

Rural Community Tourism and Its Socio-Economic Impact on a Quechua Community

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Abstract: Rural community tourism (RCT) is an effective tool for improving the social and economic conditions of rural localities, particularly indigenous ones. The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between RCT and the social and economic development of the Cuyaqui Wayi community within the Quechua Indigenous Association - Vicos in Peru. The study focused on the 41 members of the association who participated as service providers. Data was collected using an interview guide instrument and an observation guide during fieldwork. The findings indicate a direct and significant relationship between RCT and socioeconomic development. RCT practices were found to be strongly associated with a set of economic value indicators. However, the study also highlights that favorable social conditions have not yet been fully achieved.

Keywords: Rural Community Tourism, Indigenous Communities, Quechua, Social Welfare, Sustainable Tourism, Economic Welfare.

Type: Research paper



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1. Introduction

Today, in many rural communities, a disproportionate part of the population lives in poverty. Vinasco, (2017) identified that, in general, rural communities lacked job stability, community investments, economic diversity, and the social institutions necessary for stability and growth. Therefore, most rural communities have turned to alternative businesses, including tourism, to revitalize and improve their economies. On the other hand, there is a renewed interest in rural development.

Despite this interest, and some positive actions at various levels, little remains to be done with a successful plan for rural community development (Babb, (2022)). This lack of results may be due to the relatively recent origin of the strategies adopted, often coexisting with a more traditional institutional and political framework and in all cases conditioned by the particular economic, institutional, and socio-economic context of each rural area (Sánchez-Martín et al., 2019). Successful rural tourism destinations are more than these basic components, they represent distinctive sensitive environments consisting of interdependent cultural and environmental components that offer unique products that are non-urban and develop the different modalities of tourism (Brida et al., 2014; Vallejo et al., 2018). There are a variety of terms that are used to describe tourist activity in rural areas: agritourism, agricultural tourism, rural tourism, soft tourism, alternative tourism, and many others. Toselli, (2019) suggests the term "rural community tourism" where a distinctive seal of rural community tourism is that it is a community product and that it is developed from local structures. That is why the impacts generated by rural community tourism are considered an important aspect to analyze in any rural economic development process. Chavez et al., (2022), in their thesis, determine that rural tourism is essentially a practice that improves the living standards of the members of a community. In addition, the TRC encourages sociocultural exchange and helps in raising awareness among visitors about caring for the environment and concerning the cultural traditions of the native community (Tavares et al., 2014; Camargo et al., 2022). Additionally, the CRT has the effect of improving and strengthening the local identity, due to the transmission of experiences and experiences to the guests (Muñoz, 2017). In the same sense, it helps in local coordination and is linked to the search to expand products and improve marketing (Kieffer, 2018, Kim et al., 2022).

At present, on the international plane, rural community tourism occupies a very important position in promoting improvements in environmental care generated by deterioration and changes in climatic conditions. Now, Noguera-Mendez et al. (2016) mention that South American consumers consider it relevant to acquire a product or service that favors environmental conservation. Likewise, life in the city unfolds in a space that generates suffocating and overwhelming sensations, denaturing the environment and our lives (Clementi 2012). An accelerated pace of life in cities, accompanied by little or no contact with nature, has helped to increase this trend. Giving rural areas the possibility to develop into highly desirable tourism destinations. Its allure stems from the tranquillity, values, and natural surroundings present in the countryside (Lukoseviciute et al., 2022). These rural assets may be exploited to provide economic advantages for rural residents through tourism. Tourism demand, advantages, and dangers are best handled holistically, with wide participation and cooperation at the local level (Chavez et al., 2022). These participatory frameworks can encourage the growth of a variety of small-scale tourist ventures on farms and in rural communities. On the other hand, few rural villages are likely to prosper exclusively on tourism. A more successful rural development strategy would be to incorporate tourist development into an integrated community development plan (Janjua et al., 2021).

2. Literature Review

At present, some of the problems that afflict the economic and social aspect that local populations face and more acutely in rural areas are, for example: poverty, minimum income to the family basket, migration in search of new opportunities, low quality of life, among others (Riojas-Díaz et al., 2022). The expectations of the local population consider the CRT as an alternative economic possibility that generates benefits and helps them solve the problems that afflict them, in turn, over time it will continue to grow its competitiveness as a tourist destination (Ćurčić et al., 2021).

