

Article

Host Perceptions of Tourism Impact and Stage of Destination Development in a Developing Country

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Received: 20 June 2018; Accepted: 2 July 2018; Published: 3 July 2018



Abstract: This study makes two important contributions to the existing literature. On the one hand, it investigated tourism impacts as perceived by residents in two important historic cities in India (Puri and Varanasi). On the other hand, it analysed residents' perceived tourism impacts in relation to their evaluation of stage of destination development. A survey collected valid responses from 570 local residents, who display a high level of agreement concerning the positive economic and sociocultural contributions of tourism. Despite environmental concerns, respondents wish to attract more tourists and further develop infrastructure for tourism. Residents who perceive tourism to be in the development and full development/stagnation stages agree more strongly than those who consider tourism to be in the beginning stage that it increases employment opportunities and seasonality and stipulates cultural activities. In contrast, those who think tourism is in the beginning stage are more concerned about environmental pollution and thus advocate restrictions on the industry. Implications are suggested for tourism research, policy making, and planning.

Keywords: resident attitudes; destination life cycle; sustainability; support for tourism development

1. Introduction

Resident perceptions and attitudes towards tourism have attracted the attention of many researchers, the primary reason being that they are likely to influence tourists' experience and satisfaction, the success of tourism programs and policies, as well as the sustainability of tourist destinations overall [1]. Such changes also reflect broader concerns in the tourism discipline over sustainability issues and the importance of attending to the needs of host communities in tourism development. However, there has been little scholarly effort devoted to the developing countries [2–4], despite scholars arguing that residents' attitudes towards and support for tourism differ between developed and developing country contexts [3]. Although studies conducted in developed countries may offer meaningful theoretical and practical implications, they may not be applicable to developing countries that are physically remote, heavily reliant on natural resources, and vulnerable to climate change [3]. Such features mean that developing countries may confront more challenges than their developed counterparts in terms of sustainable tourism development [3]. As a result, sustainable development of tourism in developing economies may require greater community involvement [5].

In addition, residents' perceptions of tourism impacts and support for tourism may vary by the level or stage of tourism development [6–8]. Mathieson and Wall [9] argued that the perceived impacts of tourism transform over time subject to structural changes in the industry as well as the interaction between residents and tourists. Allen et al. [7] suggested that degree of tourism development directly affects residents' perceptions of tourism impacts on community life. However, the majority of prior studies only examined how residents' perceived tourism impacts vary by several

proposed levels/plans/scenarios of tourism development [10,11]. Few of them consider residents' own evaluation of stage of tourism development in relation to their perceptions of tourism impacts, despite recognition that residents better understand their place's characteristics as well as the problems and challenges it encounters.

From the previous research, there is a need to fill this gap of the impact of tourism activity in developing country contexts. This study attempts to examine tourism impacts and support for tourism development as perceived by residents in Puri and Varanasi that are two important historic cities in India. Tourism is considered as one of the major driving forces that contribute to accelerating national income as well as boosting employment. For example, tourism contributes 50.0% to the economy of Varanasi. Many other sectors in Varanasi rely to a large extent on tourism industry such as national parks, resorts, restaurants, transportation, etc. This study extends the literature by examining not only residents' perceptions of tourism impacts but also the relationship between those perceived impacts and perceived stage of tourism development as well as residents' support for tourism.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Resident Perceptions of Tourism Impacts and Demographic Variables

The perceived impacts of tourism vary depending on residents' demographic characteristics and/or socioeconomic circumstances, such as age, gender, education, job, and income. In some cases, women are more opposed to tourism than men for reasons including increased traffic, noise, crimes, traditional wage, or occupational differences. However, in others, women are more aware of the negative impacts of tourism but are more supportive of its development in their community. For example, Nunkoo and Gursoy [3] suggested that this is because those with feminist identity are more community-oriented, sensitive, and concerned about community development.

With respect to age, McGehee and Andereck [12] found that the older the resident is, the more positively he/she tends to view the impacts of tourism. Likewise, Ward and Berno [13] suggested that older people tend to maintain more positive attitudes towards tourists. To the contrary, Williams and Lawson [14] and Cavus and Tanrisevdi [15] indicated that the older group in their study is the least supportive of tourism. Education also seems to have an impact on resident attitudes. It appears that the more educated an individual is, the more positively he/she views tourism [16–19]. However, Ahmed [20] found that educated Sri Lankans were particularly unsupportive of tourism development.

Income has been found to positively influence residents' attitudes towards tourism. In Central Florida (USA), Milman and Pizam [21] found that high-income earners were more supportive of tourism than their lower counterparts. Similar findings are reported in Haralambopoulos and Pizam's [17] study in Samos (Greece). Furthermore, previous studies have identified a positive linkage between residents' job sector/economic dependence and their perceptions of tourism [17,21–24]. Those who benefit economically from tourism often view its impacts more positively [12] and are less likely than others to report its negative impacts [25]. Many of these studies draw upon the social exchange theory [26] to explain such relationships. This theory posits that exchange is driven by rewards and costs, in which individuals will participate if they perceive the rewards to outweigh the costs. In tourism contexts, residents are more supportive of tourism development if they perceive tourism to generate more benefits than costs. Those who perceive tourism impacts more positively are more inclined towards participating in an exchange with tourists. To the contrary, residents who feel tourism generates more costs than benefits are less likely to support tourism development.

