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A Case Study of the Conflicts Women Experience with Tourism and Immigration in Vilcabamba, Ecuador: A Sustainable Livelihoods Perspective

Fatima A. Cotton
Nova Southeastern University, fcotton@mynsu.nova.edu

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A Case Study of the Conflicts Women Experience with Tourism and Immigration
in Vilcabamba, Ecuador: A Sustainable Livelihoods Perspective

by

Fatima A. Cotton

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This dissertation was submitted by Fatima A. Cotton under the direction of the chair of the dissertation committee listed below. It was submitted to the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences and approved in partial fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Conflict Analysis and Resolution at Nova Southeastern University.

Approved:

8/22/2014
Date of Defense

Elena Bastidas, PhD
Chair

Michele Rice, PhD

Toran Hansen, PhD

1/26/2015
Date of Final Approval

Elena Bastidas, PhD
Chair

Dedication

A las Mujeres

To the Women

  This body of work is dedicated to the women I interviewed in Vilcabamba. I am grateful for the openness and kindness offered to me by the women who took the time to share their stories with me.

  I wrote this dissertation for all the single mothers who in the face of adversity might be inspired to persevere and believe in themselves.

Acknowledgments

This dissertation was completed because of the support and guidance of many people. In the beginning stages of research I was warned this might be a lonely road. I was fortunate to have people in my life that encouraged me and walked that road with me.

I had a dream many years ago to write about women that are marginalized, to bring awareness to the situations and conflicts they experience. It was my hope to find a committee that would understand and support me.

To my committee chair, Elena Bastidas, you have given me unwavering support even when I doubted myself. I am grateful to you for constantly challenging me. You patiently listened to my frustrations and continued to guide me to the end. These words cannot fully express how much I appreciate you. So please know this could not have been done how I wanted without you. I thank you for your part in my journey.

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My research and dissertation would not be complete without the support of many people. I most humbly thank everyone involved in the completion of my journey. Whatever the support was, whether a kind word or an action, I appreciate all of you.

Many thanks are owed to my family, friends, and colleagues that asked me on a regular basis when I was going to be done with this dissertation. Others asked what is taking so long. Even though they did not understand the process, they motivated me to finish.

While this work has depended on the support of many, I take full responsibility for any errors or misrepresentations in this research.

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

~Martin Luther King

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Abstract

This dissertation is a qualitative case study of women's experiences with tourism and immigration, and the impact of those experiences on the sustainability of their livelihoods in the community of Vilcabamba, Ecuador. At its broadest level, this research explored the interconnections among gender, tourism, and immigration. The literature review presented in the study is situated to respond to the following questions: How is the recent surge of tourism and immigration in Vilcabamba impacting the lives of women in the village and its surrounding communities? How do different women respond to the impact of tourism and immigration? What types of conflicts and opportunities are observed? How do these conflicts affect the livelihood strategies of the locals? This study is rooted in qualitative research. The methodological approach is a case study analysis, which explored what is happening to the people of the Vilcabamba community and their land. The study is based on the experiences of four women living in poverty from the local community of Vilcabamba. I wanted to understand the vulnerabilities that exist for them. I explored the livelihood strategies of the women in their everyday lives. This research is expected to contribute to the field of conflict analysis and resolution by elucidating the relationship among gender, tourism, and immigration in Vilcabamba. It will bring awareness to the issues these women experience that keep them rooted in poverty. An exploration of how other communities have met and overcome the challenges of tourism and colonization is presented, and the final outcome suggests possible resolutions for social change.

If Time Waits

If time waits
Roses will return,
and again
there will be fire in the twilight
restlessness in the air
and passions in the light,

and again
sounds will play in our hands
and desire in our voice.

If time returns
Silence will fall quiet,
and again
grief will burn
its last banners
and sensual happiness
will sound its songs.

If time is quiet
Death will die,
and again
pleasure will cry out
in all our senses,

If time dies

I will be I again
And you will be you.

~Fanny Carrion de Fiero (1994, p. 186)

Chapter 1: Introduction

This research is situated in the community of Vilcabamba in the province of Loja, Ecuador. Vilcabamba is a small village in the southern Andes of Ecuador, approximately 28 miles (45 km) from Loja city. The center of the town, which is situated in the middle of a valley surrounded by mountains, has an elevation of 1,560 meters (Byrne-Maisto, 2011; DePaoli, 2011). A church, government offices, an Internet café, several restaurants and real estate offices, a hardware store, a popular health food store, a bakery, a few hotels, and many other shops surround the central square.

In addition to the beautiful mountains and valleys of Ecuador, some tourists have other reasons for visiting Vilcabamba. Many people were drawn to the area because of stories they heard about people there living to be over 100 years old. Books and articles have been written in attempts to establish the veracity of these claims and to explore why the people of Vilcabamba are living so long (Davies, 1975; Halsell, 1976; Soto, 2007). Researchers, anthropologists, and ethnobotanists have visited Vilcabamba to study the claims supporting Vilcabamba's reputation as the *Sacred Valley of Longevity* (Wigowsky, 2011) and the *Valley of the Immortals* (Carroll, 2007).

Foreigners came in the early 1970s to Vilcabamba to learn of the "secrets" of the old people (Halsell, 1976, p. 1); many decided to stay, and others returned later. Some of the foreigners said their reason for moving to Vilcabamba was how affordable it was to live there. Word of mouth spread among foreigners—mostly from the United States and Canada—and the beautiful community was quickly invaded (Dodds, 2000).

The population of Vilcabamba has increased significantly over the last 20 years— from approximately 800 people to currently approximately 6,000 inhabitants (DePaoli,

2011). Changes in the environment, as well as in how nature is processed, are inevitable as a result of population increases. Tourism has been part of the reason for the development in Vilcabamba. Because of the rise in tourism, the infrastructure of the valley has changed from that of a small town to a busy community with hotels and spas. Transportation has changed from mules and horses to buses, cars, and trucks.

I visited Vilcabamba for the first time in the summer of 2012 as part of a global course offered through my graduate program at Nova Southeastern University. As I walked around Vilcabamba, I saw people sitting in the park on benches in the town square and outside the stores. Three women sat on a bench chatting while waiting for a taxi, and a mother stood in front of the church watching her two children play on the sidewalk. I was surprised to see a mix of cultures among the local people; I also noticed many foreigners coming and going all over the town square. This small town was not at all what I expected it to be. I had to stop and stare for a bit because it seemed as though I was in a small town in the United States.

Figure 1. Vilcabamba town square in Ecuador. Source: de Ahuano (2007).

One of the things that stood out most to me during my time in Vilcabamba was the predominance of tourists and expats. As Stephenson (2011) wrote, in reference to the small town, "Expats and new retirees sit at foreign-owned cafes, talking to other expats and tourists, in their native language-English" (Stephenson, 2011, para. 5). From my observations of the locals and the expats, it was clear that the two groups did not mingle with one another. The two groups seemed polarized. I asked myself: How are the locals coping with the changes brought by people from so many places?

One the positive aspects of tourism is that some of the local inhabitants of the area have seen their incomes increase as more tourists visit their community. As a result, the quality of life for some of the inhabitants of Vilcabamba has improved. Some of the locals have found jobs working in town at stores, restaurants, and hotels. A few of the men run a taxi service, and because of the tourists they are making a profit. However, the increase in tourism, which at one point turned into immigration to the area, has affected the landscape as trees are pulled and land is cleared to build haciendas and hotels for the foreigners (Casellas & Holcomb, 2001).

While the influx of outsiders to Vilcabamba seems to help the community economically, the increase of foreigners has altered the landscape of the valley. With the rush of people to explore the land and discover what have been called the *secrets of longevity*, the natural resources in the region are unable to continue sustaining the environment. These changes are affecting the biodiversity of the area—not necessarily intentionally, but because people are moving in and buying land. The locals, known as the *mestizos,* are attempting to improve the quality of their lives. Mestizas and mestizos

are women and men of mixed race; most frequently, they are the offspring of Spaniards and American Indians (Byrne-Maisto, 2011; DePaoli, 2011).

Because of the beauty of the land in and around Vilcabamba—and the media's marketing of the area as a *paradise*—there has been an influx of tourists (Byrne-Maisto, 2011; Carroll, 2007). This tourism started to change into the immigration of foreigners which is leaving a footprint on the land. During my time in the area, I saw many roads being torn up for new developments. From conversations I learned that some foreigners are buying up the land to build hotels and attractions for tourists. This can be a problem because the locals depend on the land for their livelihood. More and more of the people in the local community are working for the foreigners. This motivated me to investigate the impact of immigration and tourism on the livelihoods of the local people. I also wanted to investigate more closely the impact on women's experiences as a result of tourism and immigration. The changes in Vicabamba that have resulted from the increase in tourism have made the area attractive to global investors who see potential to make money in the region. Increased immigration has also changed how labor is distributed. While it is not true in all cases, gender roles are changing; the work of women and men has evolved to give women different responsibilities inside and outside the household. In some cases women are more vulnerable than men to instabilities of the environment. In many circumstances, they are the keepers of the home and must work outside to support their families. The conflicts women experience are not only based on changes in the sustainability of their livelihoods; they also face a number of social and cultural issues. Boserup argues that "[w]omen workers are marginalized in the process of economic development because their economic gains as wage workers, farmers, and traders are

slight compared to men" (as cited in Benería & Sen, 1981, p. 284). During my time in Vicabamba, I observed women in the town working as salesclerks or waitresses. In the rural part of the village, the women do the inside work, cleaning and cooking in the haciendas and hotels. In some cases, they work the fields, mostly picking coffee beans and working on vegetable gardens.

An examination of gender issues and community sustainability is central to the exploration of the present study. Gender has long been known to be an important factor in development work (Schmink, 1999; Wood, 2001). However, gender analysis, as it pertains to the immigrants' impact on the sustainable livelihoods of small rural communities, has not been exhaustively studied. Women play an important role in maintaining the sustainability of their livelihoods and that of the community. In order to better understand the local community of Vilcabamba, I take a gender analysis perspective that encompasses the different roles and opportunities of women and men in the area.

Gender analysis opens the door to a more careful study of stakeholders. Understanding stakeholders' positions and interests, resources, and issues is vital to understanding the conflicts in the local situation. If stakeholders, especially developers, understand the problems women experience due to accelerating changes occurring as part of the influx of tourism and immigration, they could become open to talking about these problems and finding solutions without destroying sustainable livelihood strategies.

Statement of the Problem

This research is situated around the complex issues of poverty and the impact of tourism and immigration in the rural areas of Vilcabamba, Ecuador. One of the reasons

poverty exists in this area is due to the limited access to assets to sustain the people's livelihoods. Assets (capitals) defined by Bebbington (1999) "are not simply resources that people use in building livelihoods: they are assets that give them the capability to be and to act" (p. 5). Research has been done on the conflicts men and women experience in Ecuador; however, no study has been done in this area, especially with specific emphasis on women as a way of understanding the impact of livelihood strategies on the local households, in Vilcabamba.

"Conflict situations are those unique episodes when we explicitly recognize the existence of multiple realities and negotiate the creation of a common meaning" (Lederach, 1988, p. 39). The major conflicts in the local community are not with the tourists; it is with the immigrants. I went into the town of Vilcabamba almost daily during my research. I observed the tourists spending money at shops of both the locals and the immigrants. At the root of the issues in the community is conflict and culture. According to Ting-Toomey (2001), there is a relationship between culture and conflict:

> It is the patterned ways of thinking, acting, feeling, and interpreting that constitute the fundamental webs of a culture. Conflict, as a form of intense, antagonistic communicative experience, is bounded by the cultural demands and constraints of the particular situation. This set of demands and constraints, in turn, implicitly dictates what are the appropriate and inappropriate ways of behaving and communicating in a given system. (p. 46)

Analyzing culture and conflict must take into consideration that the relationship varies in different cultures. Each individual exists in more than one culture. A person's culture can change over time. Handwerker (2002), for example, wrote that people's individual life

experiences should be acknowledged. His argument is that a person's occupation, gender, and age can affect how they view situations. Culture is dynamic and changes depending on the person's emotions, behaviors, and how they process information (Handwerker, 2002, p. 109).

Purpose. My research looked at the relationships among tourism, immigration, gender, and sustainable livelihoods. I wanted to know how tourism and immigration have affected the valley of Vilcabamba. Accordingly, I explored whether immigration has been monitored to allow the communities to preserve their traditional way of life and obtain economic benefits in their localities. I interacted with the locals by using a systems approach and a participatory research method.

Research Goals

The first goal of this study was to research the impact of tourism and immigration on the sustainable livelihoods of the local men and women living in the community. The second goal was to study why some of the women in the rural areas of the valley are choosing different livelihood strategies, including leaving their communities and moving to the city in order to understand the variations in livelihood strategies and the experiences of women in rural settings as a result of the tourist industry. These goals differ from those of previous studies because this type of analysis has not been done previously.

Research Questions

The following questions guide the present study:

RQ1:   How is the recent surge in tourism and immigration impacting the

sustainability of the livelihood strategies of the local people in Vilcabamba

and its surrounding communities?

The sub-questions are:

SQ1:   How do women respond to the impact of tourism and immigration?

SQ2:   What types of conflicts and opportunities are observed?

SQ3:   How do these conflicts affect the locals' livelihood strategies?

Definition of Concepts

Tourism. Tourism has been defined in many different ways and does not seem to have one clear definition. New developments in the tourist industry show the importance of using more sustainable methods in the environment. For the purpose of this study, I used the definition provided by Sharpley (2009): "Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or professional purposes" (p. 21). As a result, tourism has an effect on the environment, the economy, and the people at the tourist destination. In this context, tourism is the temporary movement of people to other locations for personal or professional purposes.

Immigration. Dumont, Spielvogel, and Widmaier (2010) offer one definition of immigration: when foreign-born persons move to another country, making that country their residence. Similarly, Vinogradova (2013) and Camarota and Jensenius (2009) define immigration as foreigners moving to a host country to live and/or work. In the context of this research, immigration refers to expatriates migrating into Vilcabamba, Ecuador to live permanently. These foreigners have moved to Vilcabamba and the surrounding

valley to live in their own settlements. This type of immigration is considered by some of the indigenous people in Ecuador as colonialism. Most of the expatriates who move into the valley have money and buy businesses and property. The difference between tourism and immigration is that in immigration, the foreigners have moved to another country to live. It is more permanent compared to a tourist who visits the location.

Gender. Gender refers to the socially constructed differences in character traits of men and women. Their differences and roles vary depending on the situation, context, and place (Gould, 1997; Schmink, 1999). Gender is frequently separated into the categories of *male* and *female*. One characteristic ascribed to the feminine gender, in most of the world, is the maternal instinct; women are generally expected to stay home to take care of their children. This idea of the *mothering instinct* of women has perpetuated the patriarchal sexual division of labor. Most often, particularly in less developed countries, women take on several roles—that of tending to the children and home, and working either outside the home and/or on the land. This study analyzed how the women in Vilacabamba identify themselves in relation to their gendered roles.

Sustainability. There are many definitions for sustainability. Chambers and Conway (1992) define sustainability as concern for the environment and taking a long-term view by envisioning rapid increase in the population. When used in the livelihoods approach, sustainability can be conceptualized to encompass the environment, as well as economic, social, and institutional sustainability (Emergency Nutrition Network, p. 1.4).

Sustainable Development. A review of the literature shows that the concept of sustainable development is used by a variety of groups, businesses, and organizations with different interests (Buchholtz & Carroll, 2012; Peet & Hartwick, 2009). Thus, the

definition of sustainable development can be vague and ambiguous. For the purpose of this study, sustainable development is defined based on the definition provided by Weaver (2006): "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (p. 10). In order to meet the needs of the future, it is important to understand the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental needs.

Livelihoods. Livelihood has been defined as a means of making a living (Chambers & Conway, 1992; Ellis, 1999; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2003). It includes the capabilities, assets, income, and activities necessary for people's lives. A livelihood framework can be used to identify five types of capital or assets (Carney et al., 1999; Scoones, 1998; Simtowe, 2010). They consist of human, social, natural, physical, and financial capital. Human capital includes the education of the people, their ability to obtain a skill for work, and the status of their health to accomplish their livelihood goals. Social capital, in this context, refers to how people connect with each other, such as by networking and forming groups to build trust and work together. Natural capital refers to natural resources, such as access to water, land, and forests. Physical capital refers to how the physical environment changes for the people to meet their basic needs. Additionally, produced goods are needed, such as tools and equipment to perform the tasks to meet their needs. Financial capital is comprised of stocks, pensions, savings, and money that regularly come in to the household and is used to purchase products that support livelihood (Carney et al., 1999; Scoones, 1998; Simtowe, 2010).

Livelihood Strategies. Another term for livelihood strategies is *adaptive strategies*. These strategies encompass the activities and choices people make to meet their goals. People diversify and use a variety of strategies to meet their objectives. Chambers and Conway (1992) describe the following livelihood strategy which people can use as an adaptive strategy, namely "claim," which is to make claims on relatives, neighbors, patrons, the community, NGOs, the government, and the international community, variously by calling debts, appealing for reciprocity and good will, begging, and political action (p. 11). This would entail taking action to find ways to reduce the vulnerabilities in times of stress.

