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INTRODUCTION

Overtourism is not a new concern and academics have been researching tourism impacts for decades (Mathieson and Wall, 1982). However, considering the continuous rise of tourism worldwide, it has become an increasing problem that needs to be investigated more than ever, especially in old and geographically constrained European destinations. The term overtourism emerged in the late 2010s, following the media coverage of protests by residents mostly in urban European destinations such as Venice, Barcelona, Amsterdam or Dubrovnik. These events brought to light locals' increasing reluctance to various tourism pressures along with growing anti-tourism protests/reactions. This paper aims to revisit the different stages that local populations go through when faced with overtourism and identifies how place detachment might occur, exemplified by the decision from some inhabitants to leave the destination.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In 2018, Milano et al. defined overtourism as “the excessive growth of visitors leading to overcrowding in areas where residents suffer the consequences of temporary and seasonal tourism peaks, which have enforced permanent changes to their lifestyles, access to amenities and general well-being” (page 2). Koens et al. (2018) stressed that, beyond the media and academic attention, overtourism is still not well conceptualized and remains open to various interpretations because of its complex and multidimensional aspects. In other words, the existing overtourism conceptualization fails to fully translate this complexity. Additionally, Koens et al. (2018) suggest that overtourism should be perceived as a social problem within a city context, rather than only a tourism or urban problem. This is also supported by Dodds and Butler (2019), who point to the lack of residents' involvement in the tourism development decision process and the necessity to take into consideration their voice.

One key issue associated with overtourism is its negative repercussions on residents' quality of life (Goodwin, 2017). Indeed, various overtourism impacts have been identified, including: rising costs of living and housing, infrastructure and traffic congestion, noise, crime, prostitution and drug trafficking, loss of identity and authenticity, etc. It has also been identified

as impacting community well-being and way of life, community pride and awareness, natural and cultural preservation, etc. (Andereck and Nyaupane, 2011). In short, tourism influences several aspects of residents' quality of life such as material, community and emotional well-being.

Although relatively recent, the term overtourism highlights a phenomenon already observed by Butler in 1975 who identified how excessive numbers of tourists lead to negative residents' perceptions. Butler's (1975) designed a matrix classifying residents' attitudes and behaviours. The author identified four attitudes/behaviour couples: positive attitude - active behaviour (tourist activity widely promoted by residents), negative attitude - active behaviour (aggressive opposition on residents' part), positive attitude - passive behaviour (residents tolerance), and negative attitude - passive behaviour (residents resignation). Other researchers have focused on residents' behavioural responses to tourism impacts. For instance, the Irridex model developed by Doxey (1975) postulates that, as the number of tourists within a destination increases, residents evolve along a continuum by manifesting an increasingly negative attitude. This model identifies four stages, each corresponding to a specific attitude: euphoria, apathy, annoyance and antagonism. This model is thus a tool for assessing the degree of tolerance of the host community towards tourism and the volume of visitor flows. However, despite its pertinence, this model has not been empirically tested. Ap and Crompton (1993) identified similar categories in terms of residents' behavior: acceptance, tolerance, adaptation, and withdrawal. The withdrawal phase referred to the action, undertaken by the residents, to temporarily withdraw from the community either physically or psychologically by not seeking in any way to engage in a tourist activity.

These models are very pertinent but they have not been updated in the light of the increasing overtourism phenomenon. Besides, the mediatization of inhabitants' reactions has given more legitimacy for local populations to openly voice their disagreement towards overtourism. As a result, the growth and heterogeneity of locals' reactions to overtourism and its impacts needs further investigations. Destinations are aware of these growing objections and are increasingly taking political stance in order to reduce overtourism negative externalities (Barcelona has expressed a wish to ban AirBnB by 2026, Switzerland is drastically constraining second homes' ownerships, etc.). It is therefore essential, both for local populations and for authorities, to understand better how overtourism truly impacts locals and their attachment to their place of living. Thus, this research has two objectives. First, it proposes an extension of previous residents' behavioral responses models in order to take into account the multiplicity

of behaviors that overtourism provokes. Secondly, the study will address how overtourism weakens place attachment, and how it can ultimately lead to local populations' decision to leave the destination altogether.