Prior studies have also considered the influence of distance of residence on the way residents perceive tourism impacts and support tourism development. Generally, residents living closer to the central tourist zone are far more concerned about tourism development impacts, although their overall attitudes towards tourism are positive [27]. Korça [18] suggested that residents who do not live in the proximity of the main tourist zone are among the most supportive of tourism development. Conversely, those living closer to the central tourist zone tend to advocate restrictions on tourism

development. Many residents are concerned that increased numbers of tourists may negatively impact their ability to use recreational resources in the same way they have enjoyed. Furthermore, the effect of length of residence on residents' perceptions of and support for tourism has been taken in account. For example, Haralambopoulos and Pizam [17] found that the length of the average years' living in an area with a particular characteristic in common is among the important factors that explain perceptual differences between groups of residents with respect to tourism impacts. Other factors that have been considered by prior research include community attachment [28], place of birth [24], knowledge about tourism [23,29], informedness and involvement in tourism [30], political and demographic position/empowerment [31–33], type and form of tourism [34], state of local economy [35], perceived personal identity [3], and place identity/image [36].

2.2. Perceived Tourism Impacts and Stage of Destination Development

The perceived impacts of tourism also vary by the level or stage of destination development. Indeed, Mathieson and Wall [9] argued that perceived tourism impacts change through time as tourism develops, structural changes in the industry occur, and the host population is exposed to tourists to a greater extent. Butler [6] proposed a tourist area life cycle (TALC) model that consists of five stages: discovery, involvement (few tourists visit an area and local people happily seize economic opportunities provided by tourism), development (more tourists arrive and thus more facilities are established), consolidation (tourist numbers continue to increase, facilities are fully utilized, and resentment is seen in people who do not benefit from tourism), and stagnation (the area becomes less appealing, host residents become bored with the presence of tourists, and tourists look for new areas), at which point the area either declines or rejuvenates. Generally, it is suggested that a negative relationship exists between level of tourism development and tourism impacts whether such impacts are measured objectively (e.g., number of tourists or tourism facilities) or subjectively (e.g., resident perceptions) [11]. For example, Nemethy [8] argued that resident attitudes transform from welcome through to development, resentment, confrontation, and destruction. Butler's [6] model has been widely applied, wherein studies suggest that for many tourist destinations resident feelings take a downward trend from happiness to regret over the course of destination development [11,37–39]. However, it has also been criticized on the ground that communities are heterogeneous with different interests and that their attitudes depend on many factors. Nevertheless, it remains the single most cited refereed article in tourism studies [40] that "provides a useful framework for description and interpretation" [41].

The relationship between level of tourism development and perceived tourism impacts has been examined by some scholars. Allen et al. [7] suggested that level of tourism development directly affected residents' perceptions of tourism impacts on community life. They proposed a threshold for tourism development, beyond which residents' perceptions became more negative. Long et al. [42] also found that in rural Colorado residents' perceptions of the impacts of tourism increased as tourism further developed. Allen et al. [10] examined resident perceptions using four "scenarios". In the first scenario of "low tourism development and low economic activity", they found high hopes among residents for tourism development. In the second scenario of "high economic activity and high tourism development", residents' attitudes towards tourism were favourable since they already benefited from tourism. However, in the scenario of "high economic activity and low tourism development", residents did not feel the need to develop tourism due to their stable economic situation. In the final scenario of "low economic activity and high tourism development", residents were discouraged because tourism did not deliver benefits as they expected.

Most of these studies were undertaken in developed country contexts. Application of Butler's model is limited in less developed countries, as Butler [43] recognized in his state-of-knowledge volumes on TALC research. Furthermore, many prior studies tend to adopt a priori categorization of potential levels of tourism development (e.g., low vs. high) and their associated potential impacts (e.g., positive vs. negative). Limited research considers residents' own evaluation of the stage at which their place is developing in relation to their perceptions of tourism impacts. Few exceptions

include Diedrich and Garcia-Buades [44] who examined tourism impacts based on residents' perceived stage of tourism development. Three stages of tourism development were used, namely "too low", "correct level", and "too high". It was found that the perceived positive and negative impacts of tourism increased as tourism development increased. This is despite increased recognition that residents better understand their place's characteristics as well as the problems and challenges it confronts [36]. A community is also composed of heterogeneous groups, whose perceptions of stage of tourism development and associated impacts may differ significantly [45,46].

3. Methodology

3.1. Study Site and Context

Puri and Varanasi are chosen for this study given their socioeconomic, cultural, religious, and tourism importance to India (see Figure 1). Puri is one of the original pilgrimage sites for Hindus. About 80% of Puri's economy comes from tourism. Varanasi is among India's top destinations for foreign tourists. Tourism is the Varanasi's second most important sector after manufacturing. Given their important role in the development of their respective states and of India overall, Puri and Varanasi are included in India's "National Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana Scheme" that was started in 2015 to preserve heritage cities and promote sustainable heritage tourism [47].

