
SUSTAINABILITY AS A KEY TO THE FUTURE FOR ST. THOMAS, UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

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ABSTRACT

St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands is a 31 square mile island in the Caribbean Sea, situated at the northern end of the Greater Antilles (VI Now, 2013). Home to roughly 51,000 residents, St. Thomas hosts millions of air and water guests each year (Central Intelligence Agency, 2004). Tourism is the main source of income for the island and is the largest employing industry (Central Intelligence Agency, 2004). Yet since its boom as America's tropical paradise in the late 1960's, very little tourist related infrastructural renovations have been made to the island, taxing the island's already limited resources. Furthermore, the intersections of socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and colonial history of the local population stand in sharp contrast to the tourists', exacerbating a bittersweet relationship between residents and tourists. These factors maybe a hindrance to the full development of tourism in St. Thomas. Improving tourism infrastructures and collecting input from both community residents and tourists on tourism initiatives may hold the key for improvements of St. Thomas's tourism future. This paper proposes conducting a quantitative study surveying tourists and local residents on their perspectives of tourism in St. Thomas. The results of such a study may be used for local government, the Department of Tourism, non-profit agencies, and others involved in the tourism industry to implement infrastructural improvements and sustainable tourism initiatives.

Key Words: St. Thomas, USVI, sustainability, tourism

1 INTRODUCTION

St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands (USVI), a small 31 square mile rock island in the northern Caribbean Sea, is known as America's tropical paradise boasting pristine beaches, romantic wedding packages, and accommodating family resorts (United States Virgin Islands Hotel and Tourism Association, n.d.). Home to approximately 51,000 residents, not including the influx of seasonal workers and undocumented residents, this island is somewhat mainland U.S.A. in its demographic mix and mainland amenities, while very Caribbean with its limited resources and dated public infrastructures (VI Now, 2013; Central Intelligence Agency 2004). St. Thomas is also considered the most culturally diverse island in the Caribbean, particularly when millions of annual tourists breach its shores (United States Virgin Islands Demographics, n.d.). The addition of hundreds of tourists daily creates a heavy demand on limited island resources like water, electricity, gasoline, and even space. The beaches and waterways surrounding the island also pay a heavy price in human traffic since these are prime tourist destinations.

As an island heavily dependent upon tourism, the addition of so many tourists daily adds a strain to the tourist/resident/environment relationships as evidenced by the consistently low rankings in customer service and island cleanliness assessments on guest surveys (Bureau of Economic Research, 2005). It may be that the underdevelopment of tourism related infrastructures plays a part in how local residents interact with tourists and how both tourists and residents interact with the environment. When developing sustainable tourism initiatives, these may be factors necessary to consider.

Aligning with the Virgin Islands Department of Tourism's goal of including community input on tourism plans, this paper seeks to assess the relationships local residents have with tourists and the environment to provide valuable information for sustainable tourism initiatives (Lewin, 2012). The methodology chosen for this research is quantitative whereby the researcher will utilize questionnaires for both tourists and local residents as the data collection tools. Findings of this study may be instrumental in mapping sustainable development options for not only tourism, but also other aspects of island life like environmental conservation, public works, and economic and social development plans.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers Dunn and Dunn (2002) conducted a similar study in Jamaica for the purpose of enriching Jamaica's hospitality industry. Recognizing the growing economic importance of tourism for the island, Jamaica's department of tourism realized it needed to establish a niche within the Caribbean tourism sector. Seeing its people as the distinguishing factor of the island over the physical nature of the island, Jamaica realized

their customer service must be their point of demarcation. "For people to be happy with visitors, they have to be happy within themselves and their social environments", Dunn and Dunn reported (2002, p. 26). These authors reiterated residents' sentiments regarding the need for improvements in the hospitality workers' arena, specifically a need to improve workers' housing and transportation options. Also recognized was a need to improve the relationships between locals and tourists via reducing the resentment between the wealthy tourists and the poor residents. Like Jamaica in Dunn and Dunn's 2002 study, St. Thomas's tourism industry is currently at a pivotal point facing very similar dynamics. With the closure of the largest private company in the territory, tourism is now this island's main income source. Therefore, feedback from both resident and tourist populations are essential components for future tourism initiatives in St. Thomas.

