

RESIDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF TOURISTIC ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORT FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED TOURISM IMPACT

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INTRODUCTION

Residents' experiences of touristic activities and its outcome has gained significant attention in recent literature (Kastenholz et al., 2018; Schnitzer et al., 2019). The current body of literature suggests that direct involvement in touristic activities has a significant impact on residents' perceived value and behaviors related to tourism (Schnitzer et al., 2019). The quality of the surrounding environment has a significant impact on residents' perception of their living and working conditions. Positive experiences of the environment can enhance residents' sense of place attachment, while negative experiences can result in a diminished sense of belonging (Dean et al., 2019). According to Luo et al. (2015), direct engagement in touristic activities can facilitate better inter-party relationships and foster a deeper understanding of the tourism among residents. Moreover, the tourism experience of residents can broaden their understanding of the tourism and its impact on local communities (Chen & Chen, 2010; Eusébio et al., 2018).

Prior research suggests that residents are more likely to endorse tourism development in their area when they perceive the potential positive impacts (Látková & Vogt, 2012; Sharpley, 2014). Tourism can have a beneficial impact on local communities through the creation of job opportunities, the enhancement of infrastructure, the preservation of local culture, and the economic benefits generated

by increased visitors (Andereck et al., 2005). Nevertheless the potential negative consequences of tourism must not be ignored, as it can lead to a rise in living costs, property prices, overcrowding, and traffic congestion (Deery et al., 2012).

Given that the support and cooperation of the local community are vital to the effectiveness and continuity of any tourism development initiative, it is essential for policy makers and businesses to comprehend the perspectives of residents and seek their endorsement (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012). Early research on residents' perception and reaction to tourism has been subject to criticism for its descriptive nature, without delving into the underlying reasons for such perception and response (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). In light of this gap, the current study employs the theory of experience economy (Oh et al., 2007; Pine & Gilmore, 1999) within the context of tourism to examine residents' experience of touristic activities. The four realms of experience economy have already been widely employed as main components of tourism experience and antecedents of behavioral intentions. Hence, the main goals of the current study are twofold: firstly, to scrutinize the influence of residents' experience of touristic activities on the support for the sustainable tourism development, and secondly, to examine the mediating role of perceived tourism impact in the relationship between residents' experience and their support for sustainable tourism development.

METHOD

The survey for this study was conducted in Danang city, Vietnam, from 27th February to 20th March 2022, using a convenient non-probability sampling method. To ensure a balanced representation of both junior and senior residents, the survey was administered using a combination of online tools (Google Form) and traditional methods (hand-down questionnaire). It is noteworthy that a relatively small proportion of senior citizens in Vietnam are active on social network systems, while the young generations can be readily accessed for an online survey via platforms such as Google Form. The measurement items used in this study include residents' tourism experience (Oh et al., 2007), and perceived tourism impact (Simpson, 2008; Yoon et al., 2001). A four-item scale was developed to measure the degree to which residents intend to

support sustainable tourism development (Nicholas et al., 2009). The scale assesses residents' level of support by evaluating their agreement with a set of statements related to sustainable tourism development in their area.

Additional questions were included in the questionnaire to gather demographic information, such as gender, age, marital status, education level, and occupation, as well as information on residents' length of residency and monthly household income from tourism. The questionnaire was initially developed in English and subsequently translated into Vietnamese by a group of individuals to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the translated version. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 26.00 was used for descriptive analyses. Then factor analysis and structural equation modeling were applied with AMOS 26.00.