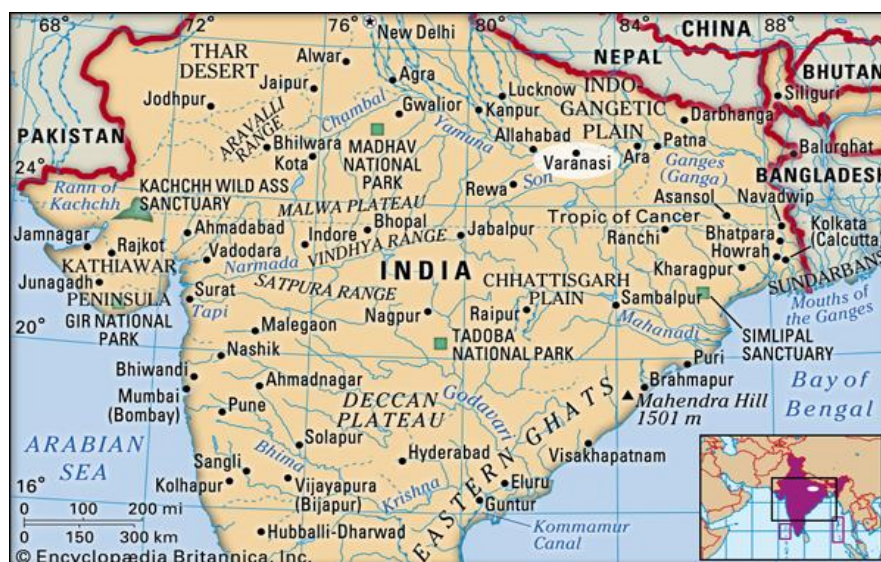


Figure 1. Map showing Puri and Varanasi (Source: www.britannica.com).

3.2. Questionnaire Design

This study adopts a quantitative methodological approach, following prior research on resident perceptions of tourism impacts [46]. A questionnaire was designed as a means for collecting data. The key statements concerning resident perceptions and attitudes were sourced from the existing literature [3,12,48] particularly that relevant to Asian settings [4,49]. Minor contextual amendments were made following discussions with some Indian tourism scholars and practitioners who were asked to judge the relevance of the statements to the Indian context. The survey questionnaire consisted of three different parts.

Part one included 44 closed statements with which respondents indicated their level of agreement using a seven-point Likert scale that ranged from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). These statements revolved around the three dimensions of economic, sociocultural, and environmental impacts. The second part involved residents' support for tourism development, wherein respondents rated the extent to which they agreed with several proposed tourism development plans (e.g., further

development vs. restriction). A seven-point Likert scale was also used, ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree) [3,32]. The third part sought respondents' demographic information to examine whether demographic variables significantly influence residents' attitudes towards and perceptions of tourism. The demographic characteristics investigated in this study included age, gender, education, income, occupation, length of residence, and distance of residence to the central tourist zone (i.e., Jagannath temple in Puri and the Ganga Ghats in Varanasi as noted above).

In addition, a question asked respondents to rate the stage they perceive at which the tourism sector in their city is developing. Four stages were used, including beginning (discovery/involvement), development, full development, and stagnation, which are consistent with Butler's [6] model. Butler's [6] first two stages of discovery and involvement were grouped as one in this study in accordance with Butler's [43] suggestion for application in developing country contexts. Butler's [6,43] stage names were amended semantically to make them more comprehensible to local residents.

3.3. Data Collection

Three trained research assistants conducted the survey from September to October 2016. The questionnaire was self-completed but the interviewers could explain where respondents did not understand properly a particular question. The survey targeted residents who were aged 18 years and older and were living in Puri and Varanasi, and it took 10–15 min to fill in. No incentives were provided to respondents for survey participation. In each city, street maps were used, where every fourth house on every fourth street was selected for the interview. This method was used to ensure that respondents were randomly selected from the study community. In each city, 300 questionnaires were delivered. Of the total 600 questionnaires delivered, 570 were usable while the others were removed due to missing values.

4. Results

4.1. Respondents' Profiles

Of the 570 respondents, 278 (48.8%) lived in Varanasi and 292 (51.2%) in Puri at the time of survey. Given the lack of official population data for the study areas, it was not possible to test the representativeness of the sample. The proportions of males and females are roughly equal with 287 (50.4%) and 283 (49.6%) respectively. In terms of religion, more than 90% of respondents are Hindu. About half of them are 36–50 years old (281; 49.3%). Those aged between 26 and 35 years account for 37.5% (214) while those younger than 25 and older than 51 are much fewer (18 and 57, respectively). With respect to education, a large majority of respondents completed secondary and high school (432; 75.8%). Respondents who are illiterate and those who completed primary school account for 2.3% (13) and 8.8% (50), respectively. About 13.2% completed university level and higher. In terms of income, more than 90% earn less than US\$300 per month wherein half earn less than US\$100 per month. With respect to length of residence, the largest number of respondents have lived in their respective location for over 21 years (246; 43.2%), followed by those living in their respective location for 11–20 years (178; 31.2%), 6–10 years (93; 16.3%), and less than five years (53; 9.3%). Nearly 60% (334) of respondents live within 2–5 km to the central tourist zone, while those living 6–10 km away account for 27.7% (158). In terms of employment, about 80% (457) of respondents have tourism-related jobs while those whose work is not related to tourism and those who are not working account for 19.8% (113).

4.2. Perceived Impacts of Tourism

The 44 statements concerning tourism impacts were divided into three dimensions (economic, sociocultural, and environmental). Table 1 indicates that overall residents in both cities have positive perceptions of the economic and sociocultural impacts of tourism. However, their perceptions of the environmental effects of tourism tend to be more negative.

In terms of economic impacts, there is strong agreement among respondents about the contribution of tourism to the local business environment (mean: 6.01 in Varanasi and 6.34 in Puri), income (mean: 6.00 in Varanasi and 6.40 in Puri), and employment (mean: 5.94 in Varanasi and 6.39 in Puri). On the other hand, they also perceive the detrimental impacts of the sector on the local life, including increased prices of goods and services and difficulties in buying a house due to rising real estate prices. With respect to social impacts, the most frequent responses are tourism improves residents' pride in cultural identity and helps preserve cultural values. However, respondents also tend to agree that tourism causes parking problems. Despite their high levels of agreement regarding the positive economic and sociocultural contributions of tourism, respondents expressed concerns about the detrimental impacts of the sector on the environment, including overcrowding, pollution, spoil the seashores, and damages to natural landscape. Residents in Puri agree more strongly on the contribution of tourism to preserving natural resources (mean: 6.00) and improving the appearance of the city (mean: 6.13) than those in Varanasi (mean: 5.51 and 5.49, respectively).

