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## A Trip into the Controversy: A Study of Slum Tourism Travel Motivations

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**A Trip into the Controversy**  
**A Study of Slum Tourism Travel Motivations**

**Bob Ma**

2009–2010 Penn Humanities Forum  
Undergraduate Mellon Research Fellowship

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## Introduction

*"We seem to feel the need to go anywhere...as long as we can pay the fee."* (Berg, 2009)

- Dr. David Fennell, Professor of Tourism, Brock University

Slum tourism is one of the fastest-growing niche tourism segments in the world, but it is also one of the most controversial. The United Nations defines a slum as, "a run-down area of a city characterized by substandard housing and squalor and lacking in tenure security" (UN, 2007). Slum tourism is the organization of tours in these areas. As a niche segment, slum tourism is distinguished from developmental tourism, which is a broader term that includes tourism in any region that is undergoing development.

Since its founding 16 years ago in Rio de Janeiro, slum tourism has spread to seven major metropolises in four continents (See Exhibit 1 in Appendix). Slum tourism has grown quickly because its tour location is unique among traditional cultural tours, and because in recent years slums have received prominent depiction in the mass media. In particular, films depicting slum life like *Slumdog Millionaire* (Mumbai), *City of God* (Rio de Janeiro), and *District 9* (Johannesburg), have become international hits. Tourism researchers have long established a positive link between media exposure and business growth (Crouch, Jackson & Thompson, 2005; Ryan, 2002: 8). Sure enough, *Reality Tours & Travel*, the largest slum tour operator in Mumbai, India, reported a 25% jump in business after the release of *Slumdog Millionaire* (WorldHum Weiner, 2009).

Since the first article on slum tourism was published in the *New York Times* in March 2008 (NYTimes Weiner, 2009), over 200 independent news sources from around the world have covered its controversy. The controversy is twofold. First, most slum tours are run by for-profit companies that often do not donate money back into the slum. Second, slum residents are said to

suffer the humiliation of having their lives put on display for Western tourists. As a result, slum tours have often been called exploitative, voyeuristic, and imperialistic.

Slum tour operators often counter by arguing that they are trying to educate tourists about the realities of poverty and are helping to dispel negative stereotypes surrounding slums. A few operators, such as *Reality Tours & Travel*, have even used tour revenues to build schools or community centers in the slums.

Slum tours are typically three hours long guided tours done on foot or in a vehicle. Most tours offer tourists the chance to enter the homes or businesses of slum residents, where a guide, fluent in English, would describe the experience of slum life. Due to language barriers, slum tourists do not generally interact with local residents directly or through the tour guide. Many tours, including those in Rio de Janeiro and Mumbai, also bring tourists to the rooftop terrace of a slum house, where they get a panoramic view of the entire slum.

Slum tours are generally divided into two categories: cultural or entertainment tours. Cultural tours are by far the more common of the two. Cultural tours have a strong educational element, by seeking to show how slum residents live their lives and how the slum community functions. Entertainment tours focus on excitement and thrill, and invoke a “safari”-like experience. For example, *Jeep Tours* in Rio de Janeiro takes tourists around in open-roof, army-style jeeps. Similarly, the *Be a Local* tour in Rio de Janeiro takes tourists on a twisting and turning motorcycle ride through the Favela slums.

A central appeal of slum tourism is that it is the antithesis of traditional cultural tours. Instead of showing tourists valuable cultural artifacts, slum tours show poverty, a vice phenomenon. This focus is a break from mass-packaged tourism (Ooi, 2002: 69), which has been

criticized for concentrating on the “4 S’s” of tourism: sun, sand, sea and sex. Slum tourism more closely fits a model of moral tourism, which offers “difference and cultural sophistication” (Butcher, 2003: 21). But this begs a fundamental question: *why* are tourists interested in seeing poverty and destitute?

### ***Objectives***

This paper seeks to answer this question in the context of whether slum tourists are primarily driven by mass or moral travel motivations. Mass tourism is often defined as tourism that is based on a standard demand, and is mass-produced and homogenous. Moral tourism is defined as tourism that is led by “individual demands” and focuses on “a search for enlightenment in other places, and a desire to preserve these places in the name of cultural diversity and environmental conservation” (8). Moral tourism is distinguished from mass tourism along four criteria (8): first, the tour does not fit the demand of the masses; second, tourists are “culturally sophisticated” in that “they take the trouble to learn about the host’s culture and language”; third, tourists constructively interact with local culture and environment, such as to preserve the environment or to benefit the community; four, tourists are “critical of modern progress” when comparing the society of the host—presumably living in a less industrialized society—to industrialized societies.

There are several recurrent characteristics in mass tourism: travel is a way to have fun, relax, escape, gain prestige, satisfy one’s curiosity, and gain physical pleasure (Park and Yoon, 2008; Pearce and Lee, 2005; Fodness, 1994; Jang & Cai, 2002). Mass tourists are less likely than moral tourists to actively engage in learning about a different culture, and are less concerned

with cultural or environmental preservation. In general, mass tourism emphasizes satisfying tourists' needs for relaxation and entertainment, rather than learning and self-enlightenment.

Understanding tourist motivations is crucial for evaluating the relevance and significance of slum tourism's moral critiques, such as claims of voyeurism and exploitation, which call into question the ethical intents of tourists. In order to focus on motivations, this paper will not evaluate the ethical controversy of slum tourism, which would be a key area for future research. Beyond motivation, by understanding the reasons behind why Westerners go on slum tours, one can get a sense of how Westerners view people living in developing regions, and these regions themselves.

As there is currently no published research on slum tourism travel motivation, this paper aims to serve as an exploratory study into this field and to provide a foundation for future research.

### *Literature Review*

The study of travel motivations strives to understand the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that compel a tourist to go on a tour. Push factors are the intrinsic, personal motivations and desires that influence a person to make decisions regarding travel, such as travel destination and trip activities (Gartner, 1993; Kim & Lee, 2002; Moutinho, 1987; Sirakaya, McLellan & Uysal, 1996).

Extrinsically, pull factors are the destination attributes that satisfy the tourist's push desires. When planning a vacation, a tourist searches for destinations and activities with pull factors that match his/her push factors. Lundberg (1971) performed the first study that matched push and pull factors, and since then, this method has become a standard in tourism research. For



example, Yoon and Uysal (2005) studied satisfaction and destination loyalty as push-pull factors, Jang and Wu (2006) studied the motivations of senior citizens, and Nicholson and Pearce (2001) studied the push-pull factors of events.

Beyond identifying individual push and pull factors, several researchers have sought to create umbrella groupings of travel motivations. Goeldner and Ritchie (2003) identified four categories of motivations: physical, cultural, interpersonal, and prestige (Park & Yoon, 2008). Pearce and Lee (2005) classified core motivations as those of escape, relaxation, relationship enhancement, and self-development.

This paper will focus on one particular set of moral tourism motivations, that of the post-modern tourist. According to Butcher (2003), post-modern tourism is a major component of moral tourism, because post-modern theory explains the psychological and philosophical aspects of self-enlightenment in moral tourism. This theory portrays the rural cultural tourist as one who rejects the conventions of mass-packaged tourism, and instead, seeks meaning through experiencing authenticity in the undeveloped countryside or rural communities. This post-modern theory most closely matches the claim that education and enlightenment are the primary benefits of slum tourism.

Daniel Boorstin (1961) was the first to study authenticity as a travel motivation, by writing that tourists were driven to see pseudo-events, which were simulations of reality that served no actual function in real life. Pseudo-events were attractive because they provided fun, pleasure, and an escape from the real world. Turner and Ash (1975) expanded Boorstin's motivation to foreign travel, in which tourists were enthralled by the exoticism of simplified and inauthentic versions of another culture.