According to Gabriel-Campos et al., (2021), tourism is considered when a person moves from the city of origin to a different place, for a period between one day and one year, the main reasons are to know new places, vacations, and distraction. On the other hand, in tourism there are efforts and a great variety of tourist resources that can be used by the community and necessarily supported by the governmental apparatus with its respective administration, taking into consideration the tourist infrastructure where the inputs will be managed in terms of undertakings for their local development (López, 2014; Camargo et al., 2022). The traveler can be in direct contact with the natural wealth and cultural and spiritual heritage of the visiting areas. Lukoseviciute et al., (2022) define unconventional tourism as the set of tourist modalities aimed at satisfying needs and expectations that identify it as a segment with different characteristics than the way of vacationing. Also, tourism is transforming, thus giving rise to a new type of traveler who seeks less parameterized and more personalized alternatives, which allows the participation of small companies or associations, especially with less planned itineraries, and focused on details and experiences (Martínez et al., 2022).

According to the Guideline for the Development of Rural Community Tourism in Peru (MINCETUR, 2018), the CRT is a collection of management models that emphasize local participation as a critical component of ensuring the sustainability of tourist activity (as a complementary economic activity) and the social and economic inclusion of rural populations through the development of diverse products and services that leverage rural populations' natural, cultural, financial, human, social, and economic resources. Likewise, it is seen as an option that, without being a panacea, can contribute to generating sustainable livelihoods and thus reduce pressure on natural and cultural resources (Vinasco, 2017; Ramírez et al., 2020). Within this perspective, rural community tourism is understood as any activity aimed at city dwellers seeking a holiday in the countryside, in contact with nature and cultural contact with the locals, as defined by Arroyo et al., (2022). This type of tourism encourages a better use of the natural, cultural, and architectural heritage of the rural world (Kim et al., 2022).

Rural tourism, according to Martínez et al., (2022), is a unique expression of new forms of tourism because it develops outside urban centers, occurs in a concentrated manner, through generally large spaces, makes diverse use of natural and cultural resources, as well as property, accommodation, and services that are characteristic of rural areas and contribute to local development and diversification, as well as tourist competitiveness. Additionally, the document of the guidelines for the development of rural community tourism in Peru (MINCETUR, 2018) indicates opportunities and benefits.

In the economic, the CRT invigorates the local economy, and the productive activities of the rural environment, generating additional and complementary income promoting employment (Mayer & Vogt, 2016; Brida et al., 2020) which serves to reduce migration and depopulation of the rural spaces.

In the environment, it promotes the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, the participation of the local population, and regional and local governments in environmental management as part of sustainable tourism development. Likewise, it is a means of environmental awareness of the communities when they observe the interest of visitors for conservation; and of visitors when they see the interaction of man with his environment (Castañeda et al., 2013).

In the social, it is nourished by, and promotes, the permanence of associativity linked to ancestral forms of social organization. It is a means of improving the community habitat since, many times, it provides infrastructure and services (for example, roads, public transport, basic and public services, etc.) to support towns, thus contributing to improving the standard of living of the local population. In addition, it promotes opportunities for the participation of women (Knight and Cottrell, 2016) (Molina et al., 2015), young people, and even the elderly who generally do not find spaces for participation and leadership in community life.

In the cultural and educational, because of the importance that visitors give to local culture and traditions, Rural Community Tourism plays a fundamental role in the conservation and long-term recovery of the elements that compose it, (gastronomy, crafts, folklore, customs, traditional activities, etc.). It contributes to the strengthening of the local, regional, and national identity since it allows one to visualize the value, expressed in the respect and admiration of the visitors, of the local culture (Gómez et al., 2013; Crawford, 2022). Likewise, it allows fellow citizens to know and value the pluricultural, multilingualism, and biodiversity of our country as part of the educational process that our society requires.

Although there are different modalities of rural tourism, this particular community practices agritourism and experiential tourism, which allow complementary activities within its activities. Putu et al. (2021) argue that agrarianism is a type of rural tourism in which there is participation in agricultural tasks or artisan food elaborations and, eventually, the subsequent consumption of what is elaborated. It should be foreseen that tourists have an active participation in the various events that are planned, so they can participate in harvesting activities, soil tillage, etc.

The attractiveness of a period dedicated to agritourism grows proportionally to its diversification, for this reason, it is recommended that producers incorporate as many activities as possible, although these sometimes only have a demonstrative and non-productive purpose (Campos et al., 2019). In this context, experiential tourism is tourism generated only by the interest towards one or several peasant and/or native communities (Afro-Peruvian peoples and Indigenous or native peoples), the purposes can be cultural, educational, and experiential. The community is benefited through the provision of services and in the same way, promotes associativity to achieve the formalization of their businesses at the corporate level.