To examine differences in respondents' perceived tourism impacts by demographic variables, *t*-tests and ANOVA were conducted. Results suggest that statistically significant differences are identified in some variables while such differences are not evident in others. Income is not a variable affecting resident perceptions of tourism impacts and hence is excluded from further analysis. Table 1 shows that gender is a discriminator for 27 of the 44 statements. In particular, men tend to agree more strongly than women that tourism creates jobs (mean: 6.36 vs. 5.98), income (mean: 6.43 vs. 5.98), and local business environment (mean: 6.27 vs. 6.09); and improves investments (mean: 5.95 vs. 5.72), living standard (mean: 6.27 vs. 5.94), and community infrastructure (mean: 6.02 vs. 5.67). Age is an explanatory variable for only two of the statements. Residents aged 18–50 years agree more strongly (mean: 5.12) than those aged 51 years and older (mean: 4.44) that tourism improves police service. However, those who are aged 51 years and older (mean: 5.72) see more damages to natural landscape than the younger group (mean: 5.41). Education is a discriminator for 35 of the statements. Generally, those who completed university level and higher tend to agree more strongly than the less educated with respect to the positive impacts of tourism. By contrast, those less educated agree more strongly on the negative effects of the industry.

Distance of residence to the central tourist zone is an explanatory variable for 17 statements. Those living within five kilometres of the central tourist zone are more negative than those living further away concerning the impacts of tourism on increased living cost (mean: 5.48 vs. 5.36), price of goods (mean: 5.52 vs. 5.25), alcohol consumption (mean: 5.03 vs. 4.95), prostitution (mean: 3.45 vs. 3.32), pollution (mean: 5.65 vs. 5.18), and damages to natural landscape (mean: 5.46 vs. 5.38). By contrast, residents living outside the central tourist districts have more positive attitudes on tourism's contributions to improving the local business environment (mean: 6.40 vs. 6.09) and investments (mean: 5.98 vs. 5.77), creating opportunities for leisure activities (mean: 5.97 vs. 5.54), stimulating cultural activities (mean: 6.16 vs. 5.83), and preserving cultural values (mean: 6.45 vs. 6.27).

Length of residence explains the statistical differences in nine of the statements. In particular, those living longer in their place (i.e., more than 20 years) are less likely to agree than the newcomers that tourism improves fire protection, the appearance of their place, living utility, or increases exploitation of local residents. By contrast, those living in their place for a shorter period show a higher level of agreement concerning tourism's impacts on increased overcrowding and agglomerations of public facilities. With respect to job sector, statistical differences are found in 11 statements. Those having tourism-related jobs agree more strongly than those not having tourism-related jobs that tourism provides the opportunity to interact with tourists (mean: 6.12 vs. 5.92) and that it spoils the seashore (mean: 5.45 vs. 5.22). However, those not working in the industry perceive tourism as more disadvantageous because it increases living costs (mean: 5.65 vs. 5.39), and prices of goods (mean: 5.65 vs. 5.38) and services (mean: 5.57 vs. 5.17), crimes (mean: 4.98 vs. 4.73), and exploitation of local residents (mean: 5.18 vs. 4.96).

Table 1. Perceived impacts of tourism and demographic variables.