Dean MacCannell (1999) proposed the theory of post-modern tourism, which sought to counter Boostin's view by stating that tourists were not searching for the inauthentic, but rather the authentic, especially in rural and undeveloped areas. MacCannell noted that many tourists had come to reject the mass consumption and lack of individuality in mass-packaged tourism (Butcher, 2003: 25), and were seeking for meaning in travel, not just fun and pleasure. Furthermore, he noted that modern tourism often emphasized the authenticity of sights; for example, saying that this is the "*typical* native house" or this is the "*actual* pen used to sign the law" (MacCannell, 1999: 14). Therefore, he posited that post-modern tourists traveled to rural areas because they wanted to escape the superficiality and inauthenticity of modern industrialized society (Krippendorf, 1987: 3-19), which Taylor (1991: 117) stated was when "[people] find it harder and harder to identify with their political society as a community" (Smith and Duffy, 2003: 115). The tourist seeks to immerse him/herself in a more primitive society, in which the tourist could reflect on his/her own identity in modern society in comparison to the "Other" (MacCannell, 1999: 3). Hence, rural and subsistence lifestyles were morally elevated (Butcher, 2003: 30).

The post-modern theory has been supported by findings in humanistic psychology. Chris Ryan (2002: 33) noted that in the research of positive psychologists Mihaly Csikszentimihalyi and Ed Diener held that basic hedonistic goals, such as tourism, could trigger intrinsic, self-actualizing goals that could help develop healthier personalities. Similarly, Ryan used Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs to describe the reaching self-actualizing, existential goals of the post-modern tourist.

To reach self-actualization using travel, Wang (2000) wrote that one did not need objective authenticity. He identified three types of travel authenticity: *objective authenticity*, *constructive authenticity*, and *existential authenticity*. Existential authenticity, defined as the “potential existential state of Being that is activated by tourist activities” (Ryan, 2002: 8), was constructed by the individual, and did not depend on objective authenticity, which corresponded to the actual uniqueness of the original. Therefore, post-modern tourists did not require objective authenticity. MacCannell supported this claim by writing that tourists did not actually see the objective reality, but rather a *staged authenticity*, because it would be impractical for tour operators to consistently bring tourists into the actual, intimate lives of the slum residents (Urry, 1990: 9). This protected the host from intrusion, while fostering the commercial benefits of tourism.

John Urry (1990) provided another explanation for the fascination of authenticity by introducing the concept of the *tourist gaze*, which explained tourist motivations by the desire to witness observational differences between the tour object and what the tourist experienced in his/her daily life. This motivation was driven by “anticipation, especially through daydreaming and fantasy, of intense pleasures, either on a different scale or involving different senses from those customarily encountered” (Urry, 1990: 3). Therefore, tourists visiting rural areas were driven by a curiosity for new sensuous experiences for which they have had an expectation. Urry did not focus on authenticity. Rather, he wrote that any experience that was “out of the ordinary” (12), could create the desire to travel. For example, he wrote that “visitors have found it particularly interesting to gaze upon the carrying out of domestic tasks in a ‘communist’ country,

and hence to see how the routines of life are surprisingly not that unfamiliar” (13). Here, tourists were attracted to viewing the ordinary in an unusual context.

In summary, there are three criteria that the post-modern theory adds to moral tourism. First, travel constitutes a search for meaning. Second, this search for meaning arises from a desire to experience a more “authentic” lifestyle, such as in pre-industrialized societies. Third, there is a motivation for social comparison with these lifestyles.

### **Questionnaire Methodology**

This study’s overarching methodology was to compare survey data of slum tourists’ travel motivations with motivations predicted by moral and mass tourism. To gain a comprehensive picture of tourist motivations, this study was divided into two parts. First, a push-motivation questionnaire was given to 193 tourists who had just completed a three-hour walking tour of the Dharavi slum in Mumbai, India. Second, 53 slum residents who worked or lived along the same tour route were interviewed to get their thoughts on the tour. These data were collected from working directly with *Reality Tours & Travel*, henceforth referred to as RTT, an internationally recognized slum tour company that has been featured in publications including the *New York Times*, *National Geographic* and the *Daily Telegraph* (See Exhibit 2 in Appendix for more information).

The push questionnaire was divided into two sections; the first section consisted of 22 questions that tested for several motivational categories that relate to mass tourism: curiosity, escape, ego-enhancement, learning and fun-seeking (Cha et al., 1995; Fodness, 1994; Jang & Cai, 2002; Lang, O’Leary & Morrison, 1997). Responses were organized according to a five

point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The second section contained five free response questions that examined tourists' feelings during the tour.

Several push motivation questions were written specifically to test the post-modern theory. For example, MacCannell's hypothesis was tested in the question, "Slum life seemed more authentic and unspoiled than modern city life". Furthermore, three questions asked the respondents about their interactions with homeless people back in their countries of origin. These questions sought to address the criticism that slum tourists ignored the poor in their home countries while paying to see poverty overseas. Two questions gauged the evidence of downward social comparison, which addressed whether tourists went on the tour in order to feel better about their own lives.

All 22 questions focused on push factors. Destination attributes, or pull factors, were not included because RTT's selling attributes were well defined by the company's website, so it was clear what pull factors were used to attract tourists (See Exhibit 3 in Appendix).

The collected data were analyzed in four steps. First, respondents were profiled according to socio-demographic characteristics. Second, a one-way ANOVA test with repeated-measures design, and a Tukey's HSD test were used to sort the 22 push questions from the most to least important. Third, underlying categories of push factors were established through a principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation. Forth, one-way ANOVA tests with repeated-measures design were used to analyze differences in responses along different socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents.

## *Results*

**Table 1.1: Socio-demographic Profile of Respondents**

Variable	Statistics		
<b>Most Frequent Countries</b>			<b>Annual Family Income (USD)</b>
USA	34%	<50k	32%
Australia	12%	50-100k	33%
UK	11%	100-200k	25%
South Africa	6%	200k+	10%
Sweden	6%		
		<b>Age</b>	
<b>Sex</b>		75%	36
Female	54%	Median	29
Male	46%	25%	25
		Mean	32

American tourists made up the largest proportion of the sample, followed by Australian and British tourists. Of all tourists, only three groups were not from Europe or North America: 6% of tourists were from South Africa, 5% from India, and 3% from China or Singapore. The tourists were relatively young, with a median age of 29. The sample was 54% female and 46% male, indicating a generally balanced sex distribution,  $\chi^2(1, N=193)=0.64, p=0.42$ .

**Table 1.2: Most and Least Important Motivations**

<b>Most Agreement</b>		
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Mean (Standard Deviation)</b>
Cultural	I was curious to see a different way of life	4.58 (0.62)
Curiosity	This tour seemed different from a typical tour	4.41 (0.71)
Authenticity	I thought this tour would portray slum life authentically	4.36 (0.71)
Curiosity	I wanted to see both the rich and poor sides of Mumbai	4.21 (0.89)
<b>Least Agreement</b>		
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Mean (Standard Deviation)</b>
Media	I wanted to see why slum tours are controversial	2.94 (1.22)
Post-Modernist	Slum life seemed more authentic and unspoiled than modern city life	2.91 (1.11)
Homeless Back Home	I usually give money to homeless people back home	2.85 (1.11)
Escape	I wanted to get away from city life	2.29 (0.98)

The questions presented in this table were those falling within one standard deviation above or below the overall mean score. Statistically, the mean scores of these values corresponded closely with the top and bottom scoring motivations in a Tukey's HSD test (See Table 4 in Appendix), and were presented for easier analysis (Sangpikul, 2008; Jang and Wu, 2006). Three of the top four motivations related to curiosity, and in particular, for culture. While tourists were interested in seeing a new culture, they had little desire to interact with slum residents. The question, "I wanted to interact with slum residents" received a comparatively low score of 3.49, putting it in the middle of the distribution.

The question "I thought this tour would portray slum life authentically" received the third highest score, which reinforced MacCannell's theory that tourists were searching for a sense of authenticity. However, his hypothesis that tourist were trying to escape city life in search for a

more authentic experience was strongly denied by tourists in the post-modernist and escape classification questions.

One possible explanation for the high degree of curiosity was the self-selection of tourists; the second section of the questionnaire identified that tourists primarily heard about RTT from guidebooks, suggesting there was little premeditation for going on a slum tour.