Poverty. The word poverty is sometimes used instead of low-income. When visiting areas of the Global South, such as the community in this research, the meaning of the word poverty has several dimensions. Some of the people I observed and spoke to are below what is considered the poverty line. Haughton and Khandker (2009) describe poverty as "pronounced deprivation in well-being" (pp. 1-2). The view of many connects well-being mostly to asset accumulation. If a person does not have enough money to purchase commodities, they are considered at poverty level. Poor health could be malnutrition, improper hygiene, and lack of birth control. Sen (1987) defines his approach to well-being (poverty) as how capable a person is to function in society (as cited in Haughton & Khandker, 2009, p. 2). Without the ability to function in society they do not have the resources and assets to achieve positive livelihood outcomes.

Based on this understanding, I explored how the large influx of tourists to Vilcabamba and the surrounding valley is affecting the livelihoods of women in the region. What new livelihood strategies have they adopted because of tourism and

immigration? Women—particularly those in the Global South—are vulnerable to the instabilities of their environment. In many circumstances, they are the heads of the household, and in other cases, their families are dependent on their income. No longer are women in the poor areas of the Global South able to stay home and tend to the household and children. From my observations and discussions with the people in the local community, more women have entered the work force. Living in rural areas limits the job opportunities women are able to find. To build context, I objectively analyzed the phenomenon of gender inequalities from the standpoint of the ways of knowing from a feminist standpoint, then to the epistemology of the ways of knowing of the women subjectively. According to Alcoff (1987), Genova (1983), and Hawkesworth (1989), this sets the foundation to see both accounts to understand the process of knowing.

Overview of the Chapters

This dissertation has five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction to the rationale behind the study. Background on the valley shows the explanation of why some people move to Vilcabamba and many of the locals wish to stay. The conflicts the people in the local community have with tourism and foreigners have impacted their livelihoods. I briefly presented the Sustainable Livelihood Framework that analyzes the vulnerabilities in these women's experiences and their survival strategies. In chapter two, I analyze the literature in the field of gender. From the standpoint of a feminist researcher, I was interested in exploring the different roles women and men have in relation to immigration, tourism, and sustainable development. The roles and gender issues related to the conflict and the culture of the local women and the immigrants are

fluid, and each individual cultural experience is different. My research questions guided my inquiry into the details of the theoretical framework and the literature.

Chapter three entails my role as the researcher in this study. Because this is a qualitative research study, I asked questions and listened to the stories of these women's lives. The desired outcome has not been so much to find the right answers, as opposed to caring and respecting the stories and lives of these women. The ethical dilemmas are also addressed later in that chapter. Chapter four is the analysis section that presents the data found and analyzes it based on the case study design. I analyzed the data, first using content analysis for secondary data. Then I used a 24-hour clock to analyze gender specific vulnerabilities and how the women and men are identified in their respective roles. During the 24-hour period four women of different age groups were interviewed to learn what their capabilities are every day and over time. There was a sense of community—"a sisterhood" the women shared—to cope with their particular responsibilities. Semi-structured interviews guided the conversations.

Following the narrative inquiry, I summarized the data creating themes. In chapter five, I present the livelihood strategies these four women use to survive. These women live below the poverty level. One of the women appeared to be destitute. This chapter incorporates the discussion, conclusion, and recommendations of the study.

In addition, I added poems to my dissertation to allow the voices of women to be heard. Latin American poetry in particular is different in its own way from poetry in the Global North. The Latin American women poets write from their everyday lives. These poems were chosen because a certain aspect of the gender is presented. The women may not always speak openly about their pain and struggles. Their voices can be heard

through their poems. Women share their stories to record their history. During the time I conducted my field research, I heard women speak of taking on responsibilities at home at a very young age. I heard women speak of the conflicts they experienced that affected their livelihood strategies. Their pain and tears could be understood through many venues; poetry is just one. While gathering the poems for this study, I wanted to locate Latin American writings that closely associated with the experiences of the women in this study.

I chose to add three poems to this dissertation. Fanny Carrion de Fierro is from Ecuador. The second woman, Rosario Casetellanos, is from Mexico. Both women's interests are similar to mine. They write about women's issues, especially the issues of poor women. When I listened to the four women, as well as the women in town, tell their stories to me, I could hear and feel their pain, sorrow, and compassion through their laughter and tears. The following poem *Destiny* by Castellanos captures some of those experiences I believe the women were trying to convey. The last poem at the end of chapter five is by Circe Maia and is entitled *Possibilities*. She shares how women are silent. There are possibilities when women find their voice.

Destiny

We kill what we love. What's left

was never alive.

No one else is so close. What is forgotten,

what is absent or less, hurts no one else.

We kill what we love. Enough of drawing a choked breath

through someone's lung!

There is not air enough

for both of us. And the earth will not hold

both our bodies

and our ration of hope is small

and pain cannot be shared.

Man is an animal of solitudes,

A deer that bleeds as it flees

with an arrow in its side.

Ah, but hatred with its insomniac

glass eye; its attitude

of menace and repose.

The deer goes to drink and a tiger

is reflected in the water.

The deer drinks the water and the image. And becomes

-before he is devoured – (accomplice, fascinated)

his enemy.

We give life only to what we hate.

~Rosario Castellanos (1994, p. 107)

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter I present the main theories and works found in the literature that helped me frame the study's findings. I start with a brief review of Colonialism, Postcolonialism, and Neocolonialism, positioning the history of the area of study as influenced by each theory. Going from a macro- to a micro-level, I explore the theories and concepts of Conflicts and the Subaltern, Gender Analysis, Patriarchy, and Standpoint Theory; while they are all related, each brings a different lens to understand the issue central to this dissertation. Culture and Conflict provides a key element in the theoretical framework since many of the conflicts between the locals and tourists can be analyzed through that lens. I finally describe the analytical framework, The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, used to analyze and discuss the research findings.

Colonialism

During my first visit to Ecuador, I met a chief in one of the villages I toured with my colleagues. He told us that everything changed in his village when the colonists came and bought up the land to develop roads and build hotels. The word *colonialism* has been used in the past as interchangeable with *imperialism*. Loomba (2005) defines colonialism "as the conquest and control of other people's land and goods" (p. 8). Similarly, Smith (2012) describes colonialism as imperialism in Africa. The West took away their ways of knowing their culture and gave back to them a new culture "through the eyes of the West" (p. 1).

Vilcabamba was colonized by the Spaniards when they came and settled in the area. The Spaniards changed the land and mixed with the people. Many expatriates have moved in and established separate communities, and there appears to be a polarization

between them and the locals. This clash in cultures is not the same as what took place when the Spaniards conquered the Indians. The two groups mixed, resulting in a hybrid population referred to as *mestizos* (Loomba, 2005). The foreigners I spoke to in Vilcabamba told me they keep to themselves; they have their own community, separate from the locals. I was curious if this separateness between the two communities is purposeful to foster nationalism.

Postcolonialism

Historically, the term *postcolonial* has been used to convey the most recent time after colonialism. The term does not apply to this situation, because *post* is the prefix for *after*. Colonialism still exists in Vilcabamba—though, perhaps, not to the extent of the eradication of previous cultures—however, the binary opposition between the two groups is still prevalent. As it relates to this context, the definition of post-colonialism provided by Loomba (2005) is most appropriate: "an understanding of 'the complicated fractured histories through which colonialism passes from the past into the present'; and a mapping of the ways in which metropolitan and colonial societies are drawn together in webs of affinity, influence and dependence" (p. 13). These two communities—the locals and the foreigners—exist in separate spaces and have contradictory ideas of community. The cultural differences between the two groups have created conflicts in communication.

Neocolonialism

The term neocolonialism in this dissertation refers to the Latin American asymmetrical economic relations between North America and European countries. Although colonialism and postcolonialism can often be used interchangeably, neocolonialism is appropriate in the context of gender in Vilcabamba. Progress in Latin

America resulted in changes to the environment. These many changes affected the urban areas as well as the rural areas. Over time the colonial cobblestone streets changed to cement sidewalks. New roads were paved, and telephone poles and electricity were brought into towns and cities. Landowners in rural areas prospered; however, life for people in the rural areas has had little improvement.

Foreign influence began in Latin America in what has been the called the period of neocolonialism 1880-1930. Foreigners and rich local landowners bought up the land, while the poor local people worked receiving little compensation. There is usually not enough to support their families (Chasteen, 2011). Agrarian capitalism took hold of the rural areas causing many of the men and some of the women to move to the cities for work. After the neocolonial period ended, foreigners began moving to the rural areas to profit from the land and low pay wages of the people (Watts, 1998). In the case of Vilcabamba, development has brought in foreigners to buy more land to build homes and structures for profit. This form of hegemony has created conflicts for the women in the rural areas. They are the most vulnerable, and their suffering can have short- and long-term effects.

Conflicts and the Subaltern

The purpose of my interviews with the local women was to hear them speak about their lives and the conflicts they experience in development and with foreigners. In an interview with De Kock (1992), Spivak presents the word *subaltern*, and defines it by saying, "Everyone who has little or no access to the cultural imperialism is subaltern" (p. 24). In its broadest definition, the subaltern are the colonized or oppressed (De Kock, 1992). Spivak (1988), in her own earlier works, warns against post-colonists' endeavors

to *recover* the voices of subaltern or colonized people, specifically women. Spivak goes on to say that the subaltern cannot speak unless Westerners are prepared to listen (p. 24).

Women must be able to speak and reclaim their identities, rather than academia attempting to speak for them (Loomba, 2005). The four typical women in Vilcabamba whom I interviewed for the present study live below the poverty level. I interviewed them using semi-structured questions; I wanted them to tell their stories in their own words. As a Westerner and a foreigner to Vilcabamba, I was aware of my role as an outsider. Their world can be explained best through their voices.

The primary purpose for promoting tourism is its role in development. In earlier research tourism was considered a vehicle for development in the land, as well as for economic development. The objective of tourism-related development has evolved from economic growth to a wider concept that also looks at sociocultural, political, and environmental growth. This is referred to as sustainable tourism development (Milne & Ateljevic, 2001; Sharpley, 2009). In this context, the definition of development is "making a better life for everyone" (Peet & Hartwick, 2009, p. 1); more specifically, it means ensuring that the people's basic needs are met, as well as respecting their cultural differences. This broad definition focuses more on ensuring that the people in the community benefit and their livelihoods are improved.

Development and economic growth are connected. The communities that depend on tourism for economic growth also have to be concerned with their quality of life, such as the ecosystem or environment. While there is a nexus between development and economic growth, there is also a basic difference between the two. Economic growth as defined by Peet and Hartwick (2009) is the production of more goods. The idea behind

economic growth is profit. Growth can occur without communities receiving benefit. Income inequality and poverty among the people of the local community become possible because the profits of economic growth generally go to the people who already have the power and money. This *trickle down* effect—in which everyone eventually benefits from growth because income trickles down from the rich—has not worked for those in the lower class, although it is upheld by the elite class. To understand gender I offer a look through a "gender lens." By using a gender lens I am looking at how and why a particualar social phenomenon occurs, and why men and women are treated differently.

Gender Analysis

In the 1970s Lindsey (2010) defined the differences between sex and gender as follows: sex is the biological differences between males and females and gender is the socially constructed roles as masculine and feminine. The difference between the two is that the term gender is a 'role'. When this word is added into the mix, there can be confusion because of the terminology. Role is a social concept, while sex is a biological concept (Bem, 1993). Gender roles can change depending on the division of labor. Many women, particularly those in less developed countries, are increasingly becoming the heads of their households and the primary source of income for their families. Some reasons for this can be socioeconomic, due to men leaving their homes to find work elsewhere. Moser (1993, 2009) explains that in the urban areas of Latin American countries and some parts of Africa, women are the head of one-third of the households. By looking through a gendered lens, it is also possible to see how "gendered inequality is intertwined with other forms of inequality" (Sprague, 2005, p. viii).

Patriarchy

There is also a connection between patriarchy and capitalism. Mies (1999) and Holmes (2007) pursue the idea that the reason for patriarchal domination is for economic systems to achieve long-term accumulation. The relationship of patriarchy and capitalism explains why women have been relegated to the background on issues regarding their development. Mies and Holmes both examine capitalist patriarchy and the role of women's work in the domestic sphere. According to the authors, women's work is unpaid; they are expected to be nurturing and allow the men to take care of the family by bringing home the income. If not for the unpaid work of women and the poor indigenous farmers tending the land, capitalism would not be able to thrive.

Kandiyoti (1988) adds that the term *patriarchy* is overused, claiming radical feminists use the term for any type of male dominance. She suggests there are different forms of patriarchy whereby women are given certain rules to follow. The gender inequality women experience could be changed if the men and women would follow these rules, which are aimed at developing strategies to balance the gender inequality in the household. According to Kandiyoti, each person should implement the rules as he or she wants, rather than according to someone else's rules.

Kandiyoti's (1998) ideas about how women should bargain differently with patriarchy later evolved into an approach toward investing in training programs for women to become empowered. The author recognizes that there will be resistance from both genders to articulating a clear plan for compromise, but she does not appear to offer a workable framework to address the area of patriarchy. It is evident that gender roles

have evolved and, at times, regressed throughout history, and many authors have addressed the patterns of patriarchy and male dominance that have existed over time.

Lamphere (2001) conducted an examination of the dual roles women play in order to explain how conflicts are created from gender inequalities. She argues that women are universally subordinated; they are left to take care of the home—or the "domestic sphere"—while men go out in the "public world," taking on roles in the government or military (Lamphere, 2001, p. 101). According to Lamphere, this dichotomy creates conflicts within families and in the work environment, and she argues that it happens in every society.

While gender inqueality is true in some cases, it is not always true in cases in which women are educated. When women are isolated and do not have access to training and education, the dichotomy of the female domestic sphere and male public world may still be true. Lamphere (2001) and Rosaldo (1974) agree that women have been relegated to taking care of the home while men work outside of the home, and Rosaldo (1974) admits that once women are educated or given training in a particular area, they are able to escape poverty. Lamphere and Rosaldo both offer frameworks of gender roles, which are based on a feminist perspective and reflect the experiences of most women throughout history. However, the authors note that women now often work outside the home to help support their families, and men are increasingly taking on some of the responsibilities for which women have historically been responsible. Rosaldo's ethnographic study on cultures revealed that "everywhere men have some authority over women. They have culturally legitimated the right to her subordination and compliance" (1974, p. 22).

Standpoint Theory. Standpoint epistemology is knowledge formed in a particular structure of physical location, history, culture, and interests. These structures can change at different times (Sprague, 2005). A standpoint does not happen all at once when thinking of the subject's issues. It takes into consideration whatever resources can be used for an understanding of the experiences of individuals. Standpoint theorists, such as Harding (1998) and Hartsock (1998) postulate the people they study are from a specific time and place, as opposed to the positivist view of creating a theory from nowhere.

In some versions of standpoint theory, the social positions examined help to develop a clearer understanding. From a feminist standpoint, the epistemology is generally granted to women. They are diverse in race and class, as well as in other areas of subordination. Hartsock (1998) describes gender inequality using the standpoint of power. She argues that one of the ways power is used is through the sexual division of labor. Smith (1990) and Harding (1991), two standpoint theorists, view women's knowledge from a particular perspective. The authors examine women's lived experiences and posit that knowledge is socially situated, which makes it possible for people in marginalized groups to see situations differently from the way people who are not marginlized see them. While Hartsock (1998), Smith (1990), and Harding (1998) are standpoint theorists, they are writing from a first world perspective of the domination of women.

French (1992) posits that women, particularly poor women, experience a form of marginalization known as structural violence. While there are various forms of marginalization, French claims that women are marginalized because they are the ones

who raise the children. Raising children and taking care of the home often leaves women with little time to become involved in politics, thus leaving them without a voice in decision-making in their communities and in the political arena. Men are paid for their work, whether from their profits in the fields or outside the home. In the present study, I proposed that patriarchy has historically influenced the separation of gender roles; therefore, the first goal of this study was to explore the sources of gender inequality. To do this, I examined the inequalities between men and women through a feminist lens. I wanted to know why we need to look at gender. What is the significance of seeing gender inequalities of third world women?

In 2000, one hundred and ninety-one members of the United Nations developed the Millennium Development Goals aimed at reducing poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women by the year 2015 (Rigg, 2008). Goal #3 is to promote gender equality and empower women. The aim is to eliminate gender inequality by educating women as well as men. Goal #7 seeks to ensure environmental sustainability. The aim is to incorporate principles of sustainable development into the policies and programs and turn around the loss of environmental resources. The UN General Assembly of the United Nations made a commitment to adopt this resolution to "free our fellow men, women, and children from their abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty" (Rigg, 2008, p. 30). There are a total of eight goals, and the expectation is for them to be achieved by the year 2015. Each goal is specific and is supposed to be met by an action plan that is executed for completing the goal.

