

GENTRIFICATION AND/OR TOURISTIFICATION?

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Abstract: *This paper is an attempt at answering the question: Gentrification and/or touristification? The two phenomena share two features (main points-whether the improvement of physical environment is distributed to the residents of low-income class, and whether residents should move involuntarily because land price increases and privacy violations-and physical environment-it is more likely to happen in places with attractiveness such as architecture, historical and cultural heritages, and scenery), but differ from three points of view (gentrifier-improvement of commercial and residential environment vs. occurs in combination; process-residents of low-income groups continue to leak, and high-income people occupy the space instead vs. residents leaked only; negative effects-migration of low-income families vs. migration of low-income families + garbage dumping an privacy invasion).*

Key words: *gentrification, urban area, touristification, tourism*

INTRODUCTION

Gentrification has been defined by Smith in Mansilla [10] as “the process by which certain working class areas and neighbourhoods in cities are transformed into residential, recreational or other uses for the middle and upper-middle classes, with the consequent substitution of one social group for the other”, touristification, as “a process, and the resulting state in a definite space, of relatively spontaneous, unplanned massive development of tourism, which leads to the transformation of this space into a tourism commodity itself”. [6]

Some scholars clearly differentiated gentrification and touristification: gentrification “means a lower income population replaced by one of a higher status, touristification consists of an increase in tourist activity that generally implies the loss of residents,” [8] and “gentrification works to transform neighbourhoods for the socially privileged, while touristification aims to convert the same areas into exclusive tourist and commerce-friendly places, meaning that few people-if any-live in them.”-which means that the only resemblance between them consists in residents’ moving away (ibidem, 13) and speak of gentrification and touristification. [1,3,8,9,24,25]

Literature abounds in questionable definitions of both gentrification and touristification.

Thus, gentrification has been defined as “a synonym for touristification” [14], while touristification has been defined as “gentrification caused by tourism”, as “a kind of gentrification”, and as “a gentrification process”. Moreover, touristification is a compound of touristify (to turn an area into a tourist one) and gentrification (“the phenomenon whereby residents of popular areas are driven out as a result of local development”). [4,7]

Cocola-Gant [4] wrote about the tourism-gentrification binomial “each [feeding] back into the other”, while Sequera & Nofre argue that the phrase tourism gentrification is erroneously used by scholars and debate the issue of uses an abuse of the gentrification concept in discussing touristification. Among the most common relevant processes related to gentrification, there are also material and symbolic “dispossession of residents caused by the rapid touristification of their neighbourhoods” and the relationship between “urban

touristification” and the “promotion and implementation of ‘gentrification policies’”. [24,25]

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The material used in this study consists in articles and books on gentrification and touristification. The methods used in the study are bibliographic and comparative.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Kang, Park & Seo compared gentrification and touristification (Table 1).

Table 1.

Comparison between gentrification and touristification [9]

Criteria	Gentrification	Touristification
<i>Main point</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the improvement of physical environment distributed to the low-income resident class? - Do residents move involuntarily because of land price increases and privacy violations? 	
<i>Physical environment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are more likely to happen in places with attractiveness (architecture, cultural heritage, historical heritage, and scenery) 	
<i>Gentrification</i>	Consists in the improvement of residential and commercial environment (e.g., city regeneration projects)	Occurs in combination (e.g., with phenomena caused by urban regeneration)
<i>Process</i>	Low-income resident families continue to leak, and high-income people occupy their space	Low-income resident families continue to leak
<i>Negative results</i>	Low-income resident families migrate	Low-income resident families migrate + problems such as dumping of garbage and invasion of privacy

To better understand the difference between gentrification and touristification, we need to identify the causes and effects of these phenomena.

Causes of gentrification:

- The building of large hotels [1,27];
- The consumption patterns linked to middle classes and skilled workers [10,11];
- The conversion of dwellings into short-term apartments [1];
- The deep economic, social and spatial regeneration / restructuring / revitalization of cities [10, 23];
- The hit-and-run visitor behaviour [2];
- The “intense fluctuation of the house occupancy in residential areas” [13];
- The new-build developments [5];
- The prices of house for sale and rent [1];
- The “privileged position of the neighbourhood, which displaces residents and businesses that cannot cope with the rise in prices of real estate and premises” [1];
- The rent gap (“the difference between the level of potential income and that of the current capitalised urban land rent under its present use”); [10]
- Tourism [24,25]; “tourism [is] a new type of gentrification”; [7,8]
- Touristification [9].

Causes of touristification:

- The “competitiveness of the destination in relation to other cities” [1,16,17,18];
- The creation of tourist districts (touristscapes) [25];
- The large number of cruise ships arriving at the city [1];
- The large number of restaurants in the historic centre [1];
- The large number of tourists [1];

- The offer of tourist apartments/hotel rooms [1];
- Mass tourism [3];
- Effects of gentrification:
 - “A lower income population replaced by one of a higher status” [8,23];
 - “Citizens’ perception of the difficulty of finding a house to rent or buy – in this case, mostly because of high house prices” [12, 5];
 - “Increase in the number of hotels or short-term tourism rentals” [1,14];
 - On commercial facilities, housing access, quality of life, service facilities, urban space [10,11];
 - On commercial system [14,15];
 - On elderly residents [28];
 - On the “facilities and everyday functions of the gentrified areas” [19,20];
 - On traditional manufacturing industries, ordinary office spaces, on traditional retail industries [28];
 - Poorer territory in terms of inhabitants and of facilities, job opportunities, recreational activities, services [21,22];
 - Residential, commercial, and place-based displacement [26];
 - “Residents are forced to compete with tourists in their everyday performances in their life spaces” [23].
- Effects of touristification:
 - “A combination of risks to low-income residential areas in association with rising housing prices” [3];
 - “An increase in tourist activity that generally implies the loss of residents” [9];
 - Displacement and harassment of tenant [9];
 - Economic, physical, or social [4].;
 - Garbage dumping, noise, and privacy invasion [3];
 - Loss of authenticity [9];
 - Social and territorial [4];
 - The use of public space [12];
 - Tourist gentrification [4].

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions of this study are as follows:

- gentrification and touristification share two features – main points and physical environment;
- gentrification and touristification differ from three points of view – gentrifier, process, and negative effects;
- gentrification and touristification are unclearly defined concepts resulted from “the uncontrolled proliferation of concepts in the field of tourism research”;
- there are clear-cut differences between gentrification and touristification;
- gentrification and touristification can be best differentiate through their causes and effects.

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