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Residents’ Attitudes Toward Tourism Impacts in Zhouzhuang Canal Town

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RESIDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARD
TOURISM IMPACTS IN ZHOUZHUANG CANAL TOWN

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Master of Tourism

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ABSTRACT
Residents, as the principal part of a tourism destination, should receive the attention that they need. They can be regarded as the owner of the destination’s resources and as part of the tourism resources. Naturally, the understanding of residents’ perception of tourism can help the tourism impact and tourism development research in a particular destination. This research explores the residents’ attitude toward tourism impacts; examines the impact of residents’ personal characteristics on their perception of tourism impacts; tests the relationships among residents’ attitudes toward tourism impacts, residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism and their supportive/restrictive attitudes towards further tourism development. This is accomplished by a questionnaire survey in Zhouzhuang canal town. The social exchange model as a theoretical basis is combined with statistical analysis to undertake an in-depth exploration of the residents’ attitudes toward tourism in Zhouzhuang canal town. The finding is consistent with previous research that residents gain more personal benefits from tourism, the more positively they perceive tourism impacts, while they gain fewer benefits from tourism, the more negative their perception of tourism. Findings also suggest that tourism income is an important variable to influence the residents’ perception of tourism impacts. Future research can continue to study why residents’ attitudes towards tourism are influenced by these determinants and to test the relationship between residents’ attitudes towards tourism impacts and tourism planning.

KEYWORDS: residents’ attitude, tourism impacts, social exchange theory, personal benefits, Zhouzhuang canal town
RESIDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARD TOURISM IMPACTS IN ZHOUZHUANG CANAL TOWN

By

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1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

In recent years, tourism has become one of the most important industries around the world. After years of tourism industry development and the exploitation of increasing numbers of new destinations, the impacts of tourism development have been attracting more attention. The impacts may be short or long term; direct or indirect; local, national, or global; and positive or negative (Hunter and Green, 1995).

To begin with, the economic benefit, as the greatest positive impact, is stressed by the tourism industry. By the 1970s, researchers had begun to document tourism’s impacts, including its economic impact, environmental impact, and social impact (Jordan, 1980; Pizam, 1978; Rothman, 1978). Influenced by the mainstream values of society, the focus has always been placed on tourism’s economic effects rather than its socio-cultural and environmental impacts during the practice of tourism development and management (Su et al., 2005). Nevertheless, a series of negative impacts could be predicted in this economy-oriented concept; similar cases can be found all over the world (Theobald, 2001). For this situation, the idea of sustainable tourism development is proposed. It can be argued that the concept of sustainable tourism development aims to strike a balance between socio-cultural, economic, and environmental impacts as far as possible. From my point of view, tourism can be classified as one of the most far-reaching industries for the local community; therefore, special attention should be paid to its sustainability. Furthermore, sustainable tourism planning as a method aims to ensure that the effective implementation of sustainable development policy is taken into account. Moreover, the underlying premise behind reasonable sustainable tourism planning is to understand the current and potential tourism impacts in a particular destination.

Obviously, studying the local residents’ thoughts, feelings, and attitudes is one way for researchers to obtain information about tourism impacts. As the directly affected group and immediate participants, residents are more sensitive to tourism’s impacts and benefits. They could make a relatively proper assessment of the current
tourism development. In other words, long-term and successful development of tourism is dependent on the local community’s attitude towards tourism and tourists, and therefore it should be developed according to the host community’s needs and desires (Andriotis, 2005), because the community attitude is essential for visitor satisfaction and repeat visitation (Sheldon and Abenoja, 2001; Swarbrooke, 1993). It has been recognized that the perception of residents of the impact of tourism is essential in providing valuable input for dealing with the strategic managerial decisions, marketing, and operation of existing and future programs and projects (Lankford, 2001). In summary, a suitable tourism planning scheme should include minimizing the negative tourism effects while maximizing the positive tourism impacts, satisfying residents’ requirements and respecting their ideas.

It has been widely recognized that tourism development is a double-edged sword for host communities (Wang et al. 2006). Not only does it generate benefits, but it also generates costs (Jafari, 2001). Depending on the amount of benefits and costs that residents receive from tourism, they have different opinions about tourism’s influence on their community. A number of researchers have found that residents’ attitudes towards tourism impacts are heterogeneous, i.e. diverse and far from homogeneous (Gu and Wong, 2006). That could be interpreted as, in a certain destination, some residents recognize tourism’s costs as greater than its benefits while others feel that tourism’s benefits are greater than its costs. Using the previous literature, it is possible to draw the conclusion that many variables determine the effect of residents’ attitudes towards tourism, such as socio-cultural aspects, age, gender, length of residence, birthplace, and so on. Williams (1979) defined three categories of impact: economic, social, and environment/physical. During the past few decades, the economic factor has been considered the main influencing factor that is directly associated with residents’ perceptions of tourism impacts and further tourism development.

In support of social exchange theory, costs and benefits have a close relationship with residents’ attitude towards local tourism. Nevertheless, according to Brougham and Butler (1981), there is increasing evidence that the costs and benefits from
tourism do not accrue equally to residents in some destination areas, and the researchers also found that residents still have different attitudes towards tourism even when they gain economic benefits from tourism of the same level. By this reckoning, other factors influence residents’ attitudes, besides the economic factor. These are identified as spatial factors and socio-demographic factors (Harrill and Potts, 2003); these two factors are also the dependent variable for the current resident attitude study. These three factors together affect residents’ views of tourism development. Studies support that resident whose passive perception of tourism outweighs their positive perception, means that they not satisfied with tourism and visitors (Harrill, 2004). In this situation, tourism authorities need as far as possible to reduce their discontent with tourism and balance the supply and demand. Anyway, the accumulation of residents’ dissatisfaction with tourism may be detrimental to tourism development and the stability of the tourism district. Not only may the natives envy the tourists, but the locals who receive less tourism income may become jealous or resentful of the residents who obtain great benefits from tourism.

With tourism development, residents’ more or less disaffection with their peaceful life is shattered by outsiders; hence, problems like those mentioned above are inevitable. On this occasion, carrying out reasonable planning and management can help to reduce the public discontent over the tourism industry and tourists, as well as adjusting the balance of the interests of all the relevant parties. In principle, an effective plan, based on knowledge of residents’ response to the tourism impacts, the kind of residents’ current behaviors towards tourism and tourists, how tourism influences the destination, and so on, is necessary. To gain support for tourism projects and initiatives, many planners are now striving to understand how the public perceives tourism (Harrill, 2004). Researchers have also supported that it is essential to understand the population’s perception and attitude during tourism planning (Wilkinson, 1976), which can allow the plan to proceed smoothly.

Zhouzhuang is an ancient Chinese canal town famous for its natural and cultural landscapes. It has been quite successful in developing a mass tourism industry (Xu
and Tao, 2001). Zhouzhuang canal town is chosen as a case study in this thesis. Shi et al. (2011) pointed out that residents tend to have noticeable perception of socio-cultural and environmental impacts compared with their weaker perception of economic impacts in study area. Jiang and Su (2013) also found that residents’ attitude toward tourism impact has shifted from a positive to a negative one in Zhouzhuang.

1.1. Aim

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of tourism on the locals’ attitudes in Zhouzhuang canal town, China. This study uses social exchange theory as a guide to explain how residents view tourism impacts and further tourism development, and finally to put forward some suggestions for sustainable tourism development. The following content will be discussed in greater depth for this study.

1.2. Research Questions

Below are several research questions that will be considered in this thesis:

**Question 1**: How is the impact of tourism development perceived by residents in Zhouzhuang canal town?

**Question 2**: Whether the residents’ personal characteristics influence their perception of the tourism impact?

**Question 3**: What is the relationship among residents’ attitude toward tourism impact, residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism, and residents’ attitudes toward further tourism development?

**Question 4**: What do the study site’s residents think about further tourism development?
1.3. Prerequisites to Reading

1. The terminology “residents’ attitudes toward tourism impacts” is used alternative to “residents’ perception of tourism impacts.”

2. The terminology “tourism income” is used as replacement of “economic dependency on tourism.”

3. For this thesis, “residents’ perceived positive/negative impacts” is observed as an index for “residents’ attitudes toward tourism impacts,” while “residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism” and “residents’ supportive/restrictive attitudes towards further tourism development” both can be regarded as an index for “residents’ perception of tourism impacts.”
2. FACTS ON TOURISM IN CHINA

2.1. Current Tourism Industry in China

Since putting forward the economic reform and open-door policy in 1978, tourism has begun to develop in China. In the 1980s, the Chinese Government first made it clear that tourism was an important part of the tertiary (service) industry (Lew et al., 2002). Now, decades later, China has become a famous tourist destination that attracts large numbers of domestic and international tourists each year. Jean-Claude Baumgarten, the President of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), reported that China has the potential to become one of the world’s great tourism economies “in terms of inbound, domestic and outbound travel” (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2004). According to the forecast by the World Trade Organization, China will be the top international destination country in the world and is estimated to have around 137 million international arrivals by the year 2020 (Lew et al., 2002). This prediction may be based on China as a country with a long history of civilization and abundant tourism resources; what is more, regardless of the kinds of visitors, they can all find their favorite kind of destination. In brief, China is one of the countries in the world with the most tourism potential.

According to the statistics, at the end of 2011, the number of tourism destinations was around 21,000 in China. According to the different quality grade, from high to low, Chinese scenic regions (spots) can be divided into five levels: AAAAA, AAAA, AAA, AA and A. For just the A-grade tourist areas, recording 25.54 million tourist arrivals, the tourism revenue reached 2658.60 billion (bn) yuan and the income from tickets amounted to 1149.94 billion (bn) yuan (1EUR=CNY 7.871 yuan), and it is worth mentioning that these 3 indicators all keep the trend of continuing rapid growth. The high tourism revenue and large number of visitors are closely related to the increase in public holidays.

Even though the tourism industry is helping the Chinese economy to grow
rapidly, the trouble with tourism development is also increasing. In another words, so many tours are putting the tourism areas under severe pressure and thus causing many negative tourism impacts. These negative impacts are directly harmful to the residents and community; the most disadvantaged people are regarded as residents who receive benefits that are unequal to the costs. In fact, the focus is very much concentrated on the benefits for the local tourism administration or government rather than the benefits for local residents and heritage preservation in China (Zhang, 2011). Next, more measurable but no less profound is the environmental effect. As those listed above, such a huge number of arrivals certainly has an effect on the environment of destination; therefore, developing sustainable tourism is necessary.

China is a vast country with so many natural and cultural tourism attractions that different regions have their own special tourism resources and tourism development background, such as economy, policy, history, and culture. The major tourism cities are Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong; these are also the most developed areas in China. Broken down by economic development, China can be divided into three economic zones: the eastern economic zone, including the Yangtze River Delta, the Pearl River Delta, and the Bohai Rim; the western economic zone; and the central economic zone. Zhouzhuang canal town belongs to the eastern economic zone and its tourism industry is very influenced by this region; for this reason, the next section provides a brief overview of the Yangtze River Delta.

2.2. Tourism Development of Canal Towns in the Yangtze River Delta

The Yangtze River Delta is also called the Chang Jiang Delta. The area that lies at the heart of this region is traditionally called Jiangnan (literally, “south of the Yangtze River”). The Yangtze River Delta is located on the central east coast of China. It extends from about 32° N to 30°45′N, 120°E to 122°E, and faces the East China Sea. This river delta includes most of Shanghai, part of Jiangsu Province, and Zhejiang Province (Chen, 1998). It covers an area of 99530 km², which constitutes 1%
of the whole country. The region accounts for 16% of China’s gross domestic product and has an estimated population of 75 million. The Yangtze River Delta has a long history and has been a major cultural, economic, and political centre of China (Zhou et al., 2002). Since ancient times, with its advantageous natural conditions and ascendant regional location, the Yangtze River Delta region has always been the richest place in China.

![Geographic Position of the Yangtze River Delta in China](http://www.ciefcci.org/zh/)

**Figure 1. Geographic Position of the Yangtze River Delta in China**

The Yangtze River Delta region has a total of sixteen canal towns, respectively located in Suzhou, Huzhou, Nanjing, Shanghai, Shaoxing, and Taizhou. These water towns are regarded as the most representative area of Jiangnan’s canal town landscape. Jiangnan canal town is famous for its special built environment, strong cultural spirit, and long history. On the whole, these canal towns are extremely similar to their landscape. Even so, with the advantage of tourism developed early, Zhouzhuang canal town has attracted the most tourist attention and has become a nationally famous
tourism attraction. It is also called “China’s first water town.” Seeing this, the other canal towns have decided to imitate Zhouzhuang’s tourism operating model to develop their product. Gradually, with more and more water towns exploiting the tourism area, the Yangtze River Delta region is forming a tourism district with a series of ancient canal towns.

With the popularity of the tourism product of canal towns, these canal towns are competing against each other and imitating each other. In recent decades, tourism has been one of the predominant economic activities in canal towns, owing to it being a strong sustainable economic development strategy to cope with the decline of other industries (e.g. farming and forestry) in these communities (Reeder and Brown, 2005). To promote economic and tourism industry development, the canal town government and local tourism authorities make use of promotion and advertisement in wide propaganda, in order to move the canal town from obscurity to fame. In roughly 2003 or 2004, the “canal town travel boom” occurred in China, and canal towns became the most famous and popular tourism spots in this period. Many articles or photos about canal town tours were published in newspapers and magazines. On the National Day holiday and Labor Day holiday, almost all the canal towns have the problem of overcrowding; the number of tourists received considerably exceeds the best capacity of the tourist region. In the peak season, it is difficult for visitors to take a picture, especially in some famous canal towns; people, based on this phenomenon, joke that children see buns, and adults see heads. According to the statistics, in 2004, Zhouzhuang received about 2.6 million visitors and the money, which was earned from entrance tickets alone, reached over 100 million yuan (1EUR=CNY 7.871 yuan).

