

Tab 1

1. Submit the research question your group identified (this response should be the same for the whole group).

How do social norms affect the perception of tourists in Seoul vs New York City?

Give at least 2 academic disciplines that you plan use as research lens for your project (this response should be the same for the whole group)

This research question covers the fields of History and economics

1. An example: "To what extent does tourism push out local residents from 'historic' and 'central' neighborhoods in Lisbon?"
 2. The academic disciplines: Economics and social justice
2. Write a short response explaining how the research question and academic disciplines relate to your NU major (this response must be unique to you).

Examples of how you might use generative AI tools for this assignment:

- Use AI to identify how a local issue you've observed connects to similar challenges worldwide
 - Ask: While in London, I noticed that more people are riding bikes to get around than back in Boston. Why might this be? And is this a recent trend?
 - Next: critically analyze the result, does it sound relevant and correct? Could there be a research question in this topic?
- Use AI to expand your perspective on a research question
 - Ask: My group is researching environmental policies in London that impact individual changes in behavior. So far we have a lot of positive examples of behavior change, but we're wondering if we're missing any perspectives from people who might be negatively impacted. Based on our brainstorming (*give examples of what you've researched already*), can you help use identify whose voices might be missing from this framing?
 - Next: critically analyze the result, does it sound relevant and correct? Do you need to adjust your research question to take different perspectives into account?

Research Outline

CAim:

Working as a group, you'll put the themes and concepts from the semester into action as you research and analyze a global issue from a local lens. (If you are studying on a NUin or Scholars program, your local lens must be your host community)

Objectives:

- Collaborate with your group to write an appropriate research question—feasible, relevant, specific
- Research independently on your assigned components using the NU library resources and practice responsible use of AI tools.
- Analyze collected research and critically reflect using the intercultural praxis themes of inquiry, framing, positioning, dialogue, reflection, and action.
- Synthesize your research and analysis with your group members to create a cohesive research outline that answers the research question.

Skills and Key concepts:

academic research skills, note taking, responsible AI usage, intercultural communication, intercultural praxis, collaboration

Deliverables:

- Research outline (group submission) -100 pts
 - MUST include a Bibliography in correct APA formatting

[FA25_Group Project Assignment Overview.docx](#)

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Step 1: Group Research Question– Review your instructor's feedback about your research question before starting your research.

How do social norms affect locals' perception of tourists in Seoul vs New York City?

Step 2: Divide up outline topics among the group (everyone must complete at least one outline subtopic, all categories must be covered) As a group, divide of the outline components and make sure that each person is doing at least one outline subtopic.

The subtopics that must be included in your outline are:

- Roots or Causes (inquiry): Megan
 - What are the historical roots or causes of your issue? (must identify at least 2 historical roots or causes of selected issue)
 - What events, groups, entities, or phenomena have contributed to the development of this issue?
 - How do we know that these issues were caused by or rooted in the things you identified?

- Constituents or Stakeholders (framing): Megan
 - Who is involved in or has been affected by it, and in which ways?
 - Identify at least 2 groups, communities, or populations.
 - Do people disagree about this issue, its impact, and/or its potential solutions?
 - Summarize the different perspectives on this issue.
 - How might the backgrounds and experiences, framing, and positions of different stakeholders influence this disagreement?
 - What is at stake for the location and different constituencies within it?

- Collective Responses (positioning):
- How have different collectivities within society (local, regional, or national governments, groups, or corporations) responded to this issue, either in your location or in other settings?
 - Identify at least 2 collectivities and at least 1 response.
- In past or current attempts at solutions, what worked? What didn't? Why?
 - What were the results of these responses?

- Community Involvement (dialogue): Laith
 - Discuss the extent to which the community or populations affected by this issue were consulted in any attempted responses.
 - Who has been included? Who has been excluded?
 - What are examples of successes for community involvement or community response to this issue?

- Potential Solutions (reflection & action):Pat
 - Evaluate how the backgrounds and experiences, framing, and positioning of different stakeholders influence perspectives, possible disagreements, and the potential success/failure of proposed solutions.
 - What are other potential responses to this issue? Have they been attempted in other locations or times?
 - What might be a way toward ethical action to respond to this issue in your location?
 - Identify at least one way forward and describe at least one potential benefit and one potential risk for the constituents or stakeholders you identified above.

Rubric for Research Outline & AI Partnership Log: 100 points

Group Submission:

- Formatting (research question, title, group members) - 5 pts
- Introduction & Conclusion – 10 pts
- Roots & Causes (inquiry) – 15 pts
- Constituents or Stakeholders (framing) - 15 pts
- Collective Responses (positioning) - 15pts
- Community Involvement (dialogue) -15pts
- Potential Solutions (reflection & action) – 15pts
- Bibliography in APA style - 10 pts

Tourism Group Research Project

How do social norms impact the perception of Tourists in Seoul vs New York City

Megan Farrington, Patrick Dunn, Santiago Rubio, Lokesh Addagiri, Laith Abuoqab

Introduction (Santiago):

When a tourist photographs a stranger through a residential window in Seoul's Bukchon Hanok Village, or rents an apartment in Brooklyn that was once a long-term home, they are doing more than visiting a city. They are participating in a web of historical grievances, economic incentives, and contested social norms that stretch back decades. This research paper examines the question: How do social norms shape locals' perception of tourists in Seoul, South Korea, and New York City, United States? These two cities make for a revealing comparative study. Both are global tourism destinations with millions of annual visitors, yet the historical, cultural, and economic forces that have shaped their relationships with tourism differ substantially, producing distinct social landscapes in which locals and tourists encounter one another.

To analyze these dynamics, we draw on Sorrells' intercultural praxis model, a framework that calls for critical reflection across the six dimensions; inquiry, framing, positioning, dialogue, reflection, and action; as a means of understanding how power, identity, and history shape intercultural encounters. Tourism is rarely a neutral exchange; it is a site where social norms are enforced, negotiated, and violated, and where the interests of residents, governments, corporations, and visitors frequently collide. The social norm of communal respect rooted in Korea's Confucian heritage, for example, means that tourist behaviors common in Western cities can register as deeply transgressive in Seoul. In New York City, decades of racially discriminatory housing policy have primed communities of color to view tourist-driven gentrification not as an inconvenience but as the latest iteration of a long history of dispossession.

This paper traces those dynamics across four interconnected dimensions. The first section examines the historical roots and economic causes of tourism-related tension in each city, from the forced displacements of the 1988 Seoul Olympics to the post-fiscal-crisis rebranding of New York. The second section maps the stakeholders implicated in each city's tourism debates and analyzes the substantive disagreements between them. The third section evaluates the collective policy responses each city has mounted and assesses whose interests those responses have served. The fourth section examines the degree to which affected communities have been meaningfully included in dialogue about tourism governance, and what participatory engagement has and has not achieved. Together, these sections argue that local perceptions of tourists in both Seoul and New York City cannot be understood as cultural quirks or individual attitudes; they are the legible products of specific historical decisions, economic structures, and power imbalances that tourism policy has thus far addressed only partially.

Roots & Causes (Megan)

Source 1: *How Olympic redevelopment erased South Korea's past, twice* — Park (2021), Edge Effects

Economic

- The 1988 Seoul Olympics were framed by the South Korean government as proof of national prosperity. Park (2021) documents that *“in the years leading to the 1988 Seoul Olympics, President Chun Doo-Hwan envisioned the Summer Olympics as a way to show the world that South Korea had become a prosperous, ‘modern’ country equal to those in the West.”* This top-down strategy embedded the idea that foreign visitors are symbols of national prestige, making locals simultaneously hospitable and self-conscious in their interactions with tourists.
- The economic logic of hosting the Olympics fundamentally restructured Seoul’s urban landscape. In demolishing 48,000 homes and forcing 720,000 people to relocate, the government established a precedent that international visibility would be prioritized over resident welfare. This legacy persists in rapidly tourist-ified neighborhoods such as Bukchon Hanok Village, where residents report feelings of displacement as their communities are commodified for foreign consumption (Park, 2021).

Social Justice

- Park (2021) documents that the process of Olympic redevelopment was frequently violent: *“residents of poorer neighborhoods were forcibly removed from their homes to make way for new construction, and under a ‘purification campaign,’ 16,000 unattended children, disabled people, panhandlers, homeless people, and political dissidents were removed from city streets and locked in institutions.”* This history of state-sanctioned clearing of marginalized people “for” incoming outsiders contributes to deep-seated ambivalence among working-class Seoulites toward tourist-driven development.
- The pattern of erasing domestic poverty for the sake of international image directly maps onto present-day tensions, where locals in tourist-heavy districts feel rendered invisible or treated as cultural props rather than neighbors (Park, 2021).

