villagers disseminate those existing environmental protection concepts common with ethnic Tibetan people. Tibetan people in this area have a profound awareness toward natural protection so they do not attack this kind of animal” (Yubeng Hotel 2005).

Results of Survey Questions Related to Knowledge

Local knowledge is an element that has been proven to be essential to the success and thus sustainability of integrated conservation and development projects. To ascertain local attitudes toward knowledge issues, the survey asked six questions (Table 33).

Tourism helping to increase local awareness and appreciation of the environment was a statement shared by 72% of those surveyed. Only 7% of respondents do not feel as if tourism provides an incentive for the restoration of historical buildings. Although 59% agree that the construction of hotels and other tourist facilities has destroyed the natural environment in the region; only 10% disapprove of further tourism facility construction. Tourism contributing to environmental conservation was a statement with which all those interviewed agree. However, within the survey results, 38% agree and 29% do not feel tourism contributes to environmental conservation. Only 19% of those surveyed believe tourism does not provide access to educational programs.

Table 33. Knowledge Related Attitudinal Statement Responses

	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
<u>IV. Knowledge</u>							
30. Tourism helps to increase local awareness and appreciation of the environment.	37	35	16	1	9	2.04	1.2
31. Tourism provides an incentive for the restoration of historical buildings.	40	24	25	4	3	1.94	1.11
32. The construction of hotels and other tourist facilities has destroyed the natural environment in the region.	35	24	11	26	3	2.35	1.30
33. Tourism contributes to environmental conservation.	11	28	30	22	7	2.80	1.17
34. Tourism provides access to educational programs.	15	38	26	19	0	2.45	1.03
35. Using our culture as a tourist attraction is viewed as exploitation within the community.	17	47	24	8	3	2.30	.98

Note: The Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree)

The cross-tabulation analysis identified the level of education of the respondent as an independent variable. The more education respondents had, the less likely they were to agree that tourism contributes to educational programs (Table 34). Respondents stating they finished middle school or less, high school, and two years of higher education or more agreed with the statement 69%, 45%, and 24% of the time respectively. The Pearson p-value for this cross tabulation is 0.069, representing 6.9 percent likelihood the results could have happened by chance.

Table 34. Cross-Tabulation, Tourism Contributes to Environmental Education vs.
Education

			Env Conservation			Total
			A	N	D	
Education	Middle school or less	Count	11	3	2	16
		% within Education	68.8%	18.8%	12.5%	100.0%
	High School	Count	19	11	12	42
		% within Education	45.2%	26.2%	28.6%	100.0%
	Two year or more higher	Count	10	16	15	41
		% within Education	24.4%	39.0%	36.6%	100.0%
Total	Count	41	30	29	100	
	% within Education	41.0%	30.0%	29.0%	100.0%	

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY: MANAGEMENT AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

In Asia as in other developing regions, it is widely known that problems of environmental degradation are linked to poverty and the uneven distribution of resources (Weaver 1998). Protection of nature in developing countries is increasingly acknowledged as requiring the addressing of interrelated environmental and social concerns with particular needs, concerns, and priorities of the local people involved (Davy 1993; Stevens 1997). If an integrated conservation and development project is to become successful, all stakeholders need to share positive interactions. The role of management in addressing associated elements of community viability is critical. If this relationship is to become symbiotic, a wide range of management and policy representatives must be present. This chapter makes recommendations for tourism development within the Deqin area based on case study findings and the salient tourism literature.

Although most research conducted within or around protected areas in China have primarily focused on empirical biodiversity evidence (Tisdell 1996), this research examined how newly existing tourism practices affect a community. By doing so, it is possible to determine the cultural costs and benefits of tourism and thus the sustainability of the introduced program. The central purpose of this study was to assess the current status of tourism-related impacts in Deqin, China through an examination of the current

park/people relations and resulting community impacts to aid in exploring the extent to which tourism is sustainable in the long run.

Three general objectives form the organizing framework for this investigation:

1. Explore the current level of tourism activities in the Deqin area.
2. Identify the major economic, social, and cultural impacts of tourism in Deqin China.
3. Assess residents' perceptions with regards to the social, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism.