The tourism industry yields remarkable economic and social benefits while bringing many negative outcomes. Therefore, the development of ecotourism is a measure taken by many canal towns. Local governments have formulated a series of protection policies aimed at different kinds of ancient architectures and water areas. Canal towns generally can be divided into three zones: the core reserve zone, buffer zone, and stretch zone. Along with the increase in the number of tourists, the tourism
district has spread from the core reserve zone to the stretch zone. Most modern restaurants, hotels, and recreational facilities are built in the stretch zone. In order to gain more economic benefits and show their own characteristics, many canal towns depend on their own unique features to construct their tourism image; for example, the tourism imagination of Zhouzhuang canal town is “cultural Zhouzhuang” and “leisure Zhouzhuang,” meaning that visitors who come here can enjoy the cultural and relaxing atmosphere.
3. STUDY AREA – ZHOUZHUANG CANAL TOWN

Zhouzhuang canal town is situated in the Yangtze River Delta, in China, belonging to Suzhou city. This area has an estimated population of 2.3 million. Its location is halfway between Shanghai and Suzhou. The distance to Suzhou urban area is approximately 45 kilometers and that to the nearest large city, Shanghai, is about 70 kilometers. The geographical advantage is one of the reasons that Zhouzhuang canal town can attract a large number of visitors every year. According to the Zhouzhuang Tourism Department statistics, about 6 million visitors were received in 2010. Zhouzhuang canal town covers an area of 36 square kilometers, wherein 0.47 square kilometers area historical and cultural protected area, the conservation district with the main scenic spots, in which about one thousand people reside.

Figure 2. Location of Zhouzhuang Canal Town in China (http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=1172727)

Through about nine hundred years’ evolution, the ancient town has been
endowed with a specific building style, beautiful scenery, and unique folkways that allow it to be included in the list of world cultural heritage sites. Nowadays, Zhouzhuang canal town is still kept in good condition with the unique and primitive style of Jiangnan water village, and this uniqueness enables it to be known nationwide and worldwide. The old town is built on water, and boats, as the major form of transport, operate between residential buildings and land. Buildings with black roof tiles and white walls lie on the banks of the river, some of which are nearly six hundred years old. In short, Zhouzhuang is a beautiful town – a world-famous town – with water, bridges, black-and-white buildings, and granite pavements.

The focus of the economic development of Zhouzhuang canal town was formerly the fishery industry and agriculture; now, both are shifted towards the tourism industry, service industries, and commerce. There is no doubt that tourism development will sooner or later play an important development role in communities with transitional economies that move from natural resource extraction to tourism development (Huh and Vogt, 2008). In 1986, Zhouzhuang started to found its first tourism company and the government allocated 5 million yuan (1EUR=CNY 7.871 yuan) to restoring and rebuilding the historical and cultural construction, to prepare it to open to visitors. Next, Zhouzhuang set up the Zhouzhuang museum and developed traditional cultural activities. In 1997, Zhouzhuang was listed as one of the classic travel lines by the Chinese National Tourism Administration. In 1998, the direct ticket income had reached 1.5 million yuan (1EUR=CNY 7.871 yuan) and the total tourism income 230 million yuan; meanwhile, tourism also generated other business opportunities (Ruan, 2000). Zhouzhuang had already turned into an economically powerful town (Xu and Tao, 2001). Nowadays, tourism is the fastest industry and the backbone of Zhouzhuang’s economy. Tourism development has brought a considerable economic benefit to this old town.

Most of the visitors come to Zhouzhuang mainly for sightseeing. Tourists look forward to experiencing the special water town scenery and enjoying a relaxed atmosphere; the latter is impossible with the increase in the number of tourists.
Tourism has brought great changes to the town’s atmosphere, from a previously peaceful small town to a currently crowded commercial town. According to the statistics, this canal town had around 80 restaurants, almost 400 hotel rooms, nearly 700 hotel beds, and approximately 58 travel agencies in 2012 (Jiang and Su, 2013). The high season of Zhouzhuang appears to be the summer holiday, including July and August, National Day holiday, Labor Day holiday, and weekends. Winter is the low season.

Figure 3. Map of the Study Area – Zhouzhuang Canal Town
(http://www.juntoo.com/map.php?cid=3222&mid=2)

Zhouzhuang canal town was selected as the research area for the following reasons. Firstly, Zhouzhuang scenic region is well known both at home and abroad, and it attracts millions of tourists every year. Therefore, it is considered a relatively typical example that can reflect the current situation of the tourism industry in China.
Further, this area is a relatively mature tourism attraction; the phenomenon of this community influenced by tourism is relatively typical. Positive tourism impacts are rapid economic development, a well-known reputation, etc.; negative tourism impacts are overcrowding, over-commercialization, and so on. The typical tourism influences combined with the Chinese culture and policy may obtain different research results from previous studies. Last but not least, Zhouzhuang is the first Jiangnan canal town I visited. From the heart, I liked it very much. Therefore, I hope my study results can provide some references for its future development.

3.1. Previous Research on Canal Towns

Canal towns, by virtue of their specific landscape and rich cultural background, attract many tourists every year. With canal towns becoming popular tourism destinations, they have attracted the attention of scholars, while more and more related research literature has arisen and been published.

Presently, the previous research on Zhouzhuang canal town has mainly dealt with the following aspects: 1) regarding the product itself: the tourism area life cycle (Zhuang and Zheng, 2006), tourism impacts (Xu and Tao, 2001), tourism planning, protection, and management (Ji, 2013; Xu and Lu, 2006), and tourist souvenirs research (Ge, 2013); 2) regarding residents’ attitude: residents’ attitude towards tourism (Xu and Lu, 2007) and residents’ attitude towards the protection of tourism resources (Hu and Huang, 2011); 3) concerning the perception of visitors: research on the tourist types in Zhouzhuang canal town (Yin and Su, 2005) and how visitors view the canal town (Zhang et al., 2006); and 4) comparative study between Zhouzhuang canal town and other destinations (Li et al., 2006).

3.1.1. A Literature Review of Tourism Impacts on the Research Area

In Zhouzhuang canal town, the residents have a strong perception of the positive
economic impact of tourism development and a weak perception of its negative impacts (Liu et al., 2005; Su et al., 2005). The residents in the study area have a strong perception of the negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism; research has also found that Zhouzhuang residents perceive obviously too many tourist arrivals and their impacts on the system culture and host–guest relationship (Su et al., 2005). Regarding tourism’s environmental impacts, the locals have a noticeable perception of the negative environmental impacts rather than the positive environmental impacts in Zhouzhuang canal town (Su et al., 2005).

As one kind of tourism impact, the phenomenon of commodification in the study area is everywhere. In 2000, researchers already described commodification as spreading rapidly in Zhouzhuang:

“There are 466 various shops situated in the old town (including the ones in the process of decoration). There are 166 craft shops selling framed photos, 94 restaurants and local specialty shops mainly selling Wangshan pig foot. These shops are basically for tourists. The old town has turned into a busy business town especially for tourists”. (Xu and Tao, 2001, pp.358)

According to an investigation in 2000, 66.17% of the stores are tourist-oriented, 17.99% of the stores are resident- and tourist-oriented, while 7.28% of the stores are resident-oriented in Zhouzhuang canal town. The ratio of these 3 types of store is 9.2:2.5:1 (Bao and Su, 2004). In my opinion, commodification also means that tourism brings a large number of economic benefits and opportunities to the villagers.

With the growth of Zhouzhuang canal town’s tourism, the relationship between visitors and residents has become strained. The conflict is not obvious, but potential conflict can be perceived. The following is researchers’ analysis of the reason:

“1) Some attractions are reserved for tourists rather than for locals.
2) Living environments for residents have not been improved much to preserve traditional
buildings.

3) Although jobs are created in tourism service sector, the economic leakage is high. Young people are attracted to work and live outside the old town. According to the survey done in 1997, more than 37% of households are seniors over 60 years old. Population of the community is aging and becoming a migrant community.

4) Houses become very expensive for living. It is profitable for residents to rent houses for commercial use”. (Xu and Tao, 2001, pp.359).

According to Doxey’s irridex theory (Doxey, 1975), the relationship between tourists and residents shows an inverse relationship with tourism growth. Therefore, tourism management should put forward rectifying measures to reduce the conflicts between residents and visitors in the future.

The above research result is from the previous literature, which I will consider as a reference for this study. In this thesis, I will try to use social exchange theory to explain the relationship between residents’ attitudes and tourism impacts. The gap that I will try to fill with my research is the link between residents’ views, tourism impacts, and tourism planning in the study area.
4. LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1. Theoretical Background for Residents’ Attitudes

An attitude can be defined as a reflection that can be a positive or negative evaluation of people, objects, events, activities, ideas, or just about anything in one’s environment (Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999). Attitudes are built upon the perceptions and beliefs of reality, but are closely related to deeply held values and to personality (Wang et al., 2006). Attitudes are not fixed; they change according to social influence or other factors.

In terms of tourism, support for the basic theory of attitude can be explained in that residents’ attitudes can not only simply reflect the residents’ view about tourism and its impacts, but can also show the result of interaction between residents’ perceptions and factors affecting their attitudes (Lankford et al., 1994). The influence factors of residents’ attitude are diverse; almost all the impact factors are variables that could change at different stages of tourism development and with different experiences. Even though the attitude research is complicated and needs to keep up to date with the investigation results at regular intervals, understanding the residents’ current perspectives on local tourism development is necessary. In a sense, residents’ perceptions of tourism can reflect how locals usually behave towards visitors, their values, and their requirements.

4.2. Effect Factors of Residents’ Attitude towards Tourism

Based on many attitude researchers, the influencing factors can fall into three major categories: socio-demographic factors, spatial factors, and economic dependency factors. These factors together affect residents’ feelings about tourism; therefore, in general it is better not to consider them separately. The following are empirical studies about the relationship between residents’ perception of tourism
impact and the three kinds of factors.

4.2.1. Socio-Demographic Factors

Socio-demographic factors appear most frequently in the latest tourism research to be examined. The common variables are age, education, gender, community attachment (birthplace, length of residence, active membership of people’s organizations, and ethnic heritage), ethnicity, and income. The variables listed above can be viewed as an essential attribute of a particular person or community. Generally, some related research has used these variables among hypotheses to examine the relationship of local resident attitudes and tourism impacts. Normally, the demographic characteristics of the resident have a corresponding reaction to tourism impacts. As regards the extent of the influence on residents’ attitude, one study suggested that socioeconomic factors play a relatively minor and sometimes contradictory role in explaining the variation in resident attitudes toward tourism development (Harrill, 2004; Perdue et al., 1990).

Age, as one of the basic variables, has been studied many times in the previous literature. Tomljenovic and Faulkner (1999) found that older residents care less for tourism’s negative impact on the environment than younger residents, and that older residents are friendlier towards international visitors than younger residents. In contrast, Senol and Abduallah (2003) revealed that older residents have more negative feelings towards tourism than younger residents, while they might think that tourism development has more of a negative impact. Regarding gender, the study found that women have a less favorable attitude towards tourism than men (Harrill and Potts, 2003) that is attributable to the unsafe neighborhood and economic benefits. It can be associated with tourism leading to an increase in the crime rate and changing the industrial structure in the tourism region. Concerning the education factor, Wang, Pfister, and Morais (2006), in a case study of Washington, found that education can help to predict the perception of tourism’s contribution to the quality of life. Also in
the Washington case, the education variable is consistent with previous study in that highly educated people are more likely to be concerned about tourism impacts (Andriotis and Vaughan, 2003), while highly educated residents tend to notice the negative aspects more than people with a low level of education.

Another important variable is community attachment. Researchers have shown that residents with a strong tie to one area often have different attitudes and perceptions of tourism development from those who have weaker ties to an area (Besculides et al., 2002). Residents’ tie to an area can be seen as place attachment. Place attachment consists of the connections of a person and community. These connections can inspire local pride and make residents more concerned with their community. Still, when residents’ thinks of themselves as a member of the community, they may have a strong feeling of attachment to the community that makes them more sensitive to community development or change. By this logic, they are willing to join civic organizations and become involved in tourism decisions.

Birthplace as an integral part of place attachment can affect residents’ perception of tourism and tourists (Brougham and Bulter, 1981; Davis et al., 1988). If people’s birthplace is inconsistent with their current residence, regarding their perception of the tourism impact in their current living place, their attitude may be apt to be less positive or even indifferent. However, that is not always the case; residents’ perception of tourism development is also influenced by another variable: length of residence. The length of residence variable is another component of place attachment. Sheldon and Var (1984) reported that the length of the residence period is directly proportional to the sensitivity to the tourism impact: the longer a resident has lived in one area, the more sensitive he or she is to the perception of the tourism impact in this place. McCool and Martin (1994) found that long-term residents regard tourism as having a more negative effect than short-term residents. Nevertheless, whichever of the long-term or short-term residents can gain benefits from tourism will be more concerned about the tourism development and tend to have a positive perception of tourism. Thus, the relationship between economic dependency and resident attitudes
has aroused the interest of many researchers.

4.2.2. Economic Factors

The reason why the tourism industry has developed so quickly and gained wide attention and popularity can be attributed to the fact that it brings significant economic benefits to the tourism area. To begin with, tourism researchers’ hypothesis is that the more economic benefit received from the tourism industry, the more positive the residents’ perception of tourism developments. In the case of Sunshine Coast, Australia, Dyer, Gursoy and Sharma (2007) found that residents support tourism development, owing to tourism being likely to create additional tax, attract more investment to the community, and create more job opportunities. Still, some researchers have found that residents who are engaged in the tourism industry have a more positive attitude towards tourism impacts than those who are not (Pizam, 1978; Rothman, 1978; Thomason et al., 1979), due to persons involved in tourism being able to obtain more direct economic benefits. Therefore, logically, economic reliance is a significant predictor of a positive perception of tourism and a negative perception of tourism is a significant predictor of support for local government control of tourism (Snaith and Haley, 1994). In spite of tourism bringing potential income and economic benefit to individuals and communities, it is not always welcomed by local residents. Cooke (1982) pointed out that some residents consider that with the growth of tourism, their incomes cannot keep up with the rising prices. In addition, residents who work in other industries, such as manufacturing, hold less positive perceptions of tourism. Despite residents having a negative perception of the tourism industry, including poor economic benefits, they still favor the current tourism development and also support future tourism development (Haralambopoulous and Pizam, 1996), since they are optimistic about it and hope for future economic benefits.

