Effects From Tourism In Australia

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Introduction:
The Great Barrier Reef located off the Queensland coast is known for its abundance of diverse wildlife with over 1,500 species, and over 3,000 individual reef systems (WWF, 2015). Unfortunately, over the years there has been mass bleaching that has caused over 50 percent to die off (James, 2018). With this great loss there has been an increase of tourists that have traveled to Australia to visit and dive down into these reefs. Since many tourists have diving the Great Barrier Reef on their bucket list, they want to visit it before it’s completely dead. Tourism is one of the main industries to create revenue in many parts of Australia. It reaps in about $6 billion annually and without this attraction more than 69,000 Australians jobs will be lost (WWF, 2015). In doing this, the researcher aims to discover how the increase of tourists is affecting the coral reefs health and the economy of Australia.

Research Questions:
1. In what ways, how are local Cairns diving companies preventing tourists from harming the Great Barrier Reef?
2. Does Australians care about their environment and how do they prevent further harm?
3. What impacts can be anticipated by tourism and global warming over the next 10 years on the Great Barrier reef?

Methods:
A qualitative study was conducted to provide context of human experience with the Great Barrier Reef. Qualitative research allows for the analysis of information through language and behavior in natural settings. This type of design is best for this research because it will capture personal experiences and testimonies of individuals who are impacted by changes in the Great Barrier Reef.

Research Site: To understand the impact of the Great Barrier Reef on a local tourism town, the researcher visited Cairns from July 18–21, 2019. While there the researcher hopes to experience the Great Barrier Reef and visit local businesses.

Observation: To understand the impact of tourism on the GBR, the researcher will be conducting a field experience by participating in an actual dive. The researcher will dive with a local diving company and will take detailed notes about the experience.

Results:

Diving the Great Barrier Reef

The researcher dove and snorkeled the Great Barrier Reef with Tusa Dive, a local Cairns diving company.

Artifacts: The collection of physical artifacts can provide insight into the current state of the reefs, steps businesses might be doing to limit the harm.

Observations:
- Crew leads by example
- Has a no touching the reef rule
- Monitors the swimmers on deck and in water
- Provides booklets of information for passengers to read through
- Displays a presentation to inform guests about the importance of the reef

Discussion/Conclusion:
The Great Barrier Reef is one of the seven natural wonders of the world and it is in danger due to environmental causes and interaction with humans. The reef isn’t dead yet, but it’s heading there as tourists are still harming it everyday. Prior research shows that human interaction stresses the coral out and causes it to bleach which is the beginning of its death. If the reef dies so will the tourist industry for Australia which will hurt their economy.