Rural community tourism is an activity with an important multiplier effect on the economy of the countries where it is developed. Riojas-Díaz et al. (2022)

highlight that it cannot be doubted that tourism affects the economy of the visited region, being able to discuss the extent of its effect, its implications, repercussions, and the economic impact it causes. Similarly, Castillo & Salcedo (2022) point out: that this activity allows generating a greater or lesser impact on the environment in which it takes place. It is understood that impact occurs when an action or activity causes an alteration in the environment.

The tourist impact has positive effects on our society due to the creation of a greater tourist infrastructure that implies basic work, communications, water supply, waste disposal, ports, airports, etc. Tourism brings as a consequence a greater capture of foreign exchange and, on the other hand, generates jobs, both in this sector and in other related sectors, which results in the redistribution of labor and, of course, the urgent need for adequate recruitment for personnel involved with tourism companies. According to the UNWTO (2020), tourism not only generates significant revenue for the businesses and individuals directly involved in tourism but also affects the rest of the economy via the so-called multiplier effect.

The multiplier effect of income is the product of the interdependence between the different economic sectors; Thus, an increase in the demand for goods or services produced by one sector generates, in turn, an increase in the demand for goods or services from other sectors, which are necessary for the production of the above. That is, the income earmarked for tourist spending flows to other companies, to the extent that the companies in the tourism industry that receive the rent replenish their stocks, remove their materials or furniture, pay suppliers, pay salaries, taxes, fees, gas, electricity, water, insurance bills, etc. Therefore, there is a clear distribution of income in which a part of it is reinvested in new expenses within the local economy itself, while another part goes outside the borders of the local economy, earmarking, for example, the purchase of imported goods. Tourism is seen as an effective means of transferring wealth and investment, from the more developed areas to the poorer ones (Martínez et al., 2022). This redistribution of wealth occurs, in theory, through tourism spending and investment in tourism facilities in destination areas. However, the net retention of this tourism expenditure varies considerably from one destination to another.

According to Castillo & Salcedo, (2022), tourism creates a series of economic advantages when it is planned and managed in a manner that minimizes social and environmental consequences; and benefits that contribute to economic growth and development. Among the main positive economic impacts generated by rural community tourism, we can mention its contribution to job creation; direct employment food, lodging, etc. (Medina, 2017; Fuster-Guillén et al., 2020), indirect employment (specialized guides, etc.) and its connection with other sectors such as agriculture, livestock, commerce. Thus according to Arroyo et al., (2022), the paid work occupation has types of employment that can be manual, administrative, or intellectual.

The tourist activity constitutes a framework in which, generally, people of very different social backgrounds come into contact, since it implies the displacement of tourists to a different region from the usual one. Sociocultural impacts are the result of these social relationships. Chavez et al., (2022) point out that the social impacts of tourism can have multiple consequences on the societies of the destinations. The construction of infrastructures, the improvement of the

physical environment, and the provision of facilities benefit both tourists and the local population, contributing to new freedom and independence and improvements to the social conditions of many women (Sánchez-Martín et al., 2019).

The so-called demonstration effect: Tourism introduces new or alien values or lifestyles into local societies. The resident population tries to imitate those behaviors or ways of dressing or even to reach the levels of wealth expressed by tourists.

Crime: Although there are few indications to demonstrate a relationship between tourism development and increased crime in tourist areas, it is observed that the agglomeration of tourists in certain destinations leads to criminal activity (Tran & Nguyen, 2022).

Religion: In many tourist destinations, buildings, and religious practices have become attractions and therefore a part of the tourist product that is marketed. As a consequence, conflicts frequently exist between local communities, devout visitors, and tourists, as religious rituals or places sacred to the natives are disturbed by tourists (Arroyo et al., 2022).

Prostitution/sex tourism: Tourism has resulted in a rise in prostitution in several tourist areas, including Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cuba, and the Philippines, however, caution should be given when drawing such generalizations.

Additionally, tourism may work as a catalyst for good social changes in a community, such as increased tolerance and well-being. The demonstration effect can be useful when it motivates citizens to fight for and/or strive for something they lack, such as an improved quality of life or an appreciation for equality.