Source 2: *Seoul 1988: South Korea opens up to the world* — International Olympic Committee (2020)

Economic

- According to the IOC (2020), the Olympics served as a springboard for international trade, with *“the diplomatic relations that Korea established with communist countries in the lead-up to the Games result[ing] in important commercial trade agreements for Korean companies,”* pushing the value of international exports to communist countries to USD 3.65 billion in 1988 — an 80% increase over the previous year. This economic awakening established tourism as integral to South Korea’s national wealth-building strategy.
- The post-Olympics economic boom set the stage for the Korean Wave (Hallyu), which deepened the link between foreign visitors and national revenue — creating a commercial incentive for locals to accommodate tourists that can at times override private social discomfort (IOC, 2020).

Social Justice

- The IOC (2020) reports that the Games generated collective pride: *“the global attention that Korea enjoyed during the Games made people proud of their Korean citizenship, while the successful hosting of the Games left Koreans with a positive new feeling of self-esteem, confidence, and uplifted spirit.”* This pride, however, is paired with a heightened protectiveness of Korean cultural norms — meaning tourists who violate Confucian customs (e.g., disrespecting elders in public spaces) may face a cool reception despite the headline hospitality.
- The framing of the 1988 Games as a “coming out party” for Korea created a national narrative in which foreigners validate Korean modernity. This dynamic produces conditional welcome: tourists are embraced when they affirm Korea’s global prestige and distanced when they are perceived as disrespectful or ignorant of local norms (IOC, 2020).

Source 3: *The effect of Hallyu on tourism in Korea* — Bae et al. (2017), *Journal of Open Innovation*

Economic

- Bae et al. (2017) found that Korean Wave content exports, GDP, and exchange rates all exert statistically significant effects on inbound tourism from the USA, China, Japan, and Hong Kong across the period 1997–2014. Crucially, *“the increase in the export of Korean wave content used as a measure of Hallyu can be interpreted as an increase in the number of foreign tourists entering Korea.”* This means locals’ perception of tourists is now partly mediated by whether visitors are seen as culturally appreciative Hallyu fans or as outsiders who consume space without reciprocal engagement.

- Hallyu tourism generated synergies across Seoul’s cosmetics, medical tourism, fashion, and cultural heritage industries (Bae et al., 2017). Residents of commercial districts like Myeongdong therefore experience tourists as both economically indispensable and spatially overwhelming — a tension that directly shapes their daily social norms toward visitors.

Social Justice

- The concentration of Hallyu tourism in specific Seoul neighborhoods has produced uneven impacts. While some residents benefit from the economic activity, elderly residents and those in traditionally residential areas experience tourist crowding as an intrusion on daily life and a dilution of neighborhood identity (Bae et al., 2017).
- The study’s framing of tourism primarily through economic indicators reflects a broader institutional tendency to measure tourism’s value without accounting for how local communities — particularly non-commercial residents — experience the presence of mass international visitors (Bae et al., 2017).

Source 4: *How gentrification powers New York City’s tourism industry* — Petro (2018), Skift

Economic

- Petro (2018) documents that in neighborhoods like Brooklyn’s Bedford-Stuyvesant, “*a glut of homesharing listings [is] driving up prices for renters and flooding the neighborhood with visitors,*” while in Williamsburg, “*inflated property values have pushed out the creative class that helped popularize the neighborhood in the first place.*” This demonstrates that local resentment toward tourists in New York often has concrete economic roots: visitors are not merely inconveniences but drivers of housing unaffordability.
- Petro (2018) notes that gentrification creates a self-reinforcing feedback loop: wealthier residents attract upscale businesses, which attract tourists, which further inflate property values, further displacing long-term residents. For locals who remain, tourists become visible markers of a process that has economically harmed their communities.

Social Justice

- According to Petro (2018), “*a side effect of torrid economic growth in a developed city like New York City is often speculation and explosive change that works to rearrange life for locals to provide a more compelling experience for high-spending visitors.*” This pattern encodes a social hierarchy in which the preferences and comfort of outside visitors are materially prioritized over the needs of existing — often non-white, lower-income — communities.

- The displacement of the creative class that originally built neighborhoods’ cultural character raises a social justice question central to NYC: who has the right to the city, and who is made invisible so that others may visit? (Petro, 2018).

Source 5: *Gentrification in New York City* — CUNY Graduate Center, AMST 103 (n.d.)

Economic

- The essay documents that “*policies such as redlining and blockbusting systematically denied Black and Hispanic people access to housing opportunities, confining them to specific urban communities. These discriminatory practices established the socioeconomic disparities that exist among minorities, rendering them more vulnerable to gentrification today*” (CUNY Advanced Research Collaborative, n.d.). In other words, neighborhoods now most attractive to tourists were historically made affordable through racist exclusion, meaning tourism-driven price increases carry compounded historical injustice.
- The piece argues that “*New York’s priorities are twisted: instead of addressing the needs of native residents who are struggling to get by, the city would rather cater to wealthy tourists, gentrifiers, or recent migrants*” (CUNY Advanced Research Collaborative, n.d.). This framing captures the social norm operating in many NYC communities — where skepticism of tourists is inseparable from decades of being deprioritized by city policy.

Social Justice

- The essay establishes that gentrification in the US carries an inherently racial dimension tracing to the 1940s, meaning locals of color in gentrifying NYC neighborhoods perceive the tourist economy not as a neutral economic force but as the latest expression of a long history of their communities being remade for the comfort of others (CUNY Advanced Research Collaborative, n.d.).
- The connection drawn between redlining, blockbusting, and present-day displacement maps directly onto a social norm of distrust: in communities where neighbors have been legally and economically expelled for generations, the presence of tourists — who often visually represent the demographic reshaping underway — activates well-founded historical grievances (CUNY Advanced Research Collaborative, n.d.).

Source 6: *Tourism is eating New York alive* — Holley (2017), VICE

Economic

- Holley (2017) draws on Greenberg’s research to document that, following the fiscal crisis of the 1970s, “*for the first time in history, New York began to fervently market itself in the late 1970s, selling a cleaned-up image for the purpose of commodifying the city for*

a new clientele of middle-class suburbanites and corporations.” This deliberate instrumentalization of tourism as urban economic policy has produced a city where residents feel they live inside someone else’s attraction.

- The consequences have been quantitative as well as qualitative. According to Holley (2017), *“in 2016, the number of visitors climbed to over 60 million, double what it was in the 1990s,”* such that, combined with a record-high population of 8.5 million, the city faces infrastructure and public-space pressures that overwhelmingly disadvantage long-term residents.

Social Justice

•Holley (2017) documents that post-9/11 political messaging normalized the inconvenience of tourist overcrowding as patriotic accommodation: *“With the Americanization of New York after the attacks, with Ground Zero turned into a morbid attraction, and with the mayor hyperfocused on increasing tourism, out-of-towners made themselves very comfortable — slowing down the trains, clogging the sidewalks.”* The normalization of tourist inconvenience as a civic duty is a historically specific social norm that hardened after 9/11.

- The article also captures a cultural resentment rooted in the sense that the character of the city has been deliberately hollowed out to accommodate mainstream tourists. As writer Fran Lebowitz is paraphrased: present-day New York has been engineered to attract people who historically did not like New York — a transformation that long-term residents experience as the erasure of their city’s identity (Holley, 2017).

Source 7: *No place like home: Racial capitalism, gentrification, and the identity of Chinatown* — Harvard Kennedy School Student Policy Review (2023)

Economic

- The HKS Student Policy Review (2023) establishes a century-long precedent for racial commodification in NYC tourism, noting that *“in the 1920s, New York City’s tour guides extolled the macabre attractions of its own Chinatown, pointing out ‘clandestine opium dens,’ gambling dens, and ‘mysterious underground tunnels.’”* Chinatown’s residents looked on as tourist buses spun fabricated narratives about their community. This century-old pattern of racial commodification explains why communities of color in NYC view tourist interest with historical suspicion.
- The review argues that *“the commodification of ethno-cultural diversity creates new opportunities in otherwise blighted neighborhoods — once the rundown neighborhoods of the marginalized, they now flaunt their ethnic diversity and are colorfully described in visitors’ guides to promote tourism and investment”* (HKS Student Policy Review, 2023). This economic dynamic — in which a community’s very marginalization becomes a

tourism asset — produces a social norm of guarded ambivalence: tourism brings revenue but confirms continued marginalization.