The idea of linking nature conservation and community development, as was done in the Deqin area, emerged in opposition to the generally ineffective Western-based approach to conservation, consisting of building fences to keep local residents out and then fining those who enter without prior permission (Brandon 1997). Under this top-down natural area conservation approach, local people have often been forced to move away from their traditional lands with no compensation or consideration for their economic or cultural well being (McLaren 2003). As a result, these local communities have a negative view of protected areas and choose not to cooperate with authorities. Within the Deqin area, residents were incorporated into management plans. All previously existing villages located within protected area boundaries have been left intact. Locals still have access to their traditional lands, however, accessing natural resources has been limited to common species and the amount permitted to take has been capped.

Bookbinder et al. (1998) state local participation is crucial to the long term success of conservation measures and so the idea of linking conservation and

development emerged and was widely adopted. Although based on survey information collected during this research, local residents feel as if they have been involved in planning and development, few interviewees reported they knew how to participate, let alone, actually had participated. Failure to account for local people's needs and promote local participation during the planning and management stages of integrated conservation and development projects has been proven to be a major constraint to sustainability (Wells and Brandon 1993). Lack of local resident participation has also been shown to result in degraded natural resources and reduced tourism potential (Cresswell et al. 2000). This research shows that environmental conservation and tourism development outreach efforts in the Deqin area, to date, have been limited and only moderately successful.

Tourism development within the Deqin area has merged economic, cultural, and environmental values. Compared to the previous 90% share of local gross domestic product the logging industry maintained, tourism development has diversified the local economic base. Local residents do believe tourism development in the area has created social benefits and infrastructure improvements. Tourism has promoted cultural preservation. Tibetan language schools and a Tibetan culture preservation NGO have been created.

Although tourism development to the Deqin area has provided an economic alternative to natural resources consumption and led to local cultural empowerment, it is agreed there is a lot more room for further improvement. Tourism has not generated funds for the management and conservation of natural resources, nor provided an economic justification for the protection of natural resources. Local residents currently

lack the knowledge of how to work within a service-oriented industry, however, they are willing to learn. They are so willing to learn that they will allow non-local, non-Tibetan business owners to capitalize on potential economic benefits in trade for such training. There currently are non-local business people operating in the Deqin area tourism industry. Based on current effects, allowing more non-local business people to enter will lead to the exploitation of locals and an increased erosion of traditional values and ways of life. If the government offered training about how locals can enter the tourism industry, future community economic benefits will increase. Locals will have increased self-confidence and improved psychological and physiological well being (McLaren 2003). Foreign investment also increases the potential for economic leakage and can limit opportunities for locals to get involved in the industry if outside investment outpaces local capacities to accumulate capital or acquire training (Place 1991). The use of locally produced goods and services, and the employment of community members whenever possible are absolutely critical to generating and retaining socioeconomic benefits in the community.

External forces or factors, extended beyond the strictly economic context, frequently drive tourism development. Cocossis and Nijkamp (1995) state such externalities introduce important social and cultural features. Fossati and Panella (2000) believe that by definition these elements are not easily valued using economic standards, but they are nonetheless important indicators, considering economics is but one measurement of a society's well being. For example, tourism introduces mixes of culture and can lead to cultural enrichment; however, mass tourism can also lead to a loss of

cultural identity and traditions, which is a considerable negative impact (Greathouse-Amador 1997). Furthermore, Brandon (1997) identifies cultural commodification, when local people and their culture become marketable commodities, as potentially being tourism's most serious impact. Thus, awareness of residents' perceptions of tourism development and its impacts can help planners and developers to identify real concerns and issues for appropriate policies and action to take place, optimizing the benefits and minimizing the problems (Andriotis and Vaughan 2003).

Cultural exchange to the Deqin area, stimulated by tourism development, to date has been minimal. Over 95% percent of the tourists coming to the area are of Han nationality, the most dominant nationality in China. In the future, tourism arrivals to the area will increase, both from domestic tourists and foreign tourists. At present, local Tibetan culture is being empowered. Local people's association with tourists is stimulating a stronger connection with their own local culture. The younger generation in the area is more willing to absorb cultural changes. They wear western style cloths and frequent dance bars that only play contemporary pop music. Cultural commodification in the area is currently not an issue though cultural exchange certainly is. But if development in the area mirrors that of nearby tourism destinations, it will become a problem. Local attitudes express feelings that locals are complacent with others selling their own culture, as long as someone makes a profit from it.

Tourism development has increased local environmental awareness, although this awareness is mainly driven by economics. Local residents have realized that a clean, pristine environment will draw tourists and thus economic returns. Now that locals are

aware that tourists are willing to pay money to see a clean and healthy environment, they are interested in community development projects that focus on environmental conservation. Following is a summary of the issues park and tourism managers are facing.