Walmsley and Jenkins's (1993) research examined tourists' and local residents' perspectives in Australia. Using social construct theory, these researchers found that tourists' perspectives of each tourist destination were relatively the same among themselves regardless of sex and age, but differed when compared with local residents' perspectives. These researchers wanted to determine what constructs tourists used to differentiate between tourist areas. Understanding the importance of human perception as it relates to their environment "has led to a resurgence of interest in 'cultural geography' and [challenged us] to focus on how environmental meaning is contested and negotiated" (Walmsley & Jenkins, 1993, p. 2). Likewise, the St. Thomas proposed study would assess tourists' perspective of St. Thomas to see how they relate with local residents' perspectives of St. Thomas. The Walmsley and Jenkins' (1993) study provided valuable information particularly for the tourism marketing industry. These businesses were able to work with how tourists viewed each particular location to create marketing strategies that reinforced the tourists' perspectives. Both the Department of Tourism and Hotel and Tourism Association in St. Thomas recognize the need for St. Thomas to develop its own niche in the Caribbean tourism sector. Assessing tourist and local resident perspectives on St. Thomas tourism would be useful in determining an appropriate niche, which could then be utilized for marketing initiatives.

When dealing with the human factor of tourism, there are many overlapping aspects to consider. In St. Thomas, the colonial history of the island, the high cost of living, low average household income, and its patriarchal culture all factor into how local residents and tourists interact (USVI Moving Center, 2012; Bureau of Economic Research, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2002; de Albuquerque, 1999). Recognizing that tourism perpetuates gender and ethnic inequalities, it is not surprising that most front line service positions like hotel front desk staff, servers, and cashiers/clerks are positions occupied by females and are among the lowest paying jobs (Virgin Islands Department of Labor, 2011; Bailey & Ricketts, 2003; Massiah, 1982). One can deduce that this intersection is where most of the negative interactions between guests and tourists occur.

The two largest resorts on St. Thomas confirm that guest satisfaction rankings can be improved by improving guest/staff interactions, which may mean improving the value or worth of the front line employees. One example is the Marriott Frenchman's Reef and Morning Star Resort, continually the company's biggest earner worldwide, yet with the lowest guest satisfaction rate within the entire Marriott Corporation (personal communication, 2013). Based on their Guest Satisfaction Survey and Trip Advisor responses many guests' overall experiences were less than satisfactory citing poor customer service and uncleanness of the island as two most reported complaints (personal communication; Bureau of Economic Resource, 2005; Trip Advisor, 2013). Another example is the Ritz-Carlton of St. Thomas, also continually low ranking in guest satisfaction relative to other Ritz hotels in the region (personal communication, 2013). Assessing worker's attitudes and their perspectives of tourism may be the key to improving tourist and worker interactions, which would not only help these particular hoteliers, but also the island's economy.

3 THEORY

The frustration/aggression theory may be an appropriate lens through which to frame the resident/tourist dynamics. According to this theory, workers may be frustrated because of their low wages and/or low worth to their place of employment. Feelings of frustration can turn to acts of aggression, passive or active, when they are not acknowledged, validated, or managed in socially acceptable ways. As this theory states "the more directly the target of our aggression is associated with the frustration, the more effectively is the tension released" (Schellenberg, 1996, p. 51). This reality has the potential to cause turbulence in not only the workplace, but in the greater community, which according to Tilly (2003) is a prime ingredient for civil discontent. Societies where certain populations' basic needs are not met or are denied risk violent outbursts from those populations (Burton, 2006). Greece's April 18th, 2013 strawberry shooting case exemplifies this very point (Labropoulou, 2013).

There is a sizable West Indian population in St. Thomas, many who migrated to the U.S. Virgin Islands for work and a better quality of life. Differentiating West Indians from St. Thomians, de Albuquerque and McElroy (1982) elaborate, "Although their impact on the delicate insular social and demographic fabric has been substantial, the West Indians' assimilation has only been partial as evidenced by insecure legal status, persistent job and wage discrimination, grudging social acceptance and political disenfranchisement" (p. 96). This social dissonance still exists in St. Thomas today as many West Indians work in the tourism industry, possibly explaining some of the negative tourist/local interactions (personal experience, 2006).