Social Justice

- The concept of “racial capitalism” applied in the HKS review describes how NYC residents in ethnic enclaves experience tourist attention not as cultural appreciation but as extraction — their identity is consumed for the economic benefit of outsiders while the community itself faces displacement (HKS Student Policy Review, 2023).
- The review asserts that “*for Chinatown’s longtime inhabitants, an available unit of affordable housing in Chinatown is not equivalent to an available unit of affordable housing somewhere else — the difference is community*” (HKS Student Policy Review, 2023). This principle applies broadly: in tourism-impacted NYC neighborhoods, the social justice concern is not just housing costs but the right to remain embedded in communities of cultural and social belonging — a right that tourist-driven development systematically undermines.

Summary

The historical sources examined across both cities collectively enact the inquiry dimension of Sorrells' (2016) intercultural praxis model by refusing to treat local attitudes toward tourists as culturally inherent traits and instead tracing them to specific, recoverable historical decisions. Park (2021) demands the most destabilizing form of inquiry: it reveals that the 1988 Seoul Olympics, widely framed as a triumph of Korean modernization, involved the forced displacement of 720,000 residents and the institutionalization of 16,000 marginalized people under a government "purification campaign" — all to present the city attractively to foreign visitors. Read alongside the IOC's (2020) celebratory account of the same Games, the two sources illustrate that inquiry as Sorrells defines it must extend to examining whose questions are being asked and whose answers are legitimized. Similarly, the CUNY Advanced Research Collaborative (n.d.) models inquiry by tracing present-day housing vulnerability in New York City's communities of color not to current market forces but to the 1940s policies of redlining and blockbusting that systematically confined Black and Hispanic residents to specific neighborhoods — making them maximally exposed to every subsequent wave of tourism-driven gentrification. The HKS Student Policy Review (2023) extends this inquiry further still, connecting 1920s "clandestine opium den" tour narratives about Chinatown to contemporary displacement, revealing that the racial commodification of communities for tourist consumption is a century-long structural pattern, not a recent development.

Where the Seoul sources demand inquiry into what national pride conceals, the New York sources demand inquiry into what economic recovery narratives erase. Holley (2017), drawing on Greenberg's *Branding New York*, traces how the city's post-fiscal-crisis rebranding in the late

1970s was a deliberate political decision to prioritize the "out-of-towner" over the resident — a decision that calcified after 9/11 when, as Holley documents, Mayor Bloomberg's aggressive tourism expansion was packaged as civic patriotism, making it socially untenable to question tourist inconvenience. Bae et al. (2017) open a complementary inquiry in the Seoul context: their quantitative finding that Korean Wave content exports directly drive inbound tourism demand invites the destabilizing follow-up question of what it means for a culture to be desired primarily as a product, and how that transformation reshapes who belongs in their own city. Together, these sources perform what Sorrells (2016) describes as the risk-taking dimension of inquiry — the willingness to allow one's own way of viewing the world to be challenged and changed by following the historical evidence to structurally uncomfortable conclusions about power, consent, and the distribution of tourism's costs and benefits.

Introduction

This document maps the constituencies and stakeholders implicated in the research question “How do social norms affect locals’ perception of tourists in Seoul vs. New York City?” It identifies the communities affected, documents the substantive disagreements between them, examines how differing backgrounds and framings drive those disagreements, and assesses what is at stake for each city and its constituencies. Sources are cited in-text in APA 7th edition format; full references appear in the bibliography.

Tourism in both Seoul and New York City is not merely an economic transaction — it is a site of contested social meaning. Residents, business owners, governments, tourism organizations, developers, and tourists themselves all hold positions on how public space should be used, who benefits from visitor flows, and how local identity and cultural heritage should be protected or leveraged. These positions frequently conflict, and the conflicts are shaped by each stakeholder group’s history, economic interest, and relationship to social power.

Part I: Who Is Involved or Affected, and How?

The following stakeholder groups have been identified across both cities. Each is affected by tourism in materially distinct ways, shaping the social norms through which they perceive visitors.

Seoul Stakeholder Groups

1. Residential Communities in Tourist-Impacted Neighborhoods

Residents of neighborhoods like Bukchon Hanok Village represent the most directly affected constituency in Seoul. According to data from the Jongno District Office, in 2023, Bukchon attracted approximately 6.4 million visitors — more than 1,000 times its resident population of approximately 6,100 people (Korea Times, 2024). The resulting noise, littering, and privacy violations have driven a 27.6 percent population decline over five years, with complaints to the district office rising from 56 to 202 in the same period (Wikipedia, 2026).

Resident Tsong-mi Kim, speaking through a translator, described the situation as follows: some tourists have entered private homes or peered into windows without permission. Resident

Bonhap Hue noted that on her street of 30 homes, only two local families remain (KITV, 2025). These experiences produce a social norm of wariness toward tourists and a perception that the government has consistently prioritized visitor access over residential rights.

At a formal protest documented by *The Korea Times* (2018), residents declared: “*The government designated our village as a Hanok Conservation Area against our will and shifted the responsibility to us while making little efforts itself. Excessive tourism has seriously undermined the quality of our lives.*” This framing — of residents as the involuntary bearers of public heritage policy — underpins their adversarial posture toward both tourists and government (Korea Times, 2018).

2. The South Korean Government and Tourism Policy Apparatus

The Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) and the Seoul Metropolitan Government operate as active stakeholders whose policy decisions directly shape how tourism develops and how residents experience it. The KTO forecasts around 18.5 million foreign visitors in 2025, a 13 percent rise from 2024, and has promoted an expansive “SPECTRUM” strategy to diversify tourism toward provincial destinations (Travel and Tour World, 2025). The government’s framing is predominantly economic: tourism generates revenue, creates jobs, and projects Korean cultural power internationally.

This orientation has produced tensions with affected communities. The Seoul Metropolitan Government’s 2024 response to the Bukchon crisis — imposing a visitor curfew (5 p.m. to 10 a.m.) and dividing the village into color-coded management zones — was a significant shift, but residents described the measures as “empty talk,” citing loopholes such as exemptions for hanok hotel guests (The POST, 2025). The Urban Resilience Hub (2018) documents that Seoul hosted the UNWTO’s Global Summit on Urban Tourism in 2018, positioning itself as a leader in “fair and sustainable tourism.” However, critics note that official tourism development strategies have historically “focused on quantitative rather than qualitative objectives, namely increasing the number of tourism arrivals, most of the time without any specific plans to prevent, control and monitor the negative impacts” (Urban Resilience Hub, 2018).

3. Tourism Industry Operators (Businesses, Hanok Hotels, Tour Agencies)

Commercial interests in Seoul’s tourism sector, including hanok hotels, cosmetics retailers, tour operators, and cultural experience businesses, have a direct financial stake in high visitor volumes. Their perspective on tourists is necessarily more welcoming than that of residents. In Bukchon, corporate-run hanok hotels pushed back on resident accounts of their contribution to overtourism: one hotel spokesperson stated that in 2023, their establishment hosted fewer than 2,000 guests, “accounting for only 0.0003 percent of the total annual visitors” (KITV, 2025). This framing contests the attribution of responsibility and deflects demands for regulation.

Research in *Journal of Open Innovation* found that Hallyu tourism generated synergies across Seoul’s cosmetics, medical tourism, fashion, and cultural heritage industries (Bae et al., 2017).

Tourism businesses therefore have a structural incentive to advocate for policies that maximize visitor access — a position that places them in direct conflict with residential communities.

4. International Tourists

Tourists are both a constituency and a cause of the issue. Their social norms around public behavior — photographing strangers, entering semi-private spaces, generating noise — violate the hierarchical, community-oriented social norms rooted in Korea’s Confucian heritage (Connor, n.d.). Unlike residents and businesses, tourists are temporary actors with no long-term stake in the communities they visit, which produces a structurally asymmetric relationship: they absorb the cultural experience while residents bear the costs.

Some tourists, however, demonstrate awareness of the dynamic. Swedish tourist Sindere Schoultz, quoted by CNN (2024), stated: *“I think it’s important that tourists be respectful to those living here. We want to come here and have a good time but we don’t want to step on somebody’s toes and be disrespectful.”* This self-aware framing exists in tension with the structural incentives of the tourism-marketing ecosystem, which encourages volume over consideration.