Natural Resources Management

Baima National Park is a national park with a fixed budget provided by Chinese national government. The staff of forty employees primarily focuses on preserving the existing biodiversity, offers outreach programs, and allows access to common natural resources on a quota system. Tourism is not allowed within the park boundaries, leaving local inhabitants without an economic alternative to the recently banned logging industry. As managers pointed out, illegal extraction is still occurring. These managers believe the major cause of illegal activities stems from a lack of awareness about Park goals and visions. Without providing an economic alternative to live on, illegal activities will continue to occur.

Management at Meili Snow Mountain Natural Reserve is still trying to compile a management plan, and thus apply for national level recognition. By receiving national level recognition the reserve will be guaranteed financial assistance from provincial and federal governments. The reserve is currently funded only by the collection of entrance fees. Managers report that current funds are only enough for employee salaries, although, as was stated above, there is a discrepancy in the total amount of funds received and total amount of funds available to be spent.

Local residents living within the reserve are all satisfied with current developments and are continually receiving increasing amounts of economic returns annually. The government improved the road system to MSMNR, easing travel to the reserve. Now large, expensive buses can carry hundreds of tourists to the bottom of the mountain daily. Local residents have formed a cooperative to rent horses to tourists taking them to the glacier lookout spots. Money earned from the cooperative is evenly distributed throughout cooperative members. Residents of Deqin city are jealous of the economic returns tourism is providing villages closer the reserve.

The low level and unequal distribution of economic benefits can be attributed, in part to the low levels of visitation at Meili Snow Mountain National Reserve and no tourist visitation at Baima Snow Mountain National Park. Managers have control over where infrastructure is located and thus the ability to control the future of tourism development in the area. The distribution and amount of future tourism-related economic returns to the area are dependent, to a large degree, upon the potential of drawing more tourists and then those tourists being able to spend larger amounts of money. Managers can provide tourists with opportunities to spend money locally through the development of tourism facilities and services. Encouraging tourists to stay longer can also increase spending levels. Suggesting or publishing sightseeing itineraries, interpretation centers, or guides could encourage tourists to stay longer.

Methodological Conclusions, Further Research, and Study Contributions

This study applied a theoretical framework (Michealidou, Lassoie, and Decker 2002) to assess the current status of tourism in the Deqin area where it is being promoted as a regional development strategy. The framework proved to be a useful tool for both conceptualizing how tourism might ideally operate at a destination and for guiding the collection of data. At early stages of development, such as at Deqin, the framework can be useful in eliciting existing and potential weaknesses in an integrated conservation and management project. Having such a quality is useful to managers and planners. However, each site is unique and subject to change.

In the process of completing this study a number of potential opportunities for further research surfaced that due to the time frame and scope of this thesis could not be examined, but that would nonetheless be worthy research projects. Conducting a tourist survey could provide managers with much needed information pertaining to visitor demographics, activities, spending patterns, willingness to pay, and satisfaction levels. China is a socialist country in transition, therefore, traditional, Western, public participation techniques may not be effective or appropriate. Examining how communities could most effectively be involved in planning processes would be a potentially valuable study. Finally, research into the effectiveness of buffer zones for local communities that face pressures from reduced access to resources is important and would contribute towards the successful development of tourism in rural, underdeveloped areas such as the Deqin area.

This thesis also contributes to the growing body of tourism literature by providing a practical, site-specific assessment of tourism development in Yunnan, China, and by demonstrating how a theoretical framework can be applied to a site-level evaluation. The adaptive approach taken during this study has not only produced site-specific recommendations, but has also identified a number of more broadly applicable findings, issues and strategies that may help destinations elsewhere to improve their capacity to benefit from tourism. Research designed to improve the efficiency with which tourism operates will be increasingly important as regional and national governments, especially in developing nations, continue to look toward tourism as a sustainable development strategy.