Despite tourism being regarded as an “invisible” and “smokeless” industry, it may influence the whole community from residents’ daily life to the government’s
decision making. Under these influences, the economic benefit that residents gain from tourism differs; some obtain great economic benefit while others receive little economic benefit. In other words, only some people can be satisfied while others suffer from the negative effect of tourism. At this point, government stimulation of tourism as a development tool may aggravate this difference (Brownrigg and Greig, 1976) and not be conducive to community development. The inequitable distribution of tourism’s economic benefit leads to abnormal competition between residents, eventually resulting in the destination’s decline. Although the economic factor is the main and decisive influencing factor, residents’ perceptions of tourism are still under the influence of the spatial distance factor.

4.2.3. Spatial Factors

The variables of spatial factors include distance (the distance between the location’s residential buildings and the tourist area); size (the scope of the tourism zone); and location (the geographical position of the tourism zone). Generally speaking, the residents who live nearer to the tourist zone may have more opportunities to make contact with visitors, even though they are not directly employed in the tourism industry or related industries. In fact, visitors and natives inevitably use the same public transportation and eat in the same restaurants in the tourism district, which should increase the number of interactions between visitors and locals. Naturally, tourism and tourists have a profound effect on this part of residents’ perspective and their life.

Above all, the nearer residents live to the tourism core, the more tourism will affect them. Belisle and Hoy (1980) used one-way analysis of variables and the results of the analysis demonstrated that distance has a significant effect on residents’ perceptions of tourism’s impact; they also concluded that the distance factor can explain a significant amount of variation: as the distance from the tourist zone increases, the impact of tourism is perceived less positively. However, some
researchers believe that the closer a resident lives to concentrations of tourism activity, the more negative perceptions of tourism will arise (Harrill, 2004). It is better for tourism activities not to be concentrated in one district because they could have a great effect on the residents’ lives and increase the stress on the public infrastructure and public transportation system. Pizam (1978) referred to the risk that a heavy concentration of tourism facilities and services in a destination will tend to cause residents to have a less positive perception of visitors and tourism. It can be argued that the concentration of tourism activities and services will impel the destination rapidly to enter the consolidation stage or even the stagnation stage, depending on Butler’s destination lifecycle model. Gursoy and Jurowski (2002) found that local residents fear their recreation area turning narrow and even vanishing while the number of visitors grows; therefore, heavy and large-scale use of a certain district as a tourism zone will lead to the social and environmental carrying capacity of the tourism region rapidly becoming saturated, consequently creating resentment of the host community towards tourism and visitors. Thus, residents who support further tourism development policy do not live in a tourism region (Korca, 1998).

4.3. Residents’ Attitudes and Local Tourism Planning

Generally speaking, residents welcome visitors to their community, but they still complain when tourism severely disrupts their lives. Along with the appearance of tourism growth and tourism impacts, research about tourism planning has gradually appeared. In the early 1970s, researchers began to introduce landscape and tourism resources into local planning. In 1977, Baud-Bovy and Lawson proposed that a national economic policy should include tourism planning. In recent decades, residents’ views and planning have received more and more attention. Despite the growing interest, only a handful of articles on tourism planning have found their way into planning journals (Harrill and Potts, 2003).

Burr (1996) pointed out that only based on proper planning and management can
tourism has the ability to improve the quality of residents’ lives as well as to enhance their overall living standards. Exploring residents’ attitudes towards tourism development is an indispensable part of tourism planning. The planner should consider not only how to satisfy visitors and gain more economic benefits, but furthermore the residents’ requirements. If residents show signs of a lack of welcome or hostility towards tourists, the number of tourists might gradually decline (Madrigal, 1995) and then damage the destination’s reputation. Another reason is that natives are more sensitive to tourism impacts than non-natives, according to Sheldon and Var (1984). Therefore, the execution of tourism planning could achieve a better result when this plan involves residents’ opinions than when the plan just refers to traditional planning models without consulting the local community (Williams et al., 1998).

4.4. Positive and Negative Impacts of Tourism

The tourism industry, seen as “no cost” and the fast way to become rich, has been welcomed by many districts and countries, and has naturally become a global industry. Therefore, the impact of tourism has become one of the focuses of tourism research. Generally speaking, tourism’s impact is divided into three categories: the environmental impact, economic impact, and socio-cultural impact (Weaver and Lawton, 2006). Even so, people first notice tourism’s positive economic impacts. However, just as for other industries, tourism development also has negative impacts on the tourism district. The negative impacts of tourism were first documented by researchers in 1970 (Pizam, 1978). Since then, the negative impacts of tourism have attracted more and more attention in recent decades. Consequently, a large amount of literature has focused on tourism impacts, especially relating to tourism’s negative effect. To sum up, part of this study aims to solve the problem as well as provide other destinations with a cautionary tale. Another part of the literature has depended on analyzing the current tourism impact to predict the future trend of tourism.
development or to conduct tourism planning. As Lankford (2001) explained, tourism impact research is (or should be) designed to provide planners with a database with which to develop a planning process aimed at addressing local concerns and issues.

4.4.1. Environmental Impacts

During tourism growth, the landscape environment is inevitably changed to cater for visitors’ requirements in a destination. Anyway, the environment is the basic and indispensable part of the tourism product and the major factor to attract visitors to a particular destination. For this reason, the preservation and improvement of the local environment are necessary because it is critical to the sustainable development of future tourism. The following presents the signs of positive and negative environmental impacts associated with tourism.

Positive Environmental Impacts

Regarding positive environmental impacts, firstly, some researchers have mentioned that tourism is beneficial to the improvement of public infrastructure, such as the water system, sewage system, and power system. The reason is that the economic benefits from tourism development provide comparatively large amounts of funds for the construction of urban infrastructure facilities. Furthermore, destinations with good infrastructures are necessary, due to insufficient infrastructure limiting the development of the travel industry. Secondly, a beautiful and unspoiled landscape is a primary attraction for many visitors, and even some tourism activities only take place in certain environments (such as diving trips and skiing), which have a higher requirement for environmental quality. Based on the above reasons, increasing numbers of people are realizing that the environment is an important parameter for tourism development; in another words, destinations have an incentive to protect and enhance their environmental assessment (Weaver and Lawton, 2006), which could help to improve the environmental awareness of residents. Although tourism
development provides locals with better living conditions, empirical studies still support the assertion that there are fewer environmental benefits than environmental costs.

**Negative Environmental Impacts**

On the negative side, tourism directly impacts on the environment as follows: noise, water, air and litter pollution, and landscape destruction. Regarding noise pollution, with tourism development, not only night pubs, amusement parks, and entertainment venues, but also public transportation, are noisy. Concerning water pollution, the most common form is sewage and garbage poured into the river or sea, and ships or boats leak oil during transit. With regard to air pollution, heavy use of airplanes produces large quantities of carbon dioxide. It can be said that airplanes need to be responsible for the global greenhouse effect and that tourism development is directly contributing to the increased demand for international and domestic air transport. In terms of the landscape, in some destinations, the phenomena of billboards, recreation facilities, or new buildings create disharmony in the whole atmosphere. This impact could destroy the esthetics of the landscape. Except those mentioned above, the previous literature has also referred to some negative impacts in more detail, such as ancient buildings being destroyed by erosion, graffiti, or overuse and flora and fauna being disturbed by visitors, which could lead to the wildlife and vegetation falling in number and changing their way of their survival, and certain species may even become extinct (Caneday and Zeiger, 1991; Cooper et al., 2008; D’Amore, 1983; Travis, 1982).

In a general way, visitors tend to make more extravagant use of the resources of tourism destinations (such as electricity, water, or public facilities) than when they are at home. Worse still, with the destruction of human greed, the environment is being polluted faster than can be repaired by man or nature in many destinations. Therefore, the remedial measures and preservation need to keep up with tourism development and receive much attention from local tourism managers and governments (Allen et al., 1988).
4.4.2. Economic Impacts

In the research on tourism impacts, the economic side of tourism is often noticed due to its positive impacts, while the negative aspects of environmental and socio-cultural impacts of tourism are exaggerated. Indeed, a positive economic impact can directly bring benefits to persons or communities; therefore, it is also the major driver of tourism development (Cooper et al., 2008). Even though it seems the economic benefits are greater than the costs, the economic negative impacts still need to be taken with caution.

Positive Economic Impacts

In general, the economic benefits can be divided into personal economic benefits and regional economic benefits; the direct benefits and indirect benefits. Based on empirical research, the positive economic impacts include the provision of more job opportunities and alleviation of employment pressures; increased foreign exchange earnings; driving the development of other industries and boosting the GDP in the tourism district; improving the life quality of residents; and more commodities being available (Davis et al., 1988; Liu and Var, 1986; Pizam, 1987; Ross, 1992). Even better, the tourism industry still has some advantages for development: low cost, quick effectiveness, and high profits. The tourism industry can stimulate the development of other industries, such as the catering industry, hotel industry, transportation, commerce, and recreation industry. Therefore, considering tourism as a comprehensive industry, its economic benefits cannot be underestimated. In many countries, the tourism industry as a pillar industry is closely connected to the regional and national economy.

Negative Economic Impacts

Firstly, the increase in the number of seasonal workers makes part of residents’ income unsteady. Generally, seasonal jobs will lead to insecurity of employees because of the relative instability of their income, fewer training opportunities, and weaker social welfare than permanent jobs. That would disturb the local economic
development and create social problems if alternative patterns or compensation practices have not been executed by tourism managers or the government. Secondly, there is an influence on the stability of the regional economy. Along with the rapid development of tourism, the tourism industry inevitably replaces other industries (for instance: farming or manufacturing) to become the pillar industry in many tourism regions. The degree of harmony between the industrial structures can reflect the health of the regional economic development. Generally, economic diversification is better than a single-product economy structure, but nowadays many districts focus on developing the tourism industry while crippling the other industries’ development. That involves a number of risks to the local economic development and stability, such as the 1997 Asian financial crisis’s blow to the Thailand tourism industry, which implicated the whole country’s economy. Thirdly, seasonality inflates food prices and results in an upward trend in prices. With the increase in the number of visitors, the demand for general commodities and food also increases. In fact, tourism development raises not only commodity prices but also housing prices. Last but not least, the tourism revenue leakage may mislead the result of tourism economic impacts if tourism managers ignore this part in their calculation (Cooper et al., 2008). Even though the tourism industry can provide efficient ways to create economic benefits, the salaries in the tourism sector tend to be low and the economic benefit is unevenly distributed compared with other industries (Weaver and Lawton, 2006).

The common methodological approaches to measuring the economic impacts can be categorized into a few basic types: the Keynesian multiplier model, input and output analysis, benefit and cost analysis (Lindberg and Johnson, 1997), the computable general equilibrium (CGE) model, and ad hoc models (Cooper et al., 2008).

4.4.3. Socio-Cultural Impacts

Previous studies have shown that the socio-cultural impacts are more profound
and broader than the environmental and economic impacts. There is a traditional view that the socio-cultural impacts are a combined effect because of the difficulty in distinguishing between sociological and cultural impacts (Cooper et al., 2008).

The social and cultural impacts can be summarized as follows: a change in the residents’ values, the influence on neighbor and family relationships, the transformation of local norms, the influence of community attachment, a change in religious beliefs, and the influence on the traditional culture and lifestyle (Cooper et al., 2008). Some of these are regarded as positive impacts, while others may be deemed to be negative impacts, depending on different perspectives and levels of impact. Nevertheless, these impacts lead to social and cultural change. The changes are not only to cater to tourism development, but can also be influenced by the difference between the visitors and the host population. In effect, tourism development accelerates the process of social change.

Tourism development’s influence on the host community can be divided into direct impacts and indirect impacts (Cooper et al., 2008). For instance, under the influence of tourists, a resident changes her traditional clothing style; this is a direct impact. Then, this resident comes into contact with others in the host community and these people are influenced by her to change their dress style, which is deemed to be an indirect impact. It should be noted that most socio-cultural impacts cannot be identified immediately.

**Positive Socio-Cultural Impacts**

The socio-cultural benefits from tourism development are mainly displayed in the following several respects (Cooper et al., 2008): promoting cultural communication and integration (Ap and Crompton, 1998). During tourism development, local residents have more opportunities to make contact with foreign cultures, which can lead them to improve their knowledge and broaden their horizons. Regarding the tourism industry as a bridge to connect the host population with outsiders, naturally cultural exchange could be considered part of tourism activity.
Every tourist has different cultural experiences, even though they visit the same destination.

Tourism development helps to enhance local residents’ pride and self-confidence (Besculides et al., 2002). With the development of society, modernization gradually replaces the traditional. Owing to the requirement of the tourism market, locals can rediscover something of value that is already overlooked by people in modern life. In an age of globalization, old crafts and traditional rituals and ceremonies can highlight the uniqueness of a particular community. This uniqueness not only brings economic benefits to destinations, but can also enhance the sense of national pride. Naturally, seeing their own community become a popular and well-known resort can improve the superiority and pride of residents.

Tourism development is conducive to the protection of cultural heritage and historical relics (Liu and Var, 1986). As mentioned above, there are many benefits to be gained from traditional cultures and crafts; therefore, these old skills or traditional things might naturally arouse more attention from the local government and people. On the other hand, the economic benefit obtained from tourism provides subsidized funds for the preservation of culture and heritage (Liu and Var, 1986).