New York City Stakeholder Groups

5. Long-Term Residents of Gentrifying and Tourist-Impacted Neighborhoods

In New York City, the equivalent of Bukchon’s residential community is represented most acutely by long-term residents of neighborhoods such as Williamsburg, Bushwick, Harlem, Chinatown, and Bedford-Stuyvesant — communities that are predominantly Black and Latino and have faced compounding displacement pressures from gentrification and tourism-driven development. The CUNY Advanced Research Collaborative (n.d.) documents that policies such as redlining and blockbusting “systematically denied Black and Hispanic people access to housing opportunities, confining them to specific urban communities” — making these residents disproportionately vulnerable to the latest wave of tourism-driven displacement.

The *amNewYork* (2025) reported that two years after Local Law 18 took effect, *“Black and Latino families are leaving NYC at higher rates,”* demonstrating how the city’s affordability crisis — intensified by the interplay of tourism and housing policy — is disproportionately affecting communities of color. This group’s historical experience of dispossession produces a social norm of deep skepticism toward tourist-driven development and the institutions that manage it.

6. Homeowners and Small Business Owners in Outer Boroughs

A distinct NYC constituency is formed by homeowners — many of them Black and Latino families — who had relied on short-term rental income through Airbnb to cover mortgage payments and the rising cost of living. These owners were directly affected by Local Law 18, enacted in September 2023, which effectively banned short-term rentals of fewer than 30 days without host presence. According to data reported by *amNewYork* (2025), Airbnb listings in NYC dropped by over 90 percent following LL18’s implementation.

Brooklyn homeowner Jorge, quoted in an Airbnb advocacy report (2025), described using hosting “to help his family cover their mortgage and weather challenges like layoffs.” The NAACP Jamaica Branch framed the issue explicitly as a matter of racial and economic justice: “Housing justice is inseparable from economic and racial justice. When homeowners can afford to stay, neighborhoods thrive.” (amNewYork, 2025). This group occupies a complex position: they are simultaneously residents who bear the costs of tourism-driven gentrification and economic actors who benefit from tourist spending.

7. Hotel Industry, Tourism Corporations, and Destination Marketing Organizations

The Hotel Association of New York City and NYC Tourism + Conventions (formerly NYC & Company) represent institutional stakeholders with a strong financial interest in maximizing visitor volume. The NYC Office of the State Comptroller (2021) reported that the tourism industry employed a record 283,200 workers in 2019 (7.2 percent of private sector jobs), generating nearly \$47 billion in economic contribution. These organizations frame tourism as a public good and resist regulations that limit visitor access.

The Hotel Association vigorously supported Local Law 18, which its CEO framed as a necessary correction to the short-term rental market — a framing that conveniently aligned the hotel industry’s competitive interests with the language of housing justice (amNewYork, 2025). Meanwhile, NYC Tourism + Conventions’ 2022–23 annual report explicitly committed to spreading “the economic benefits of tourism across communities and boroughs” equitably (NYC Tourism + Conventions, 2023), though critics note that such commitments have historically been more rhetorical than structural.

8. Tenants’ Rights Advocates and Housing Organizations

A coalition of housing advocacy groups — including the Hotel and Gaming Trades Council, tenant advocacy organizations, and groups organized under the “Tenants Not Tourists” banner — have positioned themselves in direct opposition to deregulation of short-term rentals. Their argument is structural: “Illegal short-term rentals reduce the supply of permanent housing, drive up rents, and threaten the stability and affordability of our neighborhoods” (amNewYork, 2025, quoting Mayor Adams). This group frames the issue in terms of the right of working-class New Yorkers to remain in the city, against the incursion of tourism-driven market forces.

Part II: Perspectives, Disagreements, and Contested Solutions

Seoul: Core Disagreements

Economic Growth vs. Residential Rights

The central conflict in Seoul is between the government's and tourism industry's emphasis on tourism as an engine of national economic growth and the resident community's demand for the right to live in peace in their own homes. Research by Kim et al. (2020), published in *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, found that anti-tourist attitudes in Korean communities experiencing overtourism stemmed not merely from crowding but from “*exclusion of ordinary residents, unfair distribution, disregard of diversity, and no control on negative impacts throughout the tourism development.*” This suggests the dispute is not simply about visitor numbers but about who has power in the development process.

Adequacy of Governmental Response

Residents and the government disagree sharply about whether the measures taken have been sufficient. Residents of Bukchon characterized the 2024 curfew policy as inadequate, citing loopholes and describing the district office's stance as “*empty talk*” (The POST, 2025). The Korea Times (2019) observed that Seoul's initial response to Bukchon “was more passive than proactive,” hiring stand-by guides rather than substantively restricting access. Some residents demanded the area be designated a restricted zone entirely; the government declined, framing continued visitor access as a public interest.

Hanok Hotels: Heritage Experience or Commercialization?

A specific point of disagreement concerns corporate-run hanok hotels, which residents blame for exacerbating overtourism. Since 2020, authorities loosened restrictions on traditional houses offering accommodation, resulting in a surge of such establishments. Residents argue these are commercial operations “disguised and marketed as a traditional experience” that intensify crowding and erode community (KITV, 2025). Hotel operators contest this, pointing to their small share of total visitors and their role in authentic cultural transmission. This dispute reflects a deeper tension over who has the authority to define and monetize Korean cultural heritage.

New York City: Core Disagreements

Local Law 18: Housing Relief or Failed Overreach?

The most active contemporary policy disagreement in NYC concerns Local Law 18. Housing advocates and tenant organizations argue the law was necessary to return apartments to the

long-term rental market amid vacancy rates that reached a historic low of 1.4 percent in early 2023 (City & State New York, 2025). Airbnb, homeowner groups, civil rights organizations (including the NAACP of Brooklyn and Jamaica), and all five borough chambers of commerce counter that the law has failed on its own terms: two years after implementation, rents have risen 8.1 percent and vacancy rates remain unchanged at 1.9 percent, while average hotel rates surged 12.6 percent (amNewYork, 2025). The Chicago Policy Review (2024) summarizes the disagreement: “*at its core, the debate revolves around striking a delicate balance between safeguarding housing opportunities for permanent residents and avoiding stifling economic growth, tourism, and the ability to invest in affordable housing solutions.*”

Who Counts as a Resident?

The "Tenants Not Tourists" coalition and homeowner advocates disagree fundamentally over whose residential interests the city should serve. Tenant advocates focus on renters — particularly working-class people of color — as the constituency requiring protection from displacement. Homeowner advocates, many of whom are also Black and Latino, argue that their interests as property owners are equally legitimate and that the law stripped them of an income tool essential to affording homeownership in an expensive city (amNewYork, 2025). This fracture within the constituency of color reveals how tourism policy intersects with race and class in ways that resist simple coalitional framings.

The Role of Tourism Revenue in Urban Fiscal Policy

A longer-standing disagreement concerns whether tourism revenue should be treated as essential fiscal infrastructure or as a discretionary supplement. The NYC Comptroller’s office (2021) estimated that tourism generates nearly 7 percent of private sector employment and contributes substantially to tax revenues. McKinsey & Company (2021) calculated that COVID-19 tourism losses cost NYC approximately “*six times the fiscal impact of the 9/11 attacks.*” These numbers give pro-tourism institutional actors a compelling argument for prioritizing visitor volume. Community advocates and housing organizers counter that tourism revenue historically flows to wealthier parts of the city and to corporations, not to the working-class communities that bear the social costs of tourist overcrowding and gentrification.

Part III: How Backgrounds, Framings, and Positions Influence Disagreement

Seoul

Confucian Social Norms and the Politics of Public Space

The social norms that make tourist behavior so jarring for Seoulites are rooted in Confucian principles of hierarchy, collective harmony, and respect for the private domestic sphere (Connor, n.d.). Korea's Confucian heritage, institutionalized through the Joseon dynasty (1392–1910), established a sharp distinction between public and private space and a strong ethic of communal obligation. When tourists photograph strangers, knock on doors, or generate noise in residential alleys, they violate norms that are not merely preferences but carry the weight of centuries of cultural formation. This background makes the threshold for perceiving tourist behavior as disrespectful far lower in Seoul than in cities with more individualistic spatial norms.