Accordingly, curiosity over the controversy of slum tourism's voyeurism, exemplified through many debates in online forums and newspapers, was not important in tourists' decision to go on a slum tour. Similarly, a desire to witness real life locations depicted in movies like *Slumdog Millionaire* or the novel *Shantaram*, was not important to this sample of tourists, as the mean of the question, "I wanted to see the slum I read about in a novel or saw in a movie" fell close to the bottom of the distribution.

Several unimportant factors were social comparison, fun and excitement, and the desire to dispel one's negative conception of slums—which was actually RTT's main marketing slogan.

The data suggested that the slum tourism experience was one of leisure, rather than self-discovery. For example, both social comparison questions received a comparatively low mean of 3.4. This indicated that tourists did not use the tour for evaluating their own lives, as postulated by MacCannell (1976: 3). One finding that countered the finding of moral tourism was that giving money to the homeless back home received the second lowest response. This suggested that in general, slum tourists did not actively help the poor in their home countries.



### *Principal Component Analysis*

In order to better understand the primary desires of tourists, the 22 push questions were categorized into overarching motivational categories. This allowed for the identification of correlational patterns among individual push questions.

To group push questions into categories, principal components analysis with a varimax rotation approach was used (Jang and Wu, 2006). The four significant categories identified through this method were labeled *cultural curiosity*, *self-interest*, *other curiosity*, and *connection with non-tourism experiences*. The categorization was based on the similarity of questions within each category, which together explained 44.0% of the total data variance. *Cultural curiosity* and *self-interest* were the most important motivators, with mean scores of 4.31 and 3.74.

In total, six push categories were isolated using Kaiser's (1974) criteria of identifying categories with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, and containing individual questions with factor loadings greater than 0.4 (Sangpikul, 2008). Each push question in these four categories had a factor loading of at least 0.45. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each category to test for internal consistency. The final four categories were the only ones with reliability alphas above 0.6, which was the minimum value for indicating reliability (Hair *et al.*, 2006; Sangpikul, 2008). The categories *escape* and *pre-conceptions of slum tourism* had Cronbach's alphas of 0.37 and 0.48, respectively, meaning that the questions within each category did not belong together (Jang and Wu, 2006). Furthermore, these two categories had means of below 3.0, signifying that they were relatively unimportant to the tourist. Therefore, they were eliminated from further analysis.

Table 1.3: Results of Principal Component Analysis

Push Factor dimensions (Cronbach's Alpha)	Factor Loading	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained (%)	Mean
<b>Factor 1: Cultural Curiosity (0.62)</b>		5.28	24.0	
<i>I thought this tour would portray slum life authentically</i>	0.76			4.36
<i>I wanted to personally experience life in a third-world setting</i>	0.61			3.88
<i>This tour seemed different from a typical tour</i>	0.58			4.41
<i>I was curious to see a different way of life</i>	0.56			4.58
<b>Total</b>				4.31
<b>Factor 2: Self-Interest (0.69)</b>		1.74	7.92	
<i>I was curious how my life compared with those of slum residents</i>	0.75			3.39
<i>I wanted to gain a better appreciation for the life I have</i>	0.64			3.40
<i>I wanted to see both the rich and poor sides of Mumbai</i>	0.56			4.21
<i>I thought this tour would be an emotionally powerful experience</i>	0.48			3.95
<b>Total</b>				3.74
<b>Factor 3: Other Curiosity (0.67)</b>		1.45	6.57	
<i>I am curious about the lives of homeless people back home</i>	0.80			3.07
<i>I wanted to see why slum tours are controversial</i>	0.75			2.94
<i>I wanted to contribute to the welfare of slum residents</i>	0.46			3.76
<b>Total</b>				3.26
<b>Factor 4: Escape (0.37)</b>		1.31	5.94	
<i>I thought this tour would be fun and exciting</i>	0.41			3.12
<i>I wanted to get away from city life</i>	0.37			2.29
<b>Total</b>				2.71
		1.21	5.50	
<b>Factor 5: Connection with Non-Tourism Experiences (0.61)</b>				
<i>I could talk about this experience to my family and friends later</i>	0.46			4.01
<i>I wanted to see the slum I read about in a novel or saw in a movie</i>	0.45			3.17
<b>Total</b>				3.59
<b>Factor 6: Pre-conceptions of Slum Tourism (0.48)</b>		1.17	5.31	
<i>I wanted to dispel the negative image of slums that I held</i>	0.42			3.21
<i>I usually give money to homeless people back home</i>	0.38			2.85
<i>Slum life seemed more authentic, and unspoiled than modern city life</i>	0.38			2.91
<b>Total</b>				2.99
Total Variance Explained			55.24	

### *Analysis*

Cultural curiosity was the most important factor driving tourists towards the slum tour, which matched RTT's marketing of the tour as a cultural tour. Authenticity is a crucial component of curiosity, and was indeed highly correlated with the cultural push factors. The self-interest category was comprised of the downward social comparison phenomenon and expectations of how the tour would be emotionally impactful. While the two downward social comparison questions received low mean scores, they were highly correlated with expected emotions and curiosity. This suggested that the higher the expected emotions and curiosity, the more likely tourists were to engage in social comparison.

In a second group of curiosity-driven questions, *other curiosity*, there was a relatively strong correlation between tourists' curiosity of the homeless people back home and their desire to contribute to the welfare of slum residents, with a sample correlation constant of 0.35. However, there was a much weaker correlation between the desire to contribute to the welfare of slum residents and the actual practice of giving money to the homeless back home ( $r = 0.22$ ). This either reflected a prestige bias, in which slum tourists justified their tour through the expectation of charity, or that they found it more worthwhile to donate to slum residents than to the homeless.

Connecting the tour with non-travel experiences was also important, and was especially evident for tourists who were first exposed to slum tourism through the media or literature. That tourists did not view the tour as one of private self-enlightenment, but were eager to share their experiences with their friends and family, suggested that this motivation was more in line with mass tourism.

Two motivations traditionally associated with mass tourism, fun and escape, were highly correlated, but received two of the lowest means. This suggested that tourists did not view the tour as entertainment, but rather focused on authenticity and reality.

Interestingly, the desire to dispel one's negative images of the slum was correlated with one's habit of giving money to the homeless people back home. This suggested that tourists who had prior interaction with homeless people were more inclined to view the slum tour as a potential educational experience.

### ***Response Differences along Socio-demographic Variables***

To compare differences among demographic groups, one-way ANOVA tests with a repeated-measures design was used. The sample means are displayed in Table 2 below. Tukey's HSD test showed several significant differences between two sets of demographic groups: American versus Non-American, and male versus female. Means with significant differences at the  $p < 0.05$  level were marked with \*,  $p < 0.01$  level were marked with \*\*, and  $p < 0.001$  level were marked with \*\*\*. The number of responses for all questions ranged from 177 to 193.