Tourism development is improving the quality of people’s lives with more cultural entertainment activities, such as art exhibitions and concerts (McCool and Martin, 1994), and improved local public services (Keogh, 1990).

**Negative Socio-Cultural Impacts**

The negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism are an increase in the crime rate (Jud, 1975) – even though it is hard to prove that tourism has a direct relationship with crime, tourism development is a catalyst for the growth of criminal activities – and prostitution (Omondi, 2003) – sex activity has grown quickly in many tourism areas. It is difficult to determine whether the tourism industry is causing the sex trade or the growth in the number of sex tourists has stimulated the travel market. Anyhow, sex tourism may trigger social disturbances, as well as leading to climbing venereal
disease infection rates among hosts and tourists. Tourism development could bring health risks to the local community. Due to diseases being easily transmitting, along with the growth in population density and more contact with people (Cooper et al., 2008), traffic jams (Sheldon and Var, 1984), social stability (Travis, 1984), and disruption to the residents’ ordinary life (Northcote and Macbeth, 2005), tourism activity also is a catalyst for globalization and unification, and is often presented as host communities losing their cultural uniqueness. One of the strongest indicators of such impacts is the loss of the native language as a result of an influx of tourist languages (Besculides et al., 2002; Cybriwsky, 1970).

Tourism development has led to issues of excessive commercialization in many destinations. I argue that the commercialization is the result of social and economic development and the degree of commercialization can be divided into moderate commercialization and over-commercialization. Over-commercialization can be thought of as the destination not only wanting to meet the tourists’ demand as far as possible, but also wanting to generate revenues as much as possible. More specifically, tourism managers are more concerned about present profits while ignoring the essential value of culture. When local cultural values have been used as a commodity and marketing tool, they have become over-commercialized by use (Tosun, 1998); Erkuş-Öztürk (2010) commented that over-commercialization will result in degradation of the environmental and cultural resources in a tourism area. Commodification, lack of authenticity, and standardization are all outcomes of commercialization, and will be analyzed in detail below.

Commodification is generally recognized as a major negative socio-cultural impact of tourism (King and Stewart, 1996) that could result in the vulgarization of the traditional culture. It is said to destroy the authenticity of local cultural products and human relations; instead, a surrogate, covert “staged authenticity” emerges (Erik, 1988). Staged authenticity means that the traditional cultural preference makes a distinction between frontstage and backstage (MacCannell, 1976). The frontstage is commercial cultural performance as a tourism-oriented product, and is chosen from
some part of a feast or ritual that tourists are most interested in and in accordance with the preference and requirement of the tourism market is modified and finally appointed a place for cultural display. Regarding the backstage that is prepared for the host population or researchers, contrary to the frontstage, it treats the authentic rituals or ceremonies as a necessary part of real life. In relation to staged authenticity, Tosun (1998) described the performances as not only not compatible with the original dances or dramas, but also involving contents of the dramas that are so changed that they are inconsistent with reality. In theory, staged authenticity already achieves its goal by attracting tourists and preventing the culture from suffering from the tourism impact. However, in practice, this approach could cause two problems. First, staged authenticity may take into account the problem of cultural authenticity. MacCannell (1976) commented that this practice misleads visitors to accept contrived attractions as “authentic,” creating a “false touristic consciousness.” Second, along with cultural performance, it becomes part of the local tourism product that could lead to the frequency of cultural performance increasing. This situation risks blurring the distinctions between the frontstage and the backstage, and indicates certain potential hazards to the inheritance of ethnic culture.

Authenticity in tourism is referred to as traditional culture and its origin, and the sense of reality and uniqueness, by Sharpley (1994). As the tourism area becomes increasingly commercialized, the authenticity is gradually destroyed. The authenticity is of the same importance to visitors and residents. From the residents’ perspective, they may have unique feelings towards the heritage sites compared with people from outside because they have experienced the heritage sites since they were born there or have lived there (Zhang, 2011); the lack of authenticity may influence their feeling of community attachment.

Tourism standardization is another result of commercialization, and consists of two types. One is the destination’s risk standardization: while the landscape, accommodation, food and drinks, etc. must meet the tourists’ desire for the new and unfamiliar, they must at the same time not be too new or strange because few tourists
are actually looking for completely new things (Henkens et al., 2005). Another is the standardization of the tourism development model: the destination copies the model of a famous and successful sightseeing district instead of developing its own features and advantages. This kind of lack of a competitive product will reduce the visitors’ revisits and hinder the future development of tourism.

4.5. Social Exchange Theory and Residents’ Attitudes

Social exchange theory (SET) has a social psychological and sociological perspective that explains social change and stability as a process of negotiated exchanges between people in society (Yutyunyong and Scott, 2010). Scholars have agreed that social exchange refers to interdependent transactions and reciprocity rules (Emerson, 1976). Generally speaking, participants involved in an exchange are bound to measure their gains and losses; the process of exchange could continue while both sides sense whether their benefits outweigh the costs or whether their benefits and costs are in equilibrium. By that measure, if one party finds that the gains from the exchange process are less than the cost, they might choose to drop out of the exchange relationship. The participants involved in interaction can include a single person or an entire community. By definition, the motivation for the exchange is to meet the mutual interests and profit between the involvements of the participants (Ap, 1992). The tourists engaged in an exchange relationship are diverse, but for all that, their travel purposes can be seen as their gain while the motivation of the host population involved in this relationship is tourism benefits.

There is wide agreement that social exchange theory is an appropriate framework to use in developing an understanding of residents’ perceptions of tourism (Ap, 1992; Perdue et al., 1990). In terms of tourism, social exchange theory can predict the residents’ attitude towards tourism and can be used to explain why residents have different perceptions of tourism; in other words, social exchange theory can reflect the value of the host community and person unit. In the same way as the term of tourism
impact, social exchange theory also examines economic, environmental, and socio-cultural aspects, and then determines how residents respond to tourism development and future development (Andriotis and Vaughan, 2003). Perdue, Long, and Allen (1987) found that when residents gain benefits from tourism development, their perception of tourism is unrelated to their socio-demographic characteristics. This could explain why many popular destinations attract mostly non-native businessmen and these people almost always have more positive attitudes towards tourism. Still, Ap’s (1992) conclusion is that residents who deem the costs of tourism development to be lower than the benefits could have a positive attitude towards tourism development, but when residents find that an imbalance in the exchange relationship exists in tourism development and the benefits are lower than the costs, they might have a less positive perception of tourism development. In general, the residents’ perceptions of tourism and their support for further tourism development depend on the outcome of a cost–benefit equation (Andriotis, 2005; Pearce et al., 1996). So to speak, the further development of tourism is based on the mutual benefits of hosts and visitors.

From the above statement, economic, socio-cultural, and environmental components are known as the major elements provided by the host community (Pizam and Milman, 1986). In the first stage of tourism development, the host community is more aware of its economic benefits and ignores its socio-cultural and environmental cost in the exchange relationship. Along with the tourism growth, residents not only assess the economic benefits but also consider the social and environmental benefits. To sum up, residents think about how the extent of the tourism impact on the destination depends on their overall satisfaction with the exchange relationship; as such, some residents may even feel dissatisfaction regarding the environmental degradation, but the other benefits from tourism can balance it, so they will support the continuing exchange. Even though the economic, social, and environmental factors all have the effect of the residents’ view of tourism development, the potential for economic gain still has a direct and positive effect on residents’ support. The
strongest effect of the economic gain variable is on social impacts, although it has very little effect on environmental impact variables (Jurowski et al., 1997).

According to social exchange theory, the personal benefit from tourism is relevant to the support of tourism development, but no individual benefit has been found to be related to supporting tourism planning (McGehee et al., 2002). In relation to the relationship between individual benefit and support of tourism planning, the authors explained that every resident may think that tourism planning is important to tourism development. Therefore, residents still support tourism development and planning even if they do not gain many benefits from tourism, which can be explained by their belief that tourism will bring benefits to them in the future and good planning can help the healthy growth of tourism. Residents have confidence in future tourism development that is not relevant in terms of exchange. To sum up, social exchange theory is conducive to understanding the satisfaction and requirement of residents, which can provide some reference information for the decision making, planning, and management of a tourism destination.

Following the exchange logic, previous research has reported that community groups consider whether the exchange of resources is high or balanced; these groups have a very positive view of this exchange relationship (Andriotis, 2005). Most often, members of the host community are divided into different groups according to the amount of benefits obtained from tourism. The same group’s people have similar attitudes towards tourism development as usual; with this in mind, some researchers is depend on residents’ career (whether they are employed in tourism and related industries) to conduct further studies.

To sum up, the social exchange theory is used for the interpretation of a causal relationship between the tourism benefits/costs and the residents’ attitudes toward tourism development, while Doxey’s irridex model is more inclined to the description of the phenomenon in the different phases of tourism development. These two theories will be used to provide the explanation of residents’ attitudes toward tourism development and of the relation of different variables in the study area.
4.6. Doxey’s Irridex Model

Doxey (1975) assumed that residents’ attitudes change as a result of interaction between hosts and visitors at different times of tourism development. The author also considered that the growing number of visitors is proportional to locals’ growing discontent with tourists.

![Doxey’s Irridex Model](image)

**Figure 4. Doxey’s Irridex Model**
(Doxey, 1975: figure model by Reisinger, 2009)

Doxey’s irridex theory follows four residential attitudes that range from euphoria to antagonism. Figure 4 shows a relation curve and present the relationship between the number of tourists and residents’ attitude change. The beginning of tourism development can also be called the “euphoria” stage, when the destination does not have many tourists, visitors are welcomed by the host community, and residents are interested in and curious about outsiders. Along with further tourism development, the number of visitors increases and the local community has more opportunity to come into contact with visitors. In that case, locals’ attitude towards tourists is indifferent in that they neither like nor dislike visitors, and the interaction between hosts and visitors tends to be commercial (the “apathy” stage). In the stage of “irritation,” hosts’ attitudes towards guests reach antipathy. At this stage, the host community begins to
feel that its daily life is disturbed by tourists and starts to realize the negative effect of tourism. With tourism continuing to develop, the socio-cultural and environmental problems become more serious. The landscape and socio-cultural atmosphere experience a big change, as well as the local community becoming hostile towards visitors. That means the residents’ attitude towards visitors has moved into the final phase (the “antagonism” stage).

This model demonstrates that residents’ attitude towards tourism will experience a series of changes. Long, Perdue, and Allen (1990) found that a host community’s attitudes are originally positive but become negative when more visitors are added. However, some scholars have raised two problems about Doxey’s irridex theory. First, some empirical studies show that the irridex theory cannot support all the findings. Scholars have criticized the change in residents’ attitudes towards tourism as a predictably single pattern of response; in other words, they think that the irridex theory is too simple and absolute. It suggests that residents’ attitudes and reactions towards tourism contain a sense of homogeneity (Mason and Cheyne, 2000). In reality, the residents in one host community have different perceptions of tourism in the same stage of tourism development. In support of this criticism, researchers have commented that a heterogeneous community response and diverse residents’ attitudes simultaneously exist in a community (Brougham and Butler, 1981; Wang et al., 2006). As noted earlier, the factors that affect residents’ attitude towards tourism cloud the socio-demographic, economic, and spatial factors. Second, researchers have also discussed the irridex model’s assumption of a reactive rather than a proactive community response (Weaver and Lawton, 2006). In particular, this model cannot be used for prediction just as a measurement tool for the stage of tourism development.
5. METHOD

5.1. Research Design

The descriptive research design and survey research design are adopted in this study. Landman (1988) explained that descriptive research is primarily concerned with describing the nature or conditions and degree of the present situation in detail, and this kind of research method focuses on describing rather than judging or interpreting. In this thesis, I will use a descriptive research design to describe the current tourism impacts from residents’ point of view. Moreover, Zikmund (2003) and Zhang (2011) showed that descriptive research is based on the previous understanding of the nature of the research problem. The residents’ attitude towards tourism impacts has been studied for over ten years and a large amount of research results have been obtained. With regard to Zhouzhuang canal town, scholars have also achieved many research results. Some achievements from previous research will be referred to in the thesis. In brief, it can be said that the descriptive research design seems more appropriate for this research.

Generally speaking, researchers can obtain more detailed and valid information when they use a combination of observation, household research, related document and literature reviews, and face-to-face interviews. However, considering the time and cost, this study mainly adopted questionnaire investigation. Conducting a household survey seems a relatively simple method to obtain useful information, and the collected statistical data can reflect the result of the survey more directly. Quantitative research can filter out external factors, if properly designed, and so the results gained can be seen as real and unbiased (Gaula, 2011). This is one of the main reasons quantitative research is chosen to be conducted as the major study method. On the basis of quantitative analysis, this thesis made a further qualitative analysis. When the questionnaire was administered and the field study was conducted, the author did unobtrusive observation and had some brief conversations with a few of the residents.
when their families were answering the questionnaire. In this thesis, the collected data are tabulated for analysis and comparison, while some contents of the conversations with the residents plus the observed results are used for further support.

5.2. Data Collection

The study area was chosen as Zhouzhuang canal town. I first visited Zhouzhuang canal town in April 2004, and my second trip was made in June 2006. The first visit was only for travel, and the study of visitors’ perception of the canal town was the purpose of the second visit. In February 2012, I visited Zhouzhuang canal town again to conduct a survey and gather the basic material needed by this study, for the purpose of gaining more information. With that intention, I not only followed the regular travel route but also visited the residential area in Zhouzhuang canal town. To sum up, I have been to Zhouzhuang canal town three times, between 2004 and 2012, and each time I experienced different feelings. In my opinion, the tourism industry has not only brought great changes to the tranquil atmosphere, but has also had irreversible effects on the society.