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Appendix A:

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Responsible Investigator: Pete Parker

Title of Protocol: Social and Economic Analysis of Visiting Shangri La, Northwestern Yunnan, China

1. You have been asked to participate in a research study investigating social and economic impacts of participating in the tourism industry of Deqin.
2. You will be asked questions about your own personal beliefs or perceptions of the tourism industry in Deqin; how it is affecting the local culture, the social structure of the community; and how the formation of Nature Reserves has affected your daily life. Your answers will be written down, and some of them may be audio-taped. You may ask the researcher to stop audio recording at any time. Total time required is around 30 minutes.
3. You may be uncomfortable giving some of the information you are asked for.
4. You will not receive any direct benefit from this study.
5. Although the results of this study may be published, no information that could identify you will be included.
6. There is no compensation for participating in this study.
7. Questions about this research may be addressed to: Pete Parker. 205 S 12th ST San Jose, CA, 95112 USA. 208-404-6338. Complaints about the research may be presented to: Lynne Trulio, Ph.D.: Chair, Environmental Studies, College of Social Sciences 1-408-924-5445. Questions about research subjects' rights, or research-related injury may be presented to: Pam Stacks, Ph.D., Interim Associate Vice President of Graduate Studies and Research 1-408-924-2480.
8. No service of any kind, to which you are otherwise entitled, will be lost or jeopardized if you choose to "not participate" in the study.
9. Your consent is being given voluntarily. You may refuse to participate in the entire study or in any part of the study. If you decide to participate in the study, you are free to withdraw at any time without any negative effect on your relations with San Jose State University or with any other participating institutions or agencies.
10. At the time that you sign this consent form, you will receive a copy of it for your records, signed and dated by the investigator.

Initial _____

The signature of a subject on this document indicates agreement to participate in the study.

The signature of a researcher on this document indicates agreement to include the above named subject in the research and attestation that the subject has been fully informed of his or her rights.

_____ Signature	_____ Date
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_____ Investigator's Signature	_____ Date
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_____ Witness to Signatory's Mark	_____ Date
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Appendix B:**LOCAL RESIDENT AND BUSINESS OWNER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

Survey No.: _____ Date: _____ Name: _____
Age: _____ Occupation: _____ Gender: _____

- 1) How do you feel about tourism development?
- 2) When I say the word tourism, what comes to mind?
- 3) Please describe how you participate (or not) in tourism.
- 4) What are the potential benefits offered by tourism?
- 5) What are the potential negative effects of tourism?
- 6) Would you say that overall, the benefits of participating in tourism have been greater than negative impacts? Please explain.
- 7) Do you think that participating in the tourism industry offers economic incentives for your household?
- 8) How do you feel the nature reserve and tourism industry has impacted the community in Deqin?
- 9) In what ways are locals participating in planning and management issues concerning the nature reserve and the tourism industry in Deqin?
- 10) Why is it that you have chosen to (or not) participate in the tourism industry?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME!!!!

Appendix C:**PARK STAFF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS****1) PARK OPERATIONS**

- What is the park's mandate/goal/vision?
- Are visitor statistics kept? If not, can you estimate the number of tourists received annually?
- Are funds put specifically towards conservation and/or monitoring activities? If so, what percentage of funds/ budget?
- Are entrance fees charged? If not, have they/ are they being considered?
- What are the permitted park/resources uses?
- What is the biggest constraint for park managers (time, funding, etc.)?
- Are there concessions (food, souvenirs, etc.) offered within the park? If so, are they private or park operated?
- Are there other services or anything else about the park you would like to tell me?
- What are your major concerns for current and future park management?

2) PARK STAFF

- How many staff work for the park? How many women are on (senior) staff?
- What percentage of the staff is from the local community?
- Are there tour guides working at the park?
- What are the education levels of your staff?

3) LOCAL RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- Were any people displaced when the park was established? If so, were they provided with compensation? In what form?
- Are local residents permitted to use park resources?
- What are the major threats/pressures to the park?
- Have there been local community outreach/education activities with regard to the park/tourism?
- Have locals been involved in planning and/or management in any way?
- What have been the benefits and negative impacts to the community as a result of park establishment (infrastructure, health, employment, etc.)?
- What are your feelings on the capacity of, and opportunities for, local residents to benefit from the park/tourism in the future?

Appendix D:

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The following questions are about your perceptions of tourism. Please circle an answer that most closely represents the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements provided below. Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), neither agree nor disagree (N), Disagree (D), or Strongly Disagree (SD). There are no right or wrong answers.