**Table 1.4: Differences between US and Non-US, Male and Female Tourists**

Question	US	Non-US	Male	Female
1. This tour seemed different from a regular tour	4.56* (0.64)	4.33* (0.72)	4.36	4.43
2. I was curious to see a different way of life	4.67	4.53	4.56	4.59
3. I wanted to gain a better appreciation for the life I have	3.31	3.45	3.36	3.43
4. I wanted to get away from city life	2.23	2.32	2.24	2.34
5. I read about this tour in a guidebook or tourism website	3.24	3.53	3.44	3.41
6. I wanted to interact with slum residents	3.66*	3.40*	3.56	3.45
7. I wanted to see a different kind of poverty than the poverty back home	3.82* (0.96)	3.45* (1.13)	3.57	3.60
8. I thought this tour would be fun and exciting	3.21	3.08	3.31* (1.15)	2.95* (1.09)
9. I thought this tour would portray slum life authentically	4.32	4.38	4.48	4.29
10. I wanted to personally experience life in a third-world setting	4.03	3.80	3.93	3.86
11. I am curious about the lives of homeless people back home	3.03	3.09	3.08	3.05
12. I wanted to see why slum tours are controversial	3.01	2.91	2.88	2.97
13. I wanted to contribute to the welfare of slum residents	3.79	3.74	3.66	3.84
14. I wanted to see the slum I read about in a novel or saw in a movie	3.03	3.23	2.90* (1.39)	3.34* (1.15)
15. I could talk about this experience to my family and friends later	3.80* (1.16)	4.10* (0.86)	3.75*** (1.05)	4.24*** (0.85)
16. I wanted to dispel the negative image of slums that I held	3.08	3.27	2.95** (1.03)	3.36** (1.07)
17. I usually give money to homeless people back home	2.71	2.91	2.78	2.90
18. I wanted to see the scenery of a slum	3.78	3.73	3.80	3.72
19. I thought this tour would be an emotionally powerful experience	3.97	3.94	3.78* (0.84)	4.07* (0.92)
20. I was curious how my life compared with those of slum residents	3.12* (1.35)	3.52* (1.13)	3.42	3.36
21. I wanted to see both the rich and poor sides of Mumbai	4.11	4.25	4.11	4.27
22. Slum life seemed more authentic, and unspoiled than modern city life	2.88	2.93	2.88	2.93

The ANOVA tests showed several interesting observations. American tourists were more likely ( $p < 0.05$ ) to be motivated by wanting to see a novel type of poverty than non-Americans. This implied that Americans had a clearer preconception of what poverty looked like. This is likely because poverty is more common in the United States than compared to Western European countries—several Scandinavian tourists even responded in the free response section that homelessness was essentially non-existent in their countries.

Non-American tourists were more likely ( $p < 0.05$ ) to identify social comparison as a motivation, which could indicate cultural differences in the acceptability of social comparisons. Supporting this cultural difference was the finding that non-American tourists were more likely ( $p < 0.05$ ) to identify the ability to describe this experience to friends and family as a push motivation, which demonstrated greater comfort in sharing experiences about seeing poverty. Because there was not enough data in this study to examine cultural differences, the subject of understanding the acceptability of poverty across cultures could be an interesting subject for future research.

There were several interesting differences between men and women. Men were more likely ( $p < 0.05$ ) than women to believe the tour would be “fun and exciting”, while women were more likely ( $p < 0.05$ ) to believe the tour would be an “emotionally powerful experience”. This corroborated a large body of psychological research that showed women were more open about expressing emotions (Ashmore, 1990; Brody & Hall, 1993; Hall, 1984). A related finding was that women were more likely ( $p < 0.01$ ) to say that they wanted to go on the tour to dispel negative preconceptions of slums, meaning that the company’s core marketing message of dispelling negative images would likely resonate more with female tourists.

Women were also more likely ( $p < 0.05$ ) than men to go on the tour because of having seen a movie or read book that featured slum life, which supported the notion that female tourists could be more motivated by external push motivations. Finally, female tourists were highly likely ( $p < 0.001$ ) to speak to their friends about this experience, which makes female tourists an ideal group to target for word-of-mouth advertising.

### *Summary of Questionnaire*

The primary finding of the first section was that cultural curiosity was the primary motivation for slum tourists. There was little evidence to support MacCannell's post-modern tourism theory, as escape, meaning-seeking, and social comparisons were found to be unimportant motivators.

Cross-cultural differences were also significant, with American tourists being more open to interacting with slum residents, but less willing to engage in social comparison. Men were more likely to view the tours as fun, while women were more likely to view it as an educational and emotional experience. Furthermore, women were much more likely than men to tell others about the tour.

### **Free Response Questions Methodology**

On the second page of the questionnaire, five free response questions asked tourists how they thought Dharavi residents felt about seeing the tours, what the tourists felt during the tour, whether or not the tourist would pay to see homeless people back home, what their expectation of the slum had been, and how they had heard about the tour.

The five free response questions were analyzed by content analysis through a coding procedure (Neimeyer and Moore, 1993; Aunins *et al.*, 1990). A manual of coding categories, based on the similarity of responses, was created after analyzing an initial sample of questions. Additional categories were added as the rest of the questionnaires were examined. The frequency of each category was tallied, and then percent values summarizing the relative frequencies of the responses were calculated. Responses with answers in more than one distinct response categories were tallied in multiple categories.

For questions two and three, some respondents gave more than one answer per person, as these questions asked for feelings and emotions. These questions were tested for significant differences using the nonparametric Wilcoxon signed-rank test with alpha of 0.05. For questions one, four and five, almost all respondents gave only a single response each. Therefore, the chi-square test was used to test for significance, as the responses were independent.

In total, 138 respondents replied to at least two questions in this section, with the majority responding to all five free response questions. A potential drawback of placing free response questions after multiple-choice questions was that this might have created bias in the free responses. However, the questions were arranged this way because the questionnaire was explicitly optional, so the more important push motivation questions were placed before the more time-consuming free response questions.



### *Results and Analysis*

**Table 2.1: Would you pay to see the homeless back home?**

	Frequency	% of Total
<b>Negative Responses</b>		
No, I already see them anyways	32	25.2%
No (no specified reason)	19	15.0%
No, there are no homeless people where I live	13	10.2%
No, the homeless are drug addicts or lazy	10	7.9%
No, I want to see a community or culture	8	6.3%
No, because I have worked with the homeless	7	5.5%
No, it's not the same thing	6	4.7%
No, that sounds voyeuristic	1	0.8%
No, not the best way of helping	1	0.8%
	97	76.4%
<b>Positive Responses</b>		
Yes	11	8.7%
Yes, if the tour were educational	7	5.5%
Yes, if the visit contributed to welfare	6	4.7%
	24	18.9%
<b>Not sure</b>	6	4.7%
<b>Total Responses</b>	127	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	127	

$$c^2(12, N=127)=82.5, p<0.0001$$

*Aggregated Positive, Negative and Unsure Categories Chi-Square:  $c^2(2, N=127)=109.7, p<0.0001^*$*

This question addressed a common criticism of slum tourism, which was why Western tourists would pay to see slums while paying little attention to the homeless in their own countries.

A quarter of respondents answered that they would not pay to see homeless people back home because they saw the homeless regularly, so homelessness was nothing novel. This supported the idea that visiting a slum was largely driven by curiosity, and that going on a slum

tour was not to see poverty per se, but to see poverty in a novel way. 10% of respondents, all Penn Humanities Forum Mellon Undergraduate Research Fellowship, Final Paper April 2010  
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from Scandinavian countries, responded no because there were few homeless people in their communities.

8% of respondents said no because homeless people were likely to be addicted to drugs, lazy, or otherwise in poverty because of their own fault. This response, along with the 6% of respondents who explicitly wanted to see a community spirit, supported the implication that slum life was a novel kind of poverty, one that had “community spirit” (Reality Tours & Travel, 2010).

By comparison, only 19% of respondents said they would pay money to see the homeless back home. However, there were only two cited reasons. First, the tourist had to learn something from the tour. Second, the tour had to contribute to the welfare of the homeless. There was no mention of culture, which suggested that tourists understood the social differences between slum residents and the homeless.

Overall, this question pointed out the perceptual differences between slum residents and homeless people in the West. Slum residents were seen positively as part of a cultural community, while the homeless were perceived negatively as lazy or addicted to drugs. That 25% of the respondents cited novelty as the main reason why they paid to visit a slum further reinforced novelty as the primary driver of slum tourism.