Historical Experience of Externally Imposed Development

Korean residents' distrust of top-down tourism development is shaped by a specific historical experience: the 1988 Seoul Olympics, in which the authoritarian government forcibly displaced 720,000 people to construct Olympic infrastructure, erased marginalized populations under a "purification campaign," and presented the city to the world while residents bore the costs (Park, 2021). This history primes communities to read government-led tourism development as a pattern of sacrifice being imposed on ordinary people for the benefit of outsiders and elites. It gives resident protest language — "they designated our village against our will" — a historically grounded credibility.

National Pride and the Ambivalence of Hallyu Tourism

The Korean Wave complicates resident attitudes by introducing a dimension of national pride. The IOC (2020) documented that the 1988 Olympics produced a widespread sense of national confidence that persists in how Koreans relate to international attention. Many Seoulites simultaneously feel proud that foreigners are drawn to Korean culture and frustrated when that attention degrades community life. This ambivalence — between cultural ambassador and aggrieved resident — is a distinctive feature of Seoul's stakeholder landscape that does not have a direct equivalent in NYC.

New York City

Race, Class, and the History of Racialized Housing Policy

As documented by the Harvard Kennedy School Student Policy Review (2023), NYC's ethnic enclaves have been commodified for tourist consumption since at least the 1920s, when tour guides fabricated stories about Chinatown for white tourist audiences. This century-long pattern of racial commodification means that communities of color in NYC approach tourist interest with a historically conditioned suspicion: outside attention has historically meant extraction, not exchange. Their position in the debate over tourism regulation is therefore shaped not just by

present-day housing costs but by deeply embedded memory of being treated as spectacle rather than citizen.

The Fiscal Crisis Framing and Its Legacy

NYC institutional actors — government agencies, destination marketing organizations, and hotel associations — operate within a discursive framework established by the fiscal crisis of the 1970s, in which tourism was consciously positioned as a substitute for federal investment in urban infrastructure. Holley’s (2017) account, drawing on Greenberg’s *Branding New York*, shows that this framing became so entrenched that after 9/11, Mayor Bloomberg’s “50 by 15” tourism growth goal was treated as a civic recovery strategy. For these actors, opposing tourism growth feels equivalent to opposing the city’s economic wellbeing — a position that structurally marginalizes resident concerns by framing them as parochial obstacles to a collective good.

Competing Constructions of Community

The LL18 debate exposes how different stakeholders construct community differently. Tenant advocates define community as renters with long-term roots in a neighborhood, whose stability depends on affordable housing. Homeowner advocates define community as families with property stakes, who rely on home-sharing income to remain in the city. Tourism businesses define community as the diverse network of workers and small businesses that depend on visitor spending. Each construction is coherent within its own framework, and each generates a different assessment of what policies would be just. The fracture within communities of color over LL18 — with some Black organizations supporting reform and others opposing it — illustrates how intersecting axes of race, class, tenure status, and economic role produce genuinely divergent interests even among constituencies that share a history of marginalization.

Part IV: What Is at Stake for Each City and Its Constituencies

Seoul

Cultural Heritage and Community Survival

For Bukchon Hanok Village specifically, the stakes are existential for the community. The 27.6 percent population decline over five years (Wikipedia, 2026) represents not merely demographic change but the potential extinction of a living residential community that gives the heritage site its meaning. As resident Bonhap Hue put it: “*We are starting to question how much longer we can live in this area*” (KITV, 2025). If residents are displaced entirely, Bukchon risks becoming what researcher Park & Kovacs (2020) describe in their study of Ihwa Mural Village as a site that is commercially revitalized but socially hollow — a heritage spectacle without a living community.

Economic Competitiveness and the Tourism Model

For the South Korean government and tourism industry, what is at stake is the sustainability of a tourism model built around Hallyu and heritage experience. The ITIJ (2026) reports that the

Korea Tourism Organization and industry groups have warned that “without deeper structural change, Korea risks damaging both its cultural assets and its competitiveness.” A Seoul that drives out its residential communities would ultimately destroy the authentic cultural texture that makes it attractive to quality-seeking visitors, producing a negative feedback loop in which overtourism degrades the very product it exploits.

The Rights of Residents vs. the Right to Travel

Lee & Chung (2025), in their study of resident anti-tourism attitudes in smart tourism cities published in a Sage journal, frame the stakes in terms of rights: “*there has been much debate between the tourists’ right to travel and residents’ right to peace and quiet*”, noting that both the right to mobility and the right of residents to quality of life are recognized human rights. Seoul’s challenge — and the challenge for any overtourism destination — is constructing a governance framework that takes both rights seriously rather than treating one as automatically subordinate.

New York City

Affordable Housing and Community Displacement

The most concrete stake in NYC’s tourism-related debates is the right of working-class residents — disproportionately Black and Latino — to remain in the city. The CUNY report (n.d.) frames this as the cumulative consequence of a century of racially discriminatory policy: communities that were confined to specific neighborhoods by redlining and blockbusting are now being displaced from those same neighborhoods by tourism-driven gentrification. As Holley (2017) documents, the city’s post-fiscal-crisis turn toward tourism as economic policy was a deliberate choice to serve the “out-of-towner” over the resident. For long-term New Yorkers of color, what is at stake in every tourism policy debate is whether this choice will finally be reversed.

The Distribution of Tourism’s Economic Benefits

The NYC Comptroller’s office (2021) emphasizes that tourism workers earn a median wage of \$32,000 — significantly below the citywide median of \$50,000 — and that minorities and immigrants make up 66 percent and 46 percent of the industry’s workforce, respectively (McKinsey, 2021). What is at stake for this constituency is whether tourism revenue is distributed in ways that benefit the workers who make the industry function or whether it accrues predominantly to hotel chains, real estate investors, and the city’s fiscal accounts. The LL18 debate crystallizes this: outer borough homeowners and small business owners were losing tourism income while Manhattan hotels and large developers absorbed the gains.

The Character and Identity of the City

At the broadest level, what is at stake in NYC is the question of who the city is for. Holley (2017) captures this in the voice of writer Fran Lebowitz: “*present-day New York has been made to attract people who didn’t like New York.*” This is not a frivolous concern. The cultural

specificity that makes NYC distinctive as a tourist destination is a product of its diverse, sometimes abrasive, historically layered communities. If those communities are displaced in the service of a tourist-friendly blandness, the city loses not just its residents but the very quality of place that draws visitors in the first place. This convergence of resident and tourist interest in the preservation of authentic urban character is the overlooked common ground in the stakeholder debate.

Summary

The stakeholder sources across both cities reveal that disagreements about tourism are sustained not primarily by different facts but by fundamentally different frames of reference, each of which makes certain concerns visible and others invisible — precisely the dynamic Sorrells (2016) identifies as the core challenge of the framing dimension. In Seoul, the South Korean government and Korea Tourism Organization operate within a national economic prestige frame, measuring tourism's value through visitor volume, export revenue, and international competitiveness, as documented in the Urban Resilience Hub's (2018) account of Seoul's participation in the UNWTO Summit on fair and sustainable tourism. Within this frame, residents' complaints about noise and privacy are legible only as management problems to be addressed through curfews and behavior campaigns. Bukchon residents, by contrast, operate from a residential sovereignty frame: their statement that "the government designated our village as a Hanok Conservation Area against our will and shifted the responsibility to us" (Korea Times, 2018) is not a policy disagreement but an assertion about power and consent that renders economic growth arguments categorically beside the point. Kim et al. (2020) make this framing conflict explicit, finding in their study of South Korean overtourism communities that anti-tourist attitudes stem from "exclusion of ordinary residents, unfair distribution, disregard of diversity, and no control on negative impacts throughout the tourism development" — a finding that reframes overtourism from a numbers management problem into a justice problem about who holds power in the development process.

In New York City, the framing conflicts are equally irresolvable at the surface level because they operate from incommensurable premises. NYC Tourism + Conventions (2023) and the Office of the New York State Comptroller (2021) frame tourism as a civic public good — generating 7.2 percent of private sector employment and nearly \$47 billion in economic contribution — co-opting the language of equity to position growth-oriented policy as benefiting all boroughs. The "Tenants Not Tourists" coalition and housing advocates operate from a housing-as-human-right frame in which the categorical priority of long-term affordable housing supply makes tourism infrastructure arguments structurally irrelevant; as documented by *amNewYork* (2025), even the competing chants at City Hall — "Housing is a human right!" versus "Are we not people?" — reveal two groups whose frames are not just different but logically incompatible. The most complex framing position belongs to Black and Latino

homeowners in the outer boroughs, who simultaneously hold a homeownership-as-stability frame (generating support for Airbnb income as documented by the NAACP Jamaica Branch's statement in *amNewYork*, 2025) and a community preservation frame that makes them vulnerable to the same tourism-driven gentrification Airbnb accelerates. As Sorrells (2016) emphasizes, becoming aware of the frames from which we view the world is not a passive exercise but a critical act — and the stakeholder sources collectively show that until government agencies, residents, business operators, and advocacy organizations can name and acknowledge the frames they are operating within, every proposed solution will appear legitimate to those whose frame it serves and inadequate or unjust to those whose frame it excludes.