Economic impacts of tourism in the region

1. Tourism attracts more investment and spending to the region.	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. Our standard of living is increasing because of tourism in the region.	SA	A	N	D	SD
2. Prices of many goods and services in the region have increased because of tourism.	SA	A	N	D	SD
3. Tourism only benefits a small group of people in the region.	SA	A	N	D	SD
4. Tourism creates more jobs for foreigners than for local people in the region.	SA	A	N	D	SD
5. The government should not spend public money on tourism development.	SA	A	N	D	SD
6. Most of the money earned from tourism ends up going to outsiders.	SA	A	N	D	SD
7. Non-Deqin-owned businesses benefit more from the region's tourist industry.	SA	A	N	D	SD
8. The tourism sector provides a ready market for the product of local farmers.	SA	A	N	D	SD
9. Because of tourism our roads and other public facilities are kept at a higher standard than they otherwise would be.	SA	A	N	D	SD

Social impacts of tourism in the region

10. Meeting tourists from all over the world is definitely a valuable experience.	SA	A	N	D	SD
11. Tourism has led to an increase in the availability of recreational facilities for local people.	SA	A	N	D	SD
12. Tourists have an undesirable effect on the way of life in the region.	SA	A	N	D	SD
13. Tourism has caused changes in the traditional culture of the region.	SA	A	N	D	SD
14. Local residents living in tourist areas have a lower quality of life.	SA	A	N	D	SD
15. Tourism encourages a variety of cultural activities by the local population (e. g., crafts, arts, music).	SA	A	N	D	SD
16. The money that tourism brings in benefits the whole	SA	A	N	D	SD

community.

17. Our household standard of living is higher because of the tourism.	SA	A	N	D	SD
18. Tourism promotes cultural exchange.	SA	A	N	D	SD
19. The jobs tourism provides are highly desirable.	SA	A	N	D	SD
20. Because of tourism I have a better appreciation of my own culture.	SA	A	N	D	SD
21. The quality of public services in Deqin is better due to more tourism.	SA	A	N	D	SD
22. I support the development of new tourism facilities.	SA	A	N	D	SD

Environmental impacts of tourism

23. Tourism results in crowded public places for the local population,	SA	A	N	D	SD
24. Tourists greatly add to the traffic congestion, noise and pollution in the region.	SA	A	N	D	SD
25. The construction of hotels and other tourist facilities has destroyed the natural environment in the region.	SA	A	N	D	SD
26. This community should control tourism development.	SA	A	N	D	SD
27. Tourism provides an incentive for the restoration of historical buildings.	SA	A	N	D	SD
28. Tourism contributes to environmental conservation.	SA	A	N	D	SD
29. Tourism helps to increase local awareness and appreciation of the environment.	SA	A	N	D	SD
30. Overall, the benefits of tourism are greater than the costs to the people of the area.	SA	A	N	D	SD

Empowerment and involvement in tourism planning and development

31. The local community has been involved in tourism planning and development.	SA	A	N	D	SD
32. The nature reserve employs local people.	SA	A	N	D	SD
33. Tourism provides access to educational programs.	SA	A	N	D	SD
34. Anyone, regardless of ethnicity can participate in tourism.	SA	A	N	D	SD
35. Using our culture as a tourist attraction is viewed as exploitation within the community.	SA	A	N	D	SD

The following questions ask about your interaction with tourists in the region. Please circle only one answer for each question.

36. During an average week in summer, how often do you talk to tourists?

37. a) Daily b) Almost every day c) A couple of times a week d) Once a week
e) Seldom or never
38. When you talk with tourists, which one of the following best describes your contact with tourists?
- a) Very positive experience b) Positive experience c) No effect
d) Negative experience e) Very negative experience
39. Is your job related to tourism? a) Yes b) No
40. What was your job five years ago? _____
41. Is any member of your family employed in tourism? a) Yes b) No
42. What is the greatest contribution of tourism to the *area* that you are living in?

43. What is the biggest damage tourism has caused in the *area* in which you are living?

Please circle one answer that best describes you.

44. Gender? a) Female b) Male
45. Your age? a) 18 to 20 b) 21 to 30 c) 31 to 40 d) 41 to 50 e) 51 to 60 f) 61 and over
46. Your level of education you have completed?
- a) No formal education
b) Elementary school
c) Middle school
d) High school
e) Two years of higher education
f) Bachelors degree (University degree)
g) Master's degree or doctorate
h) Other (please indicate) _____
47. How long have you been living in the region? _____ (Number of years)
48. Where were you living before coming to this area? _____
49. What is your occupation? _____
50. What is your race/ethnicity/tribe? _____

Thank you for your time and attention!