The data were collected by questionnaire survey and the reasons for choosing this survey method were outlined above. This questionnaire survey process was conducted in February and March 2012. During the low season, residents have more willingness and time to complete the questionnaire and communicate. “I would be busy doing business so cannot accept the survey, if you do it in peak tourist season,” one respondent said. The questionnaire was designed by referring to previous research literature that deals with residents’ attitude towards tourism development, combined with the current situation of the study area, reports from local newspapers, and public documents. This questionnaire consisted of four parts: first, the socio-demographic profile including the respondents’ gender, age, monthly income, where they live, how long they have been living there, and so on; the second part concerned tourism impacts and included some questions about the destination’s economic, environmental,
and socio-cultural impacts; and parts three and part four considered the perceived tourism benefits and attitudes towards further tourism development. In response to each question, the respondents could select one of the options as their opinion. Examining all the respondents’ options can assess the aspect of tourism impacts.

The questionnaire was designed with one type of question: one-choice questions. They used a Likert-type scale on which 1 equaled strongly disagree, 2 equaled disagree, 3 equaled neutral, 4 equaled agree, and 5 equaled strongly agree for each attitudinal item (Maddox, 1985).

The survey was undertaken via self-administered questionnaires; the questionnaires were distributed in the scenic area and outside the scenic spot. The random sampling approach was used in sample selection; the samples who live inside and outside the scenic spot were divided, and every sample was roughly in intervals of 5 houses or stores in the alleys of the Zhouzhuang district chosen. From the 70 questionnaires distributed, the response rate was around 67%, equal to 47 questionnaires collected. During the statistical data processing, 5 surveys were eliminated because they had uncompleted answers. All in all, surveys were collected with a 60% effective rate. According to Babbie (2004), a response rate under around 75% can be thought of as a low response rate, even though very little scientific research can come close to 75%. Therefore, this study can be considered to have a low response rate. Dyer et al. (2007) stressed that a low response rate is likely to introduce bias to the study, which may alter the findings of the study. In addition, a low response rate may minimize the generalizability of the findings, even though the findings of this study are consistent with those of previous studies. With this in mind, readers can discreetly make a better assessment of the result of this study.

5.3. Data Analytical Procedure

All the collected data were analyzed and calculated by SPSS 17.0 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The process of data analysis took place in the
following three steps.

Firstly, the reliability of the multiple-item scale was measured. With regard to the reliability test, I chose to use the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (Nunnally, 1978) and corrected item-to-total correlation (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is the index of reliability and is used for testing the internal consistency of Likert-type scales in this questionnaire. The alpha coefficient ranges in value from 0 to 1; in general, the higher the score, the more reliable the generated scale is (Reynaldo and Santos, 1999). With this in mind, Nunnally (1978) indicated that 0.7 is an acceptable reliability coefficient as a general rule, but a coefficient below this threshold is acceptable in some research. Even so, a Cronbach’s $\alpha$ coefficient lower than 0.7 means it is better to make some adjustments to the questionnaire design. The corrected item-to-total correlation suggests which item can be deleted to make the Cronbach’s $\alpha$ coefficient up to the standard 0.7.

Secondly, the descriptive statistics will be used to analyse the means and standard deviation. The result of the analysis can be used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents, tourism impacts, perceived personal benefit, and residents’ attitude towards further tourism development. To sum up, the descriptive statistics can answer the first research question: what is the current tourism impact perceived by residents in Zhouzhuang canal town?

Thirdly, the averaging method is used to construct the multiple variables related to each model into one single variable.

Fourthly, the independent-samples t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) are used to test the difference among the characteristics of residents. An independent-samples t-test is used to compare the mean score on some continuous variables for two different groups of participants, while the ANOVA is used in comparing the mean scores of more than two groups (Julie, 2013). This analysis is conducted to answer question 2.

Lastly, a series of standard multiple regression analyses was used to test the relationship among the variables (Perdue et al., 1990). They were designed with three
models. The results of the three models were examined to explore the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables, that is, to answer research question 3.

The whole questionnaire can be found in the appendices. At the beginning of this research, two questionnaires were designed, one investigating the residents’ attitudes and the other concerning tourists’ perceptions. As the research continued, I excluded the study of the tourists’ perceptions and focused on the residents’ attitudes in order to narrow the scope of the object of this study.

5.4. Model Building and Variable Specification

5.4.1. Standard Multiple Regression Analyses Models and Variables

Residents Perceived Personal Benefits from Tourism: For this research, this variable reflects the situation of the acquisition of residents’ interests. McGehee et al. (2004) argued that personal benefits are correlated with their support for tourism development and tourism impacts. This means that residents who perceive personal benefits from tourism would have more opinions when they view the tourism impacts and development. It can also be interpreted as tourism’s positive impacts bringing benefits to residents, while negative impacts would reduce their benefits. Therefore, this variable is not only influenced by tourism impacts, but it will also influence the residents’ views of further tourism development and tourism impacts.

Tourism’s Positive Impacts: It is one of the independent variables in models. With tourism development, the literature reviews (see chapter 4) mention that tourism’s positive impacts can be divided into economic positive impacts, environmental positive impacts and socio-cultural positive impacts. Haralambopoulous and Pizam (1996) found that residents who are dependent on the tourism industry, or perceive a greater level of economic gain or personal benefit tend to have more positive
perceptions of impact than others. Perdue et al. (1990) discovered that when personal benefits received from tourism development were controlled, residents with positive perceptions of tourism impacts supported further tourism development. As mentioned above, residents’ perceptions of tourism’s positive impacts are related to their personal benefits and their support to further tourism development.

Tourism’s Negative Impacts: It is another independent variable in the models. With tourism development, tourism’s negative impacts also can be divided into economic positive impacts, environmental positive impacts and socio-cultural positive impacts (see chapter 4, literature reviews). There is also evidence that those who feel that they receive tourism benefits are aware of some of the negative impacts (McGehee and Andereck, 2004), which means that residents’ perceptions of tourism’s negative impacts are related to their personal benefits from tourism.

Residents’ Support for Further Tourism Development: Perdue et al. (1987) point out that residents’ support for further tourism development was positively or negatively related to their perceived positive or negative impacts of tourism. Moreover, most individuals and communities who do not receive benefits from tourism will not support further tourism development, as noted by Martin et al. (1998). In brief, residents’ perception of tourism impacts and their perceived personal benefit are all related to residents’ support for further tourism development.

Residents’ Support for Restriction on Further Tourism Development: Researchers found that residents who perceived tourism positively were less supportive of restrictions on tourism development, while those who felt that tourism had negative impacts were more supportive of tourism restrictions (Pavlína and Christine, 2012). Furthermore, the residents’ personal benefits from tourism cannot predict whether they will support restrictions on further tourism development (Pavlína and Christine, 2012). In short, residents’ perceptions of tourism impacts are related to their support
for restriction on further tourism development, while residents’ perceived personal benefits are not related to their support for restriction on further tourism development.

**Birthplace:** Brougham and Butler (1981) suggested that, as one of the resident’s characteristics, birthplace influences the residents’ attitudes toward tourism impacts. It also influences the residents’ attitudes toward community change and development (Goudy, 1997). Furthermore, consider the fact that Zhouzhuang canal town is a famous tourism region, residents who were born in this area would have more advantage than those who were not. Compared with the guest workers, most of the residents who were born in this area have their own house. In the situation of the rise of housing prices, they either rent or sell their house to outsiders, they all can receive economic benefits. Economic benefits as one kind of tourism benefits may influence how residents perceived their personal benefits from tourism. Therefore, the residents’ characteristics are related to their perceived personal benefits from tourism to some extent.

**Model Specification:** According to the above discussion of dependent and independent variables, the hypotheses regarding the relationships among these variables are presented as the following three models:

**Model 1:**

\[
\text{Residents' Perceived Personal Benefits from Tourism} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{TPI} + \beta_2 \text{TNI} + \beta_3 B + \epsilon
\]

The dependent variable represents the residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism. TPI is tourism’s positive impacts, while TNI stands for tourism’s negative impacts. Birthplace represents the residents’ characteristics. \(\beta_0\) is the constant, while the error term \(\epsilon\) is the residual that cannot be explained by this model but still is related to residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism.
Model 2:

Residents’ Support for Further Tourism Development: $\beta_0 + \beta_1 R + \beta_2 TPI + \beta_3 TNI + \epsilon$

The dependent variable represents the residents’ support for further tourism development. R stands for the residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism. TPI is tourism’s positive impacts, while TNI stands for tourism’s negative impacts. $\beta_0$ is the constant, while the error term $\epsilon$ is the residual that cannot be explained by this model but still is related to residents’ support for further tourism development.

Model 3:

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 R + \beta_2 TPI + \beta_3 TNI + \epsilon$

The dependent variable (Y) represents the residents’ support for restriction on further tourism development. R stands for the residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism. TPI is tourism’s positive impacts, while TNI stands for tourism’s negative impacts. $\beta_0$ is the constant, while the error term $\epsilon$ is the residual that cannot be explained by this model but still is related to residents’ support for restriction on further tourism development.

5.4.2. T-Test and ANOVA Analysis Models and Variables

Tourism’s Positive Impacts: Usually, residents have different attitudes toward tourism’s positive impacts in one community. This dependent variable is influenced by many independent variables, such as gender, age and community attachment (Harrill, 2004). Some of these independent variables will be chosen to be tested in this thesis.
Tourism’s Negative Impacts: With tourism growth, residents perceive more and more negative impacts from tourism. The same with positive impact, it is also influenced by many independent variables (Harrill, 2004).

Age: The older the residents, the more negative their attitudes toward tourism (Cavus and Tanrisevdi, 2002). For this research, the responses were divided into seven groups according to their ages.

Gender: The research found that females perceived more of tourism’s negative impacts than did the males (Mason and Cheyne, 2000) this can be caused by crimes and security problems.

Birthplace: Um and Crompton (1987) revealed that people who were born in their community are less positive about tourism.

Tourism Income: It is also called economic dependency. The residents who get more economic benefits from tourism have more positive attitudes toward tourism impacts (Liu and Var, 1986). However, residents are still concerned with tourism’s environmental negative impacts, despite economic benefits (Liu et al. 1987).

Contact with visitors: The level of contact with visitors has an impact on the residents’ attitudes toward tourism impacts (Brougham and Butler, 1981), which can be connections of Doxey’s irridex model (Doxey, 1975).

Living Area: Tyrell and Spaulding (1984) pointed out that the residents less favorable toward the location of the tourism region are close to their home, because of the trash. However, Belisle and Hoy (1980) reported that as the distance from the tourism area increase, residents have more negative attitudes toward tourism. In this study, the residents’ living areas were divided into inside the scenic region and outside the
Length of Residence: Researchers found that the longer residents lived in one area, the more negative their perceptions of tourism impact are (Allen et al., 1988; Brougham and Butler, 1981). For this research, the responses were divided into five groups according to their length of residence in the study area.

Model Specification: According to the above discussion of dependent variables and independent (grouping) variables, the hypotheses regarding the difference among these variables are presented as the following fourteen models:

Model 1: The dependent variable is tourism’s positive impacts, while the grouping variable is gender. Group 1 is composed of males, and group 2, females.

Model 2: The dependent variable is tourism’s positive impacts, while the grouping variable is the living area. Group 1 is composed of residents who are living inside the scenic region, and group 2 is composed of residents who are living outside the scenic region.

Model 3: The dependent variable is tourism’s positive impacts, while the grouping variable is the birthplace. Group 1 is composed of residents who were born in the research area, and group 2 is composed of residents who were not born in the research area.

Model 4: The dependent variable is tourism’s positive impacts, while the grouping variable is the tourism income. Group 1 is composed of residents whose incomes include the tourism income, and group 2 is composed of residents whose incomes do not include tourism income.
Model 5: The dependent variable is tourism’s positive impacts, while the grouping variable is the contact with visitors. Group 1 is composed of residents who have frequent contacts with visitors in daily life, and group 2 is composed of residents who do not have frequent contacts with visitors in daily life.

Model 6: The dependent variable is tourism’s positive impacts, while the grouping variable is age. Group 1 is composed of residents who are 18 years or younger; group 2, those who are 19-24 years old; group 3, those who are 25-35 years old; group 4, those who are 36-46 years old; group 5, those who are 47-57 years old; group 6, those who are 58-68 years old; and group 7, those who are 69 years and older.

Model 7: The dependent variable is tourism’s positive impacts, while the grouping variable is the length of residence. Group 1 is composed of residents who have been living in the research area for 5 years or less; group 2, those with a length of residence of 6-15 years; group 3, those with a length of residence of 16-25 years; group 4, those with a length of residence of 26-35 years; and group 5, those who have been living in the research area for 35 years or more.

Model 8: The dependent variable is tourism’s negative impacts, while the grouping variable is gender. Group 1 is composed of male residents, and group 2 is composed of female residents.

Model 9: The dependent variable is tourism’s negative impacts, while the grouping variable is the living area. Group 1 is composed of residents who are living inside the scenic region, and group 2 is composed of residents who are living outside the scenic region.

Model 10: The dependent variable is tourism’s negative impacts, while the grouping variable is the birthplace. Group 1 is composed of residents who were born in the
research area, and group 2 is composed of residents who were not born in the research area.

**Model 11:** The dependent variable is tourism’s negative impacts, while the grouping variable is the tourism income. Group 1 is composed of residents whose incomes include tourism income, and group 2 is composed of residents whose incomes do not include tourism income.

**Model 12:** The dependent variable is tourism’s negative impacts, while the grouping variable is the contact with visitors. Group 1 is composed of residents who have frequent contacts with visitors in daily life, and group 2 is composed of residents who do not have frequent contacts with visitors in daily life.

**Model 13:** The dependent variable is tourism’s negative impacts, while the grouping variable is age. Group 1 is composed of residents who are 18 years or younger; group 2, those who are 19-24 years old; group 3, those who are 25-35 years old; group 4, those who are 36-46 years old; group 5, those who are 47-57 years old; group 6, those who are 58-68 years old; and group 7, those who are 69 years and older.