Chiciudean et al., (2021) studying tourist consumption, highlight that, when visitors meet with the local population, consumption habits are transferred to the host community, to meet the demand of tourists, and end up being absorbed little by little by the community.

By developing tourism, and even without knowing it, people with very limited resources have raised their quality of life, and they have felt included in an integrated system (Pérez-Calderón et al., 2022). The development of indigenous services and products should converge in the training of all the parties that have intervened in their growth, to achieve in this way responsible and sustainable tourism. In the not-too-distant future, rural tourism will contribute to the increase of human capital, since the members of the communities will be trained in different subjects, such as culture, organization of their companies, technology, languages, etc.

3. Methodology

The Quechua community of Vicos "Asociación Cuyaqui Wayi" is located 40 kilometers northeast of the city of Huaraz, 5.6 kilometers from the District of Marcará; The peasant community is located between 3,100 and 3,400 meters above sea level, in the buffer zone of the Huascarán National Park. The town is in Quebrada Honda, at the foot of the snowy Copa (6,188 m.a.s.l.) and Ishinca (5,530 m.s.n.m.) of the Cordillera Blanca in Peru. It is one of the most important communities in the district of Marcará, which belongs to the province of Carhuaz and is located in the department of Ancash. Vicos is a Peasant Community, although officially it is a smaller town with about 8 thousand inhabitants. Where,

as a fundamental activity agriculture, being one of the important activities for its production of potatoes, corn, and wheat, among others. Sheep, cattle, and pigs are also raised, as well as poultry and guinea pigs. As a potential activity, tourism has many peaks such as Copa Grande and Copa Chico respectively with their lagoons of the same name. The sustainable tourism project "Cuyaqui Wayi" (Beautiful House in Quechua) began as an alternative that could generate income for its inhabitants. Among the activities that they present to the visitors are: Accommodation, the teaching of the uses of medicinal plants, preparation of Pachamanca, music and dance, Andean ritual, participation in agricultural tasks, bonfire and storytelling, myths and legends and demonstration of local crafts. From Vicos, short walks are undertaken to visit various archaeological sites; enjoy a landscape that never disappoints, and observe flora and fauna.

The research was applied, the type of orientation is correlational, descriptive, non-experimental, and transversal. The population is made up of 41 members of the Cuyaqui Wayi Association. In this case, no calculation was required to find the sample. In other words, data was collected from the 41 members who act according to the functions legally described in this civil society.

The technique used for this research was the survey. The questionnaire was the instrument for data collection defined as "a set of questions regarding one or more variables to be measured", (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza, 2018), using questions with five Likert-type alternatives of scale-type response, depending on the nature of the indicator. Questions have been asked for the independent variable "Rural Community Tourism" and the dependent variable "Socio-economic development" based on the indicators set out in this research project. The reliability of the questionnaire was made through Cronbach's alpha measurement statistic, obtaining a value of 0.859 for the CRT variable and 0.868 for the socio-economic development variable. This analysis was done according to the coding that was established for data collection. Likewise, conclusions and recommendations were obtained from the results of the data analysis.

This research does not present any theme, concept, ethnicity, or definition that threatens the individual, institutional, ethnic, or community integrity of our society. Different aspects were addressed in 23 questions that were grouped into the following themes:

Environmental care (Ecotourism)

- Is there an improvement in the proportion of guided tours made by the association?
- Does the association work on communal tasks for conservation?
- Are talks on nature protection held in the association?
- Understanding the importance of preserving resources for future generations, it is necessary to contemplate the management of natural capital to ensure its conservation and durability.

Culture, religion, and gastronomy (Experiential tourism)

- Are the ancient Rituals preserved?
- Are music and dance performances encouraged in the community?
- Are gastronomy activities encouraged?
- Have the Gastronomy Products been improved?
- Said information considers the preservation of the essential characteristics of the resident population and whether it causes any socio-cultural impact on the tourist.

Trade (Agrotourism)

- Is there a significant number of tourists served in this community?
- Are artisan products sold successfully?
- Has the occupancy or demand for accommodation improved?
- Now is it possible to commercialize agricultural Products?

Social welfare

- Is my home better thanks to the practice of TRC?
- Have the means of transportation that I use now improved?
- Is security an issue that no longer worries?
- In general, are basic services being implemented in my community?

Through these indicators, it is intended to know if tourist activities result in an acceptable standard of living.

Economic wellness

- Do I have more access to employability?
- Is it possible for me to generate economic activities?
- For this research, it was found that through work in rural community tourism, decent work is ensured and sustainable economic growth is generated.