This dissonance may also explain St. Thomas's violence. Rated one of the deadliest places in the world for murders per capita, St. Thomas has its social challenges

(Mattei, 2013a; Shea, 2012; Mortenson, 2010). Island violence certainly does not facilitate a successful tourism campaign particularly when violence spills over into the tourism sector, like when a 16 year old cruise ship day guest was gunned down by gang cross fire in 2010 (Sloan, 2010). Social ills such as this exemplify the need for St. Thomas's tourism industry to become directly involved in the health and well being of the local community.

4 ENVIRONMENT

Violence against the environment is also a major concern for St. Thomas's tourism industry. As an often-reported disappointment mentioned by tourists, cleanliness of the island is an area identified for improvement (Bureau of Economic Research, 2005). Litter lined roads is reflection of ecocide, a society's conflict against the environment. This term, ecocide, is defined as "The extensive destruction, damage to or loss of ecosystem(s) of a given territory, whether by human agency or by other causes, to such an extent that peaceful enjoyment by the inhabitants of that territory has been severely diminished" (McClellin, 2012). This term can be viewed as fitting for St. Thomas for several reasons highlighted below.

St. Thomas's garbage collection system is such that it requires residents to dispose of their waste at various dumpsters located around the island along the major roadways. Most of the garbage makes it into these dumpsters, but not all. Around any one of these dumpster areas one can find old refrigerators, tires, televisions, batteries, and various other toxic materials. Often times the garbage bins and dumpsters are overflowing with the grounds around them absorbing hazardous material residue jeopardizing the long-term health of the environment.

Another major area of concern jeopardizing the long-term health of the island is the end location for all the island's garbage. There is only one landfill for the garbage of three of the four islands of the territory and all their tourist guests. The unlined, shoreline landfill in St. Thomas accommodates millions of people's garbage each year (Parten, 2013; Baur, 2010). It is consistently in violation of polluting the environment, costing the territory millions of dollars in fines (Environmental Protection Agency, 2008). The dearth of recycling facilities is a contributing factor to the landfill problem, resulting in batteries, refrigerators, motor oil, etc. to be tossed into the landfill, bush, or ocean (Mattei, 2012; Environmental Protection Agency 2008). Furthermore, the practice of live-aboard boats dumping raw sewage in the marinas and the open ocean is another major offense against the environment directly affecting coastal coral life (Department of Planning and Natural Resources, 2005). Despite the large marina industry in St. Thomas, there are no holding facilities in place for boats to deposit their raw sewage; therefore, boats empty their waste directly into the ocean (Parten, 2013; Department of Planning and Natural Resources, 2005). Raw sewage dumped into the ocean creates eutrophic conditions known to cause algae blooms, which suffocate coral life. Over the years, much of the coral

around St. Thomas has died. The Resident Questionnaire will assess knowledge and awareness of environmental issues pertaining to the above raised topics. Understanding the importance of environmental cleanliness to tourists and whether or not it is important to residents will be an outcome of this study. Answers to the survey questions can help key tourism industry entities tailor their tourism initiatives towards addressing the environmental concerns raised by previous tourists.

5 TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURES

Understanding that there is a connection between private and public tourism related sectors, it is known that private sector entities will be hesitant to invest in or support tourism infrastructures if public infrastructures are not adequate. Defining tourism related infrastructure as those services and facilities that service tourists needs and encourages private sector investments in competitive tourism products, it is paramount that public sector infrastructures in St. Thomas operate affordably, efficiently, and effectively if private sector support is desired (Tourism Western Australia, n.d.; Oliconography on Social Infrastructures, n.d.). Examples of public sector tourism infrastructures include roadways, airports, ports, solid waste and sewage treatment facilities, emergency services, water and power services, and labor regulations (Island Resource Foundation, 1996). In St. Thomas, a few of the public sector infrastructures are only just being addressed while many are still in need of improvement before they can support private tourism infrastructures adequately. For example, the emergency phone number 9-1-1 does not always connect or connects to the wrong island (personal communication, Mattei, 2013b). Local regulatory agencies like the Health Department, Water and Power Authority (WAPA), and Virgin Islands Department of Public Works, have all been in serious violations of safe operating practices (Environmental Protection Agency, 1998, 2008, 2012). Electrical power service is not only inconsistent, but costs the highest of all U.S. states and territories resulting in many private sector businesses being forced to close and move off of St. Thomas. (Water and Power Authority, 2012).