	Varanasi (N = 278)		Puri (N = 292)		Gender **		Age		Education		Distance of Residence		Length of Residence		Job Sector	
	Mean *	SD	Mean *	SD	T	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	T	Sig.	F	Sig.	T	Sig.
<i>Economic impacts</i>																
1. Tourism creates the local business environment	6.01	0.758	6.34	0.698	2.951	0.003	1.955	0.143	6.941	0.000	2.951	0.003	0.823	0.482	−2.205	0.028
2. Tourism contributes to income	6.00	0.776	6.40	0.669	7.358	0.000	0.926	0.397	6.509	0.000	7.358	6.571	2.565	0.054	1.568	0.117
3. Tourism increases employment opportunities	5.94	0.795	6.39	0.661	6.264	0.000	2.255	0.106	6.402	0.000	6.263	7.431	2.027	0.109	0.307	0.759
4. Tourism raises the price of goods	5.81	1.006	5.07	0.828	2.615	0.009	0.845	0.430	4.873	0.002	2.615	0.009	0.687	0.560	−2.665	0.008
5. Tourism increases standard of living	5.77	0.901	6.42	0.758	4.472	0.000	0.002	0.998	8.176	0.000	4.472	9.351	1.418	0.236	−1.472	0.143
6. Tourism increases difficulties in buying the first home	5.74	1.001	5.99	0.927	2.451	0.015	0.099	0.905	2.700	0.045	2.450	0.014	0.851	0.466	1.293	0.197
7. Tourism increases the cost of living	5.65	0.890	5.25	0.866	2.631	0.009	0.852	0.427	2.775	0.041	2.631	0.008	1.162	0.324	−2.825	0.005
8. Tourism increases seasonality in labour	5.63	0.905	5.98	0.925	4.656	0.000	0.739	0.478	20.468	0.000	4.655	4.021	1.284	0.279	−1.766	0.079
9. Tourism improves residents' quality of life	5.58	0.792	6.13	0.892	2.632	0.009	0.283	0.754	4.012	0.008	2.631	0.008	0.522	0.667	−.741	0.459
10. Tourism improves community infrastructure	5.55	0.776	6.13	0.802	5.126	0.000	0.190	0.827	4.539	0.004	5.125	4.091	1.813	0.144	−1.761	0.079
11. Tourism improves investment in the economy	5.54	0.835	6.12	0.858	3.052	0.002	1.308	1.271	4.110	0.007	3.052	0.002	0.251	0.861	−1.963	0.051
12. Tourism increases real estate property prices	5.47	0.718	5.55	0.850	2.426	0.016	0.971	0.379	2.166	0.091	2.426	0.015	0.546	0.651	−1.469	0.142
13. Tourism increases city's overall tax revenues	5.46	0.826	5.85	0.828	4.272	0.000	1.663	0.191	4.682	0.003	4.272	0.281	1.286	0.278	−1.295	0.196
14. Tourism improves living utility infrastructure (supply of water, electric, telephone etc.)	5.31	0.753	5.75	0.876	1.629	0.104	0.105	0.900	16.421	0.000	1.628	0.103	6.541	0.000	−1.982	0.048
15. Tourism raises the price of services	5.30	1.013	5.20	0.881	0.670	0.503	2.205	0.111	7.792	0.000	0.669	0.503	0.941	0.420	−4.067	0.000
<i>Sociocultural impacts</i>																
16. Tourism increases pride in cultural identity	6.23	0.728	6.48	0.762	3.844	0.000	2.371	0.094	6.661	0.000	3.844	0.000	0.455	0.714	−0.968	0.334
17. Tourism preserves cultural values	6.21	0.737	6.43	0.884	2.286	0.023	2.857	0.058	4.651	0.003	2.286	0.022	0.858	0.463	0.189	0.850
18. Tourism increases parking problems	5.99	0.893	4.77	0.823	1.820	0.069	1.328	0.266	0.615	0.606	1.820	0.069	0.440	0.724	−1.056	0.292
19. Tourism provides opportunity for interacting with tourists	5.98	0.893	6.17	0.835	6.363	0.000	1.990	0.138	2.545	0.055	6.362	0.281	2.346	0.072	2.152	0.032
20. Tourism raises interest in maintaining and preserving historic buildings and archaeological sites	5.67	0.796	6.21	0.796	3.486	0.001	0.688	0.503	11.762	0.000	3.485	0.000	0.690	0.558	−0.143	0.886
21. Tourism stimulates cultural activities	5.62	0.823	6.24	0.788	2.254	0.025	0.070	0.933	16.601	0.000	2.254	0.024	1.555	0.199	−1.773	0.077
22. Tourism causes value distortion among the youth	5.44	0.829	5.07	0.859	0.242	0.809	1.528	0.218	6.643	0.000	0.242	0.808	1.043	0.373	0.018	0.985
23. Tourism provides education opportunities	5.42	0.755	5.09	0.853	1.170	0.242	0.768	0.464	4.371	0.005	1.170	0.242	1.096	0.350	1.219	0.223
24. Tourism creates opportunities for leisure activities	5.38	0.840	5.94	0.863	2.867	0.004	0.482	0.618	4.811	0.003	2.867	0.004	0.644	0.587	0.148	0.882
25. Tourism increases traffic accidents	5.37	0.960	5.07	0.886	−0.948	0.344	2.023	0.133	0.168	0.918	−0.947	0.343	1.292	0.276	−1.359	0.175
26. Tourism leads to moral degradation due to cultural differences	5.26	0.840	5.07	0.809	1.180	0.238	0.114	0.892	6.944	0.000	1.180	0.238	3.028	0.029	−0.730	0.466
27. Tourism gives rise to cheating/fraud	5.14	1.213	5.65	0.935	1.407	0.160	0.086	0.917	17.859	0.000	1.407	0.159	0.319	0.812	−1.853	0.065
28. Tourism increases consumption of alcohol	5.04	1.155	4.98	1.139	2.060	0.040	0.671	0.512	2.254	0.081	2.059	0.039	0.118	0.949	−1.851	0.065
29. Tourism increases serious crimes in the city	4.92	1.193	4.65	0.995	1.935	0.053	0.095	0.909	1.157	0.326	1.935	0.053	0.326	0.806	−2.157	0.031
30. Tourism increases illegal games	4.91	1.271	4.58	1.401	−1.213	0.226	1.029	0.358	9.808	0.000	−1.213	0.225	0.392	0.758	0.207	0.836
31. Tourism increases exploitation of local residents	4.83	1.026	5.18	0.859	0.173	0.863	0.286	0.751	1.535	0.204	0.173	0.862	5.354	0.001	−2.109	0.035
32. Tourism increases drug usage	4.82	1.172	4.65	1.161	4.000	0.000	1.554	0.212	7.487	0.000	3.999	7.191	1.971	0.117	−2.067	0.039
33. Tourism increases theft	4.79	1.183	4.71	0.938	1.457	0.146	0.630	0.533	2.647	0.048	1.457	0.145	0.482	0.695	−2.425	0.016

Table 1. Cont.