Collective Responses (positioning) (Lokesh)

Introduction

The collective responses to tourism-related tensions in Seoul and New York City illustrate the positioning dimension of Sorrells' (2016) intercultural praxis model, in which institutions enact power through policy decisions that privilege certain frames and constituencies over others. Tourism governance in both cities is not neutral administration but a political process shaped by economic priorities, historical precedent, and institutional self-interest. Governments, tourism organizations, corporate actors, and advocacy coalitions have each advanced responses that reflect their positionality within broader structures of economic power. Examining these responses reveals not only what actions were taken, but whose interests were protected, whose concerns were minimized, and how the issue itself was framed.

Seoul: Collective Responses

1. Seoul Metropolitan Government & Korea Tourism Organization (KTO)

The most visible collective response in Seoul has been the 2024 overtourism management policy implemented in Bukchon Hanok Village. The Seoul Metropolitan Government introduced a visitor curfew between 5 p.m. and 10 a.m., divided the neighborhood into color-coded tourism management zones, and increased monitoring of tourist behavior (Korea Times, 2024; The POST, 2025). These measures represented a departure from earlier passive strategies, which had relied primarily on informational campaigns and the hiring of tourism guides rather than structural restrictions (Korea Times, 2019).

From a positioning perspective, this policy shift acknowledges resident grievances while maintaining tourism as an economic priority. The curfew partially reduced late-night disturbance and symbolically validated community complaints. However, residents criticized enforcement loopholes, particularly exemptions for hanok hotel guests, arguing that the policy treated symptoms rather than root causes (KITV, 2025). Structural reliance on tourism revenue, reinforced by Hallyu-driven national branding (Bae et al., 2017), remained unchanged.

What worked was limited behavioral regulation and increased visibility of the issue. What did not work was redistribution of decision-making power or reduction of overall visitor volume. As Sorrells (2016) argues, positioning requires asking who has the authority to define the problem. In this case, overtourism was framed as a management issue rather than a justice issue concerning residents' right to residential sovereignty.

What worked:

- Acknowledged overtourism as a legitimate governance issue
- Reduced late-night disturbance
- Signaled that resident concerns were publicly recognized

What did not work:

- Enforcement gaps
- Continued prioritization of visitor volume
- Structural economic reliance on tourism remained unchanged

The result has been partial mitigation without structural transformation. The government’s positioning continues to frame tourism as essential to national economic competitiveness and Hallyu-driven global influence.

2. Corporate and Industry Actors in Seoul

Tourism businesses, including hanok hotels and retail operators, responded by reframing responsibility. Industry representatives emphasized their small share of total visitor numbers and highlighted their contribution to cultural preservation and economic vitality (KITV, 2025). Travel and Tour World (2025) documents that the Korea Tourism Organization’s broader strategy focuses on dispersing visitors geographically rather than reducing total arrivals.

This positioning preserves economic growth while diffusing accountability. By framing overtourism as a distribution problem rather than a volume problem, industry actors maintain profitability and national competitiveness while the social costs remain concentrated in residential neighborhoods. The result is a partial mitigation strategy that addresses crowding optics without altering the growth-oriented tourism model established during the post-1988 globalization period (International Olympic Committee, 2020).

Result:

Economic actors preserve profitability while responsibility for social disruption remains concentrated at the neighborhood level.

New York City: Collective Responses

1. New York City Government – Local Law 18 (Short-Term Rental Reform)

In New York City, the most consequential collective response has been Local Law 18 (2023), which required short-term rental host registration and effectively restricted rentals under 30 days without host presence. The policy was framed as a housing protection measure intended to return

units to the long-term rental market amid a historic vacancy crisis (City & State New York, 2025).

The measurable results were immediate: Airbnb listings dropped by over 90 percent (amNewYork, 2025). However, rental prices continued to rise and vacancy rates remained largely unchanged. Hotel prices increased significantly, suggesting that market power shifted rather than housing supply expanded.

From a positioning perspective, LL18 successfully regulated one sector but did not address deeper structural drivers of housing inequality, including speculative real estate investment and long-term gentrification trends (CUNY Advanced Research Collaborative, n.d.). The law privileged a tenant-protection framing while simultaneously aligning with hotel industry interests, illustrating how policies can satisfy one constituency while generating unintended economic consequences for others, including outer-borough homeowners who relied on rental income (amNewYork, 2025). After implementation:

- Airbnb listings dropped by over 90% (amNewYork, 2025)
- Hotel prices increased
- Rents continued to rise
- Vacancy rates showed minimal change

What worked:

- Dramatically reduced illegal short-term rental listings
- Strengthened regulatory enforcement

What did not work:

- Did not significantly reduce rent prices
- Shifted economic benefit toward the hotel industry
- Reduced supplemental income for homeowners

The outcome illustrates how collective responses can successfully regulate one sector while failing to resolve underlying structural housing inequality.

2. Hotel Industry & Tourism Organizations

The Hotel Association of New York City strongly supported Local Law 18, publicly framing it as housing justice while also benefiting competitively from Airbnb's restriction (amNewYork, 2025). NYC Tourism + Conventions continues to advocate for visitor growth, citing tourism's

contribution of approximately 7 percent of private sector employment (Office of the New York State Comptroller, 2021).

This response reflects what Holley (2017) identifies as NYC's post-1970s fiscal crisis positioning of tourism as essential urban infrastructure. Tourism is framed not as discretionary but as foundational to economic survival. Within this framework, limiting tourism volume appears fiscally irresponsible, even when communities bear disproportionate costs. Sorrells (2016) notes that positioning often renders certain harms invisible; in NYC's case, the lived experiences of overcrowded neighborhoods and displaced residents are subordinated to macroeconomic indicators.

Their collective response emphasizes:

- Expanding visitor volume
- Distributing tourism across boroughs
- Protecting hospitality jobs

This growth-oriented positioning reflects NYC's post-1970s fiscal crisis model, where tourism is treated as essential infrastructure rather than a discretionary economic sector (Holley, 2017).

Comparative Analysis of Collective Responses

Across both cities, collective responses share three patterns:

1. Economic framing dominates governance decisions.

Tourism is treated primarily as revenue-generating infrastructure.

2. Responses are reactive rather than preventive.

Policies emerge after overtourism pressures escalate.

3. Structural inequalities persist.

In Seoul, residents remain vulnerable to displacement pressures.

In NYC, housing affordability remains unresolved despite regulation.

However, the mechanisms differ. Seoul emphasizes behavioral regulation and spatial management. NYC emphasizes market regulation and housing law. Both approaches demonstrate how institutions define what counts as legitimate harm. Seoul's policies imply that disruptive behavior is the problem. NYC's policies imply that housing supply distortion is the problem. In neither case are long-term growth models fundamentally reconsidered.

Conclusion

The collective responses in Seoul and New York City demonstrate that tourism governance is an exercise of positioning within systems of economic power. Governments and industry actors frame tourism as a necessary engine of competitiveness and fiscal stability. Residents and advocacy groups frame it as a justice issue concerning the right to remain, the right to peace, and the community's right. The measurable outcomes of these policies reveal partial successes but limited structural transformation. As Sorrells (2016) emphasizes, intercultural praxis requires not only acknowledging multiple perspectives but also interrogating the power relations that determine which perspectives shape policy. Until tourism governance addresses those power imbalances directly, collective responses will continue to manage conflict rather than resolve it.

Community Involvement (Dialogue) (Laith)

Introduction

The degree to which affected communities are included in tourism governance in Seoul and New York City illustrates the dialogue dimension of Sorrells' (2016) intercultural praxis model, which emphasizes reciprocal listening, ethical engagement, and the redistribution of communicative power among stakeholders. Tourism development is often framed as a technical or economic policy issue, yet the experiences of residents demonstrate that it is fundamentally a social process involving negotiation over space, identity, and belonging. Examining who was consulted, who was excluded, and how communities responded reveals the power dynamics embedded in tourism governance and the extent to which participatory dialogue has shaped policy outcomes.