Finally, labor policies like the Federal minimum wage of \$7.25 is insufficient for living in St. Thomas by \$2.75 for a single person or by over \$15 for a family of three. Employees who are under 20 years of age, work for tips, or are full time high school or college students can legally get paid can legally be paid \$4.25, \$2.13, or \$6.16 per hour respectfully in St. Thomas (Kotval, Kotval-K., Machemer & Mullin, 2012; MinimumWage.org, 2012). This stipulation includes most hotels and tourism based employees. Paying minimum wage or less means that a large number of tourism's employees are completely disenfranchised from the very industry in which they work.

Improving public sector services like those aforementioned would not only encourage more private sector businesses to invest in St. Thomas's tourism industry, but would also enhance the quality of life for local residents. As Dunn and Dunn (2002)

observed, for tourism to be successful and not an exploitative industry, involvement of local residents in tourism must be organized and planned. Such efforts will inevitably improve tourist/local relationships. Updating emergency service protocol, equipment, and staff training is one step to ensuring the safety and well being of everyone on St. Thomas. Improving the quality and effectiveness of regulatory agencies would help ensure long-term safe practices of St. Thomas services. Making electricity more affordable and reliable would help many private sector businesses by reducing their overhead costs; savings that could be converted into increased workers' wages, possibly improving tourist/resident interactions. Lastly, establishing fair labor practices and implementing a minimum wage that is compatible with the cost of living in St. Thomas would significantly help curb the poverty rate and improve the quality of living for over 30 percent of the island's poor population and over 40 percent of the island's children currently living in poverty (Kotval et al., 2012; Bailey & Ricketts, 2003, VINow, 2013).

In sum, public sector improvements in St. Thomas are needed for the economic survival of St. Thomas. The ripple effect of such improvements would not only impact tourism via the private sector, but island residents as well, potentially improving tourist/resident interactions. The questionnaires included in this proposal will assess local resident knowledge of how these infrastructures relate to them and to tourism.

6 METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this research initiative is based on the implementation of two questionnaires listed in Appendices A and B. These survey tools utilize nominal, ordinal, and interval ratio questions. The questionnaires, which will be in both English and Spanish languages, will be disseminated by research assistants to adults of any gender at various locations around the island. A set number of copies of each survey will be printed and offered to both tourists and local residents until all questionnaire forms have been complete. The points of dissemination will be at high traffic areas for tourist and locals alike. The number of completed surveys will provide a rich perspective of both tourists and local residents on tourism and the environment in St. Thomas. Using survey analysis software such as Survey Monkey or SPSS, the results will be coded and analyzed. The primary researcher will then offer a written report of the findings once the analysis is concluded.

The primary limitation of this study is language. Tourists and residents who cannot read English or Spanish will be excluded from this study. Though Spanish and English are the two most prominent languages spoken and read, there are numerous other languages used by residents and tourists who may be very interested in completing the questionnaire in their own language, but who cannot because of a language barrier. Each research assistant will encourage the tourist or resident to answer each question honestly and to the best of the respondent's ability and will not guide or influence participants' responses.