	Varanasi (N = 278)		Puri (N = 292)		Gender **		Age		Education		Distance of Residence		Length of Residence		Job Sector	
	Mean *	SD	Mean *	SD	T	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	T	Sig.	F	Sig.	T	Sig.
34. Tourism improves police service	4.45	1.405	5.62	1.044	1.900	0.058	6.393	0.002	6.366	0.000	1.899	0.057	0.877	0.453	−0.521	0.603
35. Tourism improves fire protection	4.42	1.383	5.75	0.988	0.476	0.634	2.507	0.082	3.501	0.015	0.476	0.633	4.405	0.004	−1.651	0.099
36. Tourism gives rise to prostitution	3.57	1.404	3.26	1.668	0.646	0.519	0.287	0.751	1.082	0.356	2.384	0.017	1.392	0.244	−1.267	0.206
37. Tourism provokes school dropouts	3.15	1.430	3.25	1.474	2.675	0.008	0.195	0.823	2.631	0.049	2.675	0.007	2.669	0.047	−0.883	0.378
<i>Environmental impacts</i>																
38. Tourism increases overcrowding	6.08	0.777	5.75	0.894	4.399	0.000	1.688	0.186	18.481	0.000	4.399	1.311	9.442	0.000	0.256	0.798
39. Tourism causes pollution	5.81	0.855	5.22	1.019	2.384	0.017	0.237	0.789	5.541	0.001	2.384	0.017	1.429	0.233	−0.586	0.558
40. Tourism leads to agglomerations of public facilities	5.56	0.838	5.95	0.860	4.192	0.000	0.066	0.936	12.883	0.000	4.191	3.212	3.200	0.023	−1.010	0.314
41. Tourism spoils the seashore	5.53	1.090	5.28	0.757	1.397	0.163	2.045	0.130	6.630	0.000	1.396	0.162	0.133	0.941	1.994	0.048
42. Tourism helps preserve natural resources	5.51	0.704	6.00	0.821	1.774	0.077	0.007	0.993	10.815	0.000	1.773	0.076	3.468	0.016	−0.492	0.623
43. Tourism improves the appearance of the city	5.49	0.857	6.13	0.799	4.049	0.000	0.102	0.903	17.335	0.000	4.048	5.861	3.933	0.009	−1.926	0.056
44. Tourism damages natural landscape	5.36	0.859	5.51	0.753	2.300	0.022	3.865	0.022	0.506	0.678	2.299	0.021	1.080	0.357	1.895	0.059

* Impact items are ranked by their mean value; Seven-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree); ** Level of statistical significance at 0.05.

4.3. Residents' Support for Tourism Development

Table 2 shows a high level of respondent agreement with respect to attracting more tourists (6.51) and further development of infrastructure for tourism (6.40). This is in part because respondents are conscious of the positive economic and sociocultural impacts of tourism, as analysed above. On the other hand, they welcome day-trip tourists (6.40) because they feel tourism is growing too fast (5.97). This is despite their happiness with the current level of tourism development (5.77). The lowest level of agreement is found regarding restrictions of tourism development by regional tourism authorities (4.70).

Respondents' support for tourism development was further analysed in relation to demographic variables. Table 2 indicates that significant statistical differences are evident between males and females. Overall, men tend to agree more strongly than women on all the items presented on the survey instrument. Age significantly affects the extent to which respondents advocate restrictions on tourism development. The older the residents are, the more supportive they are of limited tourism development (highest mean value (5.11) among those aged 51 years and older, followed by those aged 36–50 years (4.83) and 18–35 years (4.44)). Statistical differences are not evident in the education variable.

Regarding the influence of distance of residence, statistical differences are evident only in two items. Respondents living further away from the central tourist zone are happier (5.97) than those living closer (5.68) with the current level of tourism development. It is, therefore, understandable that those residing in closer proximity with the central tourist zone are more supportive of restricted tourism development (4.84) than those living further away (4.36). Furthermore, the longer residents live in their place, the more they are supportive of infrastructure development (6.51) among those living for more than 20 years in their place, followed by those living 11–20 years (6.40), 6–10 years (6.23), and less than five years (6.13) and attracting more tourists (6.61, 6.56, 6.30, and 6.24, respectively). Concerning job sector, those not working in the tourism industry appear more supportive of limited tourism development (5.12) than those having tourism-related jobs (4.59).

4.4. Perceived Stage of Destination Development, Tourism Impacts, and Support for Tourism

Of the 570 respondents, 120 (21.1%; 76 in Varanasi and 44 in Puri) state that their place is in the beginning stage of tourism development. Two-third of them consider their home destination to be in the development stage (401; 70.4%; 189 in Varanasi and 212 in Puri). Only 49 (8.6%; 13 in Varanasi and 36 in Puri) of them feel that tourism has fully developed and started to stagnate (Table 3). The last two stages of full development and stagnation were grouped together since they received a small number of responses.

To examine whether residents' perceptions of stage of destination development significantly influence their perceptions of tourism impacts and level of support for tourism, ANOVA was conducted. With respect to perceived tourism impacts, statistical differences are only significant in four of the 44 statements. Those who consider tourism to be in the development and full development/stagnation stages agree more strongly than those who perceive tourism as in the beginning stage that it increases employment opportunities and seasonality and that it stipulates cultural activities. By contrast, those who perceive tourism to be in the beginning stage have a higher level of agreement than those who consider tourism to be in the development and full development/stagnation stages with respect to its impacts on environmental pollution.

Concerning residents' support for tourism development, statistical differences are not evident in most of the statements presented on the survey instrument except one that involves restrictions on tourism development. It is interesting that those who perceive tourism to be in the beginning stage are more supportive of limited tourism development than those who consider tourism to be in the development and full development/stagnation stages. The influence of residents' perceived stage of destination development on their perceived tourism impacts and support for tourism in the study areas are summarized in Figure 2.

Table 2. Residents' support for tourism development and demographic variables.