Women and men in more developed countries are, in most cases, better off than those in less developed countries. Women in more developed countries face different issues and have different life experiences than women in less developed countries. Women's experiences are varied—similar in some areas, but very different in others. While searching for the *facts* and *truth*, it is possible still to acknowledge women's experiences. Smith (1990) uses the expression "alternative way of thinking" (p. 20) to refer to using information gained in research and its connection to knowledge. In positivist research, the researcher looks for the truth. There is, indeed, a truth to be discovered. In this study, the truth is gained from the lived experiences and interpretations of the women in Vilcabamba. Many of them share some of the same goals, such as gender inequality and struggles with gender discrimination. However, they do not share the same perspectives and interests.

The alternative way of thinking suggested by Smith (1990) involves looking at what life is like for women as they experience it (as cited in Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007). Knowledge is built from the actual life experiences of the women and is filtered through that lens. From an epistemological standpoint, I observed and listened to the women in Vilcabamba and the local community. By hearing their ways of knowing how they survive, I can bring attention to their inequalities in the home and in their work. Jaggar's (1997) research illustrates women's experiences, and the knowledge gained from it provides an understanding of the "mechanisms of domination," helping us "envision freer ways to live" (p. 193). This research study presents the alternative framework with women in Vilcabamba and the local community using the identities of women. This framework allows for these women to define their reality. Their individual

needs can be recognized and accepted. Moser (1989) first introduced a strategy for development that explores the differences between women and men. She examined the need to challenge and change the gender roles.

The term *gender and development* was first used in the early 1970s to address the perceived exclusion of women in economic development (Moser, 1989). The role of women in the decision making process for development in their communities was a threat to men's machismo. Many men already had experience in politics while women did not (Moser, 2009). Boserup (1970) was one of the first researchers to present a study about the changing roles of women in economic and social development. Women have a major role with regard to their contribution in economic development. She analyzed how women are at a disadvantage. For example, most often their land sells, usually because "women cultivate the subsistence of the crops for the family, while the men cultivate crops for cash or work for a wage" (p. 68). From my observation in the rural areas of Vilcabamba, women were taking an active role in their lives. Even with the low-paid seasonal labor in the field, they found other means of support.

Researchers such as Tinker (1990), Parpart (1993), and Boserup (1970) wrote about gender and development. Their research focused on the roles assigned to men and women by society; in particular, they looked at patriarchy and gender inequality. Once women are allowed to share their feelings and circumstances, they can become participants in change rather than just recipients. Espinosa (2004) offers an approach to analyze the nexus between the social variables of gender, poverty, age, and education.

In her research study, Espinosa (2004) cites the need for stakeholder's conservation projects to look at how to protect the natural resources in the local

communities. She suggests participatory approaches in the planning and management to empower people in the local communities. Specific attempts should be made to give voice to the locals, particularly women in the community, to participate in the decision-making. Women bring a unique perspective to defining and solving problems. Espinosa provides a framework and methodology for her study. She proposes to balance or reverse the inequalities women experience. She proposes one way to balance these different interests is to understand how the differences between the genders and the stakeholders affect social interactions in specific settings (2004, p. 5).

While the purpose of the sustainable livelihoods framework centered on the identities of women is to acknowledge that women have a voice and to allow them to promote their own development, it does not take into account that most women are in traditional relationships. In particular, women in less developed countries with little education either work menial jobs or stay at home. Many have children or take care of their families. Educating women who live in diverse situations gives them the option to participate in their own development or be active participants in their own communities.

It is crucial to note that gender is an important variable in this study. Looking at the women in the local community using an emic approach, I studied their culture and lives from their perspectives. The women in Vilcabamba with whom I had casual conversations had no more than an eighth grade education. Women from Latin America share some similar problems and strengths that both unite and divide them (Knudson & Weil, 1988), and there is still a gender gap separating them from the men. The Latin American concepts of *machismo* and *hembrismo* reflect the separation between the genders. These concepts are taken from the Spanish word *macho*, which refers to

masculine, aggressive, dominant males. The counterpart of machismo is the feminine—the woman in the role of mother who is submissive and dependent on the male; the word hembrismo is formed from this notion of femininity (Moser, 2009).

Through observations and interviews, I looked at these women and their families using a systems epistemology, as I wanted to understand whether and how these families are interdependent. How do these women cope with tourism and immigration? These women are members of the *have-not* group; they live in poverty. From my observation as an outsider, it appears that some of the conflicts they experience are due to their lack of resources and education and their vulnerable position in relation to men. Culture plays a large role in how the women and their personal lives and their relation with the immigrants are analyzed.

Culture and Conflict

When the concept of culture is examined it is often considered secondary according to Avruch (1998). Culture is associated with ways of behavior of what each group considers the "other", when in fact culture is not always connected to the ways of behavior. Even after a culture is learned, each and every behavior of everyone in that culture cannot be predicted. Cultures are complex, and a way of gaining an understanding of how culture and conflict are linked is studying the socio-economic and gender issues of the specific cultures.

Conflict is inevitable. It happens in our personal lives, in our jobs, and in our communities. There are multiple facets to conflict, and it applies to a variety of situations. Jeong (2010) gives a definition of conflict that is relevant to this study: "conflict is competition for resources or other interests, value differences or dissatisfaction with basic

needs" (p. 5). One conflict is the cultural differences between the people in the community and the immigrants. Another is the foreigners' interest in buying up the land in the valley. Two of the women I interviewed have lived in their homes all of their lives. If they were forced to move from their home, it would be devastating to them. The level of competition is by one group (the dominant group with the financial capital) over the less powerful group (the local people in the community). What appears to be prominent in the differences between the two groups is "incompatibility of goals" (Jeong, 2008; Kriesberg, 1998; Mitchell, 1991; Pruitt & Kim, 2004). When we examine the two—culture and conflict—in terms of their context which are inside of their social systems, we are looking at their means of struggle. Augsburger (1992) proposes a different paradigm for conflicts with culture as he quoted at length from Galtung:

> If you cannot remove conflict from life,
>
> why not adjust your thinking about it?
>
> If you can't beat it, join it
>
> as the salt of life,
>
> as the big energizer,
>
> the tickler,
>
> the tantalizer,
>
> rather than a bothersome nuisance,
>
> as a noise in a perfect channel,
>
> as disturbing ripples in otherwise quiet water?
>
> Why not treat conflict
>
> as a form of life,

particularly since we all know

that it is precisely during the periods in our lives

when we are exposed

to a conflict that really challenge us,

and that we finally are able to master,

that we feel most alive. (Galtung 1975-80 as cited in Augsburger, 1992, p. 4)

The above words offered by Galtung have resonated with other scholars of conflict and culture all over the world. Conflict is not always intractable. Oftentimes it can be resolved when both sides want settlement. It is important to mention that not every interaction leads to conflict and escalates to violence. Learning to understand diversity and other cultures is the first step. However, some theorists who use an economic analysis make the assumption that conflict is inevitable in these circumstances.

Lederach (1988) looks to Marx as a social theorist who portrays conflict from the view of the "struggle of classes" (p. 8). Marx delineated in his macro view that social conflict can be the catalyst for social change. When I walked around Vilcabamba and the local community, it was evident that there was a class distinction. Property ownership is what enables many people to work their land and allows them to find ways to use some of the livelihood strategies to accumulate assets, while others who do not have ownership are working to give the profits of their labor to benefit the landowners. Thus, we see a dominant group and a lower-class working group, and "without property, workers are largely at the mercy of the economic system developed and managed by others" (Schellenberg, 1996, p. 81). It was interesting to me to observe how these women used the analytical tool in the next section to manage and cope with their economic conditions.

Sustainable Livelihoods Framework as an Analytical Tool

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (Department of International Development, 1999) is a tool used to define and describe livelihoods. In this context the framework organizes the complex issues with poor people in the center of the pentagon. The foundation for understanding the livelihood framework is the Vulnerability Context, which includes a series of steps that ends with the livelihood outcomes. This analysis, which is centered on people, should begin with an examination of their assets and objectives.

Livelihoods are sustainable when they are resilient in the face of external shocks and stressors and do not undermine (or compromise) the livelihood strategies open to others. Chambers and Conway (1992) offer the following definition for a sustainable livelihood approach:

> A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base. (p. 6)

The sustainable livelihoods approach begins with the people's livelihoods and how they have been changing over time. By using the livelihoods approach, the starting point locates the specific issues that may prevent the people from improving their lives. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework is people-centered and holistic; as such, it involves the people and allows them to participate. From a holistic perspective, the framework is not a model of how the world is; rather, it is geared toward how the

community is. The livelihoods outcome should come directly from the people in the local community, allowing them to make their own outcomes (Carney, 1998; Chambers & Conway, 1992; Scoones, 1998).

There are five core asset categories—or types of capital—in the foundation, which serve as the building blocks of the livelihoods framework. The assets are inside the vulnerability context in which the poor people exist. Initially, the pentagon was used to show a picture of how the various assets are related; the center of the pentagon, where the lines meet, is intended to illustrate that the people have no access to the assets. The outside of the pentagon represents full access to the assets. Assets change and shift as the access increases or decreases according to the livelihoods outcomes of the people in the community who live at the poverty level.

The vulnerability context is what frames the external environment in which the people live. The people's livelihood and ability to gain access to assets are dependent on trends, shocks, and seasonality; they have little to no control over how these vulnerabilities affect them. Table 1 presents an example of some of the external vulnerabilities people experience in their communities.

Table 1

Examples of the Vulnerability Context

TRENDS	SHOCKS	SEASONALITY
Population trends	Human health shocks	Of production
Resource trends	Economic shocks	Of health
Technological trends	Natural shocks	Of employment opportunities

As Figure 1 illustrates, the top of the pentagon represents the *human capital*. This term refers to the knowledge, skills, ability to work, and good health of the people in the community. If their human capital needs are met, the people can find other strategies to meet their livelihood goals. Human capital at the household level is dependent on whether work is available, as well as on how many people are in the home and what skills those people have to assist in the support of the family.
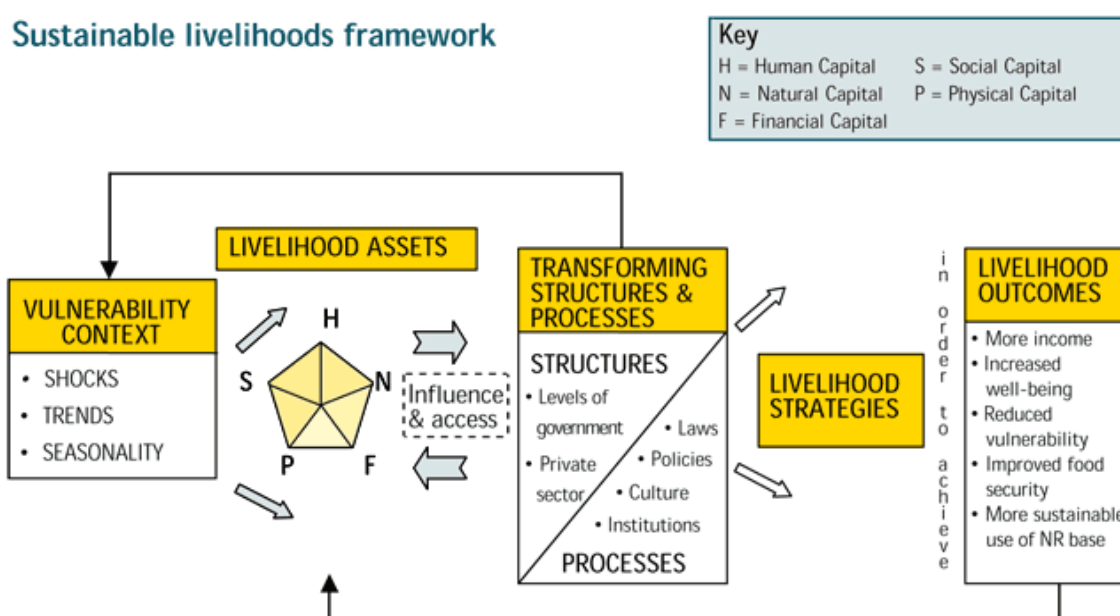
Figure 2. Sustainable livelihoods framework illustrated.

The second category of assets, *natural capital*, represents the assimilation of land, water, and waste. The people in the community depend on access to the land and water for their livelihood. Inside the Sustainable Livelihoods Frameworks there is a connection between natural capital and the vulnerability context. Some of the shocks that affect the vulnerability context of the poor people from the natural processes in the natural capital category are droughts, fires, and earthquakes. These, among others, can destroy the land and prevent agricultural farming. For the people of Vilcabamba, tourism is now

becoming a part of their natural capital. Foreigners are visiting and some are deciding to stay in the area, leaving a footprint that impacts how much of the natural resources are used. Foreigners moving into Vilcabamba are buying the land, using the water, and adding to the environmental services through waste assimilation.

Financial capital refers to the financial resources used by the people to achieve their livelihood objectives. The main sources of financial capital are available stocks and regular inflow from work. Available stocks are considered liquid assets, such as livestock and farming, and they are assessed by how quickly they can be turned into money. The regular inflow of money—not money earned from work, but from pensions or consistent income from the state—can be used as an investment. Financial capital is important because by converting their liquid assets into cash, the people can better achieve their livelihood outcomes. The regular inflow of money is an asset that most poor people do not have available.

Physical capital refers to the set of assets that makes up the infrastructure, tools, and technology. Infrastructure is necessary for sustainable livelihood; people need access to affordable transportation. When I was in Vilcabamba, I saw new roads being built leading from the town to the nearby communities which would enable easier and faster transportation to the town. Other components of infrastructure are water supply and sanitation. Furthermore, equipment and technology—such as seed, fertilizer, pesticides, and technology used for communication—are needed to produce goods. If the poor people in the community do not have an adequate water supply or energy, such as wood to heat their homes, it will impact the other assets, thereby making the people more vulnerable.

The last of the livelihood assets is *social capital*. In the context of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, social capital means the social resources used by the people to help them meet their livelihood objectives. This is done through networking and connecting with others, either inside or outside their communities. By doing this, the people are able to develop bonds with their own community and people who have migrated to the area (Emergency Nutrition Network, 1999).

Social capital impacts all the other types of capital. It is meant to be the social resources people use in pursuing their livelihood objectives. By increasing their social capital, people are able to build links to each other and to the community by sharing knowledge, thereby increasing their income through relationships with banks and lenders. Social capital is developed through building relationships through trust. Exchanges with others in the community reduces the buying cost they would otherwise have, and helps the poor get one step closer out of poverty.

The livelihood strategies approach is appropriate for the present study. I analyzed how four specific households obtain and manage their access to the resources necessary for their existence and long-term survival. The capital or assets are the necessary resources I looked at and placed into five categories. I wanted to know how the women in these households withstand shocks and conflicts that threaten their livelihoods (Emergency Nutrition Network, 1998). There is a link between livelihood and conflict. Numerous factors influence how conflict can result in weakening or increasing livelihood strategies. Scarce resources are one factor that could result from competition, drought, and marginalized groups being denied access to land by investors or the government.

People in rural areas are more diverse than in the past, when they tended farms and fished for their livelihood. They are now finding other ways to support themselves, and these strategies link together to help them meet their needs at different times. Developers are coming into the valley to build roads from the valley to town. With new roads, the people will have more opportunities to use one or more of the strategies they need to get out of poverty.

DeLuca (2002) conducted a descriptive analysis case study of tourism, conservation, and development in Tanzania, Africa. Her ethnographic research design included a mix of methods from surveys to participant observation. She used the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework to analyze the data collection and address some of the potential conflicts among the people in the community and the stakeholders. Her analysis showed that tourism underpins the livelihoods of the people in the community.

DePaoli's (2011) research was on sustainable development, climate change, and the livelihoods of the people living in the Loja province of southern Ecuador. Her ethnographic fieldwork included participant observation, structured and unstructured interviews of men and women in the community, and the analysis of written materials. She also used secondary sources, such as books, newspapers, and pamphlets.

Using a qualitative research method called photo-elicitation, Barnridge (2008) examined how African American individuals in Missouri accessed education and employment. Photo-elicitation is another method of data gathering that involves inserting a photograph into a research interview. Barnridge organized the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework around photo-elicitation interviews of African American men and women.

Her rationale for using the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework was to illustrate how the framework can aid in identifying community factors in the United States.

In his study, Mbaiwa (2008) analyzed how the livelihoods of the people in the villages of Botswana, Africa changed before and after tourism development. He collected quantitative and qualitative data from field-based research, participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and interviews from snowball sampling. Using a Sustainable Livelihood Framework, he analyzed the outcomes of tourist development.

Each of the aforementioned dissertations has some similarities to my research. The authors all used the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework in the analysis of their data, which I also used in the present study. The framework has evolved and is used in a variety of ways to analyze research studies. I used the original model developed by the Department for International Development (DFID).

In the previous sections the issues of gender and economic development were explored as well as social development among the most marginalized groups. Women, particularly rural women, are adversely affected by depletion of their natural environment and resources. For survival many women develop livelihood strategies to cope with the vulnerabilities they experience, such as lack of purchasing power, marginalization, lack of education, and—for some—their own perception of poverty, and problems with local governance (Mullen, 2008).

This methodology helped to identify biases and show why this framework is appropriate. The case study method analyzed up close the people in Vilcabamba and the local community. Through observation, interviews, and secondary data collection, new knowledge is gained regarding women's experiences with tourism and immigrants.