**Table 2.2: How do you think Dharavi residents think or feel about tourists?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Mixed feelings from adults; some like tourists, some do not	65	36.7%
Residents are happy to see tourists	36	20.3%
Kids seemed happy, but not sure about Adults	21	11.9%
Residents don't care; neutral	20	11.3%
Residents are curious about tourists	15	8.5%
I don't know	14	7.9%
Residents found tourists intrusive	4	2.3%
Others reactions	2	1.1%
Total Only Positive	36	
Total Only Negative	4	
Total Mixed	86	
Total Neutral	51	
<b>Total Responses</b>	177	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	134	

Wilcoxon Sign Test Results ( $\alpha = 0.05$ , DF = 133, N = 134):  
 Positive – Negative:  $P > t = <0.0001^*$ ; Positive – Mixed:  $P > t = 0.0038^*$ ;  
 Positive – Neutral:  $P > t = 0.112$ ; Negative – Mixed:  $P > t = <0.0001^*$ ;  
 Negative – Neutral:  $P > t = <0.0001^*$ ; Mixed – Neutral:  $P > t = 0.0221^*$   
 \*Pair was significantly different at  $\alpha = 0.05$

This question addressed how tourists perceived slum residents' feelings towards the tour. 37% of the respondents sensed mixed feelings from the slum residents, especially from the adults. These respondents stated that the mixed feelings resulted from slum residents staring at them, often emotionlessly. One respondent, a local from Mumbai, wrote that he overheard two slum residents criticizing the tourists.

12% of respondents specifically noted that the children were happy to see the tourists, demonstrated by smiling, waving, and often saying "Hi!" and asking, "What is your name?" However, almost all of these respondents also wrote that they were unsure or had mixed feelings about how the adults felt.

Interestingly, only 9% of tourists thought that slum residents were primarily curious about the tourists, as many slum residents had expressed curiosity about them in subsequent interviews. Overall, tourists were correct in perceiving that most slum residents had mixed feelings of the tours. Interviews with slum residents showed a roughly even split between slum residents who liked, disliked or were neutral about the presence of tourists.

**Table 2.3: How did you feel during the tour?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Interested; Intrigued	24	16.4%
Happy; Good	22	15.1%
Overwhelmed; Speechless; Amazed	18	12.3%
OK; Neutral	17	11.6%
Upset; highly emotional; cried	15	10.2%
Impressed by Industry; Community	13	8.9%
Being Educated	12	8.2%
Comfortable; Safe	11	7.5%
Intrusive; uncomfortable	7	4.8%
Guilty	4	2.7%
Others	3	2.1%
<b>Total Positive</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>71.9%</b>
<b>Total Negative</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14.4%</b>
<b>Total Neutral</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13.7%</b>
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>146</b>	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>126</b>	

Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test Results ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $DF = 125$ ,  $N = 126$ ):  
 Positive – Negative:  $P > t = < 0.0001^*$ ; Positive – Neutral:  $P > t = < 0.0001^*$ ;  
 Negative – Neutral:  $P > t = 0.386$

There was a diversity of answers to this question. The most frequently cited feeling was “interested” and “intrigued”, at 16% of respondents. This could largely have been due to the instructive nature of the tour, which was essentially a “show-and-tell” of the various small-scale industries in Dharavi. However, tourists cited “being educated” independently with 8.2% of

responses. Learning and interest were differentiated because learning is an active participatory process, whereas interest is the reaction to a feeling of curiosity.

A striking finding was that 20% of tourists either became highly emotional or were amazed during the tour. This indicated the tremendous novelty of experiencing slum life.

Overall, the majority of responses were positive. Negative feelings accounted for only 14% of the responses, divided among feeling uncomfortable, feeling guilty at the income disparity, or feeling intrusive or upset.

**Table 2.4: Is this what you imagined a slum would be like?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Less Poor; More Industrious; Happier	64	48.1%
Yes	42	31.6%
Sort of; Partly; Yes & No	10	7.5%
No Prior Expectations	8	6.0%
No (no specified reason)	6	4.5%
Worse Than I Thought	3	2.3%
<b>Total Responses</b>	133	
<b>Total Responses</b>	133	

$$\chi^2(5, N=133)=140.8, p<0.0001^*$$

The dominant answer, at 48% of responses, was that Dharavi was more positive than what the tourist had expected. This was consistent with RTT's marketing model of showing the positive, community-driven spirit of Dharavi. However, there was still a question of whether RTT portrayed the slum in an objectively authentic manner, as four slum residents who were interviewed said that the company should show a larger part of the slum (see Table 3.2).

**Table 2.5: How did you hear about this tour?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Friends; Family; Travelers	62	43.7%
Lonely Planet	26	18.3%
Unspecified Guidebook	18	12.7%
Internet; Wikipedia; Google	15	10.6%
Rough Guide	10	7.0%
New York Times Article	4	2.8%
Wikitravel.com; TripAdvisor.com	3	2.1%
TV	2	1.4%
Hotel	2	1.4%
Total by Word-of-Mouth	64	45.1%
Total by Guidebook	54	38.0%
Total by Internet (incl. TV)	24	15.5%
<b>Total Responses</b>	142	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	135	

$\chi^2(8, N=142)=187.7, p<0.0001^*$   
 Aggregated Chi-Square:  $\chi^2(2, N=142)=18.3, p=0.0001^*$   
 Word-of-Mouth and Guidebook Chi-Square:  $\chi^2(1, N=118)=0.85, p=0.357$

The two dominant responses were word-of-mouth and guidebook recommendations.

Among guidebooks, the *Lonely Planet* was the most popular, with 12% of respondents.

Surprisingly, despite a large number of published articles about slum tourism over the past year, including from major sources like the *New York Times*, *CNN* and the *National Geographic*, the Internet and print publications accounted for only 15% of responses. This suggested that tourists generally did not go on the tour because they had read about slum tourism's controversy.

### *Summary of Free Response Questionnaire*

This section contained several important findings. First, slum tourists recognized a distinct difference between slum residents and the homeless. Tourists were used to seeing the homeless, and did not find them to be a novel sight as they did with the slum residents. The homeless were categorized as lazy and lacking in the community spirit that existed in the slum. This finding supported the idea that tourists did not go on the trip with the purpose of improving the welfare of slum residents, but rather because tourists saw it as a novel experience.

Second, slum tourists were highly accurate in perceiving the feeling of unease from adult slum residents. In comparison, a smaller proportion of tourists felt that the slum residents were happy seeing the tourists.

Third, despite sensing unease from the slum residents, tourists overwhelmingly experienced positive feelings during the tour. Curiosity, represented by the feelings of interest and intrigue, was the most commonly cited feeling. A fifth of the tourists also felt emotionally overwhelmed by the tour.

Forth, in accordance with RTT's message of portraying a productive and industrious Dharavi, almost half of respondents felt that Dharavi was a happier and wealthier place than they had imagined.

Finally, tourists primarily learned about the tour from two sources: word-of-mouth and guidebooks. The large volume of online articles, most of which have mentioned RTT, over slum tourism's ethicality accounted for only a small proportion.

### **Slum Residents Interview Methodology**

Speaking with the slum residents was important because this presented the other side of slum tours. The goal of the interviews was to ascertain what slum residents thought about the tours and the tourists, which could then be compared to and matched with the tourists' thoughts. This allowed for some evaluation of the ethicality of the tours, but was not likely comprehensive enough to draw conclusions.

To understand how slum residents felt about the presence of tourists, 54 residents who lived or worked along RTT's tour path were interviewed. The residents were sampled from three major locations. The first set of interviews was done on the main road in Dharavi, below an overhead bridge where the tour began. The second set was done with workers and business owners along the narrow alleyways of the tour path. The final set was done along the main road of the pottery district, near RTT's community center and at the end of the tour. The residents interviewed were predominantly shop and factory owners who saw the tourists on a regularly basis. Almost all people who were approached agreed to do the interview, so there was little selection bias in terms of who decided to respond.

One potential weakness of asking open-end questions was prestige bias. Slum residents might not be willing to admit to the poor conditions of their neighbourhood out of a feeling of shame. Furthermore, there was a risk that slum residents were hesitant to admit dislike of tourists directly to this author, a foreigner. To counter these potential bias problems, all five translators were instructed to begin every interview by cautioning the interviewee against these biases, and telling him/her that the data would be collected anonymously and used only for research purposes.



All 54 interviews were done face-to-face through five translators who were fluent in Hindi. In order to obtain data for content analysis, interviewees were asked several consistent sets of questions. Questions were asked one-by-one, and then individually translated before moving onto the next question. The interviews were done over six days, with each interview session lasting about two hours.