**Model 14:** The dependent variable is tourism’s negative impacts, while the grouping variable is the length of residence. Group 1 is composed of residents who have been living in the research area for 5 years or less; group 2, those with a length of residence of 6-15 years; group 3, those with a length of residence of 16-25 years; group 4, those with a length of residence of 26-35 years; group 5, residents who have been living in the research area for 35 years or more.

**5.5. Methodological Considerations**

Research methods include quantitative research and qualitative research. In
general, the data collection procedure approach to qualitative research uses observation, interviews, and reviewing documents, while typical data collection for quantitative research involves a questionnaire survey. Through the comprehensive assessment of two research methods, I chose to follow the quantitative research method as the major research method in this research, while qualitative research as a kind of complement to the method of quantitative research. Firstly, my research is a major study of the relationship of variables, while researchers have pointed out that quantitative data can be used to discover associations (Nigel, 2008). Secondly, interviews as one of the qualitative research approaches appear suitable, but are not easy to conduct in Zhouzhuang canal town in reality. Language is one of the obstacles in that some of the residents cannot speak Mandarin, especially the elderly. However, another problem is that many residents refused to cooperate with the interview. I think the main reason to be a lack of interest, which can be directly linked to the challenges of the qualitative method: it is time-consuming, expensive, and labor-intensive (Nigel, 2008). Last but not least, compared with the not “generalizable” qualitative research result, quantitative data have greater relative precision (Nigel, 2008).

From my point of view, despite such advantages of quantitative research, the limitation of questionnaire surveys is that they cannot obtain more opinions and examine more complex problems; another is the risk of respondents' faulty understanding of questions, which directly causes problems with the reliability of numerical descriptions.
6. FINDINGS

6.1. Measurement Model

Examining the consistency and reliability test showed that most of the multiple-
item scales are up to standard in that the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient exceeded 0.7,
with just a few exceptions.

Exception 1: The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of the perceived positive impacts
scale was 0.68, failing to make the grade. Checking the corrected item-to-total
correlations found that the item “tourism arouses residents’ awareness of
environmental protection” was too low, hence it was deleted. After the retest, the
Cronbach’s alpha coefficient rose to 0.72 for this scale.

Exception 2: The scale of perceived personal benefits had a Cronbach’s alpha
coefficient of 0.56. When the item “with tourism growth, you feel a strong sense of
ethnic identity” was removed, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient increased to 0.87.

After deleting these two items, all the scales reached the standard values; the
Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of the five scales can be seen in Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5.

6.2. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Through processing the survey data, the respondents’ demographic profile is as
follows. The numbers of males and females are roughly even, with 46.5% for men
and 53.5% for women. Most of the respondents are in the 36–46 age group (34.9%),
followed by the 25–35-year-olds (30.2%) and then the 47–57-year-olds (18.6%) and
the 18–24-year-olds (16.3%). Over 58 years old and below 18 years old are not
represented in the sample. The respondents’ living area was also distributed roughly
equally, with 53.5% living in the scenic region and 46.5% living outside the scenic
spot; it should be noted that the ticket booth serves as the boundary. The majority of
the respondents was born in the research area and had lived there from an early age
(69.8%). About 41.9% of the respondents had been living in this area for more than or equal to 35 years, followed by the lengths of residence of 26–35 years (20.9%), 5–15 years, and 16–25 years (11.6%, respectively). The length of residence of 5 years or less obtained 14.0%. A sizable proportion of the respondents said that they have frequent contact with tourists, while nearly half of the residents said that they have tourism income in their monthly income. (Detailed information is presented in Table 1).

From the above statistical data it can be argued that the majority of the respondents have a relatively strong community attachment and a large proportion of the residents’ life is affected more obviously by the tourism industry.

6.3. Tourism Impacts of Zhouzhuang

A range of tourism impacts on Zhouzhuang will be described below. All the results were obtained in the questionnaire survey and field survey. To enable a better understanding and description of the tourism impacts, the following analysis is divided into two sections. The first part is the descriptive statistics performed for the statistical calculation of survey data in which residents were investigated to identify tourism impacts, perceived personal benefits, and attitude towards further tourism development; for all the assessment items the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) will be worked out. Generally speaking, average scales on the Likert table between 1.0 and 2.4 indicated is disapproval, while 2.5 to 3.4 scales indicate neutrality and 3.5 to 5 approval (Tosum, 2002). The second part concerns the unsustainable development of tourism, mainly describing the findings based on the field observation of the study area. Due to the second part tending to consist of analysis, it is incorporated into Chapter 7.
6.3.1. Residents’ Attitude towards Tourism’s Environmental Impacts

On the environmental scale, the majority of the respondents perceived that the quality of the environment did not improve, but tended to decline (M=3.89). The majority of residents put forward the view that their community has become overcrowded (M=4.07); therefore, lots of people agree that so many tourists interrupt their quiet and peaceful life (M=3.81), the opportunity to use the river embankment and gardens has actually decreased significantly (M=3.63), and the destruction of ancient buildings and historic sites is caused (M=3.53), but most of the respondents did not agree that tourism development causes new buildings not to be coordinated with the original landscape (M=2.19). Lastly, more than half of the residents felt that tourism provides incentives to protect the natural environment (M=3.28) and to improve the development of the local public infrastructure (M=3.70).

From the above statistic it is apparent that almost all the environmental impacts in Zhouzhuang canal town are consistent with the general environmental effects in destinations exposed to the tourism industry, except for the term of harmony with new building and landscape. Moreover, the numerical results concerning residents’ attitude towards tourism’s environmental impact show that a majority hold a neutral view with a slight tendency towards the negative side; in addition, residents feel that their life has been affected by visitors. Lastly, a point worth mentioning is that the residents already have environmental awareness, but it is poor as they first take into account the economic benefits. When I asked them which of the environmental protection and the economic benefits are important, most of them were silent; some people said they did not know, and some said that more money can bring a better life. Such a result can be linked to residents still needing to heighten their sustainable development consciousness in the research area.
6.3.2. Residents’ Attitude towards Tourism’s Economic Impacts

Regarding the economic-related impacts, many people agreed with the increased employment opportunities (M=3.72), increased residents’ income (M=3.74), accelerated economic development (M=3.95), and more commodities being available (M=3.81). Many respondents also agreed that the tourism industry is the main industry in their community (M=3.84), which indicates that this study area is a relatively mature tourism area. Tourism as an important pillar industry helps to make residents wealthier, even though economic impacts that tend to be negative also exist. A large number of residents indicated that tourism causes an increase in the cost of living (M=4.16) and house price rises (M=3.93), widens the income gap (M=3.93), and causes some residents to be out of work in the low season (M=3.70). Still, a little more than half of the residents felt that tourism-related jobs involve low pay and fierce competition (M=2.60) –the above phenomena are common in many mature tourism destinations –while a large number of residents felt that tourism increases the number of guest workers (M=4.05).

Taken all together it can be realized that tourism has a significant influence on economic development in the study area. The survey result of economic impacts is in line with previous research findings about tourism’s economic impacts.

From my side, some of the impacts are neither good nor bad; therefore, it is not possible to reach simple conclusions that the positive impacts on the economy are greater than the negative impacts, or vice versa. For instance, a mismatch between rising property prices and income is most often thought of as a negative phenomenon, but one responder told me: “as house prices rose, a part of residents can get more money due to some people took this opportunity to sell or rent out their old houses to persons who want to do business in their community. Land and houses, particularly in scenic areas, are becoming more in demand along with tourism development.” Therefore, increase in house prices are not a completely bad effect. Finally, it can be said that the economic benefits are great and obvious compared with the
environmental benefits in Zhouzhuang canal town.

6.3.3. Residents’ Attitude towards Tourism’s Socio-Demographic Impacts

The majority of residents favor tourism offering them opportunities to come into contact with foreign cultures and outsiders (M=4.12). Many residents in the study area agree that tourism helps the inheritance of culture, gives them a better understanding of their traditional culture (M=3.67), and increases the spread of Mandarin and English (M=3.67) in that residents mainly spoke dialect when tourism had not been developed, but with an increasing number of tourists and guest workers, Mandarin has displaced the local dialect, especially among the younger generation. Meanwhile, the majority of the respondents reported that tourism changes their traditional lifestyle and habits (M=3.95), brings about a rise in crime rates (M=3.84), and makes the cultural resource development shallow and commercialized (M=3.47). Not many residents felt that tourism causes a decline in the quality and style of traditional handicrafts (M=2.91) and maintains the original atmosphere of the canal town (M=2.91). The majority of residents agreed that the local community is being exploited by tourism (M=3.86), tourism is likely to put more pressure on local public services, such as police and fire protection, utilities, and traffic (M=3.60), and tourism leads to friction between residents and visitors (M=3.51). Even so, a small number of residents would like to move out of their community (M=2.84), and some residents felt that tourism results in their neighbors moving out (M=3.14), but a few respondents still agreed with tourism causing the phenomenon of a cold neighborhood (M=2.09).

Using Doxey's irridex model, the above descriptive statistics reflect the situation that this study area has already entered a stage of irritation, while most hosts agree that the Zhouzhuang canal town is being exploited by tourism and the hosts have negative views towards visitors. Even so, nearly half of the respondents are still willing to stay in their community. Presumably, the usual view of why this should be
the case is twofold: the community’s strong emotional attachment and the residents’ satisfaction with the benefits from tourism that can offset their daily life being disturbed. The last explanation is in keeping with social exchange theory.

6.3.4. Residents’ Attitude towards Personal Benefits from Tourism and Further Tourism Development

The result of the personal benefits survey indicated that the majority of residents felt that they perceived benefits from tourism (M=3.63) and more people believed that the benefits of tourism outweigh the costs (M=3.98). Regarding the further tourism development aspect, the majority of respondents felt proud that tourists choose to travel to their community and they welcome visitors who travel to their community (M=4.26). They also agree that tourism development is closely related to their community’s future development (M=4.07), and that the government and tourism organizations should advertise their community more (M=4.02) and build more tourism facilities to attract more visitors (M=3.86). Meanwhile, residents reported that they were very resistant to the Government restricting further tourism development (M=2.02). However, many residents still agreed that the policy of carrying capacity (the maximum number of visitors) should be determined and enforced by the government (M=3.49).

To sum up, a majority of residents still support further tourism development in their community, even though some of them feel that they have not perceived personal benefits from tourism or that the cost of tourism development outweighs the benefits. Such a result can be explained by residents’ belief that tourism development can provide more chances of gaining personal benefit in the future. With the logic of social exchange theory, the benefits should imply an economic or at least quantifiable variable (McGehee et al., 2002). In a certain sense, the current economic benefit received makes residents believe that the costs of tourism development are lower than the benefits and that they can receive more benefits in the future.
Table 1. Characteristics of Residents

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<td>Female</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in survey area</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>69.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not born in survey area</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length of residence</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16–25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tourism income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact with tourists</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2. Tourism’s Positive Impacts (n=43)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>SD</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Improve the local environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>0.689</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Provides incentives to protect the natural environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.549</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Promotes the local public infrastructure development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.638</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) Accelerates the local economic development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>0.434</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) The tourism industry is the main industry in your town</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>0.485</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13) Enhances the employment opportunities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>0.454</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14) Increases the spread of Mandarin and English makes you improve your knowledge of your traditional culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15) Your income has increased with the introduction of tourism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.978</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16) Increases the number of guest workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17) More commodities are available when you are shopping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>0.394</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18) Helps the protection and inheritance of the traditional culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>0.631</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19) Maintains the original atmosphere</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>0.895</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20) Helps the protection of culture and makes you improve your knowledge of your traditional culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>0.474</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21) Gives you opportunities to come into contact with foreign cultures and outsiders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.324</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22) Increases the spread of Mandarin and English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>0.566</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s alpha=.716
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.19</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.53</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3. Tourism’s Negative Impacts (n=43)**

40. Makes the cultural resource development tend to be shallow and commercialized.
39. The increase in the number of tourists leads to friction between residents and visitors.
38. Brings about a rise in crime rates.
37. Changes the locals’ traditional lifestyle and habits.
36. Tourism development produces the phenomenon of a cold neighborhood.
35. Causes your neighbors to move out of your community.
34. If possible, I would like to move out of my community.
33. Tourism-related jobs are low paying and fiercely competitive.
32. Causes a rise in house prices.
31. Results in an increase in the cost of living (some people have a very low income while others have a very high income).
30. Causes the income of local residents to have a huge gap.
29. Causes some residents to be out of work in the low season.
28. Leads to the destruction of ancient buildings and historic sites.
27. New buildings are not coordinated with the original landscape.
26. “Residents, less of the tree environment and garden has actually decreased significantly.”
25. “My community is becoming overcrowded due to the increase in the number of tourists.”
24. My community is becoming overcrowded due to the increase in the number of tourists.
23. Causes a decline in the quality of the environment.
Table 3. Tourism's Negative Impacts (n=43) (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Leads to the decline of local handicrafts' quality and style
2. Local community is being exploited by tourism
3. Tourism development is likely to put more pressure on public services, such as police and fire protection, utilities, and traffic
4. I personally perceive benefit from tourism
5. Generally, the benefits of tourism outweigh the costs

Cronbach’s alpha=.730

Table 4. Personal Benefit from Tourism (n=43)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s alpha=.730

Table 3. Tourism’s Negative Impacts (n=43) (continued)
### Table 5: Residents’ Attitudes Towards Further Tourism Development (n=43)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s alpha = .843

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha = .772</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42) I feel proud that tourists choose to travel to my community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43) I welcome tourists to my community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44) The local government needs to restrict further tourism development controlled by the Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45) The carrying capacity (maximum number of visitors) should be determined and enforced by the Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46) I support building more tourism facilities to attract more visitors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47) The government and tourism organizations should advertise our community more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48) I think the tourism development is closely related to my community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49) The government needs to restrict further tourism development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s alpha = .843

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha = .772</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42) I feel proud that tourists choose to travel to my community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43) I welcome tourists to my community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44) The local government needs to restrict further tourism development controlled by the Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45) The carrying capacity (maximum number of visitors) should be determined and enforced by the Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46) I support building more tourism facilities to attract more visitors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47) The government and tourism organizations should advertise our community more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48) I think the tourism development is closely related to my community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49) The government needs to restrict further tourism development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. ANALYSIS

7.1. Unsustainable Development of Tourism

The following analyses concentrate on tourism’s negative impacts. The above survey results are combined with the field observation to describe the current problems of the research area. It aims to show more comprehensively the tourism impacts and their relationship with residents.