Limitations of the Study

There are a few limitations I had to consider when conducting this research. The first is that the study is not funded, which affected the amount of time I was able to spend in Ecuador collecting data in the field. The second limitation is the communication issues that were likely to arise. Because my Spanish is minimal and the women I interviewed do not speak English, I had to rely on an interpreter to help me translate the questions and answers. This presented the possibility that some of the context and wording in the interview dialogue may get lost in translation. Next, I was an outsider who went into the participants' homes or places of business, asking personal questions about their lives. My concern was how they perceived me; perhaps as an outsider coming into their village asking questions the women were going to tell me what they thought I wanted to hear, rather than share their truths.

One of the reasons I chose only four women in the community to interview is because of my limited resources. The site I researched is easy to access, and I was able to locate myself near the women without disrupting their lives too much. Last, I was able to obtain a rich amount of data with a smaller number of participants than I would need for a quantitative study. Although the participants are diverse in terms of age and marital status, the small sample of women is not representative of all women living in Vilcabamba. One further limitation was my own perspective as an American woman from an urban background. These women have lived in poverty all their lives, and my life experiences have been different from theirs. I recognize that I have my own ideas about gender inequality and sustainable livelihoods, but because I am aware of my biases, I was able to put them aside while conducting this study.

While secondary research is not always clear, and can be difficult to describe, as the researcher I had to take responsibility for the role I played in the data collection (Mathner, 2012). Even with the people I spoke to during the casual conversations in town and in the community, I was mindful to be protective of their privacy.

Before collecting the data for the case study, I used a protocol to ensure the reliability of my research (Yin, 2003, 2013). One part of the protocol was the field procedures. I am aware that there may be issues involved in the data collection. As the investigator of the case study, I may not be in control at all times. The subjects can often dictate when and how the interviews are conducted, based on their work and life schedule (Stake, 1995); therefore, I was flexible and adaptable in the field. Furthermore, I recognized the potential for biases on my part. As a member of the Global North and from a different culture, the relationships I established with my respondents may have a power imbalance due to standpoint epistemology of race, class, and nation. I was sensitive to the fact that while these women were telling their stories, I was analyzing them through my eyes as the foreigner.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The primary purpose of this qualitative study was to understand how the habitants, with a focus on the women, of the centenary community of Vilcabamba, Ecuador, have been affected by the surge in tourism and immigration this valley has experienced in the last 10 years. The second purpose was to investigate the different ways in which this phenomenon has impacted the sustainable development of Vilcabamba and its neighboring communities. Finally, this research explored the differential impact the tourism phenomenon has had on women and their families' livelihoods.

This chapter describes the research design used in this investigation, including data collection and data analysis tools and methods used. It also explains the rationale for selecting the methods, the participants, the role of the researcher, and ethical considerations.

Research Paradigm and Design

According to Creswell (2003) qualitative research is used when the person making the inquiry presents the following rationales:

knowledge claims are based primarily on constructivist perspectives (multiple meanings of individual experiences, meanings socially and historically constructed, with an intent to develop a theory or pattern) or participatory perspectives (change oriented, or collaborative) or both. (p. 18)

Some of the terms Creswell chooses to identify qualitative work include: narratives, ethnographies, grounded theory, case studies, and phenomenological research. Qualitative methodology has certain characteristics making it preferred over a

quantitative methodology. With qualitative research it is holistic; the researcher is trying to understand the whole picture of the study. The researcher is the research instrument through observations and personal one-on-one interviews with the respondent(s). The focus is on understanding the social setting. In this study, I wanted to understand the experiences of the people in the community.

With quantitative research the researcher is concerned with an investigation of the structure. One method for this type of research is surveys. An example is a controlled experiment (pretest, post-test, and a control group). Surveys such as questionnaires are used to learn about the distribution of certain traits of a selected population (Babbie, 1990). The quantitative approach would be useful when pre-tests and post-tests are needed for comparisons and verification of a theory (Creswell, 2003).

Some of the philosophical assumptions of qualitative research I have chosen to use in my research, in addition to bringing my own views, are from Creswell (2012). The first is ontological and the second is epistemological. See Table 2 for a summary of the assumptions used.

Table 2

Assumptions with Implications for Practice

ASSUMPTIONS	QUESTIONS	CHARACTERISTICS	IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE
Ontological	What is the nature of reality?	Reality is multiple as seen through many views	Researcher reports different perspectives as themes develop in the findings.
Epistemological	What counts as knowledge? How are knowledge claims justified? What is the relationship between the researcher and what is being researched?	Subjective evidence from participants; research attempts to lessen the distance between researcher and participant.	Research relies on quotes as evidence from the participant; collaborates, spends time in the field with participants and becomes an "insider".

Source: Creswell (2012)

Looking at ontological assumptions is appropriate for my research methodology because I explored a variety of different realities. The reality of this research emanates from the quotes from the women that were interviewed and the secondary conversations with others in the community. The variety of individuals I spoke to shared different perspectives of their conflicts in meeting their livelihood objectives. The ontological position is subjective and is meant to understand the reality of the women and men through their senses. It is this reality that is created in their minds which leads me to different positions on the issues being studied (Willis, 2007).

Epistemology differs from ontology in that it is concerned with "what" and "how" we know. Ontology wants to know what is real. Epistemological meaning is based in the word knowledge. Two of the women shared their life stories, and the young woman I interviewed talked about her life and her goals for the future. My research analysis relied

on the quotes of the women and the people in the community to understand how they know what they know. Conversations were an important resource for building trust. According to Cannella and Manuelit (2008), "interactions allow different epistemological spaces from which to collect data without imposing their power over others" or claim to represent "Others" (p. 56). The interviews turned into more and more lengthy conversations.

Due to the nature of the study, a multi-method research design that supported exploratory and descriptive data was used. The Case Study approach was selected as the research design because it enabled the use of multiple data collection and data analysis methods to answer the research questions and because a limited case could be identified. According to Yin (2013), an acceptable definition of a case is a bounded entity—including a person, behavioral condition, or other social phenomenon—in this case the social phenomenon under study is tourism/immigration and is delimited to the valley of Vilcabamba in Ecuador.

In case study research, the researcher utilizes an up-close method to understand a single case or multiple cases through detailed investigation. The purpose is to gain insight into real-world behavior and the meaning behind it. According to Yin (2013), a good case study is a challenge because multiple types of data are used. Yin defines a case study as "an empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon (e.g., a 'case'), set within its real-world context—especially then the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (2013, p. 15). The author explains that there are appropriate times when a case study is relevant, such as when the research question is descriptive. This method is appropriate for my study, because it seeks to describe what is happening in the

rural area of Vilcabamba in relation to sustainability and economic development with tourists and immigrants. The conflicts with tourists and immigrants are the focus of analysis in this case study.

Yin (2013) posits that there are three approaches to use in case study research. According to the author, researchers use exploratory case studies when they are exploring a new field and do not have much information to begin their research. Explanatory case studies are used to explain the research through the use of *how* and *why* questions. Finally, descriptive case studies describe the phenomenon under study through the use of *what* and *how* questions. This study fits the definition of exploratory and descriptive based on its research questions.

Stake (1995) in contrast to Yin classifies case studies in three different categories in qualitative research: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. The intrinsic case study seeks to understand the particular case study in order to understand a particular individual case. Similar to Yin's (2013) descriptive case, the researcher is asking "how" and "why" a certain phenomenon is happening (p. 4). For example, the aim is to understand how the four women in this study respond to the impact of tourism and immigration. The focus of intrinsic case study is on a specific case to gain better understanding of it. In an instrumental case study provides information on issues and insights to gain an understanding of something else. The focus is on a broader understanding, such as the community's reaction to tourism and immigrants. A collective case study is one in which more than one case is studied in order to examine a phenomena, population, or general condition. For example, the researcher may choose to study the entire community (Stake,

1995, p. 4). The present study is an intrinsic case study. The focus is on understanding this one particular case. Figure 2 illustrates the research design of the study.
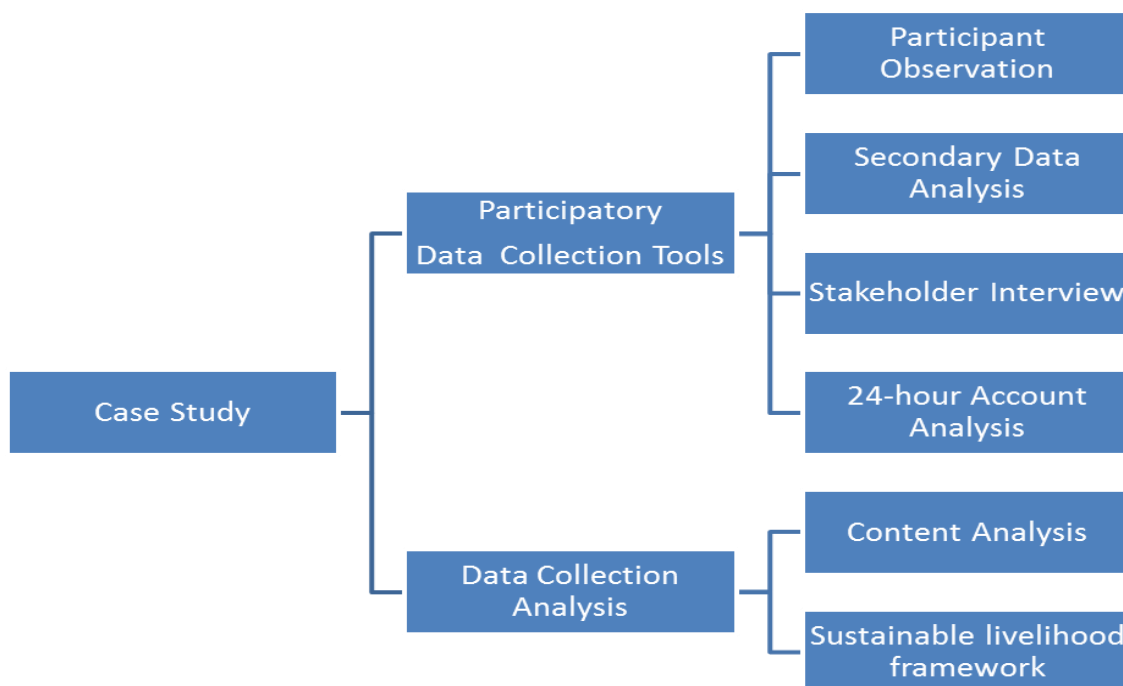
Figure 3. Research design.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the present study:

RQ1: How is the recent surge in tourism and immigration impacting the sustainability of the livelihood strategies of the local people in Vilcabamba and its surrounding communities?

The sub-questions are:

SQ1: How do women respond to the impact of tourism and immigration?

SQ2: What types of conflicts and opportunities are observed?

SQ3: How do these conflicts affect the locals' livelihood strategies?

Data Collection

The data for this study was collected through different techniques including: secondary data such as historical documents, in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, open-ended conversations with key participants, and participatory observation.

I used certain methods originally developed by ethnographers. For example, according to Willis (2007), ethnography generally looks at the behaviors of members of a culture through observations of them in their natural context. The researcher uses unstructured conversations and can use various types of observations, including participant and non-participant. Ethnography has "strong family resemblances" to other research methods, however it is "firmly rooted in first-hand exploration of research settings" (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland, & Lofland, 2007, pp. 2-5). Ethnographers use field notes to document their observations and interviews in their research and data construction. Ethnographers usually conduct research over a period of several months and even years. In my case I had a limited amount of time to conduct my research so the data collection followed a more participatory research approach.

Secondary Data. Secondary data in qualitative research includes the use of pre-existing data from other research or sources. This type of data is derived from field notes, previous research, and transcripts of interviews (Heaton, 2004). Because qualitative secondary data does not use statistical data sets, there are other types of secondary data including photographs and unstructured interviews. My secondary information is on Vilcabamba, Ecuador. One example of the books I read on the history of Vilcabamba and Ecuador is MacQuarrie's (2007) *The Last Days of the Incas*. Others include *The Two-*

Headed Household: Gender and Rural Development in the Ecuadorean Andes (Hamilton, 1998) and *Los Viejos: Secrets of Long Life from the Sacred Valley* (Halsell, 1976). In addition to the books, articles, and blogs I researched, I examined data from mainstream media sources, websites for various NGOs, and tourist and travel information. I also acquired a master's thesis (Byrne-Maisto, 2011) and a dissertation centered on research in Vilcabamba (DePaoli, 2011). Byrne-Maisto spent two months in Vilcabamba researching amenity migration and gentrification, and DePaoli's dissertation focused on climate change and development in Southeast Ecuador, the valley of Loja. Women and Poverty data was obtained from the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC) that was taken from the Population and Housing Census of 2010, for the province of Loja. These sources provided important information about the context of the site and its people.

Analysis of the Documents. The majority of the documents collected were from two libraries. One of the libraries has a college of hotel and tourist administration program. All of the books, recent and older, were found at the first library. The second library has a conflict analysis and resolution program. I was able to find recent and older books there. Both libraries had a vast amount of material on gender and women's studies. In addition I consulted many books which I bought for doctoral classes and for the dissertation. Approximately 60 books were read specifically dealing with the subject matter of tourism, tourism development, economic development, sustainable livelihoods, gender conflicts, gender analysis, agricultural conflicts, colonialism, and post-colonialism. I read all of the books but did not use all of them in my research. I used approximately eight dissertations. In each dissertation I explored how the content

connected to my research. For example, in DePaoli's (2000) dissertation she wrote about climate change and development in southern Ecuador. More specifically, her research was on Vilcabamba, while my research focused on sustainable livelihoods, gender inequality, and impacts of tourism and immigration on the local community. DePaoli's study investigates the relationship between the people and immigrants in Vilcabamba; the focus was on climate change in relation towards climate change in relation towards development (p. iv).

Other forms of data collected were through four blogs and two comment forums. I looked for peer-reviewed scholarly articles covering the specific areas of the study, as mentioned in the previous paragraph. Using information obtained online made it easier and retrieval ubiquitous, making it part of our lives. The field notes and reflective journal were also included in my data documents for analysis. For my interpretation of all of these documents, I incorporated Riessman's (2008) methodological skills to find themes from the collection of research material.

Through this entire collection of data the themes developed to see the link between men and women and the surrounding communities with tourism and immigration. This showed the nexus between immigration and the vulnerabilities that possibly prevent the people in the local community from achieving a sustainable livelihood. Robson (2002) assisted me with his suggestions on how to carry out this empirical investigation. The approach I took for the analysis of the materials is content analysis. One of the means for analysis of the content is through the narratives. I asked myself questions as I read each document to understand their relevance to the research:

"How will this document benefit my research?" "Are there any recurring themes useful to my study?" "What is not being told in this document that I need to know?"

Participatory Listening and Observation. The approach to observation I used was participant observation. I wanted to observe and get to know the people I interviewed and the others in the community in their natural setting. Angrosino (2007) defines participant observation as "a way of connecting research that places the researcher in the midst of the community he or she is studying" (p. 2). I observed the interactions of the local people in the community, and I noticed the diversity of the tourists, businesses, and immigrants.

My involvement in the community was only a few weeks. To compensate for the short length of time for my study, I had to be sensitive to obtain worthwhile data. Participant observation is the notion of "being there," of being present in the setting of the study (Schwandt, 2007, p. 220). While I was interested in the ways of knowing of the immigrants and the women in my study, I was mindful that I was a professional stranger. In this role, I became involved as much as I could to gather information with regard to the impact tourism and the immigrants had on the community. I was aware to keep a respectful distance from those studied, being empathic, not sympathetic, and building rapport, not friendship. It was necessary to keep a distance to remain objective in my research. While engaging in participatory listening and observation I took notes in the field. When I visited town, I sat in the town square several times, observing the comings and goings of the people. The people were friendly and did not seem to mind sharing their experiences of living and visiting in Vilcabamba and the local community. Because of my limited familiarity with the Spanish language, I anticipated having difficulty

communicating with the people who did not speak English; therefore, I used an interpreter when I wanted to talk to some of the locals on my initial visits. This information also helped me complement the findings of the discussions and interviews to find meaning in my findings.

I visited the town almost daily and spoke with a variety of people—some who had lived in the area for a long time, and others who consider themselves newcomers—in order to obtain diverse points of view. I made contact with seven immigrants and five tourists. Having conversations with people from the community and locals helped me to capture an insider (locals from the community) and outsider (foreign born) perspective. There were several of the people I spoke to that blurred the boundaries of insider and outsider. For example, three of the foreigners were from Mexico. All three were fluent in Spanish and English and appeared to fit in with the locals as insiders and the foreigners as outsiders. This hybrid identity was a benefit to me as the researcher because they acted as translators when I spoke to the locals in town.

The information collected involved ongoing examination and interpretation of the data to refine my questions. Because of the large amount of data I collected, it was imperative that I remain focused on the research questions. I developed a method for labeling and storing the information during the research process: I labeled each piece of information with the date, location, and the persons who contributed to the information gathered as a way to enhance my understanding of the livelihood strategies of women in Vilcabamba.