7 CONCLUSION

The implications of this study will be far reaching. Assessing tourist and local residents' level of interest in tourism and environmental awareness will benefit many sectors of not just St. Thomas, but potentially the whole U.S. Virgin Islands territory. As a result of this study, tourism industry investors can specifically allocate resources to address their areas of weakness as well as to bolster their areas of strength. The U.S.V.I. Hotel and Tourism Association, the Virgin Islands Department of Tourism, the St. Thomas/St. John Chambers of Commerce, the Department of Education, the University of the Virgin Islands, and the St. Thomas Taxi Association are just a few organizations that will directly benefit from the implementation of streamlined tourism related initiatives designed from the results of this study. It is this author's belief that if sustainable tourism changes are to take place, the residents of St. Thomas need to support them through actions by establishing accountability measures. Furthermore, this author is confident that this seminal work will establish a foundation for future research on the social, cultural, and economic perspectives of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

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DISCLAIMER AND STATEMENT OF WILLING VOLUNATRY PARTICIPATION

Dear Participant,

As part of this tourism research project, we are asking that you take a few minutes to complete the survey below.

Our research study's objective is to examine the attitudes and opinions of local residents on tourism. The goal of this research is to include local residents' input on sustainable tourism initiatives for St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. To gauge the community's perspectives and input, we want to ask participants to complete the survey herein as honestly and completely as possible. By participating in this exciting groundbreaking research, you are not only assisting our community in assessing an accurate read on public opinions on tourism, but you are also helping to better plan a future for St. Thomas.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and anonymous. It may take you up to 30 minutes to complete this survey. You must be 18 years of age or older, must reside in St. Thomas, must understand written English and/or Spanish, and be of sound mind. You may terminate your own participation in this study at any time by discontinuing to fill out the survey. You, as the survey participant, can opt to answer all, some, or none of the survey questions below. You will not gain any direct benefit from participating in this survey, nor will you incur any risks. The information obtained from this survey will be used for informational use only with the goal of assessing local resident perspectives of tourism for the purpose of establishing sustainable tourism initiatives for St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

Thank you for your participation in this ground-breaking research. We value your time and opinions.

Elizabeth Estes, ABD

Primary Investigator

Appendix A

Resident Survey

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHICS

1. What is your home town, state, and/or country?

2. What is your ethnicity? _____

3. What is your gender?

Male _____ Female _____ Other _____

4. What is your age range?

18-24 _____ 25-34 _____ 35-44 _____ 45-54 _____ 55-64 _____ 65 + _____

5. How many years have you lived in St. Thomas?

0-5 ____ 6-10 ____ 11-15 ____ 16-20 ____ 21-25 years ____ 26 + ____

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Some high school ____ High School Graduate ____ Some College/Associates Degree ____
Bachelor's Degree ____ Graduate or professional degree ____

7. What category best describes your household income?

Less than \$20k ____ 21k-50k ____ 51k-70k ____

71k-99k ____ 100k-150k ____ 151k ____

SECTION 2: RESIDENT PERSPECTIVE

8. How do you define a St. Thomian?

A person born in St. Thomas ____

Someone who's parents were born in St. Thomas_____

Anyone who lives in St. Thomas_____

A West Indian living in St. Thomas_____

9. Is a "local" always a St. Thomian?

Yes_____ No_____

10. Is a St. Thomian also a West Indian?

Yes_____ No_____

11. Is a local also a West Indian?

Yes_____ No_____

SECTION 3: INDIVIDUAL INFORMATION

12. From where are your grandparents? _____

13. In what estate do you live?_____

14. Do you work?

Yes ____ No_____

15. What best describes your line of work?

Entertainment/Tourism_____ Education_____ Health Care_____

Construction_____ Government_____ Real Estate_____

16. How do you get to work or around the island?

Personal car__ Safari/Taxi _____ Carpool _____ Walk _____

17. Do you own or rent your place of residency? Rent ____ Own____

18. How many people live with you?

JOURNAL OF TOURISM RESEARCH VOL 6

0-1____ 2-4____ 5-7____ 8 or more____

19. Does your place of residence have drinkable tap water?

Yes____ No____

20. About how much is your average monthly electricity bill?

Less than \$150____ \$151-\$250____ \$251-\$350____ Over \$351____

SECTION 4: TOURISM PERSPECTIVE

21. How important do you think tourism is to St. Thomas?

Not Important____ Somewhat Important____ Important____ Very Important____

22. How well do you think St. Thomas treats its tourists?

Very well ____ Adequately____ Not well____

23. How do you feel about the number of tourists who visit St. Thomas each year?

Not enough tourists visit____ Just enough tourists visit____ Too many tourists visit____