7.1.1. Imbalance between Protection and Development

From the results of this survey it can be seen that tourism has great power to affect this research area and change its host society. As noted above, it seems that tourism has more negative impacts on the environment and socio-cultural aspects than economic-related issues. From the cost-effectiveness point of view, this research area as one district is highly dependent on tourism economy, and the economic development can be connected with the expense of environmental and socio-cultural resources. Worse still, the investigation shows that the protection and remedy measures of the environmental and socio-cultural aspects are not fully implemented; in other words, the protection of these resources is not taken seriously enough.

The major streets in the scenic area are cleaner and more orderly than the less-touristic residential area; the buildings are new and tidy in the core of the scenic area, particularly around the major pavement connecting the ticket office and individual attractions in the water town. Regarding profitability, the primary goal of keeping the environment clean is to attract more visitors, while protection is the second purpose. Similarly, the outsides of some buildings are regularly painted and renovated, but inside, they are rather run down. Further into the residential area, a few of the buildings are dilapidated both inside and outside. This was inadvertently seen when I conducted the survey. Additionally, it is worthy of note that this residential area is
located in the scenic region, but is not close to the main attractions. With the growth in tourism, the residential environment has not improved with the traditional building preservation; some residents are still living in old houses, while most of them are middle-aged and aged people.

The action of excessively emphasizing the requirements of tourists to the neglect of the local residents’ living quality naturally makes many residents agree that their local community is being exploited by tourism (Table 3). In the long term, this imbalance may cause a severely negative socio-cultural impact. Under this influence, residents may be made to develop in the interest of supreme value. If necessary, some residents may neglect the related regulations in order to earn as much money as possible. Using social exchange theory to explain this, people just want to balance their needs. Residents believe that they deserve to receive more money, which is trading off their pleasant living environment. One respondent talked about the protection of old buildings being more beneficial to the government and tourism authorities, while they gained little advantage in reality. However, if the old houses are remodeled into stores, they can engage in business to make money and obtain more benefits. The current situation of over-commercialization in the research area demonstrates that most people obviously choose the latter.

7.1.2. Over-Commercialization

The survey found that tourism is an important pillar industry and has a great impact on the development of other industries (Table 3). As a tourism-oriented town, the over-commercial phenomenon inevitably appears in Zhouzhuang. This is shown through the following specific forms: the proliferation of souvenir shops, restaurants, and guesthouses; commercial folk songs; and overcrowding. Arguably, modest commercialization is good for tourism economic development and can help to bring about a renaissance of the traditional culture, but over-commercialization brings lots of problems to the local community. Most scholars hold that tourism commerce in
Zhouzhuang has been over-commercialized (Zhu and Shen, 2010), which is consistent with my field investigation. In the following, I will provide details about over-commercialization in the research area.

One older resident was heard to say that in the initial stage of tourism development, in order to obtain more tourism economic benefits, many residents converted their traditional dwelling into a store. One family dwelling became a store in just one night; although that sounds overwhelming, the speed of reconstruction is especially fast. In addition, according to the statistics, the ancient residences have different types of doors and windows, as many as more than 100 kinds, but now the number and style of the traditional doors and windows are less than half. By a rough estimate, almost hundreds of shops are squeezing into about 0.4 square kilometers. The strong commercial atmosphere makes Zhouzhuang criticized as a shopping mall due to the fact that almost all the residents are traders and every family has a business (Zhonghai, 2011). This description reflects the seriousness of over-commercialization in the study area.

The previous tourism developmental strategy is another reason for over-commercialization in the study area. With the growth in the number of tourists, the manager of tourism put forward the policy of residents’ reallocation in the old town to relieve the environmental pressure. The advantage of this strategy is that it both accommodates more visitors and reduces pressure on the environment. However, in the long run, it loses the real living atmosphere, and Zhouzhuang canal town will gradually lose its soul and traditional culture, which is the most lethal form of cultural tourism. This staged authenticity of the cultural atmosphere promotes the commodification of Zhouzhuang canal town and increases the risk of potential hazards to the inheritance of the ethnic culture.

To sum up, there are many reasons that are attributed to the over-commercialization problem, but the main reason is that the managers of tourist attractions lack humanistic concern, and use ruthless means to attain their financial goals.
7.1.3. Standardization.

Standardization is another common negative impact that many destinations are encountering, this research area being no exception. The view on standardization can be linked to the statement that tourists can use their economic capital to transform the destination landscape in terms of their habitual schemes and to work with tourism producers to forge how landscapes are to be presented (Su, 2010). Generally, visitors have similar desires and preferences for one kind of tourism resource. Standardization is formed by destinations as far as possible to satisfy the visitors’ need and directly copies successful similar tourism area patterns, which causes the tourism products to be identical. This explanation may be a little different from the traditional definition of standardization in tourism (refer to the literature review) but also makes sense.

By this logic, Zhouzhuang has serious similarities to other ancient water towns, but I have to say that almost all the Chinese Jiangnan water towns are similar. This includes the landscape, cultural activities, and stores selling almost all the same souvenirs in these canal towns. These water towns have so many things in common that it makes visitors feel that they have no significantly different experiences when they travel to different water towns; therefore the rate of travel is low. Most tourists even think that having been to one water town that could be representative of all the others, as they are basically the same.

The above analysis of standardization shows that there does not seem to be too much damage to the local community. In fact, the result of standardization is the most harmful for the socio-cultural aspect, while the destination will have an inclination of cultural assimilation; thus, the uniqueness of folk culture will gradually disappear. In other words, the standardization standardizes not only the tourism product but also the residents’ daily life when the residence area overlaps with the central tourism place. That can be linked to the result of the survey: more than half of the respondents felt that tourism changes traditional lifestyle and habits (Table 3).
7.1.4. Loss of Authenticity

The problems of over-commercialization and standardization cause the destruction of the authenticity of culture and heritage sites to a certain degree. In reference to Handler (1986), authenticity is unspoiled, genuine, untouched, traditional, and pristine. With the relocation of indigenous people and the growth in the number of tourists, Zhouzhuang canal town has gradually lost its cultural authenticity. In order to attract more visitors to create a traditional regional cultural atmosphere, it has tragically misguided the tourists and blurred the residents’ perception of authentic culture and staged authentic culture, particularly the younger residents.

With regard to the authenticity of traditional buildings, a more reasonable level has been maintained than culture. Most of the respondents perceived that the preservation and authenticity of old constructions are important. One resident indicated that authentic buildings connect them to memories of the past; I think they can be regarded as a kind of social community. Another reason is considering the requirement of visitors while they enjoy more authentic things, so townies think the authentic tourism products can attract more visitors to travel.

7.2. T-Test Analysis

The procedure of the interpretation of the output from the independent-samples t-test in SPSS is presented in the following. First, check the Sig. value for \(^1\text{Levene’s test}. \) If the value is larger than .05 continue to refer to the \(^1\text{equal variances assumed}; \) otherwise, if the value is less than .05, this means that the data violate the assumption of equal variance that can use the information which refer to the \(^1\text{equal variances not assumed}. \) Then, based on determining that the data do not violate the assumption of equal variance, continue to check the \(^1\text{Sig. value (two-tailed)}, \) which can show whether a significant difference between two groups. If the Sig. value (two-tailed) is

---

\(^1\) Term indicate a specific SPSS procedure
equal to or less than .05, this means that there is a significant difference between these two groups; otherwise the difference is not significant (Julie, 2013). Finally, the result of the analysis is shown as follows.

As indicated in table 6, the independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the tourism’s positive impacts scores for the different residents’ personal characteristics. For gender, there was no significant difference in scores for males (M=54.05, SD=3.47) and females (M=54.09, SD=4.38; t=-.030, p=.98, two-tailed). For the residents’ living areas, there was no significant difference in scores for the residents who live inside the scenic region (M=54.87, SD=3.49) and those who live outside the scenic region (M=53.15, SD=4.29; t=1.45, p=.155, two-tailed). For the birthplace, there was no significant difference in scores for the residents who were born in this area (M=53.63, SD=4.30) and the residents who were not born in this area (M=55.08, SD=2.81; t=-1.11, p=.275, two-tailed). For tourism income, there was a significant difference in scores for the residents’ whose incomes include the tourism income (M=56.72, SD=2.74) and the residents’ whose incomes do not include the tourism income (M=52.16, SD=3.57; t=4.52, p=.00, two-tailed). For contact with visitors in daily life, there was a significant difference in scores for the residents who have frequent contacts with visitors in daily life (M=54.62, SD=3.32) and those who do not have frequent contacts with visitors in daily life (M=50.67, SD=5.88; t=2.41, p=.02, two-tailed).

As indicated in table 7, the independent t-test was conducted to compare the tourism’s negative impacts scores for the different residents’ personal characteristics. For gender, there was no significant difference in scores for males (M=70.45, SD=4.93) and females (M=67.80, SD=4.93; t=1.74, p=.09, two-tailed). For the residents’ living areas, there was a significant difference in scores for the residents who are living inside the scenic region (M=70.61, SD=5.06) and those who are living outside the scenic region (M=67.25, SD=4.51; t=2.28, p=.03, two-tailed). For the birthplace, there was a significant difference in scores for the residents who were born in this area (M=70.03, SD=4.99) and those who were not born in this area (M=66.77,
SD=4.57; \( t=2.01, p=.05 \), two-tailed). For tourism income, there was a significant difference in scores for the residents whose incomes include tourism income (M=67.06, SD=5.68) and those whose incomes do not include tourism income (M=70.48, SD=4.07; \( t=-2.31, p=.03 \), two-tailed). For the contact with visitors in daily life, there was no significant difference in scores for the residents who have frequent contacts with visitors in daily life (M=69.35, SD=4.60) and those who do not have frequent contacts with visitors in daily life (M=67.17, SD=7.52; \( t=.983, p=.33 \), two-tailed).

The above analysis suggests that the factors cause the residents to have different attitudes toward tourism’s positive impacts are including the tourism income and the contact with visitors. Meanwhile, the living area, the birthplace, and the income from tourism are all factors influencing the residents’ attitudes toward tourism’s negative impacts. In brief, the tourism income factor is thought to be a significant influence on residents’ attitudes toward tourism impacts due to its \( p \) value.

7.3. One-Way ANOVA

Below is the procedure of the interpretation of output from the ANOVA in SPSS. First, check the Sig. value for \(^2\)Levene’s test. If this number is greater than .05 that means it does not violate the assumption of homogeneity of variance; otherwise, it violates the assumption of homogeneity of variance. Next, based on determining that the data do not violate the assumption of homogeneity of variance, continue to look at the table of \(^2\)ANOVA, if the Sig. value is .05 or less, there is a significant difference among the means scores on the dependent variables for the groups; otherwise, the difference is not significant. Finally, the result of the analysis is presented as follows (Julie, 2013).

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to test the impact of age on the levels of residents’ attitudes toward tourism’s positive impacts. Respondents were divided into

\(^2\) Term indicate a specific SPSS procedure
seven groups according to their ages. The data analysis shows that there is no statistically significant difference among these age-groups ($F=.42, P=.737$). For the impact of the length of residence on the levels of residents’ attitudes toward tourism’s positive impacts, respondents were divided into five groups. The results found that, there was also no statistically significant difference among the groups with different lengths of residence ($F=.51, P=.728$).

To test on the impact of age on the levels of residents’ attitudes toward tourism’s negative impacts found that there is no statistically significant difference among these age groups ($F=.974, P=.415$). With the impact of the length of residence on the levels of residents’ attitudes toward tourism’s negative impacts, there is also no statistically significant difference among groups with different lengths of residence ($F=1.25, P=.305$).

To sum up, the different age-groups have no significant difference in their attitudes toward tourism’s positive and negative impacts, while the different lengths of residence also has no significant difference in their attitudes toward tourism’s negative and positive impacts.

### 7.4. Standard Multiple Regression Analyses

The following is the procedure of the interpretation of output from the standard multiple regression analyses in SPSS. First, check the table of model summary to evaluation of this model. Notice the adjusted $R^2$ value, if this value is too low, this indicates that this regression equation may be of limited generalizability and, it is better change to another kind of analysis method. Then, check the beta under the standardized coefficients and the Sig. value. If the Sig. value is less than .05, the variable is making a significant unique contribute to the prediction of the dependent variable. If the Sig. value is greater than .05, it can be concluded that this variable is not making a significant unique contribution to the prediction of the dependent

---

3 Term indicate a specific SPSS procedure
variable (Julie, 2013).

Regarding the exploration of the relation between the dependent variables and the independent variables, a series of standard multiple regression analyses was performed to test the models. In this study, three models were tested. Model 1: tests the relationships between the birthplaces, the positive and negative impacts of tourism, and residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism. Model 2: the relationships between residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism, positive and negative impacts of tourism, and residents’ support for further tourism development were explored. Model 3: the relationships between residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism, tourism’s positive and negative impacts, and residents’ support for restriction further tourism development were examined (detailed items can be seen in table 8).

Model 1 mainly predicts the residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism, relationship with tourism’s positive impacts, tourism’s negative impacts, and residents’ birthplace in the study community. It is the most important model of all the regression analyses. When residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism have a statistically significant relationship with tourism’s positive impacts in a positive direction, it can be regarded that the more residents gain personal benefits from tourism, the more they are in favor of tourism having positive impacts on their community. Conversely, the fewer benefits residents gain from tourism, the more likely they are to perceive that tourism has more negative impacts on their community. Age has a positive relationship with residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism. This indicates that the older the respondents, the more they can receive personal benefits from tourism. In addition, the variable of tourism’s positive impacts is making a unique statistically significant contribution to the prediction of the residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism (P=.000).