Interviews. Before collecting the data for the case study, I used a protocol to ensure the reliability of my research (Yin, 2003, 2013). One part of the protocol is the

field procedures. Before I began the interview process, I introduced myself, and then asked the participants for consent to audio-tape each session. Next, I explained to each one what the study was going to be about. This allowed for me to obtain rich data by picking up the tones and nuances of each woman during the interview. While I did want answers to specific questions, I did not want to lead them to what I thought their answers would be. This process made the conversations fluid. I am aware that there may be issues involved in the data collection. As the investigator of the case study, I understood that I might not be in control at all times. The subjects often dictated when and how the interviews are conducted, based on their work and life schedule (Stake, 1995). I was flexible and adaptable in the field. Furthermore, I recognized the potential for biases on my part. As a member of the Global North and from a different culture, the relationships I established with my respondents may have a power imbalance due to standpoint epistemology of race, class, and nation. I remained sensitive to the fact that while these women were telling their stories, I was analyzing them through my eyes as the foreigner. Conversations were transcribed from my field notes every night.

Analysis of the Interviews. The interviews were transcribed from the notes after each session. Because I was concerned the translations at the time of the interviews may have varied, I recorded the interviews to be translated again by another person who spoke Spanish as their first language after I returned home. I compared both transcriptions for any differences in the translation, and there were none. I used three different transcripts for each interview. One of the transcripts was to hear the nuances, note pauses in responses, and capture the emotions in tone of the voices of each person. The second transcription was to transfer the narrative into a textual form. The third was my copy used

to cut and paste any themes from the interviews. A code was used to identify each woman in reference to the written notes I made.

24-hour Account Interview. One of the tools in my data collection is a 24-hour account interview. The 24-hour clock is one tool used to examine the location of individuals living in the community. This is a way to understand the many roles of the four women I interviewed. I included women from different age groups. All four were very poor; one of the older women and one of the younger women were below poverty level.

Women oftentimes have triple roles. They work longer hours in a day than men, and most also do unpaid work at their homes (Moser, 1989). Because their double roles—productive and reproductive—already take up so much of their time in a day, there is not always enough time for a third role of volunteering in the community (Moser, 1993). Productive roles are paid work outside the home. Reproductive roles refer to household tasks such as taking care of the family and care of the home. Community management roles are the volunteer activities for the purpose of being a benefit to the community (International Federation of Red Crescent Societies, 2003). The 24-hour clock shows the responsibilities and jobs of the women that sometimes overlap and cause a conflict. When other roles, such as doing household tasks, shopping, preparing food, cultivating the land, and community volunteering require attention, the productive role (income-earning activities) will take precedence over other non-paid activities. Volunteering in the community is important because it builds rapport and is one of the social assets needed for a positive livelihood outcome.

My objective was to interview and record how four women in the local community live and what problems, if any, they experience over a 24-hour period (Coupal, 1999). I wanted to look at the different roles of each woman as they pertain to sustainable development. In developing a 24-hour clock, I informed the women that I would like to learn about what their typical day is like. I plotted each of their activities on a pie chart, which looks like a clock. Any activities they carry out simultaneously—such as gardening and feeding the animals—were documented in the same space on the chart.

After I completed the clocks, I asked the women questions about their activities. For example: What is the first thing you do in the morning? What time do you get up? Is this different from what you did last month, last year? For purposes of consistency, I asked each woman the same set of questions. Through my questions, I explored the patterns of the women's livelihood and attempted to understand the strategies to live used by different groups of households in a 24-hour period. Once all four women answered the questions, I compared the four clocks to categorize and analyze the women's roles (Moser, 1989, 1993).

Criteria to Identify Women for the 24-hour Account

The criteria to identify potential women to interview in the study included the following: all the women live in the outskirts of Vilcabamba, and each woman must represent a typical female corresponding to their particular stage in their life cycle. I selected a single 19-year-old, a married 39-year-old, a married 58-year-old, and a widowed 59-year-old. Interviewing women who are at different stages of their life cycle provided a rich description of the different tasks, responsibilities, and dreams the women in Vilcabamba experienced. Interviews with the women had a semi-structured format;

some guiding questions were provided to the women, but they expressed their own opinions of their experiences. My method allowed the women to share their experiences regarding the tourism industry in their community. Another form of sampling I employed is referred to as snowball sampling (Miles & Huberman, 1994); using this approach, I asked interviewees to refer me to other people who might have been relevant to the study.

The interviews with the four women in Vilcabamba were transcribed each evening after the interview. This allowed me to revisit it several times to confirm the accuracy of the data. After all taped data was completely transcribed and I reviewed it, I erased the audio-taped sessions at home. For the purpose of protecting the identities of the women, I used pseudonyms. To compensate the women for giving me their time, they were paid a small fee of $10.00. Even though this was considered to be an incentive to participate in the project, these women were very proud and gave me coffee or other small items, such as flowers in return. I was touched by their kindness and willingness to share their stories with me.

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Most oral narratives suggest a stimulus/response. This was the standard method of interviewing. Mishler (1986) offers an alternative approach to interviewing. He redefines the traditional method of interviewing as "speech events" (p. 137). According to Mishler (1986) with oral narratives:

Meaning emerge, develop, are shaped by, and in turn shape the discourse. Looking more closely at this process and focusing on the task faced with by respondents as they try to answer questions in a cohesive, relevant, and meaningful way. I found that under many different interviewing conditions their accounts often resemble stories that is, they display narrative features. (p. 138)

My goal was to obtain rich, detailed data in an authentic setting. According to Rubin and Rubin (2005), "People are more willing to talk to you if they know you, and what your project is about" (p. 89). The subject of my research was explained to the women I interviewed before I asked questions. All four were willing to answer the questions, and three decided to open up more about their lives as we got to know each other. The questions and answers developed into what Mishler called speech events. I

obtained rich data from the women regarding their lives. For my interviews with the four women, I used the same interpreter each time, Lo Dama. He was already familiar with and had a relationship with the people in the local community. My concern with using a translator was that the meaning of my questions and the participants' responses would get lost in the translation. To compensate for this I recorded, with each interviewee's permission, their responses. Further translation allowed me to get more understanding of their responses.

Organization of the data was arranged thematically; the content concerned the impact of the vulnerabilities on the livelihoods of the women. The design was structured around detailing the methods I selcted of collecting, recording, and analyzing the data (Flick, 2008; Willis, 2007). One of the tools used to analyze the data of the daily activities of the women was the 24-hour clock. I asked open-ended quesitons to obtain information from a specific group of women (Téllez, 2008).

Ethics and Reflexivity

Prior to the study, I obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Nova Southeastern University to conduct preliminary research in the summer of 2012. I followed the IRB guidelines, and data collection was done under the supervision of my committee chair. To show that I care and am concerned for the women I studied and interviewed, I asked them for their consent before I asked questions. I assured the women they would be protected from harm and deception, and informed them that I would protect their privacy and confidentiality by storing all data from the study in a password-protected computer. If the data collected at that time was not sufficient for the purpose of this dissertation, a follow-up data collection phase was also contemplated. I obtained

access to the women in the community through one of the relationships that my dissertation chair has with members of the local community. Through her support, I was able to develop rapport with many of the women in Vilcabamba and the rural areas of the community. When I visited Vilcabamba, I observed how the people lived and engaged in informal conversations with the locals, tourists, and immigrants. Through these encounters, I identified the issues they were dealing with and formed my study based on that information.

Wolf (1996) explains the issues of power in fieldwork as one of the dilemmas researchers face. Mentioned are the imbalances of power between the researcher and the respondents and the levels of control during the fieldwork and afterwards analyzing the data.

> Power is discernable in three interrelated dimensions: (1) power differences stemming from different positionalities of the researcher and the researched (race, class, nationality, life chances, urban-rural backgrounds); (2) power exerted during the research process, such as defining the research relationship, unequal exchange, and exploitation; and (3) power exerted during the post fieldwork period-writing and representing. (p. 2)

Before I met the women for the interviews I was not sure how the women would receive me. I relied on my status as a woman, and particularly a woman of color, to gain acceptance. That being the only commonality presented barriers in my research. Studying a marginalized group of people takes the position of power differences to another level. I recognized the difference in class and education, among others. While Mies (1982) suggests downplaying the differences in hierarchy to build relationships, Reinharz (1992)

finds that the relationship cannot be equal because of the differences. My focus stayed on creating a situation of listening to try to understand their stories.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for three primary reasons. First, the results reflect some of the livelihood strategies women use when they experience conflicts in relation to tourism. Secondly, the results show why women are staying or leaving Vilcabamba and the surrounding communities. Lastly, the results explain the relationship between sustainability and the environment.

Building Trust

As an outsider to the community, I recognized that I had a limited time to learn about the social identities of the people I met in Vilcabamba and the local community (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). I began the research by talking to everyone I saw sitting around the town square on my initial visit into town. As I looked around the town square I saw mostly white foreigners of various ages. These people seemed to be members of the community. Most tourists and immigrants were cooperative and willing to assist in my research. The interviews with the following stakeholders were not in-depth. Conversations with the people in town and in the community were casual and were meant to learn more about how people in the town interacted. Each conversation gave me more information to understand what the conflicts were and with whom.

I walked up to each person, introduced myself, and explained the purpose of my research. Most of the people were cooperative and friendly. After conversations with several of the foreigners, connections through social media, and reading their blogs, I learned many were amenity migrants. The definition for what appears to be a growing

movement in Vilcabamba is what Moss (2006) calls "significant manifestation of a societal driving force"... and in its basic terms, "people move to rural mountain areas they perceive as having greater environmental quality and differentiated culture" (p. 3).

Conclusion

Qualitative research led to different approaches to inquiry of the phenomenon studied. What began as a case study of the conflicts of tourism and immigration with the locals in the community and how the women and men respond to this impact, through reflexivity of the discussions, changed to include a narrative of the lives of two of the women. The issues, the purpose, and the method of the study have been identified to clearly understand how the study was developed. A detailed description of the case and the context of the issues the people in the community faced with tourism and immigration was provided (Stake, 1995). As Yin (2003) suggests, a single case design of a unique case is best. The design was holistic to understand the entire case because some of the questions shifted and changed during the fieldwork. An alternative structure was used. The case study is repeated several times with alternate descriptions of the same case presented.

The key informants provided rich data for the analysis of their impact of their livelihood strategies to build assets. Findings from the secondary analysis revealed the relationship between the local women and men with the immigrants and tourism. Special attention was made to build trust in the community by spending time and participating in the activities as much as possible. The next step is to analyze the data. The data was situated in the context in the people in the community. For instance, by using my time in

the field to observe and ask the participants to tell me about their lives, I tried as much as possible to take a "picture" of the context.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

Introduction

      This chapter presents the data collected in this study. As discussed in chapter three the main data collection methods used were participatory listening and observation, semi-structured interview, and in-depth interview using the 24-hour account data collection tool. I start with a description of the area and brief statistics of the country as a point of reference. Then the data aligns with the purpose of this qualitative study that was to understand how the inhabitants, with a focus on the women, of the centenary community of Vilcabamba, Ecuador, have been affected by the surge in tourism and immigration this valley has experienced in the last 15 years. Following is a detail presentation of the data obtained.

Vilcabamba Context and History

      Vilcabamba is located in the south province of Loja in Ecuador. Ecuador inherits its name for being crossed by the Equatorial imaginary line that divides the world into the Northern and Southern hemispheres. Ecuador is a country blessed by different cultures, tremendous biodiversity of flora and fauna, and striking landscapes. The tourism opportunities are countless from the Pacific Coast, through the Andes Mountains, the Amazon jungle, and the Galapagos Archipelago. Its democratic government and friendly inhabitants welcome populations from all over the world, making Ecuador a popular tourist attraction. The importance of tourism for the national economy has grown incrementally during the past 10 years. The government is spending on infrastructure which includes an important network of highways that connects all points of its territory, including the once isolated small community of Vilcabamba.

Vilcabamba is approximately 28 miles (45 km) from the city of Loja. The center of the town, which is situated in the middle of a valley surrounded by mountains, has an elevation of 1,560 meters (Byrne-Maisto, 2011; DePaoli, 2011). Many people were drawn to the area because of stories they heard about people there living to be over 100 years old.

Figure 4. Vilcabamba Valley. Source: Heimburger (2008).

Vilcabamba was settled by a group of Indians called Huilcopamba—who were part of the Malacatos group—from the Palta confederation (DePaoli, 2000). According to Ogburn (2001), the Paltas were members of an independent group of ethnic Indians in the area. The Paltas battled with each other and against the Incas and Spaniards (DePaoli, 2011; Ogburn, 2001). This group of people inhabited most of the Saraguro region in the southern highlands of Ecuador. Evidence from excavations in the area shows the Incas also lived in the area for a time (ca. 1460-1534 C.E.); the Spanish conquered the Incas and settled in the territory around 1546 C.E. (DePaoli, 2011). The land and the people

remained as they were until researchers and scientists discovered the beauty of the landscape and heard tales of the longevity of the villagers.

For years the beauty of the land and mountains and the year-round balmy, pleasant climate brought visitors to the valley. Water flowed from the mountains and was said to have health benefits. When people visited the area, some found out, as I did, that Vilcabamba was the highlight of their vacation. Another reason for the popularity of the area is the stories of the centenarian locals who have remained healthy into very old ages. With this increase in popularity came paved roads.

Ecuador's current population is around 15.5 million people. Loja, one of its 24 provinces, has around 185,000 people (CIA, 2014). According to the 2010 census of the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC), there are approximately 6,000 people living in Vilcabamba; out of this number 1,200 are foreigners from Europe, the United States, Argentina, and Colombia among others places. The later statistic is most likely underrepresented since many tourists make Vilcabamba their place of residency, but their status stays as tourist since they leave the country a few times during the year and come back again as tourists. In 2012 it was reported by the Ministry of Tourism that 13,000 visitors had visited Vilcabamba. The local government estimates that this number only accounts for 30% of the tourists that visit the town (personal communication, June 5, 2012), hence, the importance of tourism as a source of income for the area. Of the local population it is estimated that 80% work in the tourism industry. Tourism and immigration are impacting the community and its people in many different ways. It has changed their economy, its customs, and traditions; for example, now the town celebrates Halloween, and most of the restaurants in town serve international cuisine.

Perspective of Foreigners by Female Foreigners

The first person I spoke to was a foreigner white woman, Megan, standing in front of the church watching her son and daughter playing on the steps nearby. Megan said she and her husband and two children moved from Colorado to Vilcabamba to find a new life. They gave up their jobs, sold all of their furniture, and moved to Mexico. They heard about a beautiful place that was affordable to live in Ecuador called Vilcabamba. She said they have been living in Vilcabamba for four months now. The adjustment has not been easy for them, particularly the children. They do not speak Spanish, and both of the children have been bullied at school. She said she believes they are picked on at school because of their lack of ability to communicate in the class and with the other students. Their teachers suggested they go to summer school to take Spanish classes. They share a few rooms at the home of a family from North America. The differences in the cultures have been difficult, but Megan said there is a community of people from North America and European countries living in the area. This has helped them cope with the cultural divide. She showed me the shops and restaurants where other foreigners hang out. The foreigners have developed a community where they email each other when anything happens or to share news. When I asked her if they intended to stay in Vilcabamba she said possibly for a few more years.

Another conversation took place at a store around the town square. A woman from South Africa manages the store. She said most of the foreigners stay to themselves and do not mix with the locals very often. They have their own community. The "people like me" (her words) keep in contact with each other through a newsletter, emails, or

phone calls. The items in her store were candles, soaps, and items one would find in the mall in North America. Nothing in the store was from the community.

As I made my way around to the healthy restaurant on the other side of the town square I approached a woman sitting at an outside table nursing her baby. She said her name was Ariel and agreed to speak to me. Ariel introduced me to her mother-in-law visiting from California. Both women were friendly. Ariel said she and her husband make their living by selling products, mostly vitamins through an online business. They have been living in Vilcabamba for eight months.

I looked at Ariel and some of the other white foreigners in front of the restaurant and for a moment I was back in the 1960s. Her husband walked up close enough to hear what we were talking about. When I smiled at him, in the hopes of talking to him he turned around and walked away. He had long brown bushy hair wrapped in the back in a pony-tail. Ariel said his name was Michael. Her husband kept his distance from us, but remained close enough to listen. I walked away shortly after our conversation, and asked if I could talk to her again, if needed, and she said yes. I saw Ariel on another visit into town. Her husband rushed her away when he saw me walk towards her.

I made a connection with a woman from the United States through social media. Her name is Mary Frances. I explained my research and asked if I could interview her. She agreed. Mary Frances and her husband moved to Vilcabamba from Long Island, New York. They sold everything and bought a home on the outskirts of town. She has a beauty salon and services the other expats. She said they stay involved with their own community of expats. They don't want to get involved with others in the town. They have not learned the language of the locals. She said more and more people from other

countries are moving to the area. The word is spreading about the beauty of the land, the clean water, and healthy lifestyle.