4. Results

This statistical analysis shows that the practice of rural community tourism has had a 42.8% impact on the social level. In the economic sphere, an incidence of 92.8% is reflected. The social impact generated by rural community tourism is reflected in incipient improvements in the families that comprise it. There are only slight improvements in the conditions of the type of housing, how they interact with the tourists (treatment), some basic services, and security. It has been detected that the impact of rural community tourism practices is strongly related to a set of economic value indicators. In this way, the residents show that employability and the generation of economic activities are always present; generation of their own communal and family businesses, in areas of lodging house, food, crafts, and guidance. The members of the association affirm that they work in communal tasks for conservation, but this is not expressed in favorable economic terms, so they do it voluntarily since they respect their environment and that is how 66.7% of the members confirm their participation in talks on the protection of nature.

Table 1: Hypothesis testing

Variables			Community rural tourism	Socio-economic development
Spearman's Rho	Community rural tourism	Correlation coefficient	1	0.873**
		Sig. (bilateral)		0
		N	41	41
		Correlation coefficient	0.873**	1

	Socio-economic development	Sig. (bilateral)	0	
		N	41	41

** The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To test the hypothesis, Spearman's Rho statistic of 0.873 and a value of sig were used, confirming the hypothesis that there is a direct and significant relationship between rural community tourism and the socio-economic development of the Cuyaqui Wayi association of the Quechua Indigenous community.

5. Discussion

In this study, it has been diagnosed that the impact of rural community tourism practices is directly related to a set of economic value indicators. In this way, the residents show an increase in employability and the generation of economic activities, in addition, 47.6% of the members express that their homes have improved thanks to the practice of the TRC. More than half of the members of the Cuyaqui Wayi association state that there is an improvement in the proportion of those guided; 66.7% of the members participate in talks on environmental protection; in turn, most of the members affirm that they participate in community awareness-raising tasks, this because they are organized for the communal work that they usually carry out (Tran & Nguyen, 2022). When the visitors meet with the local population, consumption habits are transferred to the host community (Kim et al., 2022), to meet the demand of tourists, allowing them to transmit their culture, 71.4% state that this type of activity is always given to diversifying your tourism product; complementing that 57.1% of artisan products are rarely sold successfully. 66.7% of the members of the association show an increase in the demand for the accommodation they provide. 66.7% have been able to market agricultural products directly to tourists, but for this, they have had to go through a training process to provide a good service. 61.9% state that the means of transportation they now use to get to their community have improved regularly, allowing them to reach the community of Vicos and especially the Cuyaqui Wayi association; Visitors have the facility to visit by this means directly from the city of Huaraz to Marcará and then to the community of Vicos. 57.1% almost agree that security in their community is an issue that no longer worries when receiving tourists. 66.7% state that basic services have been implemented in their community. Through these results, we can deduce that the economic effect on the Cuyaqui Wayi association allows the members to achieve adequate local development, although an increase in the social aspect is not yet evident in the same proportion (Pérez-Calderón et al., 2022).

Thanks to these data, future research could be carried out that consign the issue of Rural Community Tourism in public entities of the State to promote and include in the development of rural areas or communities.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

It is found that progress in social conditions has not been evident; but yes in the conditions of the type of housing, how he interacts with the tourist through treatment (social behavior), and also in some basic services and security. Because there is a slight social impact generated by rural tourism, it is necessary to improve educational conditions, an element that concentrates on social improvement in a single indicator. The aspect of health conditions should be reflected in the installation of a medical post with continuous care that can be achieved thanks to the action of the local government.

It is also important to train residents in social and family investment, from how to improve lodging houses, to improving handicraft production, which is very incipient as has been seen. As stated in the theoretical framework, this practice of coexistence with peasant families should be consolidated, taking advantage of their strength or ties of strong friendship and intercultural enrichment. With them, you can replicate agricultural, craft, culinary, and cultural work with visitors. Elements such as short walks to visit various archaeological sites, visits to markets and traditional fairs, and the enjoyment of a landscape, would go very well in the tourist package. In conclusion, it is not only a question of tourism distributing and moving capital, it must also increase the social sphere. Community members should reach agreements to carry out joint actions and link companies and institutions in their area with those in neighboring regions. Infrastructure capital would also be increased by the TRC, as it should improve health services, security, and the different accesses to the area. All this together would contribute to increasing the level of quality of life.

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