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to investigate overtourism with residents and former residents of a medium-sized tourist destination: Lake Annecy-France (*Lac d'Annecy*). The choice of this destination was motivated by the fact that Annecy and the municipalities around its lake have gradually experienced episodes of saturation and flirt with a maximum load capacity during the summer period. Moreover, local residents are increasingly voicing their concern over this situation and some have taken the decision to move away from the destination.

In order to meet the research objectives, the researchers conducted 30 semi-structured individual interviews with residents who were not professionally involved in the tourism industry and therefore not economically dependent on this activity. The study was conducted via semi-direct interviews with inhabitants investigating their perceptions of Lake Annecy tourism developments, and the perceived impacts on their daily lives. The sample consisted of 12 men and 18 women aged 31 to 80 years. The respondents investigated were both natives or new residents, and lived at varying geographical distances from major tourist sites. A second phase of interviews took place in 2022 with 16 ex-residents (snowball sampling) who had taken the decision to leave the destination Lake Annecy.

All individual interviews were recorded, anonymized and transcribed using NVIVO. The corpus was then coded according to the thematic content analysis procedure. Emerging coding took place following an immersion in the data collected, inductively, in line with the grounded theory principles (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The coding process was three-fold: open coding (which allowed the researchers to identify the main themes emerging from the data), axial coding (establishing the connections that could be identified between those themes/concepts), and selective coding (reorganizing the previous analysis into several main categories). Both data collection were coded separately.

RESULTS

In the study of the interviewees from the Annecy destination, the mechanisms observed propose a more detailed reading of the categories of Ap and Crompton (1993). First, the study shows that some categories are poorly or not represented, but other categories subdivide into more

detailed levels of reaction namely: adoption/tolerance, temporary temporal and/or temporary geographical adjustments, temporary withdrawal, and permanent withdrawal. The results show that overtourism acts as a shock wave on residents, a slow but relentless wave that gradually pushes them away from their original daily and leisure lifestyles within their own destination. A model is proposed that graphically illustrates the different stages of this process.

On a second level, the notion of place attachment and detachment was investigated. The second wave of data collection (conducted on residents who had decided to move away from the destination) proved very useful in understanding this process further. Overall, these ex-inhabitants expressed their general tiredness with the various tourism pressures felt when they lived in Annecy. Two main negative components came out of this data collection. The first was the amount of traffic, especially road traffic (difficulties experienced in reaching different locations within Annecy on a daily basis, time spent in waiting lines, impossibility to find a parking place, etc.). All these elements conducted to the feeling that Annecy had become a place where it was very costly, timewise, to live on a daily basis. The second main element was the increased cost of real estate (both a result of the tourism activity and the proximity with high-wage Switzerland). As a result it had become increasingly impossible for newcomers or for those still renting, to purchase a property. Major life changes (either when wishing to move to the area/purchase a property or when retiring) were identified as catalysts to the decision either not to move in, or to leave (sell one's property).

DISCUSSION

The results from this study have identified the different stages that residents go through when living in a destination subjected to overtourism. In terms of theoretical contributions, the study revisits older models (Ap and Crompton, 1993; Butler, 1975; Doxey, 1975) and provides a more detailed vision of the gradual impact of overtourism upon residents. The results provide a detailed identification of the different levels of behavioral responses. Far from identifying a clearly displayed resistance or clear thresholds in tourism rejection, the study details rather a progressive effect of tourism developments on the behavior of the inhabitants and there associated strategies. This shock wave pushes the populations to gradually move away from the places and practices that punctuated their daily lives, until potentially deciding to leave them permanently.

Can we contemplate that those leaving are experiencing place detachment? The data actually show that those "leavers" are still attached to the place. They have enjoyed their time living there, they still find that the place is increasingly attractive, and often consider coming

back on a temporary basis. But they equally express no regret in having left the place. As such, the research then provides a definition of place detachment (especially in relation to place dependence and place identity) and analyses how it unfolds. It then contrasts those findings to existing theories on those issues.

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