As I walked around the town square I stopped a passerby. A young women; appeared to be in her early twenties; she had a backpack on her back and looked like a foreigner. I asked her if she would talk to me for my research. She said she was from France. While backpacking across Ecuador she heard of Vilcabamba. Someone told her you could work in the fields picking fruit and get a place to stay for as long as there was work with a maximum length of the stay of six weeks. I asked her about her experiences in Vilcabamba so far. She said some of the people were friendly, mostly the foreigners. The locals she met were distant and stayed to themselves. Since she was a single female traveling alone she tried to find environments that would be safe. Because this community had expats that stayed connected she said she would probably stay the entire six weeks if the work lasted.

One immigrant doing positive things in the community is Maritsa. She is Mexican and had recently moved to Vilcabamba with her two children. Maritsa rents a home outside of Vilcabamba and worked the land to plant fruits and vegetables to sell at the farmer's market on Saturdays. Her work in the community is so varied that she posts her busy schedule on the social media practically every day. One of the many ways Maritsa supports the community is by giving workshops to the local women about the soil, planting seeds, and growing their own food. She goes to the schools in Vilcabamba and Loja to give classes to the students on sustainable development.

Maritsa's classes are helping the locals, but she is also teaching classes to the immigrants that live in the community. Some of the pictures she shares via social media

show the locals and the immigrants taking Maritsa's classes and enjoying meals together. I am sure because she was a Spanish speaker her acceptance within the community came easier than the other immigrants. Initially, I assumed she was accepted because she was Hispanic and the ethnic connection. Further investigation showed it was not necessarily the ethnicity, but more so the shared language.

Another foreigner supporting the community is a young man from an Eastern European country. He called himself Lo Dama. He was a spiritual person looking for a peaceful place to do his meditation. Lo Dama said he loved the people, and he loved the beauty of the land. He stayed at the hacienda where I stayed during my time there. He was fluent in several languages, one of them Spanish. Lo Dama was respectful, kind, and helpful to anyone in the community whenever they needed help. He was accepted by the locals and became a part of the community. Lo Dama had already been staying at the hacienda for three weeks before I came. During that time he built trust and acceptance from the people in the community. With his help I was able to communicate with the four women with whom I conducted my in-depth interviews as well as others during my stay.

Newsletter

Further research led me to the newsletter written by the locals and some of the foreigners in Vilcabamba. In the comment section many locals complained about a foreigner that was buying the land for his profit. He wanted to sell off parcels to his friends and other foreigners that wanted to move there. I discovered that Ariel's husband Michael was mentioned as the person the negative comments were made against. He posted videos on YouTube about their business and later showed the land he bought and what he planned to do with it. Michael did not seem to be aware of the damage he is

doing to the environment with his plans to build a new community for him and his friends. This clash of cultures and class between the locals and the white foreigners was obvious. When any locals walked around the town square it was as if they were invisible. The foreigners only spoke to each other.

I wanted to explore the motivation behind the foreigners visiting and moving to the area. The reasons the foreigners gave for their migration to Vilcabamba varied. Some came for the beauty of the land, others to make money working in the fields, and others for the affordable lifestyle. Further research showed some came to Vilcabamba to profit from the land.

Before I interviewed the four women in my research I wanted to lay the groundwork for my study by talking to people and getting to know some of the residents. Therefore, I stopped in the local real estate office. The office manager agreed to speak to me when I explained my research topic. He shared there was an increase in foreigners moving to the area. In the past five years the number of immigrants has almost doubled. It has been relatively easy for outsiders to come here. They bring money, and it has been a boon to the community in revenue. They are renting and buying land in Vilcabamba, and with more people, particularly with the foreigners, there is more development. When I asked how this affects the environment, he said it is progress. My next question was how the community feels about the changes to their community, and the foreigners. He shrugged his shoulders, and said some are not happy with it, while others are trying to get used to it.

In-depth Interview: 24-hour Accounts

The criteria to identify potential women to interview in the study included the following: all the women must live in the outskirts of Vilcabamba, and each woman must represent a typical female corresponding to their particular stage in their life cycle. I selected a single 19-year-old, a married 39-year-old, a married 58-year-old, and a widowed 59-year-old. Interviewing women who are at different stages of their life cycle provided a rich description of the different tasks, responsibilities, and dreams the women in Vilcabamba experienced.

In this section I briefly present the description of the women's daily activities and later I present a discussion of the findings. The patterns used by different households in a 24-hour period were examined. After the interview process was completed, I compared the clocks of the many roles of the four different women. These women developed survival strategies to cope in the vulnerable times. Some of the women found ways to integrate themselves into development in small ways.

The women I interviewed were 19-year-old, Teresa; Perla, age 39; Yadira, age 58; and Carmen who was not sure of her age, but she believed she was around 59. The first question I asked them was:

"What is the first thing you do in the morning when you get up? What time do you get up? What happens next?"

After they gave a timeline I asked: "Is this different from what you did last month? Last year?" Then I continued with the following questions.

- Where do you get your water?

- How do you use it?

- Are there problems getting water?

- How do they use their resources?

- Where do you get your food?

- How long does it take you to get to town?

- Do you go to town? Who cultivates your land?

- Are you paid for your work?

- If someone gave you a good offer for your land, would you sell it?

- How would that affect how you live?

- Where would you go?

The objective was to explore their patterns of livelihood. This gender analysis may help to understand some of the assumptions of the roles of women. Circumstances in households, communities, and in the government have been known to alter how women manage in particular settings. The goal was to find out the how the gender roles affect their livelihoods. Further analysis sought to understand how these four women relate to the community.

Teresa (age 19)

Teresa is single. She lives with her parents and family. I spent every day with Teresa during my time at the hacienda.

Question: What is your day like?

Teresa's day begins at 04:30. She makes breakfast for her younger brother before he goes to school. After her brother leaves for school, she makes breakfast for her father and another brother. When she finishes cleaning up the house, she prepares to go the hacienda to work at 06:30. She gets to work at 07:00. If there are no visitors, Teresa

works until 01:00. Once she walks home, she rests for an hour before she washes clothes at 15:00 at the nearby river. At 16:00, Teresa works in the garden. At 16:30, she helps her mother cook dinner. She takes a shower and gets ready for bed at 20:00, and goes to bed at 21:00.

Table 3

Teresa's Daily Activities

Teresa's Activities	Approximate time
Gets up, make breakfast for family	04:30
Cleans the house, gets ready for work	05:30
Walks to work	06:30
Gets to work, if there are no visitors, she works until 01:00, then goes home. If there are visitors she stays until they go to bed.	07:00
She walks home and rests until 03:00.	13:00
Washes clothes at the nearby river.	15:00
Works in the garden	16:00
Helps her mother cook dinner, cleans up the kitchen and spends time with her family and friends	16:30
Takes a shower, gets ready for the next day	20:00
Goes to bed	21:00

Teresa takes care of the garden and picks vegetables and fruits at the hacienda where she works. In addition to her other work at the hacienda, she has to take care of the crops on the land at her home. Her family depends on the small amount of vegetables for their household use. Work at the hacienda is seasonal. If the family she works for is not

home or if there are no visitors, her pay is small. Teresa makes a meager income, not enough for her live on, let alone to feed her family. One of her sisters is a mentally and physically challenged adult. Her mother has tried to seek financial assistance from the government for her sister and has not been able to get help. Teresa is the youngest daughter.

I was told in their culture the youngest daughter stays home and takes care of the family. There are 14 children in the family. Most of the daughters have married and moved away. Some of her brothers still live at home. They are allowed to continue their education. She said her parents hope if her brothers continue with their schooling they will find jobs that pay enough to give financial assistance to the family. Because Teresa did not complete her education, and does not have any special skills, she is limited in finding work. During many of our talks, she said she would like go back to school and maybe go to college one day. Other than the work she does on both farms and her domestic work she does not have specialized skills that would help her acquire assets.

Perla (age 39)

Perla lives with her husband and five children in a small home on the rental property of her husband's employer.

Question: What is your day like?

Perla's day begins at 04:00. She prepares food for her family until 05:30. At 05:30 her children walk to school. From 07:00 - 16:00 she works in the field harvesting coffee. She gets home at around 17:00. Her family eats dinner, and she cleans the house afterward at 19:00. She rests until she goes to bed at 22:00.

Table 4

Perla's Daily Activities

Perla's Activities	Approximate time
Gets up and prepares breakfast for her family, makes lunches for everyone	04:00
She gets ready for work after her children leave for school	05:30
She works in the fields harvesting coffee, fruit, or whatever is in season.	07:00 - 16:00
She returns home and prepares dinner for her family	17:00
She cleans the house then rests until time for bed.	19:00
She gets ready for bed then sleep.	22:00

Perla lives with her husband and five children in a small home on the rental property of her husband's employer. She does not have any formal skills or training to do any other work but pick in the fields of her husband's employer. She did not attend high school. The girls are needed at home to take care of the family. There was little time for going to school. Her agricultural labor was needed at home to help her parents. She married early, and her time was spent caring for her new family. Because the community of Vilcabamba is close-knit, and because Perla has a large family, she has resources to support her when it is needed.

Yadira (age 58)

Yadira is married and lives with her husband.

Question: What is your day like?

Yadira wakes up at 05:00 and makes coffee for herself and her husband. She gets ready for work then leaves for around 06:30. She collects the coffee from her father-in-

law's farm from around 07:00 to 16:00. She returns home around 16:30.Yadira has a small store she runs out of her home from 17:00 to 19:00. While she waits on customers that come to her house for items, she also processes coffee beans to sell for a profit. She cooks dinner for her husband and herself around 18:00. She rests from 20:00 until she goes to bed at 21:30.

Table 5

Yadira's Daily Activities

Yadira's Activities	Approximate time
She wakes and makes coffee for herself and her husband.	05:00
Gets ready for then leaves around 06:30	06:30
She collects the coffee from her father-in-laws farm	07:00 - 16:00
She has a small store she runs out of her home. Customers come to her home to buy small grocery items. Additionally, she processes coffee beans to sell for profit.	17:00 - 19:00
She cooks dinner for her husband during the time after processing the coffee beans.	18:00
She rests for an hour	20:00
Goes to bed to sleep	21:30

Yadira lives with her husband and her adult son. Her physically challenged sister and elderly father live in the house next door. She has lived in Vilcabamba all of her life in the same house. Her mother died when she was a young child. She was not able to finish elementary school because she had to stay home to raise her younger brothers and sisters. Yadira has had to work in the fields to make money for the family. She picks coffee beans when it is the season. When there is work, she picks strawberries and

whatever other fruits and vegetables are available. She has a small enterprise out of her home to bring in additional income. Based on my observations from the interviews and in passing by her home on my daily walks, the locals buy her items. I was told she charges more than the stores in Vilcabamba and Loja because her store is convenient to the locals. She has had her business for several years. Getting into town can be a challenge for many of the people in the community, particularly because of the development. Her health has affected her ability to work outside of the home as much as she wants to. She has high blood pressure and cannot work at times because she does not have enough money for her medication. When she is not feeling well she does not leave her home. The first time I met Yadira she was sitting in front of her home cleaning the coffee beans she bought from the owner at the coffee farm she worked. She told me later she had not been feeling well and was not able to go to the doctor for her medicine. It helps her feel better when she sits outside to do work. Similar to the other women, Yadira has little access to clean affordable water.

Yadira only works for a few months out of the year. Her salary for the day is dependent on how much coffee beans are picked or whatever fruit is in season at the time. If not for the small business Yadira has in her home her family would not eat most of the time. One of her sons still lives at home. She supports her mentally challenged adult sister and her father who both live in the house next door. Because she has high blood pressure she needs medication, but there have been times she could not afford the medication and was not able to work. From looking at Yadira's home on my visits, I could see she had very little assets in her home, and it is in need of repair.

Her family has one old vehicle, and her husband uses it to go to work. Yadira relies on a friend to take her to work. An adequate water supply would be one livelihood strategy for Yadira to expand her agricultural fields on her land.

Carmen (she is not sure of her actual age, she said about 59)

Carmen is a single woman and lives alone. Over a two week period I visited with Carmen for a few hours almost daily.

Question: What is your day like?

Carmen does not work outside of her home. She gets up in the morning around 06:30 and sometimes 07:00. If she has work to do, she may get up around 05:30 or 06:00. She makes her coffee at 07:30. At 08:00 she does household chores such as washing clothes and cleaning the house. She has a small business out of her home to make a small income. Friends share their tobacco leaves with her. She hangs tobacco on a line in front of her home to dry. Once it is dry she makes and sells cigars to locals. Afterwards she tends to her garden and animals until 12:30. She eats lunch around 13:00 or 14:00. After her lunch, Carmen takes a nap until 16:30. When she wakes from her nap, she cooks dinner around 17:30 or 18:00. If there are visitors she sits on her porch and socializes. Her bedtime is around 21:30.

Table 6

Carmen's Daily Activities

Carmen's Activities	Approximate time
Wakes up and cleans up	05:30 or 07:00
Makes coffee and relaxes for a half hour	07:30
Does household chores, washing clothes, cleaning the house, runs a small business of processing tobacco leaves to sell. During this time she works in her garden and feeds the animals.	08:00 - 13:00
She eats lunch, takes a nap until 16:30	14:00 - 16:30
Cooks dinner around 17:00 or 18:00. If there are visitors she socializes on her porch.	17:00 - 21:00
Gets ready for bed and sleeps	21:30

Carmen is not married and lives in her small home, mostly alone. At times her adult son stays with her. Once in a while her grandchildren come from Loja for short visits. Carmen complains of ill health. She does not have health insurance and said it is difficult to go to the clinic in Loja for a health screening. Her poor health prevents her from obtaining the skills to achieve the livelihood objectives. Carmen did not finish elementary school and has no marketable skills. She supports herself from small funds sent to her from her children. The money she receives from them is not consistent, and she is finding her ability to cope with the stresses and shocks more difficult.

Carmen has a small piece of land in front of her home that she uses to plant crops. She uses these vegetables for her household food. Carmen did not work outside of her home. When she can afford to buy tobacco leaves, she hangs the leaves outside on a line to dry. After the leaves are dry she makes cigarettes and sells them to the locals. Carmen

had very little assets in her home. She had two chickens running around the front of her home. Her water had been cut off some time ago. Her neighbor gave her access to his water through a pipe that runs from his property to hers.

Carmen said there have been times when she did not have food because she did not have enough money to buy it. Her neighbors check on her, and her children come from Loja to visit, so her "hungry times" do not last long. I visited Carmen four times during my stay at the hacienda. Carmen and Yadira lived within walking distance from where I stayed. In looking at her home while sitting on the porch talking with Carmen it was evident that she was extremely poor. Out of the four women I spoke to, Carmen seemed the most cheerful. Whenever I visited Carmen, she always had a smile on her face.

Figure 5. Woman showing her home. Photo by Fatima Cotton.

Discussion of Women's Roles

These are the general work and chores the four women do in a 24-hour regular period during the summer. Depending on the circumstances of the day or weather, their

schedule may change. After I asked each woman what their schedule was on a regular day, I asked if yesterday was different from what they did last month, last year. Each one said for this time of the year (summer) it usually is the same. If there are factors that keep them from working they lose their income.

The 24-hour clock of the women's day shows the triple roles they play. They work generally longer hours per day than men, and most of their work is unpaid. Women are expected to balance their work because of the many roles they play (Barrig, 1996). Each of these women contribute in the agricultural development for their homes and in the community. In addition to the work they do outside of the home, each one of the women found ways to make extra money to compensate their meager income.

Yadira has a small scale market trade from her home to supplement her income. Carmen dries tobacco and rolls cigars to sell to locals. Both women consider themselves too old to make the move to urban areas for employment in service industries and do not want to move. As follow up in 2014 on Carmen, I was told she fell and had to move to Loja to live with her daughter. She told neighbors she was very unhappy to leave her home. Later I learned Carmen was able to return to her home in Vilcabamba.

This sequential progression of economic development is more of a forwards and backwards growth with continued inequalties between women and men. Their roles are categorized to show how certain tasks take precedence over others, dependent on the importance to the needs of the family. For example, if a certain task generates an income, the women said it more than likely will come before household chores or other taks they categorize as less important.

If it rains, Perla said there is no work, and she loses money if she can't work. Her family depends on what she makes working in the fields. The salary her husband makes is not enough to support their five children and the two of them. If she is out of work for an extended period of time, her family is below the poverty level. While both incomes keep them at the poverty level, they are able to pay for water and food. They rent their home and would like to move into the city, but are unable to save enough money to relocate.

With Teresa, when there are guests at the hacienda, her day is longer and more work is required. She generally will stay until 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. When asked what home chores are expected on those long days, Teresa said she still has to wash clothes, do the cleaning, work in the garden, and clean the kitchen. If she doesn't work at the hacienda, she is not paid. Teresa's day is long, and the majority of the time her work is hard.

Brysa is another woman in the community with whom I talked. She was in her early twenties. Brysa and her husband had a son around eight months old named Nicholas. The three of them lived in a small home on the land of the owners of the hacienda where I stayed. I saw Brysa just about every day. She was shy and quiet, but did respond when I asked her questions. She said she did not go to town often because there were foreigners everywhere, and she did not feel like it was their town anymore. She was happy living in the community away from so many new people. I asked if she would like to move to the city someday. Her family is nearby, and she is comfortable. She does not want to move and does not want anything to change. When she comes out of her house she can see the bulldozers and trucks by the river. They are doing some kind of

construction. Also, the road to Vilcabamba is blocked off, and it is difficult to get into town when she needs to shop.