Model 2 focuses on the residents’ support for further tourism development. The residents’ support for further tourism development has a positive relationship with residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism and positive impacts, while the
residents’ support for further tourism development has a negative relationship with tourism’s negative impacts. In other words, residents who gain more personal benefits from tourism and who feel that tourism has more positive impacts are likely to support further tourism development more. Residents who feel that tourism has more negative impacts tend to support further tourism development less. In addition, the variable of residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism is making a unique statistically significant contribution to the prediction of the residents’ support for further tourism development ($P=.000$).

Relatively, model 3 focuses on the residents’ support for restriction on further tourism development. The residents’ support for restriction on further tourism development has a negative relationship with personal benefits and tourism’s positive impacts, while in a positive direction with tourism’s negative impacts. By this logic, residents who receive more benefits from tourism and who agree that tourism has more positive impacts are less likely to agree with the restriction on further tourism development. Residents with a perception of more negative impacts are more likely to agree with the restriction on further tourism development. Moreover, the variable of residents’ perceived personal benefits from tourism and tourism’s positive impacts is making a unique statistically significant contribution to the prediction of the residents’ support for restriction on further tourism development ($P=.000$ and $P=.039$, respectively).

Through comparing the beta coefficient in models, it could be argued that the residents’ perceived personal tourism benefits is an important variable that can directly influence the residents’ attitude towards tourism’s impacts and support for further tourism development; this finding is in line with social exchange theory and the previous research findings (McGehee and Andereck, 2004). In summary, a majority of the respondents have a favorable attitude towards further tourism development. In support of social exchange theory, researchers have found that local community citizens are likely to support tourism development if they perceive that the industry results in more benefits than costs (Gursoy and Rutherford, 2004). By this
logic, residents who obtain more personal benefits from tourism naturally support further tourism development, while residents who do not receive current tourism benefits still hope that further tourism development will bring more benefits to them.

7.5. Suggestions for Tourism Planning

As the previous literature mentions, how much tourism interest the residents have received and whether their opinions could affect the local tourism planning are both related to residents’ satisfaction with tourism development. What is more, with the aid of residents’ attitude, research can better understand the current status of tourism development and know residents’ requirements. As can be seen, the investigation of residents’ attitude as a platform for communication is conducive to developing an effective planning scheme and better ways to manage the tourism destination. Researchers have argued that an important area of research in planning and community development is residents’ satisfaction with community services (Nunkoo and Ramkissoon, 2011; Sirgy and Cornwell, 2001).

The investigation of Zhouzhuang residents found that most of the residents are not very satisfied with their current living environment and the population growth in the research area is negative growth, according to the statistics (Zhao et al., 2008). With tourism’s growth, the deep sense of dissatisfaction may lead locals to abandon their community and choose to move out. That can be linked to this survey’s result that over half of the respondents agree that if possible, they would like to move out of their community (Table 3). In this case, government and tourism officials need to placate the local people and know what they want.

In my view, it is necessary for all destinations to implement sustainable development as the overall trend of tourism development. In previous studies, researchers have pointed out that sustainable development is vital for the continued survival and viability of the tourism industry and for the protection and nurturing of the natural and cultural environment on which tourism depends (Hall and Lew, 1998;
In short, sustainable development is conducive to extending the destination’s life cycle and balancing tourism’s economic growth and environmental protection.

Based on the above analysis and survey results, I offer a few suggestions for sustainable tourism planning in this study area. The proposal is presented in a graphical format as follows (Figure 5).

![Diagram](chart.png)

**Figure 5. Suggestions for Further Tourism Development in Zhouzhuang**

On one hand, tourism planners should realize the importance of residents and the neighborhood. In other words, tourism authorities cannot regard the host community
as a resource or tool for earning tourist money. In this study area, there is a peasant-controlled pattern instead of a government-controlled pattern. The Zhouzhuang Canal Town Tourism Corporation (Ltd.) established by the town plays a major role in tourism investment and management, while most local residents are highly engaged in tourism (Su et al., 2005). Even so, the status of the residents is not regarded as equal to tourists. Considering residents as a social subject, tourism authorities should respect them and tourism planners should involve them in the tourism planning as well as asking for their opinions; protect citizens’ use of the recreation area or enhance their ability to use it (Gursoy and Jurowski, 2002); give priority to providing locals with jobs opportunities; and strengthen the residents’ training in tourism knowledge. On the other hand, tourism development exerts a great deal of pressure and influence on the destination. In order to cope with this situation, tourism administrators should strengthen the environmental auditing work; keep the authenticity of the cultural heritage; and limit the number of tourists entering the destination whereby the degree of accessibility should refer to the destination’s tourism environmental carrying capacity.
### Table 6. Independent-Samples T-Tests for Differences in the Residents’ Characteristics with Variables in Tourism’s Positive Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Residents</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Prob</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>54.09</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>52.16</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthplace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in this community</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>53.63</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not born in this community</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>55.08</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living inside the tourism region</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>54.87</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living outside the tourism region</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>53.15</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly income does not include tourism income</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>56.72</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly income include tourism income</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>52.16</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Residents</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Prob</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent contact with visitor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent contact with visitor</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>50.67</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not frequent contact with visitor</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The table presents the results of independent-samples T-tests for differences in the residents’ characteristics with variables in tourism’s positive impacts.
### Table 7.1: Independent-Samples T-Tests for Differences in the Residents’ Characteristics with Variables in Tourism’s Negative Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Residents</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Prob</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living area</td>
<td>4.925</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>70.45</td>
<td>0.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living outside the tourism region</td>
<td>5.017</td>
<td>67.25</td>
<td>4.258</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly income</td>
<td>4.977</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>70.03</td>
<td>0.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly income does not include tourism income</td>
<td>4.993</td>
<td>66.77</td>
<td>4.993</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group statistics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8. Standard Multiple Regression Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Residents’ Perceived Personal Benefits from Tourism’s positive impacts</td>
<td>Tourism’s negative impacts</td>
<td>0.502</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.357</td>
<td>-3.05</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Residents’ Support for Further Tourism Development</td>
<td>Birthplace</td>
<td>1.131</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>.261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.177</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>.114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Residents’ Support for Restriction on Further Tourism Development</td>
<td>Birthplace</td>
<td>-0.637</td>
<td>-4.85</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.247</td>
<td>-2.13</td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model 1: Recoded as a dummy variable where 1 = yes, 2 = no.
8. CONCLUSION

This thesis focused on exploring residents’ perceptions of tourism impacts, the difference of the residents’ characteristics variables in residents’ attitude towards tourism impacts, and the relationship of variables. Regarding tourism’s positive impacts in the research area, residents have more opportunities to make contact with external cultures, improve the destination’s economic development, and so on. Tourism is, however, bringing an increase in the cost of living, a decline in the quality of the environment, and so forth. As tourist-oriented produce, over-commercialization is serious in the study area. Furthermore, over-commercialization is said to influence the authenticity of local culture and finally to cause an imbalance between the resource protection and the tourism development.

The results of the t-test and ANOVA indicate that most of the residents’ characteristic variables have no obvious effect on their perception of tourism’s positive impacts or their perception of tourism’s negative impacts except the income from tourism, the contact with visitor, the birplace and the living area. In these variables, the tourism income is influencing both residents’ attitudes toward tourism’s positive impacts and residents’ perception of tourism’s negative impacts. That is, whether the residents have income from tourism or not can lead to a significant difference in their attitudes toward tourism impacts. To sum up, the economic factor has a stronger effect on residents’ attitudes toward tourism impacts than the socio-demographic factor and the spatial factor in study area.

The findings of this research revealed that the factor perceived personal benefits has an obvious effect on residents’ attitude towards tourism. The more personal benefits residents gain, the more they agree with tourism having positive impacts on their community, while residents who gain fewer benefits from tourism are more likely to perceive tourism as having a negative effect on their community. This finding is consistent with Getz (1994), who found that the increased negative attitudes towards tourism development suggested that residents believed the benefits had
declined or not matched their expectations.

In terms of further tourism development, the research findings are consistent with social exchange theory and previous studies that residents who gain more tourism benefits are more supportive of further tourism development and vice versa. Despite some of them feeling that tourism’s costs are greater than its benefits, residents still consider that further tourism development is generally beneficial to themselves and their community. This shows that the M value of restricting further tourism development is lower than that of support.

8.1. Limitations

Based on the results of the survey, it is apparent that residents younger than or equal to 18 years old, those in the 58–68 age group, and those older than or equal to 69 years old did not appear among the respondents. The reason for this result can be explained by younger respondents being at school and older people’s inability to speak Mandarin, as the Zhouzhuang dialect is their native language, which leads to them having difficulty answering the questionnaire. Except for these two age groups, the result may imply that the average income of residents is tending to rise.

The relatively limited field time and the limited number of questions may have influenced the reliability and validity of the survey results to some degree, which is shown in the low survey response rate.

8.2. Suggestions for Future Research

Future studies can conduct research into why residents are influenced by these determinants and to test the relationship between residents’ attitudes towards tourism impacts and the tourism planning. The qualitative research method can be attempted. I think face-to-face interviews are a good way to gain a deeper understanding of residents’ inner thoughts.
Considering that the current research uses social exchange theory, future research can use Butler’s life cycle model as a guide and connect to other theory to obtain an in-depth understanding of tourism development processes in study area.
9. REFERENCES


D’Amore, L.J. (1983). Guidelines to planning in harmony with the host community. In P. E. Murphy (Ed.) Tourism in Canada: Selected issues and options (pp.135-159).


Emerson, R.M. (1976). Social exchange theory. Annual Review of Sociology, 2, 335-


community resident reactions to tourism. *Journal of Travel Research, 36*(2), 3-11.


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### Part 1: Characteristics of Residents

**Lin Yan**

Residents' Attitude Towards Tourism Development in Zhouzhuang Canal Town

#### 1. Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>□ Male</th>
<th>□ Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>□ 18 and under 18 years old</th>
<th>□ 18 and 24 years old</th>
<th>□ 25-34 years old</th>
<th>□ 35-46 years old</th>
<th>□ 47-57 years old</th>
<th>□ 58-68 years old</th>
<th>□ 69 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where do you live?</th>
<th>□ Living inside the conservation district (the scenic region)</th>
<th>□ Living outside the conservation district (the scenic region)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Were you born in this community?</th>
<th>□ Yes</th>
<th>□ No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Based on the ticket office to draw the line between inside the conservation district and outside the conservation district.
5. How long have you lived here?
□ 5 years and below □ 6–15 years □ 16–25 years □ 26–35 years □ 36 years and above

6. Does your monthly income include tourism income? (This monthly income includes all the sources of finance)
□ Yes □ No

7. Are you in frequent contact with visitors in daily life?
□ Yes □ No

Part 2: Tourism Impacts

Please answer the following questions according to how you really feel and choose one option to represent what you think. Thanks a lot!

12). The tourism industry is the main industry in your town
11). Accelerates the local economic development
10). Promotes the local public infrastructure development
9). Provides the incentives to protect the natural environment
8). Improves the local environmental quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tourism’s Positive Impacts

13. Enhances the employment opportunities
14. Attracts more investment to your community
15. Your income has increased with the tourism growth
16. Increases the number of guest workers
17. More commodities are available when you are shopping
18. Helps the protection and inheritance of the traditional culture
19. Maintains the original atmosphere
20. Helps the inheritance of culture and gives you better knowledge of your traditional culture
21. Gives you opportunities to come into contact with foreign cultures and outsiders
22. Gives you opportunities to come into contact with foreign cultures and outsiders
23. Causes a decline in the quality of the environment

Tourism’s Negative Impacts

1. Increased the spread of Mandarin and English
2. Increases the number of guest workers
3. Causes a decline in the quality of the environment (including noise, water pollution, and waste pollution)
My community is becoming overcrowded due to the increase in the number of tourists. It interrupts the quiet and peaceful life in my town. New buildings are not coordinated with the original landscape and result in the destruction of ancient buildings and historic sites. Tourism-related jobs are low paying and fiercely competitive. Tourism development produces the phenomenon of a cold neighborhood and changes the locals' traditional lifestyle and habits. Causes some residents to move out of your community or your neighbors to move out of your community. Tourism-related jobs are low paying and fiercely competitive. Causes a rise in house prices and results in an increase in the cost of living. Some people have a very low income while others have a very high income. Leads to the destruction of ancient buildings and historic sites and leads to overcrowding and graffiti on the historicals. Leads to the destruction of ancient buildings and historic sites and leads to overcrowding and graffiti on the historicals. Tourism development produces the phenomenon of a cold neighborhood. Changes the locals' traditional lifestyle and habits. Changes the locals' traditional lifestyle and habits and brings about a rise in crime rates.
### Part 3: Personal Benefit from Tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 43. Tourism development is likely to put more pressure on public services, such as police and fire protection, utilities, and traffic.
- 42. Your community is being exploited by tourism.
- 41. Leads to a decline in local handicrafts' quality and style.
- 40. Makes the cultural resource development tend to be shallow and commercialized.
- 39. The increase in the number of tourists leads to friction between residents and visitors.

Generally, the benefits of tourism outweigh the costs.
Part 4: Attitude Towards Further Tourism Development

1. I strongly disagree.
2. I disagree.
3. Not sure.
4. I agree.
5. I strongly agree.

I support building more tourism facilities to attract more visitors.

I think the tourism development is closely related to my community’s future development.

I welcome visitors who come to my community.

I feel proud that tourists choose to travel to my community.

The government and tourism organizations should advertise our community more.

The carrying capacity (maximum number of visitors) should be determined and enforced by the government.

The local government needs to restrict the further tourism development.

The government needs to restrict the further tourism development.