24. What do you think is the primary reason tourists come to St. Thomas?

Duty free shopping____ Cultural experience____ Beaches____ U.S. territory____ Other____

25. What percentage of tourists do you think return to St. Thomas within 5 years?

0-20%____ 21-40%____ 41-60% 61-70% 71+ % ____

SECTION 5: ENVIRONMENT

26. Rank in order of importance the following list as they relate to you personally with "1" meaning the most important and "10" meaning the least important:

____ Cost of living (price of housing, utilities, food, gasoline, etc.)

____ Crime

JOURNAL OF TOURISM RESEARCH VOL 6

- ___ Food security (a reliable supply of food)
- ___ Health of the environment
- ___ Homeland security (protection against the threat of terrorism)
- ___ Overdevelopment
- ___ Emigration (residents leaving St. Thomas to live somewhere else)
- ___ Education
- ___ Tourism
- ___ Energy matters (reduction of green house gases, development of alternative energy options)
- ___ Other (please specify) _____

27. Again, rank in order of importance the following list as they relate to you personally with "1" meaning the most important and "10" meaning the least important:

- ___ Air quality
- ___ Availability of safe drinking water
- ___ Cleanliness of beaches
- ___ Climate change
- ___ Coastal water quality
- ___ Habitat protection
- ___ Invasive species
- ___ Preservation of coral reefs and fisheries
- ___ Preservation of land-based and marine plants and animals
- ___ Other (please specify) _____

28. From what energy source do you think St. Thomas generates most of its electricity?

Oil ___ Coal ___ Natural Gas ___ Solar ___ Wind ___

29. Which of the following have you disposed of in the garbage or a dumpster?

Plastic water bottles _____ Batteries _____ Florescent light bulbs _____ Motor oil _____

Electronics (T.V., Computer, VCR/DVD) _____

Household appliances (Refrigerator, Washer, Stove) _____ None of the Above _____

30. Where do you think live-aboard boats deposit their raw sewage?

Ocean _____ Holding Facility _____ Public Water Treatment Plant _____

SECTION 6: TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURES

31. Do you think emergency services like fire, police, and ambulances work effectively and efficiently?

Yes _____ No _____ Not sure _____

32. Do you have confidence that agencies like Environmental Protection Agency and Water and Power Authority adequately monitor the safety and security of operating procedures for businesses and private residences alike?

Yes _____ No _____ Not sure _____

33. Do you think the Federal minimum wage of \$7.25 is adequate, too low, or too high for St. Thomas?

Adequate _____ Too Low _____ Too High _____

34. Do you think hiring practices in St. Thomas are gender biased?

Yes _____ No _____ Not sure _____

35. Is there anything else you would like to add for this survey? _____

DISCLAIMER AND STATEMENT OF WILLING VOLUNATRY PARTICIPATION

Dear Participant,

As part of this tourism research project, we are asking that you take a few minutes to complete the survey below.

Our research study's objective is to examine the attitudes and opinions of tourists on St. Thomas tourism. The goal of this research is to include St. Thomas tourists' input on sustainable tourism initiatives for St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. To gauge our guests' perspectives and input, we want to ask participants to complete the survey herein as honestly and completely as possible. By participating in this exciting groundbreaking research, you are not only assisting our community in assessing an accurate read on tourists' opinions on tourism, but you are also helping to better plan a future for St. Thomas.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and anonymous. It may take you up to 30 minutes to complete this survey. You must be 18 years of age or older, must be a

visiting guest of St. Thomas, must understand written English and/or Spanish, and be of sound mind. You may terminate your own participation in this study at any time by discontinuing to fill out the survey. You, as the survey participant, can opt to answer all, some, or none of the survey questions below. You will not gain any direct benefit from participating in this survey, nor will you incur any risks. The information obtained from this survey will be used for informational use only with the goal of assessing tourists' perspectives of tourism for the purpose of establishing sustainable tourism initiatives for St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

Thank you for your participation in this ground-breaking research. We value your time and opinions.