Interview results were first transcribed and then coded. The coded responses were tallied and aggregated into broader categories based on similarity (Neimeyer and Moore, 1993; Aunins *et al.*, 1990). Where appropriate, the responses were aggregated into *positive*, *negative* and *neutral* classifications to assist in interpretation. To test for significant differences, chi-square tests were run on questions in which each respondent gave only a single response. For questions in which respondents gave multiple responses, the nonparametric Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to test for significance. To test if there were significant differences in response means to a single question asked by different translators, a one-way ANOVA test with repeated-measures design was run on the question with most responses. No significant differences were found in this analysis, which suggested little evidence for interviewer bias. Analysis results for all questions can be found in the Appendix.

### *Results and Analysis*

**Table 3.1: How do you feel about the tour?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
<b>Like</b>		
Tours are good	10	15.4%
Proud of living in Dharavi; proud of showing Dharavi's culture	7	10.8%
Tourists are guests	7	10.8%
Tour guide is a friend	3	4.6%
Tourists buy from my shop; look at my business	2	3.1%
	29	44.6%
<b>Dislike</b>		
No one is doing anything about poverty; foreigners don't buy from my shop	5	7.7%
Don't know what there is to see in Dharavi; not proud of life in Dharavi	5	7.7%
Feel threatened, humiliated or embarrassed	4	6.2%
The company has not done anything in return	3	4.6%
Westerners dress inappropriately, which caused a scene	1	1.5%
	18	27.7%
<b>Neutral</b>		
Ok; used to it; tours aren't harming us	15	23.1%
Don't know much about tourists, because don't interact with them	3	4.6%
	18	27.7%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>45</b>	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>65</b>	

Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test Results ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $DF = 44$ ,  $N = 45$ ):

Like – Dislike:  $P > t = 0.0509$ ; Like – Neutral:  $P > t = 0.0467^*$

Neutral – Dislike:  $P > t = 0.4954$

The most important finding from the interviews was that many slum residents were not aware of RTT's mission. Slum residents showed mixed feelings when asked about their thoughts of the tour. According to the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, the frequency of *like* responses was only slightly more significant than *dislike* and *neutral* responses at an alpha of 0.05, indicating that

there was some unease in slum residents' approval of the tours. If one were to combine the *dislike* and *neutral* responses, then the new category would not be statistically different from *like*.

The single most common response that slum residents gave was apathy. The response that came closest to indicating that residents supported RTT's mission of improving tourists' image of slums was stating that they were proud of showing off Dharavi, but only 10% of respondents gave this response. But notably, not even these respondents mentioned that they knew about RTT's mission. In light of these findings, the sentiment of discontent among slum residents might be improved if the company could ensure that the residents knew about its positive mission.

When slum residents responded that they approved of the tour, most did not articulate any specific reasons. Almost a third of those who approved the tour did so because they believed visitors should be treated like guests, but not because of any specific benefit they received. In contrast, respondents who expressed a dislike for the tours all mentioned very specific reasons. Overall, the negative responses supported the finding that many residents were unaware of RTT's charitable activities.

Only two respondents mentioned that they received any economic or tangible benefits from the tour. Only one respondent mentioned that tourists have purchased from his shop, and only three respondents mentioned that they had attended, or knew of people who had attended lessons run by RTT's community center. When asked whether they knew about RTT's community center, 11 of 15 respondents replied yes (See Table 3.7 in Appendix). This suggested that while slum residents knew about the community projects RTT was running, they were unsatisfied because they could not directly benefit from these projects. This could be due to the

age-targeted nature of the projects. For example, the community center focuses on computer and English classes, which might not appeal to older residents. Nine of thirteen respondents did not know about RTT's kindergarten, which further indicated that the company should strive to disseminate information regarding its initiatives.

In terms of dislikes, slum residents expressed two recurring concerns: the company and tourists did not do anything to better slum conditions, and that the residents felt embarrassed or threatened by the foreigners. To address these concerns, RTT could expand its communication to residents about the benefits that it was providing, and to have its tours stop more often at shops to allow tourists to purchase refreshments.

**Table 3.2: How can the tours be improved?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Questions</b>
Don't mind how it is currently run	4	18.2%
Show a bigger part of Dharavi	4	18.2%
Tourists shouldn't just stop and look, they should talk with slum residents	11	50.0%
Don't want to talk to tourists	3	13.6%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>22</b>	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>19</b>	

$$\chi^2(3, N=22)=7.45, p=0.0587$$

By a large margin, slum residents were unhappy that tourists were just stopping and looking. The residents wanted to interact with the tourists through the tour guide. Not understanding whom the tourists were, or what they were interested in, was consistent with the finding that slum residents were unsure about the mission and purpose of the tours, which had caused unease and distrust. Unfortunately, tourists expressed little interest in interacting with the slum residents, especially among non-American tourists (See Table 4 in Appendix). It might also

be logistically difficult for the tour to ensure that many slum residents along the route got to speak with tourists.

### ***Summary of Slum Resident Interviews***

The most important finding in the interviews was that slum residents were ambivalent about the tour. They were split between liking, disliking and feeling neutral about the tourists. Slum residents who liked the tour often did not cite specific reasons why they liked it, and only two interviewees mentioned having received any economic or tangible benefits from the tour. RTT could address these doubts by better disseminating information about its contributions to the community, or by creating opportunities for the residents to interact with the tourists.

### **Discussion**

This study found that cultural curiosity was the primary motivation for tourists going on a slum tour. This did not support the post-modern tourism model, which postulated that the driving factor behind rural cultural tourism was a search for meaning. Although tourists viewed authenticity as the third most important motivation, they did not view the tour as an escape from the inauthenticity of modern city life, as hypothesized by MacCannell. There were several other indications that the post-modern model did not hold. Tourists expressed little desire to interact with slum residents, which would have allowed them to gain a deeper understanding of slum culture, and hence a more authentic experience of slum life. Social comparison was also unimportant, which showed that tourists had little desire to use the tour as a means to examine their own lives. Therefore, tourists did not seek self-enlightenment by comparing their lives to those of slum residents.

Overall, tourists accepted the authenticity that was presented to them. They did not question whether RTT was portraying a full picture of the slum, even though the tour focused on presenting the positive industrial elements of Dharavi. There were indications that this picture was incomplete. When asked how they thought the slum tour could be improved, four slum residents said that the tour should have showed a larger portion of Dharavi, and not just the industries. Indeed, after taking the slum tour three times, and then spending another eight hours exploring the interiors of Dharavi, this author also found that the tour could have presented more of the residential and social life of Dharavi residents. The tour presented Dharavi in a completely positive manner, which was likely not objectively authentic. Ooi (2002) wrote that, “Local cultures are selected, accentuated and aestheticized to attract the attention of tourists,” meaning that to attract the most customers, the company had to be selective about what reality it portrayed (Smith and Duffy, 2003: 118; Dann, 1996: 77-79; Markwell, 1997: 131-141). Therefore, by accentuating an aspect of slum life that most people would find surprising, such as a high degree of industrial productivity, RTT was able to spur the curiosity of tourists. Although this evidence of staged authenticity through selective accentuation might carry a negative connotation, it has been a common practice in the cultural tourism industry. Urry (1990) and Ooi (2002) both noted that selectively showing tourists certain aspects of a culture might be the most logistically and practically efficient method of running cultural tours.

Tourists were also not driven by Urry’s motivational criteria of anticipation, daydreams and fantasy (Urry, 1990: 3), as tourists clearly rejected escape as a motivation. Urry’s hypothesis that these fantasies were perpetuated through the mass media was also not supported, as tourists indicated that the popular movie *Slumdog Millionaire* and the novel *Shantaram* were not

important in their decision to go on the tour. According to the principal components analysis, both escape and pre-conceptions of slum tourism emerged as push categories, yet garnered two of the lowest means scores. Tourists did not consider the desire to escape, or the realization of their pre-conceptions of a slum as important motivational factors. Furthermore, word-of-mouth and guidebooks were the most common sources for learning out about the tour, which suggested that going on the tour was a largely spontaneous decision for many tourists. These findings did not support Urry's theory of tourists using rural cultural tours to realize daydreams or fantasies.