My perception was these rural women stayed home and took care of the family. They relied on the men to support the family. Some of them helped around the farm when needed. After talking to these women and conversing with other women in the community, it became obvious that the gender roles were fluid.

According to Bem (1993), gender polarization is defined as "mutually exclusive scripts for being male and female" (p. 81). There is a variation in how sexual differences between males and females are looked at—not just the physical differences, but the social differences. Women cross the barriers from being subjugated to roles that have been considered masculine by some. The different roles between women and men were created by men. They used their power over women to keep women excluded from being equal to them in the home, in busines, institutions, and in politics. Men have a position of being privileged in the social environment while women in almost all settings play a subservient role.

There is an imbalance in power relations between the women and men. The men have the ability to work on their land or to work for someone else in the community. They also have the option to leave their homes to find work in the city or some have left the country. Women in many instances are limited in how they support themselves and their families. This imbalance between the women and men are some of the reasons why women have remained in poverty. I was interested in the epistemological approach to hear how the women "claim their reality" as they describe their experiences. Levesque-Lopman (1988) uses the term *Claiming Reality* as the title for her book. By using this

approach, the data collected remained mostly subjective, rather than objective. She does not reject objectivity in the research, but by allowing the women to voice their experiences and to share their strategies, as the researcher I was able to gain a more personal and emotional perspective.

Gender Differences and Conflict Styles

Women possess many powers, but they are limited, channeled, suppressed, and denied by men's power. The more valuable, crucial, or brilliant the gifts of women, the more males and male-dominated structures are willing to exploit them or take the credit for them (Augsburger, 1992, p. 167).

What makes this case unique is that these women have had to take responsibility for their families and homes for years. With the increase in tourists and immigrants, the environment in Vilcabamba is changing, and the women's livelihoods are being threatened. I was interested in exploring how the women are managing any conflicts they experience as a result of tourism and other vulnerabilities that may prevent them from moving out of poverty. I wanted to understand how the women were dealing with the social dichotomy of being domesticated to the home but also taking on the responsibility of either taking care of her family or helping her husband financially working outside of the home.

Conflicts in the Local Community with Tourism and Immigrants. As discussed earlier, gender and conflict mostly concern the inequality between women and men. During my time spent in this resource poor community and talking to the women I was startled to see the dissonance between the men and women in the community and between the foreigners. The gender division of labor changed when there was no work in

the area. Women had to take on a more active role in their households in order to take care of the family. They were doing many of the responsibilities previously done by the men. Conversations with some of the women showed they did not mind.

One local woman I chatted with in Vilcabamba said her husband could not find work in the surrounding area. He found a job in Guayaquil and comes home on weekends a couple of times a month. His work in the city allows him to send home a small stipend to his wife and children. In the past, traditionally there was a sexual division of labor between the two. These roles are changing as men and women sometimes work in the agricultural field at the same time. Women make less in wages doing the same job as the men. They are not offered management positions, even if they have more knowledge and experience. The impacts of the conflicts the women experience with poverty, inequality, tourism, and immigration vary in each situation.

How these women respond to short term crises depends on their roles and responsibilities. The conflicts in the community are based on gender differences between the men and women. Other conflicts are cultural differences with the foreigners and immigrants.

Augsburger (1992) said, "Who knows but one culture, knows no culture" (p. 9). By understanding other cultures, we begin to understand that there are multiple ways to work through conflicts. The conflicts the women are experiencing are not just with development. Many of the conflicts are because of the development and the issues with the differences in culture. The foreigners have moved into the area, and some have been gradually expanding their land acquisitions. Vilcabamba and the surrounding community have been largely untouched for many years. With this expansion of the immigrants the

people living in the area have been affected. The local people in the community are non-existent to the foreigners.

Gender roles differ as they relate to tourism. From my observation men can earn a living providing public transportation or working as a handyman for locals and foreigners, but women, on the other hand, are limited. Kinnaird, Kothari, and Hall (1994) agree that employment in tourism is gender biased, based on the roles women are expected to play as "women's work" (pp. 17-18). Traditionally, women stay home and take care of the household. The men go out to find work.

These roles, which have been considered the norm for so long, are gradually changing. More women are taking on multiple roles. Changes are occurring in tourism development, and the system as it relates to family is one of the changes. Female-headed households are increasing. Two of the women I interviewed worked outside of the home as well as in the home. Yadira worked outside of her home and had a small micro-enterprise business from her home. There clearly is a power imbalance between the genders. "Behavior and roles are given different meaning, and labor is divided to express gendered differences symbolically" (Swain, 1995, p. 253).

Development for these outsiders is rationalized as a justification, somewhat similar to the United States 'Manifest Destiny.' For them, it is there, it is affordable, and they are going to buy it. They have not taken into consideration what their development has done to the community. The development to profit some of the foreigners has been an injustice to not only the people of the community, but also the beautiful land area.

Tourism and immigration has brought advantages and disadvantages to the community. Immigrants have moved to Vilcabamba for many different reasons; for some

it is to enjoy the beauty of the land and a peaceful life. There are others that have bought up the land and have not taken into consideration what their development has done to the community. Some of the immigrants have used social media to advertise their purchase of land, and how they have expanded their acquisition of more of the surrounding areas.

Observation of the social media sites reveals that the immigrants have posted their experiences with development. The foreigners' objective is to buy more land and build to attract economic development; in this circumstance it is in the interest of outsiders to make profit from the land. From what it appears there have not been any regulations to control the purchase of land by outsiders. The ecological footprint made by these foreigners will deplete the resources of the land over time. The carrying capacity based on the human demand for land and profit will likely change how the people live (Hui, 2006; Sayre, 2008). Carrying capacity is defined by the Carrying Capacity Network as: "the number of individuals who can be supported in a given area within natural resource limits, and without degrading the natural social, and cultural economic environment for present and future generations" (as cited in Srinivas, n.d., para. 1).

Because of the development the people in the community are being excluded rather than included in the surrounding areas of Vilcabamba when it comes to decision-making and employment. Tourism and immigration affects livelihoods of poor people. For some it helps them and for others it keeps them rooted in poverty. The focus of the government has been to promote investments from the private sector. Donors and stakeholders invested here, thus creating an infrastructure to attract more tourists to the area. The only links to help the local economy is for employment in low-level jobs such as housekeepers and handymen. Tourism perpetuates a weak economy for the poor. It

perpetuates conflicts in rural areas. One of the conflicts is competition for the water. As more tourists and immigrants come to the area, water used for farming and household use by the locals is depleted.

The immigrants are looking for opportunities they did not have in their country. Living in Vilcabamba is affordable and beautiful. These foreigners are denying those same opportunities to the poor people, particularly the women. Some of the men in the community are finding ways to increase their livelihood. One form of enterprise utilized by the men is taxi service. In this respect tourism has benefited some of the men in the community. Since there are no other forms of transportation the taxi service is available in front of the park, across the street from the health food restaurant. Anyone without personal transportation who wants to leave Vilcabamba utilizes the taxi service. The financial gains are few for the poor, with the men mostly benefitting from tourism (Shah & Gupta, 2000).

Conclusions

Development from tourism and immigration has brought more jobs to the community of Vilcabamba. Many of the locals work as maids, housekeepers, and salesclerks in stores. Some work the land of the rich homeowners, and when the season yields crops they live off the meager earnings. These jobs do little to improve the livelihoods and income of the poor. This research thus contributes to the field of conflict analysis by demonstrating how the women in Vilcabamba use their livelihood strategies to survive. I explored the phenomenon of sustainability through the context of community—in this case, a community of women that can be defined as a sisterhood of women working together.

This study explored how the "ontological concerns of being, meaning, and identity are taken in concert with epistemological concerns of knowing" (Hollinshead, 2004, p. 83). When used in this context, ontological research looks at the real cultural and natural world of the people in the community. Barnes and Gregory (1997) describe ontology as "a theory that claims to describe what the world is like – in a fundamental foundational sense – for authentic knowledge of it to be possible" (p. 511).

In the next chapter using a systems perspective the discussion of my research continues with a focus on the livelihoods capitals the women have and how the other structures impact the sustainable development of the area.

Possibilties

We have resolved not to exist. Or rather

it has been resolved that we not exist.

So we stay quiet, deep down,

doing nothing.

Like children too good

who have quit playing in order not to make noise

and neither talk nor read because there are rustlings

when the pages turn.

Thin, yes, almost without weight,

without moving ourselves, as I said.

Only, we remain looking at someone who doesn't look,

who almost never sees us.

But sometimes!

Sometimes we still exist

in the form of silent stabs.

A thought-needle, voice splinter

utters the inaudible scream: "Still!"

~Circe Maia (1988, p. 191)

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand how the inhabitants—with a focus on the women—of the centenary community of Vilcabamba, Ecuador, have been affected by the surge in tourism and immigration this valley has experienced in the last 15 years. This research investigated the different ways in which this phenomenon has changed the sustainable livelihood strategies available to the local population and how these changes have a differential impact on women and their families' livelihoods.

The following questions guided the present study:

RQ1:   How is the recent surge in tourism and immigration impacting the

sustainability of the livelihood strategies of the local people in Vilcabamba

and its surrounding communities?

The sub-questions are:

SQ1:   How do women respond to the impact of tourism and immigration?

SQ2:   What types of conflicts and opportunities are observed?

SQ3:   How do these conflicts affect the locals' livelihood strategies?

In this chapter the data presented in chapter four is discussed in light of these questions and analyzed through the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework lenses.

Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

For this research the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework was used to analyze some of the salient themes of the research based on the data collected through the different methods. As mentioned previously, from the in-depth interviews the typical local woman in Vilcabamba lives in poverty. While this framework is not the only way to

understand the issues of poverty, it is one way to look at how these women and their families cope with the vulnerabilities in their lives.

The 'sustainable livelihoods framework' is based on the premise that every household has different needs (Harper, Iyer, & Rosser, 2011). Each of the women I interviewed shared how they cope with adversity in their everyday lives. This analysis does not suggest that looking at the vulnerabilities in context will end with a positive livelihood outcome, but rather shows how the strategies they use may help them to meet their objectives to improve their livelihood. The goal of using the framework is intended to bring to the forefront the issues that affect the lives of the women interviewed. Each woman has had to use different assets at various times, some more than others, and develop strategies to cope with the vulnerabilities.

Vulnerability Context

Living in a rural area where the households are dependent on agriculture for their income can create conflicts. For some women their crops are their main food source, and the four women interviewed were dependent on the crops, even if it is just for their own consumption. The shocks like negative environmental conditions, too much rain, and no rain at all, can impact their livelihood. Seasonality of work, employment opportunities, and food prices have been a source of deprivation for these women and their families.

For example, when it rains, Perla does not work. If she does not work, she does not get paid. Perla and her husband have five children to support. Both of their incomes are dependent on their crop work on other people's land. The revenue from their work feeds the family. If there is no income, each has to find alternative ways to find money. If the crops do not make a profit or only make a low profit there is not enough income, and

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thus they cannot buy food for their family. Perla said there are times her family has had very little to eat. This period generally does not last too long, because she and her husband try to find alternative methods to feed their family when they can. Perla was able to work at one of the stores in Vilcabamba for example. It is in the beginning of the school year when lack of income hits family the hardest. The children need school clothing and supplies. Perla shared her dreams for her children to have the opportunities she did not have growing up.

Tourism and immigration can also be seen as shocks to the system in this case because of the rapid increase in the number of people visiting and staying in the valley. Although the phenomenon started as a gradual change in the 1990s it has exploded in the past 10 years. Income opportunities have increased because of tourism, which is positive; however, the type of jobs offered are seasonal and do not offer the security needed to support a family. Immigration, on the other hand, has created a real estate bubble. It has been the driving force to increase land prices to exorbitant levels. While some inhabitants feel they have benefit from selling their land and have used that money to move to the city of Loja to start a new life, the majority of the households that leave in poverty— especially women—have small plots of land and selling that land would leave them without their everyday subsistence. Farming is what they have done all their lives; they do not possess the skills or networks to start over in the city and they do not want to. This situation creates intra-household conflicts.

The Assets or Capitals

Human Capital. In this case study the human capital represented by the women interviewed was preoccupying to say the least. Ill-health and lack of education were

common themes in the conversation of the women. The inequalities women experience regarding education are subtle and not easy to change. Most often the reason is an educated woman is a threat to male machismo (Jiggins, 1994). A challenge in analyzing rural poverty includes the women's own perception of poverty and their ability to address it. Most of the women in the local community do not have access to education beyond elementary school and, therefore, they have little skills to achieve their own livelihood goals. In many cases, young women leave their homes to find work in the city and build a better life. Without an education, they often find work as maids and housekeepers. The triple threat women in the rural areas experience of working outside the home, tending to their families' needs, and working the land has prevented them from becoming empowered at the same rate as their male counterparts. In one of conversations with Teresa about education she shared these comments when I asked her how far did she go in school and does she want to finish school:

> "I went to elementary school. My parents said it is more important for my brothers to go to school and for me to work and take care of the family. I want to go to school and graduate. My brothers walk for an hour to school and I have to make their breakfast before they leave" (personal communication, June 9, 2012).

Healthcare was another big issue for the women. Yadira recognizes if she had healthcare nearby, she could get the medication she needed to work more often when it was available. This seems to be the conundrum, because in Yadira's case, for example, if she had the resources, such as healthcare and education or training, she might also have continued income-opportunities. Yadira shared her concern with how the unpredictable

weather has an effect on her work. She said one week not too long ago, it rained most of the week. She did not work, and did not have an income that week.

Mullen (2008) writing on rural poverty stated, "the rural poor, in particular, have been adversely affected in terms of their weaker purchasing power, removal of concessional credit schemes, lack of quality inputs, collapse of extension systems, marginalization, and disempowerment of men and women" (p. 147). According to Gaspáríni and Cruces (2013), "both poverty and income inequality decreased significantly in Latin America during the first decade of the twenty-first century" (p. 51). While this may be true in some areas of Latin America, in this small community the gender gap in education and employment still exists. In Teresa's particular circumstance she does not want to get married for many years. She mentioned several times in our conversations her desire to go to school and learn a skill that will give her the resources to help her family.

Social Capital. There is no doubt that there is strong social capital that the local population, especially the women, have developed over the years to be able to survive in times of need. In terms of the social resources, the relationships Yadira has built in the community have enabled her to network with the people living nearby. During my visits to Yadira, I saw people in the community walking up to her home, and others driving to her home to shop. She said if they needed something and did not have the money at the time they paid when they had the money. There was a level of trust between the members of the community. The majority of the locals had relationships for generations. Yadira's home was next to Carmen's home. They both grew up in the same homes where they currently live. My respect for these women increased exponentially as I talked to each

one. When Yadira found out Carmen needed help with food or household items, Yadira gave them to her. Carmen was a proud woman and if she was given help she found some way to give back.

Perla has been able to network with others in the community for reciprocity and exchanges of goods. What is lacking is the external support of the local and state government. The direct support Perla needs for asset accumulation and to cope with shocks is leadership in the local government. There is a link between social capital and the other five types of assets. By receiving support from the local government, such as training or education, Perla would have increased opportunities for better wages.

Similar to what I heard from the other three women and from the locals I spoke to in town, Teresa draws on the social resources oftentimes to meet her livelihood objectives. It is small community and there is a connectedness through networking. Teresa said that when there is labor available, the word gets out and both men and women show up ready for work. These relationships build trust over time and provide safety nets when they need assistance.

Natural Capital. The health of the natural capital is very important for the wellbeing of the community. One of the most precious assets for the people of Vilcabamba is nature, the beauty of the valley, its climate, and the quality of the water and the air which have drawn many people to the area because of stories they heard about people there living to be over 100 years old. The increase in tourism to the area has affected the landscape as land is cleared to build haciendas and retirement homes. While the influx of outsiders to Vilcabamba offers seasonal work that helps the community economically, the increase of foreigners has altered the landscape of the valley. These

changes are affecting the biodiversity of the area—not necessarily intentionally, but because people are moving in and buying land. This immigration of foreigners has left a footprint on the land. During my time in the area, I saw many roads being torn up for new developments. From conversations I learned that some foreigners are buying up the land to build hotels and attractions for tourists. This can be a problem because the locals depend on the land for their livelihood. More and more of the people in the local community are working for the foreigners.