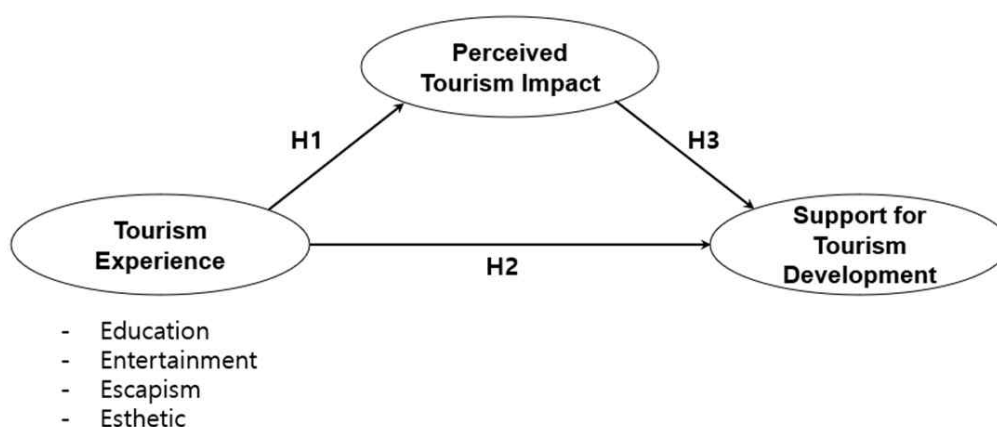


Figure 1. The Proposed research model

FINDINGS

A total of 332 respondents were participated in the survey, with the majority of the respondents being female (57.2%). For age group, the highest percentage of respondents falling into the age group between 25 and 29 (36.4%), followed by those under 25 years old (27.1%). Only 12% of participants were over 40 years old. The marital status of the participants indicated that 132 individuals (39.8%) reported being married, and about 70.8% reported having a college diploma or university degree.

A measurement model was specified to check the validity and reliability of the observed variables responses to the latent variables. To verify the accuracy of the measurement, the study utilized the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) technique along

with the maximum likelihood estimation approach. Due to the factor loading of the item 'I support the development of sustainable tourism in my city' being smaller than .50, this item was deleted from the initial results (Hair et al., 2009). Consequently, CFA was conducted again with the remaining 30 items. The revised scale with 30 items demonstrated improved fit indices, suggesting a better fit with the data. Additionally, all items had factor loadings greater than .50, indicating a stronger association between the observed variables and their underlying latent constructs. CR values higher than .70 indicate a high internal consistency for all the latent variables (Chen et al., 2014).

Structural equation modeling was used to test the proposed relationships among variables. The goodness of fit indicators ($\chi^2 = 562.017$, $df = 343$, χ

2/df = 1.639, $p = .000$, SRMR=.067, RMSEA = .044, CFI = .944, TLI = 0.929, IFI = .945, GFI=.901) revealed that the model is appropriate and acceptable. As seen in <Table 1>, Education ($\beta = 0.253$, sig. =.004), Entertainment ($\beta = -0.212$, sig. =.004) and Esthetic ($\beta = 0.303$, sig. =.004) exert significant impacts on local resident' perceived positive tourism impact, with high explanatory power (Squared Multiple Correlations [R^2] = .309). Furthermore, Education ($\beta = -0.219$, sig. =.017) and Entertainment ($\beta = 0.274$, sig. =.006) significantly influence local resident' perceived

negative tourism impact with a relatively low explaining power of 8.1%. Among four dimensions of tourism experience, only Escapism ($\beta = 0.363$, sig. =.004) directly influences resident' support for sustainable tourism development, while three other dimensions have indirect effects on their support. Additionally, both local citizen' perceived positive and negative tourism impacts directly influence their support for sustainable tourism development. It illuminated the partial mediating role of residents' perception on tourism impacts.

Table 1. Bootstrapping analysis results

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable					
	Perceived Positive Tourism Impact		Perceived Negative Tourism Impact		Support Sustainable Tourism Development	
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect
Tourism Education Experience	.253***	-	-.219**	-	.128	.228***
Tourism Entertainment Experience	-.212***	-	.274***	-	.209	-.208***
Tourism Escapism Experience	-.077	-	.010	-	.363***	-.059
Tourism Esthetic Experience	.303***	-	.063	-	-.167	.213***
Perceived Positive Tourism Impact	-	-	-	-	.740***	-
Perceived Negative Tourism Impact	-	-	-	-	-.183*	-

* $p < .1$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study address and respond to the recent calls for a more nuanced approach to understanding residents' perceptions and behavior (Kim et al., 2020). Theoretical underpinnings suggest that residents' engagement in touristic activities within their residential area could significantly influence their perception of tourism impacts and, subsequently, shape their support for sustainable tourism development. The study findings suggest that the framework of four realms of experience proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1999) can provide valuable insights for improving our understandings of residents' behavior and attitude toward tourism development. It can be inferred that the educational and esthetic aspects of residents' experience with touristic activities have a positive association with their expectations of tourism impact in the region. On the other hand, the entertainment aspects of residents' experience are more likely to be associated with negative perception of tourism impacts. Residents would perceive that entertainment activities are usually experienced as fun but may not help much in lifting

their living standards or creating any other economic benefit for the community. Perception on tourism impact play a mediating role, especially for education, entertainment, and esthetic experience, in influencing the support for sustainable tourism development in the area. Different elements of touristic experience for residents needs to be considered when the opportunity is not limited to tourists. Future research could explore how the intensity and types of touristic activities influence experiential outcomes, with the potential inclusion of in-depth interviews with residents of popular tourist destinations to enhance both theoretical and practical contributions.

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