Across both cities, community involvement has increased in response to overtourism pressures, but participation has frequently been reactive rather than proactive. Governments and economic actors continue to hold primary authority, while residents often gain influence only after mobilizing collective action. Nevertheless, examples of community engagement demonstrate that dialogue — even when unequal — can produce measurable policy changes and reshape how institutions frame tourism-related challenges.

Seoul: Community Consultation, Resident Protest, and Limited Participation

Community involvement in Seoul has historically been constrained by top-down development practices rooted in state-led modernization and tourism expansion. The designation of Bukchon Hanok Village as a cultural heritage and tourism site occurred largely without meaningful resident consultation, contributing to perceptions that locals were positioned as custodians of national heritage rather than decision-makers regarding their own neighborhood. Residents have repeatedly argued that policies prioritized visitor access and national economic interests over residential wellbeing, reinforcing distrust toward institutional actors.

The most visible example of community involvement emerged through organized resident protest. According to reporting by the Korea Times (2018), Bukchon residents publicly demonstrated against excessive tourism, stating that government authorities had “designated our village... against our will and shifted the responsibility to us.” This protest activity forced the issue into national public discourse and pressured authorities to acknowledge resident grievances. Subsequent policies — including the 2024 visitor curfew, zoning regulations, and increased monitoring — reflect partial institutional responses to community concerns (Korea Times, 2024; The POST, 2025).

From a dialogue perspective, this represents a qualified success. Community mobilization produced recognition of resident experiences and initiated policy change, demonstrating that grassroots engagement can influence governance even within hierarchical decision-making systems. However, the depth of participation remained limited. Residents reported enforcement

loopholes and insufficient consultation during policy design, suggesting that institutions incorporated community feedback selectively rather than collaboratively (KITV, 2025). Inclusion within Seoul's community dialogue has also been uneven across demographic groups. Elderly residents, renters, and individuals not directly involved in tourism-related businesses often have less representation in policy discussions compared to commercial stakeholders. Tourism operators and government agencies retain disproportionate influence due to their economic power and institutional authority. Additionally, tourists themselves — despite being central actors in the issue — are largely absent from participatory dialogue structures, reflecting an asymmetry in accountability between visitors and residents.

Despite these limitations, community activism has contributed to increased awareness of overtourism's social impacts and has initiated public conversations about sustainable tourism practices. Public mediation efforts and discussions between local government, residents, and tourism operators represent incremental steps toward more participatory governance, though structural power imbalances persist.

New York City: Advocacy Coalitions, Public Participation, and Policy Debate

Community involvement in New York City reflects a more institutionalized tradition of civic engagement, with advocacy organizations, tenant groups, and community coalitions playing significant roles in tourism-related policy debates. The controversy surrounding Local Law 18 — regulating short-term rentals — demonstrates how community voices can shape legislation through public hearings, protests, and advocacy campaigns.

Tenant advocacy groups and housing coalitions framed short-term rentals as a housing justice issue, arguing that unregulated tourism accommodation reduced long-term housing supply and contributed to rising rents. This perspective influenced policymakers and contributed to the passage of Local Law 18 (City & State New York, 2025). From an intercultural praxis perspective, this represents a meaningful example of community dialogue influencing institutional decision-making, as resident concerns reshaped the framing of tourism from economic growth to housing equity.

However, inclusion in NYC's dialogue was also uneven. Homeowners who relied on short-term rental income — many of whom were members of historically marginalized communities — reported feeling excluded from policymaking processes that ultimately restricted their economic opportunities (amNewYork, 2025). Advocacy organizations representing homeowners and small business interests argued that their voices were overshadowed by tenant-focused narratives, illustrating how community participation can still privilege certain constituencies over others even within participatory systems.

Tourism workers represent another constituency with limited direct involvement in dialogue. Although the tourism industry employs large numbers of immigrants and minority workers (Office of the New York State Comptroller, 2021), their perspectives are often mediated through unions, corporations, or policy advocates rather than direct participation. This indirect

representation highlights how economic dependence does not necessarily translate into decision-making power.

Nevertheless, NYC demonstrates stronger institutional pathways for community involvement than Seoul. Public hearings, organized advocacy networks, and media visibility allow multiple constituencies to contest policy decisions and influence outcomes. The resulting debates reveal competing definitions of community — renters seeking housing stability, homeowners seeking financial survival, businesses seeking economic growth — each grounded in distinct experiences and priorities.

Comparative Analysis of Community Involvement

Comparing Seoul and New York City reveals both shared patterns and structural differences in community involvement.

First, in both cities, community participation often emerges after conflicts intensify rather than during initial planning stages. Resident protests in Bukchon and housing advocacy movements in NYC both developed in response to perceived policy failures, suggesting that participatory mechanisms were insufficient at earlier stages of development.

Second, economic stakeholders maintain disproportionate influence across both contexts. Governments, tourism organizations, and corporate actors possess structural authority that allows them to define problems and solutions, while residents frequently must mobilize collectively to gain attention. This imbalance reflects broader global patterns in tourism governance, where economic growth narratives dominate policymaking.

Third, community action can still shape outcomes despite unequal power relations. Bukchon residents influenced tourism regulation policies, while NYC advocacy coalitions reshaped housing legislation. These examples demonstrate that dialogue, even when imperfect, can produce meaningful institutional change.

However, the mechanisms of involvement differ significantly. Seoul relies more heavily on hierarchical governance structures with limited formal participation channels, while NYC benefits from stronger civic institutions and advocacy networks that facilitate engagement. These structural differences influence both the scope and effectiveness of community dialogue.

Conclusion

Community involvement in Seoul and New York City demonstrates the possibilities and limitations of participatory dialogue within tourism governance. Residents and affected populations have increasingly asserted their voices through protests, advocacy, and public engagement, producing incremental policy changes and shifting institutional framing of tourism-related challenges. However, decision-making authority remains concentrated among governments and economic actors, limiting the depth of community influence.

Sorrells (2016) emphasizes that dialogue requires not only listening but ethical engagement that redistributes communicative power. In both cities, community involvement has begun to challenge dominant economic narratives but has not fully transformed the structural inequalities that shape tourism development. Future progress toward equitable tourism governance would require proactive consultation, inclusive representation of diverse constituencies, and collaborative decision-making processes that position residents not as passive recipients of policy but as co-creators of solutions.

Potential Solutions (Reflection & Action) Patrick Dunn

The reflection and action dimensions of Sorrells' (2016) intercultural praxis model demand that stakeholders move beyond documenting harm toward asking what ethical, structurally grounded responses might look like — and who bears the responsibility for enacting them. The research examined across this paper's preceding sections reveals that tourism governance in both Seoul and New York City has thus far been organized around reactive, economically driven responses that manage conflict without addressing its structural roots. A genuinely reflective approach requires evaluating how the backgrounds, framings, and positions of different stakeholders shape which solutions appear viable, which remain politically marginal, and which risks fall disproportionately on the same communities that have already borne the greatest costs.

Evaluating How Stakeholder Positioning Shapes Proposed Solutions

In Seoul, the South Korean government and Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) operate from a national economic prestige frame in which high visitor volumes are treated as both an economic necessity and a cultural achievement. This positioning makes solutions that would cap or meaningfully reduce tourist arrivals appear categorically unacceptable — not because such limits are technically infeasible, but because they conflict with the institutional identity that has been built around Hallyu-driven growth since the 1988 Olympics (Bae et al., 2017; IOC, 2020). As a result, the solutions that government and industry actors have advanced — dispersal campaigns, behavioral guidelines, curfews with significant loopholes — are structurally designed to preserve tourism volume while distributing its social costs more efficiently. Residents of Bukchon Hanok Village, operating from a residential sovereignty frame, assess these same solutions as fundamentally inadequate because they leave the growth model intact (Korea Times, 2018; The POST, 2025).