There is a close relationship between the natural capital and the human capital. This relationship becomes evident in the case of Vilcabamba where agriculture is in some cases being displaced as a source of income by tourism. From the description of their daily activities, I learned that women in the local community often find temporary work in the tourist industry to increase their income. Many of these women rely on agricultural fields for their livelihood; if these fields are not attended to, the land is neglected and their sustenance is depleted. Through my observations and casual conversations with women during my short visit to Vicabamba, I found that some of them are content to stay on their land and would not consider selling the land if given the option of keeping their farm or leaving. Others, however, would rather leave and move to the city or away from Ecuador. Two women I had a conversation with in town were older and grew up in the community; other younger women expressed interest in experiencing a different life away from their homes. Yadira shared her thought on income with me:

> "This is my home, I lived here all my life. I took care of my brothers and sisters here, then my own children. We have two homes next to each other. My handicapped sister Gloria and my father live in the next door. He is old and dries

tobacco to sell to our friends to help out. I sell the coffee beans you see here (she was processing coffee beans while we talked for some of the time until it started to rain). My husband and I work in the fields. I pick fruit, whatever is in season." (personal communication, June 8, 2012)

Physical Capital. There is a big difference in terms of the quality of the physical capital in Vilcabamba and its outskirts. While in town you can find adequate water supply and sanitation, affordable energy, and access to information, these services are not always present as you move a few kilometers away from town if you are one of the local small farmers. The situation is different for the immigrants that have the resources to pay for the necessary infrastructure to provide all types of services. The inequalities you can find are really striking. You can find retirement developments for foreigners that are advertised through various media channels and that are no different from the gated communities you would find in the U.S., while a few kilometers down the road you find 100-year-old houses made out of mud and wood that are a hazard for its inhabitants. This situation is getting worst since the government has been absent from intervening. With so much wealth coming to this area one wonders what the local government is going to do to provide the local community with at least the basic needs to leave a decent life. Taxes could be put in place to advance local services and more assistance to the women, youth, and elderly.

Direct Support for Asset Accumulation

Support provided to Yadira for repairs on her home and training will improve the infrastructure on her land. The irrigation and drainage on her land does not adequately allow for her to grow her own crops. At the time of the interviews there was no assistance

for the people in the local community to increase yields and make a profit. Also, there was no support to Yadira on how to lower her blood pressure and have access to her medication. Living in the rural area means that they do not have the same immediate access to doctors and medicines that the people in the urban areas have. External support is needed because there is no help other than the help the community members provide to one another. Asset accumulation for all of these women can be achieved by assistance from the local leadership and government.

For Yadira to obtain capital she would need control over her land. None of the women I spoke to own their land. Yadira said her father still owns her home and land. All of the women said they were unaware of their rights regarding home and land ownership. One strategy that would enable women to gain more equality is knowledge in natural resource management. From my observation and listening to Yadira and Carmen speak, developers have bought up land and own much of the rights to the water used locally. This has created a conflict in the community for access to the available natural resources in the area.

Indirect Support

The question here is: How can the structures and process in the community be transformed so that the people living outside of the town could receive the same benefits as the people living in the city? All of the women shared that they do not have available access to general training, and in fact, there is none specifically for women. A Mexican woman who migrated to Vilcabamba has provided agricultural classes to many of the local women. She has created awareness among the women and elders in the community about educational topics that can improve their skills and provide them with better

economic opportunities. However, the government does not provide services in the community, and if it does it is at a very low scale, benefiting only a few.

Gender Relations

From my observations of the men and women in the local community, the gender roles were fluid. According to Butler (2006) the roles between the genders shift and change in different contexts and different times (p. 10). Their identities are based on what they have to do at a particular time, not especially who they are. For example, I saw one of the women I interviewed running a small micro enterprise outside of her home, work in the fields, tend to the farm on her property, and take care of her immediate and extended family. She took on a role that would have been considered a masculine role. These women multi-task and take on several identities to meet their needs. Butler challenges the ways gender has been defined by sex (male/female) or how it is socially constructed. She makes the argument that gender is a "product of actions and behaviors" (2006).

Resilience. I was impressed with the resilience I observed in the people from the local community. One woman diversified by combining some of her livelihood strategies. She worked a small farm on her land on which she raised chickens, grew vegetables, and processed and sold coffee beans. During the day, if the weather permitted, she also picked coffee beans at the farm her husband tended. To supplement her income, she ran a little store at her home, which the locals could visit to buy food, beer, and some non-perishables.

It should be noted that people compete for livelihood resources. While some have access to resources to meet their objectives and gain assets, others in the community are

disadvantaged. For example, the woman with the little store in her home offers convenience for the locals because a trip to Vilcabamba requires a long walk; however, the store charges higher prices than the stores in town. From my observation, most of the women and men live in poverty. I wanted to explore the vulnerabilities that continue to keep them in poverty.

Carmen does not work outside of her home. She shared what she does to manage her livelihood:

"I get tobacco from my neighbors and hang it out to dry so I can make cigars for people to buy. I don't have water in my home anymore. The neighbor next door ran a pipe from his house to mine, so I can have water. I have a garden in the front of the house and in part of the back of the house. I grow the herbs for horchata tea. The tea is good for you to drink. I have an orange tree over there to the right." (personal communication, June 9, 2012)

Women in the Global South utilize strategies for survival unlike women in the Global North. The study explored not only the women's experiences, but also the experiences of their families. Research has shown that there is a connection between tourism and economic development (Casellas & Holcomb, 2001). Because of the lack of education and resources, women in rural areas often struggle to find ways to survive. The political, social, and cultural influences impact how women live in a man's world. While women appear to dominate the markets in many of the areas in Ecuador, the men control the resources. This is an inequality in the roles of men and women relative to tourism and the management of natural resources (Kinnaird & Hall, 1996).

Figure 6. Woman showing the quality of her organic coffee. Photo by Fatima Cotton.

Contribution of the Research

This research has contributed to a better understanding of poverty defined by the access people have to essential assets in order to sustain their livelihood. This case study shed light to the dynamics between gender and tourism/immigration in rural areas of the small community of Vilcabamba. After I collected the data, I found the women in the local community live in relative poverty, with little education, scarce physical resources, and few skills to access better paid jobs. This study has brought awareness to the issues the women in Vilcabamba experience within the tourist industry. It is evident from the empirical research that the people in the local community, particularly the women, are vulnerable to the impacts of the tourism and development due to immigration. While both women and men work in agriculture and are affected by the development in their communities, women are marginalized. The impact of tourism development on gender is not the same. By analyzing the conflicts women experience using a gender perspective, I showed how the different roles played by women and men have contributed to gender inequalities (Lindsey, 2010; Schmink, 1999).

Learning about sustainable tourism can assist the women in Vilcabamba to become empowered. Tourism has continued to grow in Vilcabamba as the popularity of the area increases. My goal for this study was to show that in order to achieve more sustainable development of tourism, it is necessary to build a strong foundation in the community. A recommendation is for a paradigm shift for development. A concerted effort should be made by the tourism developers and stakeholders to develop the resource skills to build a sustainable infrastructure in the local community.

An example of sustainable infrastructure building is an enterprise to reach low-income markets used in Maharashtra, India. Zaidman, Ng, and Couton (2008) studied how the small-scale farmers were able to cope and recover from shocks from the devastation of their crops. Their crops did not receive enough water from rainfall or from pumping water to sustain their crops. A new affordable product became available (translated as "a farmer's friend") to save their plants. This new product was a low-cost irrigation system ensuring that water was evenly distributed where it was needed. The investments paid off for the farmers. They were able to use livelihood assets to build sustainability to eventually cross over the poverty line. The significance of this example is that the farmers used several livelihood strategies to build capacity and to achieve a positive sum gain. One asset-building strategy used to withstand the shocks was financial. The farmers were able to take out low-interest loans to purchase the product. Microcredit is only one service which the poor can use to protect against the shocks and stresses; it is one that can address the needs of the poor.

Recommendations

One of the predominant conflicts in the community was the conflict between the foreigners and the locals, which manifested in different scenarios. To help mitigate the polarized situation I would suggest that local governments and/or NGOs develop initiatives that could work as a bridge for the local community and immigrants—similar to the work Maritsa has been developing. These types of initiatives could contribute to developing the skills of the women through a training program for the women in the community. Also, including topics that would bring together both the locals and the immigrants such as, diversity, health, and agricultural classes could be a constructive beginning.

Figure 7. Women's Ecological Association. Courtesy of the association.

As I reflect on more than 15 years as a professional trainer in diversity and conflict resolution, I recognize adjustments are to be made when working with different parties. Local authorities and community leaders should receive diversity and conflict

resolution training. An example of the type of training is the Platinum Rule. I believe this would apply in this setting. Sometimes people look at people from different cultures as "others" and "us" and "them". This Platinum Rule allows me to treat the other person the way they want to be treated. This rule is the opposite of the Golden Rule. In a cultural conflict it does not benefit either party to treat you the way I want to be treated, which is what the Golden Rule tells us to do. The Platinum Rule follows this notion: *Do onto others as they would have you do onto them*. The focus is on getting to know the other party and asking them how they want to be treated. This would mean that the immigrants need to think outside of the box. Maritsa was the bridge between the locals and the immigrants. Rather than both parties continuing to be adversaries, her work was the start for relationship building. Michelle LeBaron (2002) suggests using creative ways to bridge conflicts.

Relationships thrive on mutuality and respect for difference, so processes centered in relationship draw on a wide range of ways of knowing and being. When we draw on a range of ways of knowing, we invite creativity into our midst (LeBaron, 2002, p. 2). In order to resolve the conflicts and to build relationships, it is recommended that a third party who could speak both English and Spanish be the bridge builder in the community.

Another recommendation is to facilitate workshops for women to learn accounting and marketing skills so that they can market their produce. It would be helpful to the women if they were able to start a micro-business, similar to the one Yadira has. These businesses would be structured. The stakeholders needed in these key relationships are banks and community leaders. The banks could give small business loans with low interest rates. Workshops and trainings to provide skills to the women, such as how to

plan their business would ensure that they have the resources needed to accumulate assets and start the road out of poverty. Again, an important part to this strategy is relationship building. It is important to develop relationships with elected officials who have influence with the local government, grassroots organizations, banks, and the community. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework would be prominent in this type of micro-business. For example, human capital utilizes skills, knowledge, experience, and motivation. The financial capital would come from small business loans from the bank. Follow up research during and after the training programs should be conducted in order to evaluate successes for sustainability (Sherradan, Sanders, & Sherradan, 2004; Vargas, 2000).

Conclusion

Although men in most cases benefit more from tourism than women, there is still a hegemonic influence of the political structure and foreigners. It is understood that there are inequalities in tourism development. With increased awareness brought to the study of tourism, migration, and gender relations there is a possibility for change. Many of the people in the rural areas of Vilcabamba live in poverty. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework is a tool for understanding the livelihoods of the poor. "A livelihood consists of people, their capabilities, equity, and sustainability" (Chambers & Conway, 1992, p. 1). Each of the livelihoods link with each of the others. Investment in education will contribute to more options for employment. Loans and credit impact a positive outcome for constructing an infrastructure owned by the individuals. The goal is for the people in the community to withstand the shocks and stresses for a positive outcome.

The results of the study lead to suggestions for action research that can help women in Vilcabamba become empowered to improve their lives. The participatory nature of the data collection helped in terms of providing accurate data in a changing environment. Chambers (2008) contends that changes take place daily, and to keep up with these changes, we must be prepared to "learn and unlearn" our ways of thinking (p. xv). He proposes that participatory methodologies—which consist of approaches, methods, attitudes, behaviors, and relationships—can be used as a way for community members to adapt to the rapid changes they experience.

Reflections from the Author

The inspiration for writing about the women of Vilcabamba came from my first visit to Ecuador. I wanted to do research with women, and about the women. My interest in feminist studies began years ago with the idea of making the lives of women's work visible to the new generation of readers (Wolf, 1996). Research has shown women's experiences are different globally. There are still many who are not aware of the class, cultural, and ethnic differences. This bond of sisterhood of all women that some assume we have is examined and explored.

Field research was necessary to understand the gender roles of the women in a rural area living in poverty. "If you want to understand people, ask for their stories. Listen long enough, and you learn not only the events of their lives, but their sources of meaning, what they value, what they most want" (van Gelder, 2014, p. 1). By listening to women share their work histories, and then for some their life histories, I have made their lives visible. I identified with them in some ways; however, I could see the many

differences in our lives. The goal of this study was to transform how the roles of women dealing with conflict are perceived.

People often need to talk about their experiences to find relief from their feelings or pain. Two of the older women cried while sharing their stories. The women shared their life histories. This part of my research was transformative for me. My fieldwork was no longer "about" the women, but began to be "for" them (Wolf, 1996). It became important to allow their voices and their stories to be heard also. My challenge was in being present, recording, and trying to comprehend our very different circumstances and their often severe conditions.

Oftentimes researchers from the Global North make the assumption that families consist of what is generally termed the 'nuclear family,' which is husband, wife, and two or three children. Another assumption is the sexual division of labor. In most cases, the man is the breadwinner for the family. He is the one who works outside of the home and the wife stays home and tends the household. Moser (1989) points out the need to understand the structure of families being researched. Exploring these women's livelihoods brought awareness to their challenges.

While one of my goals in this study was to make the gender conflicts with tourism and immigration in women's lives visible, I recognized the power imbalance between myself and the women I interviewed. The experiences of women are not universal. There are some commonalities among all women. Women have a bond by virtue of being oppressed and dominated in one form or another. This research has taught me that the so-called 'bonds of sisterhood' vary in cultural settings. Some of the ways we differ are in our ethnicties, class, and race. My definition and experience of growing up poor in an

urban setting in the Global North did not compare with the extreme poverty of the women in the Global South community where I conducted my research.

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Appendix A: Map of Ecuador
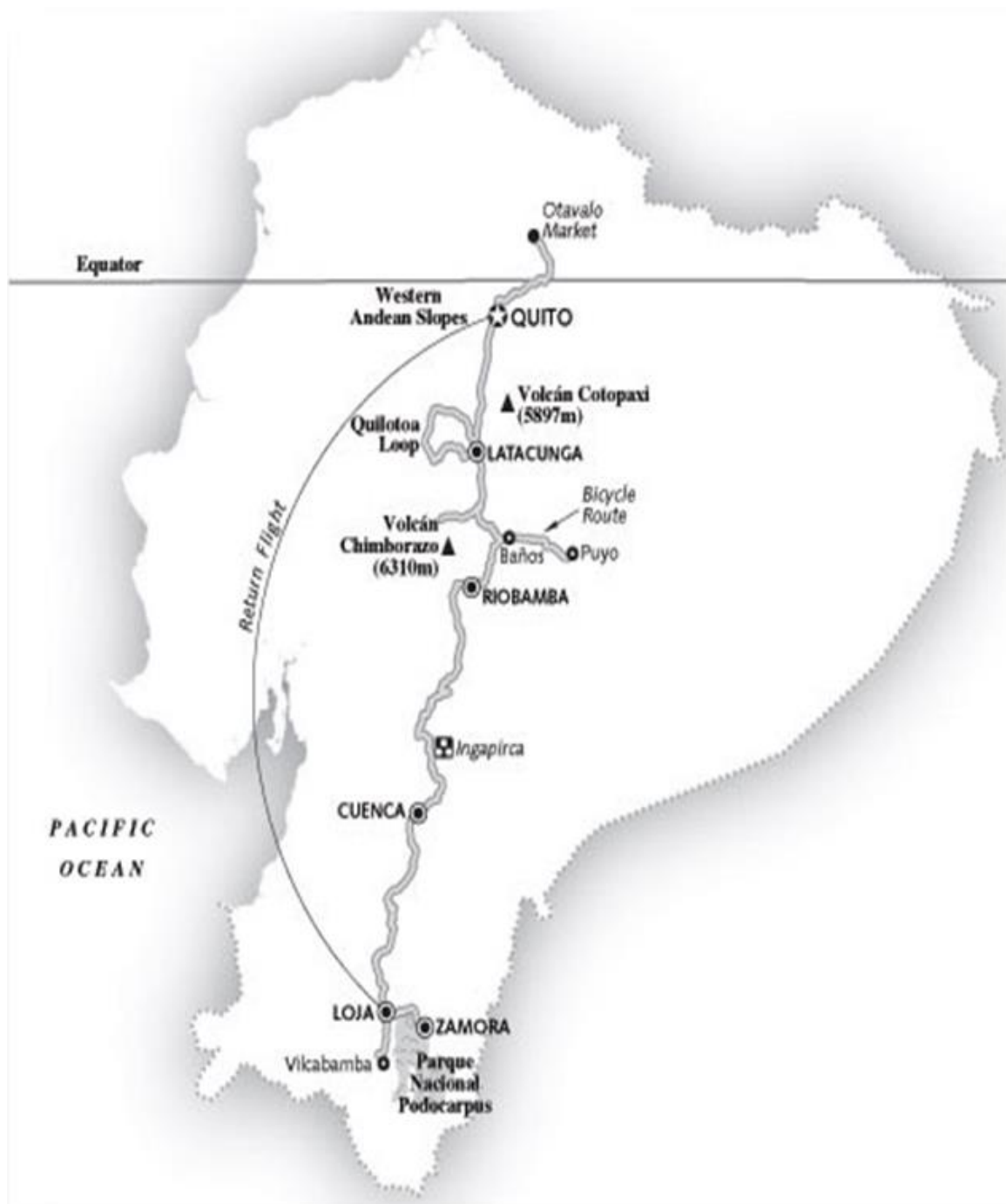
Source: Ecaudor map (2010). Retrieved from http://www.vilcabambatv.com/maps.htm

Appendix B: Map of Vilcabamba, Ecuador

Source: Vilcabamba map (2014). Retrieved from http://www.weather-
forecast.com/locations/Vilcabamba/forecasts/latest