Instead of daydreams or fantasies, tourists were primarily driven by curiosity. When asked whether if Dharavi matched what they had imagined a slum would be like, only about 5% of tourists said that they had no pre-conceptions of what a slum looked like. Similarly, when asked whether they would like to see the poor back home, a large majority said no, and cited the reason that slum poverty was different from homelessness in the West. This evidence combined with the finding that three out of the top four responses on the push motivation survey were curiosity questions, clearly establish curiosity as the primary motivator.

This finding supported Urry's theory of the tourist gaze, which was a desire to consume tourist images through one's senses. Urry (1990), Smith and Duffy (2003) noted that anytime the tourist gaze was the main driver of a tour, voyeurism was inevitable. This was because when tourists did not have the capability to independently navigate the environment, which would allow them to participate in the local culture, they were relegated to using visual sight as the primary source of cultural consumption (Ooi, 2002: 168). As a result, local people were viewed as objects in the scenery rather than subjects to be interacted with. This was consistent with one's experience on a RTT slum tour. With the exception of children at primary school, tourists

showed little interest in interacting with the slum residents. In going on the tour three times, this author found it striking that tour guides presented and explained every stop in exactly the same manner. Therefore, every tourist consumed the same image of workmen hammering away at tin cans or cutting bars of soap, as if these workmen were part of a living museum. While the mass media has decried this type of gazing with a negative flair, it is both common and inevitable in the cultural tourism industry (Urry, 1990; Smith and Duffy, 2003).

Data suggested that RTT's tour did not have the general characteristics of post-modern tourism, which called for a search for self-enlightenment through social comparison. But did it fit the other three criteria of moral tourism? First, as a relatively small and niche industry, this tour type did not cater to mass demand. Second, slum tourists were "culturally sophisticated" (Butcher, 2003: 22) in that they were sufficiently motivated to undertake a three-hour walking tour in order to experience another way-of-life. Third, the tourists did not constructively interact with the local culture, as they had little desire to interact with slum residents and most did not purchase anything from the residents. The desire to contribute to the welfare of slum residents was not a primary concern of the tourists, and the overwhelming majority did not donate money to the homeless in their country-of-origin. Therefore, in general, tourists were united by their cultural curiosity to undertake a niche tour, but did not use the tour as a means to reach higher personal or social causes, as deemed to be a part of moral tourism.

One possible explanation of why slum tours might not be moral tours was due to an inherent paradox of slum tourism. Butcher (2003) considered that one of moral tourism's main goals was to preserve the environment or to benefit the host population. However, both of these definitions were contradicted by slum tourism. First, it would be ironic and socially undesirable



to preserve slum conditions. However, second, by working to actively benefit and support the host population, the tour ran a risk of no longer portraying slum conditions authentically.

Therefore, slum tour operators had to strike a balance, and indeed face a limit, between how much time and money they could dedicate towards improving slum conditions. Yet improving slum conditions would be a primary goal of moral tourism.

As with moral tourism, RTT's slum tour also showed only some of the characteristics of mass tourism. Tourists denied fun, relaxation or escape as major motivational factors. Tourists did show signs of using the tour to gain prestige, as the ability to talk about the experience to friends and family later was a common motivation. Pure curiosity, as distinguished from active learning, was the dominant motivation, and was a characteristic of mass tourism. Therefore, evidence for mass tourism appeared to be split.

Overall, the tour struck a middle ground between moral tourism and mass tourism, by containing some characteristics of both groups, but not most of the characteristics of either. If one were to classify RTT's tourists, and by corollary, the tour itself, it would be what Cohen (1979) termed the "diversionary" tourist, one who's primary motivation was to escape the boredom of everyday routine by exploring new experiences through tourism (Ooi, 73; Frankl, 1992; Ryan, 2002: 31). This concept was distinct from Cohen's "existential" tourist, whose primary goal was self-enlightenment. In other words, slum tourists could be seen as diversionary tourists seeking to experience contrast from daily routines. But instead of doing so through mass tourism, they chose the more radical experience of visiting a slum.

## Conclusion

Curiosity was the most important push factor for the tourists in this study, which did not fit either MacCannell's or Urry's prominent motivational theories of rural cultural tourism. RTT's tourists were not primarily motivated by characteristics of either moral or mass tourism, but instead by a combination of the two. They could be described as what Cohen (1998) called diversionary tourists, who were motivated to consume experiences that contrasted from daily life, but who were not motivated by self-enlightenment or education.

Interestingly, the degree to which tourists fell into the diversionary tourist category deferred according to sex, with male tourists more likely to seek fun and excitement, and female tourists more likely to seek learning and an emotionally significant experience. Tourists made clear distinctions between slum residents and the homeless, with slum residents generating greater novelty. While many tourists mentioned that part of their motivation for taking the tour was to contribute to the welfare of slum residents, the overwhelming majority did not donate to the homeless back home.

Slum residents were ambivalent regarding the tourists' presence, and only two interviewees had received any economic benefits from the tours. Slum residents also disliked how tourists stopped only to look around, instead of interacting with them. The tourists were accurate in sensing this unease. However, despite this realization, the majority of tourists reported positive feelings during the tour, with interest and intrigue as the most commonly cited feelings.

A fifth of the tourists reported feelings of amazement during the tour. Indeed, visiting a slum was a significant new experience for many Westerners. Because of its uniqueness, slum tourism will likely continue to grow in the coming years, as there are still many major slums

around the world currently without slum tours (See Table 1 in Appendix). This study did not make ethical evaluations of slum tourism, and instead provided an objective analysis of slum tourists' motivations and the connections they had with slum residents. This author hopes that this study will be of assistance to future scholars studying the issues and topics surrounding slum tourism.

### **Acknowledgements**

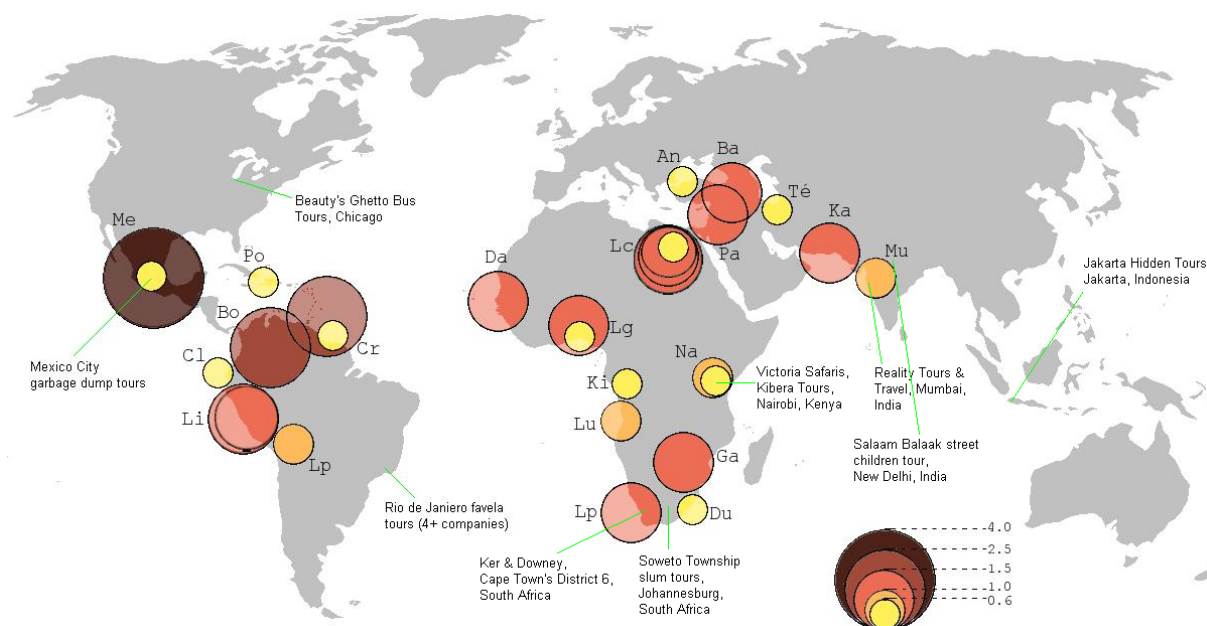
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## Appendix

### Exhibit 1: Global Slums and Slum Tours



The colored circles represent the 30 largest slums in the world according to Mike Davis' *Planet of Slums*. The legend's numerical values represent millions of slum residents in the slum. Note: According to Brazil's census data in 2000, the favelas in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo are bordering on 600,000, so these two cities just missed being marked on this map. Map Source (Not including slum tour labels): [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Principaux\\_Bidonvilles.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Principaux_Bidonvilles.png)

### Exhibit 2: Reality Tours & Travel

*Reality Tours & Travel* (RTT) is a tour operator based in Mumbai, India. It specializes in organizing tours of Mumbai's Dharavi slum, often regarded as the biggest slum in Asia. It was founded in 2004 by Chris Way, a British national, and Krishna Poojari, an Indian national. RTT has received a tremendous amount of press coverage, especially in India, the UK and the USA. The company operates a charity, *Reality Cares*, which primarily serves children in Dharavi.