Questions on the Survey Instrument	Mean *	SD	Gender **		Age		Education		Distance of Residence		Length of Residence		Job Sector	
			T	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	T	Sig.	F	Sig.	T	Sig.
Attracting more tourists to the city is a good idea	6.51	0.647	6.990	0.000	2.191	0.113	0.224	0.880	6.989	8.541	9.038	0.000	1.444	0.149
I am in favour of further developing tourism infrastructure in the city/region	6.40	0.694	6.247	0.000	1.670	0.189	1.469	0.222	6.247	8.472	6.928	0.000	1.333	0.183
I welcome visitors who spend less than one day in the area	6.40	0.805	6.883	0.000	2.921	0.055	1.177	0.318	6.883	1.672	7.446	0.000	1.437	0.151
Tourism is growing too fast in my city	5.97	0.810	4.854	0.000	1.951	0.143	0.228	0.877	4.853	1.581	2.301	0.076	0.445	0.656
I am satisfied with the current level of tourism development in my city/place	5.77	0.927	3.416	0.001	1.567	0.209	0.646	0.586	3.416	0.000	0.320	0.811	0.321	0.749
The regional tourism authorities should consider plans to restrict the growth of tourism	4.70	1.856	2.201	0.28	4.373	0.013	1.706	0.165	2.201	0.028	0.692	0.557	−2.960	0.003

* Items are ranked by their mean value; seven-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree); $N = 570$; ** Level of statistical significance at 0.05.

Table 3. Residents' perceived stage of destination development, tourism impacts, and support for tourism development.

Perceived Stage of Destination Development	Beginning ($n = 120$)	Development ($n = 401$)	Full Development/Stagnation ($n = 49$)	F	Sig. **
Varanasi (frequency)	76	189	13	-	-
Puri (frequency)	44	212	36	-	-
Perceived tourism impacts *					
Tourism increases employment opportunities (mean)	6.017	6.204	6.265	3.248	0.040
Tourism increases seasonality in labour (mean)	5.608	5.880	5.714	4.257	0.015
Tourism stipulates cultural activities (mean)	5.742	5.973	6.082	4.146	0.016
Tourism causes pollution (mean)	5.733	5.459	5.367	4.167	0.016
Support for tourism development *					
The regional tourism authorities should consider plans to restrict the growth of tourism (mean)	5.392	4.516	4.490	10.985	0.000

* Seven-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree); $N = 570$; ** Level of statistical significance at 0.05.

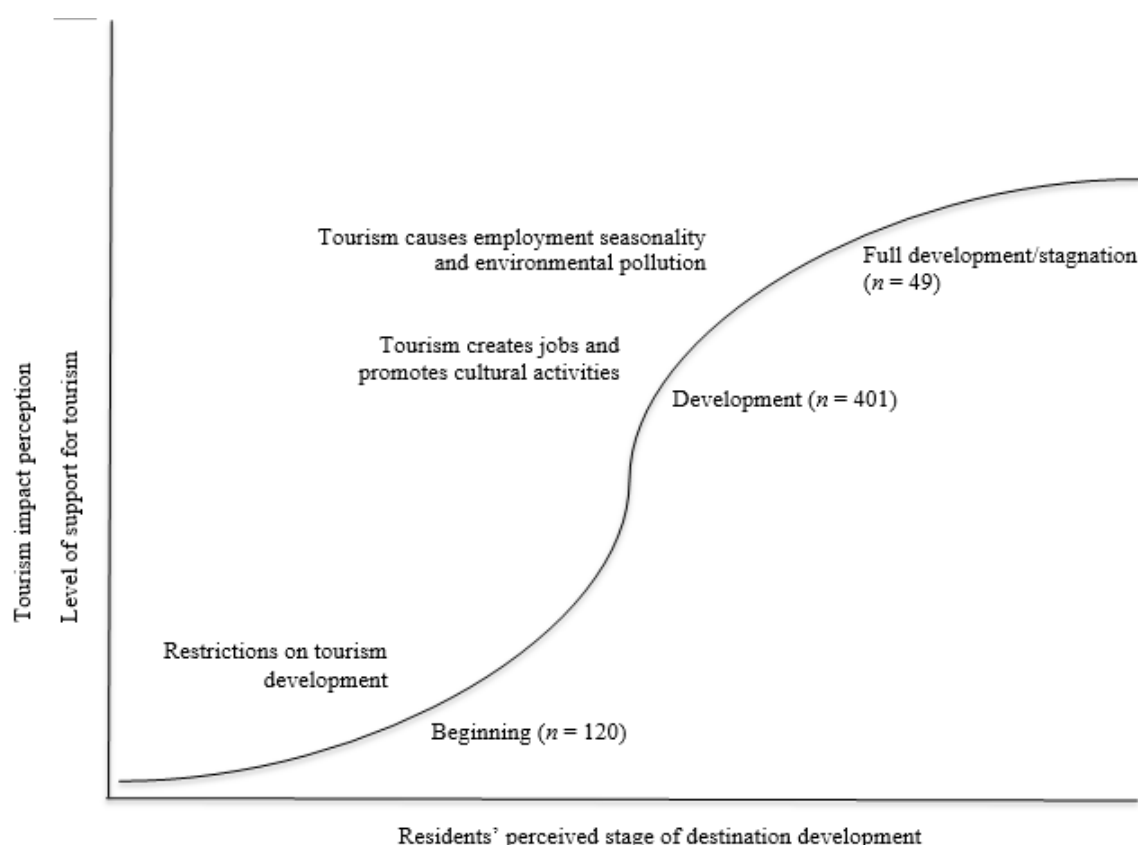


Figure 2. Residents' perceptions of stage of destination development, tourism impacts, and support for tourism in Varanasi and Puri.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

Tourism impact is among the most extensively studied topics in tourism research [50–52]. This study extends the literature by focusing on India that is a vast country but has been under-researched on the one hand and investigating residents' perceptions of tourism impacts in relation to their evaluation of stage of destination development on the other hand. It suggests that residents' perceptions of stage of destination development may help explain why they perceive tourism impacts or support tourism in a particular way.