In New York City, the framing conflict is similarly irresolvable at the surface level. The Hotel Association and NYC Tourism + Conventions evaluate proposed solutions through the lens of the city's post-fiscal-crisis reliance on tourism as economic infrastructure, a frame in which any reduction in visitor capacity constitutes fiscal risk (Holley, 2017; NYC Tourism + Conventions, 2023). Tenant advocacy groups and housing organizations evaluate solutions through a housing-as-human-right frame in which the expansion of the long-term rental supply is the non-negotiable baseline (amNewYork, 2025). Outer-borough homeowners of color — particularly those who relied on Airbnb income — hold a third frame in which homeownership stability is the primary value, making solutions that restrict short-term rental income appear as racial and economic injustice regardless of their broader housing market effects (amNewYork,

2025). As Sorrells (2016) emphasizes, the action dimension of intercultural praxis requires not choosing among these frames but naming the power relations that determine which frame shapes policy — and designing solutions that do not simply reproduce those power relations under a new name.

Alternative and Comparative Solutions

Community-Led Tourism Governance (Seoul)

One potential response to Bukchon's overtourism crisis is the adoption of a community-led governance model in which residents hold formal decision-making authority over land use, visitor access, and commercial licensing in their neighborhood — rather than being consulted after institutional decisions have already been made. This model has been piloted in Amsterdam, where the city has implemented neighborhood-level tourism management plans developed in direct partnership with resident associations, including hard visitor caps negotiated with community approval (Urban Resilience Hub, 2018). In Venice, the introduction of reservation requirements and entry fees for day visitors to the historic city center represents an attempt — though contested — to assert that the interests of a living residential community must structurally constrain visitor access rather than be balanced against it (Urban Resilience Hub, 2018).

Applied to Seoul, this approach would require the Seoul Metropolitan Government to transfer genuine authority — not merely consultative access — to Bukchon residents over decisions affecting their neighborhood. The potential benefit for residential stakeholders is significant: it would end the pattern Park (2021) documents, in which the government designates communities as heritage sites without consent and then expects residents to absorb the social costs of the resulting tourism. The potential risk is equally concrete: tourism industry operators who currently benefit from unrestricted access to Bukchon's commercial and aesthetic appeal would face reduced revenue, and the government's Hallyu-driven national branding strategy would need to accommodate limits that run counter to its growth orientation. The KTO's current "SPECTRUM" dispersal strategy — designed to spread visitors geographically across provincial destinations — points in a compatible direction (Travel and Tour World, 2025), but dispersal alone does not address the governance deficit that residents have identified.

Short-Term Rental Reform with Community Benefit Agreements (New York City)

The implementation of Local Law 18 demonstrated both the possibility and the limits of regulatory intervention in NYC's short-term rental market. What LL18 achieved — a dramatic reduction in illegal listings — came at the cost of eliminating legitimate income for outer-borough homeowners of color who had relied on hosting to sustain homeownership in an increasingly unaffordable city (amNewYork, 2025). An alternative policy design, attempted in other jurisdictions including Portland, Oregon, would combine strict registration requirements with community benefit agreements that exempt owner-occupied short-term rentals in designated affordability-stressed zones from the most restrictive provisions, while directing a portion of hotel and short-term rental tax revenue into a dedicated affordable housing fund administered with community board oversight (Chicago Policy Review, 2024).

The potential benefit of this approach for the stakeholders identified in this paper is that it holds together two concerns that LL18 forced into opposition: the right of long-term renters to

protection from tourism-driven displacement, and the right of homeowners of color to economic tools that allow them to remain in the city. The potential risk is significant: it requires a level of administrative precision and political will that NYC has historically not sustained, and it leaves unresolved the deeper structural driver — the concentration of tourism revenue in Manhattan and in large corporate actors rather than in the outer-borough communities that bear the greatest social costs (Office of the New York State Comptroller, 2021; McKinsey & Company, 2021).

Intercultural Education and Visitor Norm Disclosure (Both Cities)

A solution that has been attempted in both cities with limited structural impact, but which carries genuine potential if redesigned with community input, is intercultural education aimed at visitors. In Seoul, the Korea Tourism Organization has implemented behavioral campaigns encouraging tourists to respect residential privacy in Bukchon (Korea Times, 2019). In New York City, tourism promotion organizations have increasingly incorporated messaging about equitable spending across boroughs (NYC Tourism + Conventions, 2023). The weakness of existing approaches is that they are produced by the same institutional actors whose primary interest is maintaining visitor volume — which means the norm disclosure is designed to manage perception rather than to genuinely alter behavior or redistribute power.

A community-designed alternative would involve affected resident groups producing the visitor education materials themselves, with content that reflects their actual experience of tourism's costs rather than an institutional framing of tourism as mutual benefit. In both Seoul and New York, this would require funding for resident-led organizations to develop and distribute materials through the same channels — hotel check-ins, tour agency briefings, transportation hubs — currently controlled by tourism promotion bodies. The benefit is that it inserts resident perspectives into a moment of genuine visitor receptivity. The risk is that without structural enforcement mechanisms — zoning controls, licensing requirements, visitor fees — behavioral education functions as a palliative rather than a solution, and resident organizations may bear the labor of producing materials while the institutional actors who fund them retain all authority over tourism policy.

A Way Toward Ethical Action

The evidence across this paper consistently points toward a single structural conclusion: ethical action in both Seoul and New York City requires governance frameworks that position affected residents not as consultees but as co-designers of tourism policy, with formal authority rather than advisory access. In Seoul, this means extending the community-led governance model to give Bukchon residents binding authority over visitor caps, commercial licensing, and heritage site management — drawing on the Amsterdam and Venice precedents while adapting them to Seoul's specific Confucian spatial norms and its distinct history of state-imposed development (Park, 2021; Urban Resilience Hub, 2018). In New York City, this means redesigning short-term rental regulation to hold together the interests of long-term renters and outer-borough homeowners of color, while directing tourism tax revenue into a community-controlled affordable housing fund that acknowledges the century-long history of racial commodification documented by the Harvard Kennedy School Student Policy Review (2023).

In both cities, the shared ethical imperative is the same: tourism governance must stop treating the social costs borne by the most vulnerable residents as the acceptable price of economic growth, and start treating those residents' right to remain in their communities as the non-negotiable baseline from which all policy design begins. This is not a technocratic adjustment but a political reorientation — one that requires the same governments and tourism organizations that have historically prioritized visitor volume over residential welfare to fundamentally reconceive what tourism governance is for.

Conclusion (Santiago):

Across Seoul and New York City, the evidence examined in this paper consistently demonstrates that local perceptions of tourists are not primarily matters of individual hospitality or cultural disposition. They are the accumulated products of deliberate historical decisions: Olympic redevelopment that displaced 720,000 Seoul residents, post-fiscal-crisis rebranding that transformed New York into a product for outside consumption, decades of racially discriminatory housing policy that concentrated vulnerability in communities of color, and the rapid commercialization of living neighborhoods into heritage attractions. When a Bukchon resident views a tourist with wariness or a Brooklyn tenant resents the presence of short-term rental guests, these responses are expressions of social norms shaped by structural forces, not by failures of hospitality.

The intercultural praxis model provides a language for understanding why this matters. The inquiry dimension demands that we refuse to treat local attitudes as culturally inherent and instead trace them to the historical choices that produced them. The framing dimension reveals that governments and tourism industries consistently deploy economic growth narratives that render resident harm invisible by design. The positioning dimension shows that policy decisions from Seoul's curfew in Bukchon to New York's Local Law 18 reflect institutional power far more than community consensus. And the dialogue dimension exposes how participation in governance has been reactive, uneven, and structurally biased toward economic actors, even as resident mobilization has produced real, if limited, policy change.

What emerges from the comparison of these two cities is a set of findings that transcend their individual contexts. First, the social costs of tourism are not distributed randomly; they fall disproportionately on communities already made vulnerable by historical injustice. Some examples shown in the paper are working-class residents in tourist-impacted Seoul neighborhoods, and communities of color in gentrifying New York. Second, the policy responses of both cities have thus far managed the symptoms of overtourism rather than addressing its structural drivers, because growth-oriented economic frameworks remain dominant in both governance systems. Third, and perhaps most importantly, the communities most affected by tourism have demonstrated through protest, advocacy, and sustained civic engagement that they are not passive recipients of policy but active agents capable of reshaping institutional narratives even when their power to do so is constrained.

The question of how social norms shape the perception of tourists ultimately points toward a deeper question: who has the right to define what a city is for? In both Seoul and New York, that question is being contested in real time, in neighborhood meetings, on protest signs, and in the lived friction of daily life alongside millions of visitors. This paper argues that until tourism governance takes seriously not just the volume of visitors but the distribution of their costs and benefits, local perceptions of tourists will continue to be shaped by the well-founded sense that the city has been remade around the preferences of those passing through, at the expense of those who remain.

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