### Exhibit 3: Overview of Pull Factors

The 22 questions in the push questionnaire match one of several pull factors that the company uses in its advertising material. Because the only active marketing that RTT does is by maintaining a website, I derived these pull factors from the language and presentation of its website. Note: RTT changed its website towards the end of 2009. The pull factors were derived from contents on its old website, which had been used since the company's founding in 2004.

<b>Pull Factor</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<i>Learning</i>	RTT's main objective is to "break down the negative image of Dharavi (and India's slums) and its residents" by showing tourists the productivity of small scale industries, and "the sense of community and spirit that exists in [Dharavi]". This is to counter the common stereotype that people living in poverty are lazy and that the slum is a place of misery.
<i>Curiosity</i>	RTT's website shows the headline, "...Asia's biggest 'slum' - a place of poverty and hardship but also a place of enterprise, humour and non-stop activity." This line contrasts "poverty and hardship" with "enterprise, humour and non-stop activity", thereby clearly generating curiosity through the antithesis. If one clicks on RTT's link for its slum tours, the first sentence reads: "...Dharavi, the biggest slum in Asia, is one of the most interesting places to see in Mumbai." The premise of the "biggest slum in Asia" is a point of curiosity that is repeated and emphasized both on RTT's website and during the actual tour.
<i>Authenticity</i>	RTT seeks to breakdown negative preconceptions about slums, which implies that it is trying to show tourists the "real" slum. Authenticity is also explicitly indicated by the company's name, <i>Reality Tours &amp; Travel</i> .
<i>Fun &amp; Excitement</i>	RTT writes, "It is quite an adventure to pass through the narrow alleys, and you will almost certainly lose your sense of direction!" This creates a sense of entering the unknown, thereby generating excitement.

<i>Welfare</i>	<p>RTT claims prominently on the front page of its website that, “[slum tours are] not run for profitable purposes- 80% of the profits after tax from these slum tours go to local NGOs who work for the less privileged members of society.”</p> <p>Going one-step further, RTT writes “in May 2007 we opened a community and education centre where we are giving English and computer classes”. Here, RTT notes that beyond donating 80% of its profits to NGOs, it has also expended money to operate a community centre for Dharavi residents. Similarly, it also writes that it has opened a kindergarten in June 2009.</p>
<i>Culture</i>	<p>RTT writes that, “We also pass by the residential areas, where you really get a feel of how the people are living and you see the sense of community and spirit.” Although the word “culture” is not used on the company’s homepage or its walking-tour page, it is clear that tourists will learn about the slum residents’ way-of-life.</p>
<i>Social Comparison</i>	<p>RTT does not explicitly or implicitly mention the idea of social comparison. However, downward social comparison, in which a tourist would feel better about his/her life by comparing it to that of slum residents, is a major criticism of slum tourism. Therefore, this concept will be explored as a pull factor.</p>

**Table 3.3: Should slum residents be compensated?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Yes	3	33.3%
No	6	66.7%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>9</b>	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>9</b>	

$\chi^2(1, N=9)=1.0, p=0.317$  (Small sample size)

A common response for this question is that RTT is a business, much like the businesses in Dharavi, and therefore it is natural for it to collect a fee from its customers. However, prestige bias may have caused the large number of negative responses.

**Table 3.4: If RTT made 3000 rupees a day, how does that make you feel?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Ok; Neutral	10	77%
Dislike, that's too much	3	23%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>13</b>	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>13</b>	

$\chi^2(1, N=13)=3.77, p=0.0522$  (Small sample size)

This question sought to avoid the potential prestige bias that might be present if slum residents were asked directly if they should be compensated. This question tested if slum residents were unhappy that the company was generating revenue, of which they did not have a share. The Rs 3000 was an estimate of the number of tourist per day during the summer, eight, and the cost per person, Rs 400.

**Table 3.5: What do you think tourists want to see in Dharavi?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Industries; type of work here	4	28.6%
Poverty	2	14.3%
Life/culture in the slum	3	21.4%
Don't know	5	35.7%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>14</b>	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>13</b>	

$\chi^2(3, N=13)=1.43, p=0.70$  (Small sample size)

This question sought to gauge if slum residents had ideas of what the motivations of slum tourists were. This group of interviewees did not show consistent guesses of tourist motivations.

**Table 3.6: Do you know about RTT's kindergarten?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Yes	4	30.8%
No	9	69.2%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>13</b>	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>13</b>	

$\chi^2(1, N=13)=1.92, p=0.166$  (Small sample size)

All respondents to this question lived or worked on the same street as the kindergarten and the community center, so it is surprising that many respondents did not know of the kindergarten.

**Table 3.7: Do you know about RTT's community center?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Yes	9	60.0%
Yes, but they don't put much effort in it	2	13.3%
No	4	26.7%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>15</b>	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>15</b>	

$$c^2(2, N=15)=5.19, p=0.075 \text{ (Small sample size)}$$

As with Table 3.5, respondents to this question lived or worked on the same street as the community center. The difference in results between Tables 3.6 and 3.5 indicates that RTT should give its kindergarten greater publicity.

**Table 3.8: Tourists feel sorry for the people of Dharavi, how does this make you feel?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Feel bad or disrespected	6	35.3%
Don't care	11	64.7%
<b>Total Responses</b>		<b>17</b>
<b>Total Respondents</b>		<b>17</b>

$$c^2(1, N=17)=1.47, p=0.225$$

This question sought to gauge the importance of an ethical argument against slum tourism, that it is exploitative because tourists “gawk” and look down on slum residents. Residents generally downplayed such concerns, and several respondents even said they doubted this claim could be true.



**Table 3.9: Does seeing foreign tourists make you want to travel?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Yes	4	50.0%
Yes, but not because of seeing the foreigners	3	37.5%
No	1	12.5%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>8</b>	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>8</b>	

$\chi^2(2, N=8)=1.75, p=0.412$  (Small sample size)

This question tested for a common criticism in the cultural tourism literature, which is that Western tourists generate envy and desires for Western amenities among local residents. Despite replying that they did want to travel, most respondents to this question also mentioned that they did not have the financial resources to do so.

**Table 4: Push questions Tukey's HSD test; One-way ANOVA, repeated-measures design**

<b>Questions</b>		<b>Mean</b>
2	A	4.58
1	A	4.41
9	A B	4.36
21	A B C	4.21
15	B C D	4.01
19	C D E	3.95
10	C D E F	3.88
13	D E F G	3.76
18	D E F G	3.74
7	E F G H	3.57
6	F G H I	3.49
5	G H I J	3.44
3	G H I J	3.40
20	G H I J	3.39
16	H I J K	3.21
14	I J K	3.17
8	I J K	3.12
11	J K	3.07
12	K	2.94
22	K	2.92
17	K	2.85
4	L	2.29

Note—Questions with the same letter are not significantly different from each other  
 $F(2,15) = 57.4, p < 0.0001^*$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$

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