Elizabeth Estes, ABD

Primary Investigator

Appendix B

Tourist Survey

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHICS

1. What is your home town, state, and/or country?

2. What is your gender?

M____ F____ Other____

3. What is your ethnicity? _____

4. What is your age range?

18-24____ 25-34____ 35-44____ 45-54____ 55-64____ 65 +

5. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Some high school____ High School Graduate____ Some College/Associates Degree____
Bachelor's Degree____ Graduate or professional degree____

6. What category best describes your household income?

Less than \$20k____ \$21k-50k____ \$51k-70k____ \$71k-99k____
\$100k-150k____ \$151k and over____

SECTION 2: TOURIST INFORMATION

7. How long was your visit on St. Thomas?

1-3 days____ 4-6 days____ 7-10 days____ 11+ days____

8. What were two of your other destination options you considered besides St. Thomas?

JOURNAL OF TOURISM RESEARCH VOL 6

1)_____ 2)_____ Did not consider another option_____

9. Where did you stay?

Hotel/Resort_____ Boat/Ship_____ Guest House_____ Private Residence_____

10. How did you travel around the island?

Rental car_____ Taxi_____ Friend_____ Didn't travel_____

11. How many times did you dine at a restaurant off property from where you were staying?

1-3_____ 4-6_____ 7-9_____ More_____ None_____

SECTION 3. TOURISM PERSPECTIVE

12. Did your vacation meet your expectations?

Yes _____ No _____

13. What was your impression of St. Thomas?

Better than expected_____ As expected_____ Less than expected_____ No expectation _____

14. Were the prices as you expected?

Higher_____ Just right_____ Lower_____

15. Did you visit any other islands while in St. Thomas?

Yes_____ No_____

16. What did you think of the customer service?

Very friendly_____ Friendly_____ Neutral_____ Not friendly_____ Rude_____

17. How important do you think tourism is to St. Thomas?

Very Important _____ Somewhat Important_____ Important_____ Neutral_____

17. Was this your first time to St. Thomas, USVI?

JOURNAL OF TOURISM RESEARCH VOL 6

Yes _____

No _____

18. Would you recommend St. Thomas as a vacation destination to others?

Yes _____

Probably _____

Not Sure _____

Not likely _____

Definitely Not _____

19. Would you come again to vacation in St. Thomas?

Yes _____

Probably _____

Not Sure _____

Not likely _____

Definitely Not _____

SECTION 4: ENVIRONMENT

20. What did you think of the cleanliness of the island?

Very clean _____

Somewhat clean _____

Not very clean _____

21. What was your impression of environmental conservation in St. Thomas?

Better than expected _____

As expected _____

Less than expected _____

No expectation _____

22. Where you aware that St. Thomas has no natural water source?

Yes _____

No _____

23. How do you think St. Thomas generates its power?

Coal _____ Oil _____

Gas _____ Solar _____

Wind _____

24. How much of St. Thomas's power do you think comes from renewable resources (wind, solar, biofuel)?

1-5% _____

10-30% _____

Over 50% _____

25. What do you think of renewable energy (wind, solar, biofuel)?

Positive _____

Neutral _____

Negative _____

SECTION 5: TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURES

26. What is the average cost of your monthly electric bill at home?

Less than \$50 _____ \$51-\$150 _____ \$151-\$250 _____ \$251-\$350 _____ Over \$351 _____

I don't receive a bill _____

JOURNAL OF TOURISM RESEARCH VOL 6

27. Did you find the roadways and walkways easy to navigate?

Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No _____ Not Applicable _____

28. Did you know St. Thomas residents pay the most for electricity out of all U.S. states and territories at 51 cents a kilowatt?

Yes _____ No _____

29. During your stay in St. Thomas, did you feel safe and secure, trusting in the local police/emergency response teams should you have needed to rely on their services?

Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No _____ Not sure _____

30. Do you think the Federal minimum wage of \$7.25 is appropriate for St. Thomas?

Adequate _____ Too Low _____ Too High _____

31. How would you rate your departure experience at the airport or dock?

Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

32. Is there anything else you would like to add? _____