5.1. Theoretical Implications

First, demographic variables play a significant role in influencing residents' perception of tourism impacts. For example, this study identifies education as the most significant variable influencing residents' perceptions of tourism impacts, which has similarly been found in other urban contexts. Generally, those who completed university level and higher agree more strongly than those less educated with respect to the positive impacts of tourism. Gender is the second most significant variable affecting residents' perceived tourism impacts. In contrast to some prior research which suggests that women are more aware than men of the negative impacts of tourism [28], this study found that men are more conscious than women of both the positive and negative impacts of tourism. In particular, in the present study, income is not an explanatory variable for residents' perceptions of tourism impacts, which contrasts with previous studies [17,21]. A possible explanation is that there is little difference in respondents' reported monthly income (over 90% of them earn less than US\$300/month, as noted).

Second, the present study found that respondents living within five kilometres of the central tourist zone have a more negative view than those living further away concerning the impacts of tourism on particular aspects such as increased living costs, prices of goods, alcohol consumption, prostitution, environmental pollution, and damages to natural landscape. By contrast, residents living five kilometres and more away from the central tourist zone see tourism as advantageous in improving the business and investment environment, creating opportunities for leisure activities, stipulating cultural activities, and preserving cultural values. Job sector is the fourth most significant variable affecting residents' perceived tourism impacts. Those not working in tourism tend to perceive the industry more negatively because it increases the prices of goods and services and living costs generally. Length of residence is the fifth most significant variable explaining nine of the impact statements. In particular, newcomers agree more strongly than those living longer in their place (i.e., >20 years) on the environmental impacts of tourism (e.g., increased crowding).

Third, this study found that, in contrast to that of previous research, at the beginning stage of tourism development, host residents are happy to welcome tourists who come from different cultures and bring about economic benefits [37]. The present study suggests that a segment of residents may not be willing to sacrifice environmental quality for tourism development. For example, residents who perceive tourism to be in the beginning stage are more concerned about environmental pollution due to tourism development than those who consider tourism to be in the development and full development/stagnation stages. As a result, they are more supportive of restrictions on tourism although they are aware of its positive economic and sociocultural contributions. Recently, research has indicated that residents' support for tourism development may not necessarily be explained by the extent of their interaction with tourists or growing numbers of visitors [43]. Rather, there are a variety of factors at play such as the characteristics of tourists [43]. The present study adds that residents' perceptions of tourism impacts and support for tourism may depend on their own evaluation of stage of destination development.

5.2. Managerial Implications

First, given respondents' positive perceptions of the economic and sociocultural contributions of tourism, it is understandable that local residents support attracting more tourists and developing infrastructure for the industry. However, local residents prefer day-trip visitors because they feel tourism is growing too fast. Older residents are more supportive of limited tourism development than the younger ones. Similarly, Williams and Lawson [14] and Cavus and Tanrisevdi [15] also suggested that the senior group in their study is the least supportive of tourism. Limited tourism development is also advocated by residents not working in the industry and those living closer to the central tourist zone. However, those living longer in their place are more supportive of further developing infrastructure for tourism than the newcomers. This finding may offer meaningful implications for local tourism authorities whose aim is to "ensure a favorable attitude among local residents to tourism development" [53] and maintain the continued attraction of the tourist area [43]. Local tourism authorities may consider raising public awareness of the importance of tourism to the local economy on the one hand and attracting segments of short-day tourists (as suggested by the residents) on the other hand. Such measures may help prevent potential host-guest conflicts while still maintaining tourism as an important economic sector. However, it is highly recommended to examine the views of the local tourism authorities regarding the feasibility of such measures, which provide an interesting avenue for future research.

Second, about 70% of respondents consider tourism to be in the development stage, 21% perceive tourism as in the beginning stage, and only 8.6% think tourism has fully developed and started to stagnate. A possible explanation is that India is still a developing country whose tourism potential remains somewhat untapped in many regions. If residents' perceptions are considered to reflect the stage of destination development, the finding of this study suggests that in the context of developing countries such as India the last two stages on Butler's [6] TALC model (full development

and stagnation) may be combined since they received a limited number of responses. Similarly, Butler's [6] first two stages of discovery and involvement may also be considered as one and labelled development stage. Local tourism marketers and operators should incorporate residents' perceptions as an additional indicator of stage of destination development apart from objective data and measures such as numbers of tourists and tourism facilities that are often seen in prior studies.

6. Limitations and Future Research Directions

Several limitations in this research could be addressed in future studies. First, this study used 44 impact statements that were sourced from the literature and reviewed by key researchers and practitioners in India. However, they may not embrace all the impacts that tourism may have on the study communities. Further research is thus warranted to verify those impact statements covering a larger sample in Varanasi and Puri as well as other regions in India. Second, local residents' perceptions of stage of destination development are subjective, although it is recognized that they better understand their home destination, as noted previously. It is necessary to examine if other stakeholders such as business owners and authorities perceive the same with respect to stage of destination development in the study area. Such research would provide a more comprehensive understanding of tourism impacts, stage of destination development, and potential measures to maintain residents' positive attitudes to tourism.

Author Contributions: The two authors made substantial contributions to conception and design and participated in drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content. They made the broadest range of different contributions. For example, these two authors developed this research design together. X.L. was in charge of the conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, and interpretation. J.L. provided critical revisions of the article. These two authors gave final approval of the version to be submitted.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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