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# Tourism in Hoi An, Vietnam: impacts, perceived benefits, community attachment and support for tourism development

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## ABSTRACT

Tourism has impacts and these impacts affect people. This study aimed to identify how residents in Hoi An, Vietnam (a world heritage site), perceive the impacts and benefits obtained from tourism and the relationship between community attachment and support for tourism. The study employed a survey of local residents in Hoi An. The results indicate that residents largely see the impacts of tourism as positive economically and socioculturally but not environmentally. Also residents who have a stronger attachment to their community had a positive inclination towards tourism and its development. Having a better understanding of residents' perceptions about tourism impacts, benefits, community attachment and support for tourism could assist tourism planners not only in Hoi An but also in other heritage sites. Positive economic and sociocultural impact should be emphasized to local residents. It is found that greater attention should be given to negative sociocultural and environmental impacts in order to improve the quality of tourism in a sustainable way.

## KEYWORDS

Tourism impact; tourism development; benefit; attachment; support; Hoi An

## 1. Introduction

Tourism systems consist of tourists, the tourist-origin society, the tourism destination (having attractions, facilities and services) and intermediaries between the tourist-origin and the tourism destination such as transportation and information (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012). From the perspective of the host community, the success of tourism development in a destination is linked to how local residents perceive and support tourism impacts. Where local residents perceive or experience the impacts and benefits of tourism positively, there is a tendency for them to be more supportive of its development. Understanding residents' views and aspirations should be prioritized especially before planning and development of tourism (Byrd, Bosley, & Dronberger, 2009; Byrd & Gustke, 2004; Diedrich & García-Buades, 2009). How residents are attached to their communities has also been found influence their

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support for tourism development (Sheldon & Var, 1984; Um & Crompton, 1987; Wang & Pfister, 2008; Williams, McDonald, Riden, & Uysal, 1995).

Hoi An, Vietnam was selected as a location in which to assess residents' responses to tourism development. The city has history of over 2000 years and prospered due to trade with merchants from around the world including China, India, Portugal, Japan and France since the mid-sixteenth century. The cultural heritage site is located in Quang Nam province and situated on the northern bank of the Thu Bon River on the south central coast of Vietnam.

Approximately 1.3 million tourists visited Hoi An in 2013, an increase of 23% over the previous year (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2015). This figure is considerably high because Hoi An is a small and remote village by the riverside with an estimated population of about 120,000. Since the ancient town still reflects the fusion of domestic and foreign cultures that combined to produce the unique features such as authentic architectural buildings, old village buildings, museums, traditional factories for weaving hand-made fabrics, living customs and intangible assets, it was designated a World Heritage Site in 1999 by UNESCO. Although Hoi An is home to several economic activities such as agriculture, fishing, carpentry and pottery, tourism has become a major economic force in Hoi An (UNESCO, 2008).

Despite the importance of investigating tourism impact in this heritage site, little research has been conducted so far. Its cultural significance and preservation are of prime importance not only to the people of Hoi An, but also the greater international community since Hoi An is a World Heritage Site. Effective and sustainable development of tourism in Hoi An cannot be achieved however, without the support of the local residents. Ascertaining residents support for tourism development is therefore vital to the maintenance of the World Heritage Site (Drost, 1996).

In addition, the rich heritage, history and uniqueness of Hoi An are likely to influence the attachment of residents to their community and response to tourism (Nicholas, Thapa, & Ko, 2009). This is significant to understanding support for further tourism development in Hoi An. Since tourism is a major component of the economy of Hoi An, ascertaining how tourism affects the socio-economic and environmental lives of residents and how this makes people supportive of tourism or otherwise is very crucial in the sustainable development of tourism in the ancient historic town. The first objective of this paper is to identify whether tourism's impacts affect residents' perception of the benefits generated from tourism development. The second, is to explore whether residents' perceptions of the impacts of tourism affect community attachment. Lastly, this research aims to investigate whether the benefits people receive from tourism development and community attachment affect their support for tourism development.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. The impacts of tourism**

The impacts of tourism span the economic, sociocultural and environmental fabric of a destination. First, the tourism industry contributes to positive economic growth by generating revenue from a variety of tourism taxes such as airport taxes, license fees issued to tourism operators, and indirect taxes that tourists pay when they purchase goods and services (Archer & Fletcher, 1996; Youell, 1998). In addition, the industry is conducive to

generating foreign currency, which can improve the international trade balance, especially in less-developed countries (Lickorish & Jenkins, 1997; Seetaman, 2011). In the domestic economy, the tourism industry creates jobs and helps improve infrastructure (Durbarray, 2002; Mihalic, 2002; Witt, 1991; Youell, 1998).

However, there are negative economic impacts as well including seasonality concerns due to fluctuation in tourism demand and low paid jobs in the hospitality industry (Chon & Devereux, 1999; Lee, 2006; Oh, 2005). The tourism industry also tends to accelerate inflation of consumer products and rents (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012; Tribe, 2005). Tourism also often generates foreign currency outflow in the form of leakages attributed to importation of goods and material, especially in less-developed economies – to satisfy the requirements of increasingly ‘internationalized’ tourists as well as remittances of foreign workers’ earnings (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, & Wanhill, 2008). Others include the costs of promotional activities outside the country, and payment of royalties to overseas franchises (Holloway, 1998). Furthermore, financial support for other economically vital and more pressing sectors including capital projects (such as schools and hospitals) may be reduced because investment is pushed toward tourism, especially in less-developed countries (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Youell, 1998).

The socio-cultural aspects of tourism greatly influence the host community. First among the several benefits, is the promotion of cultural exchange, which leads to a more globalized community through global understanding and promotion of peace (Cook, Yale, & Morqua, 2010; Cooper & Hall, 2008; Evans, Campbell, & Stonehouse, 2003; Foster, 1990; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Travis, 1984). Other favourable impacts include revitalization of local traditions and preservation of cultural artefacts, events, customs and architecture (Cooper & Hall, 2008). Furthermore, tourism development is linked to a sense of pride in community residents and attachment to the local society (Cooper & Hall, 2008). It can also give rise to an upgrade of female social status attributable to earning income from working in tourism establishments (Cook et al., 2010; Wilson, 1979).

Despite these however, some socio-cultural impacts, can be detrimental. Among them, tourism is reported to trigger the disruption of the social structure and belittlement of traditional authority and beliefs of local people (Cohen, 1982; Duffield & Long, 1981; UNESCO, 1976). It also propels a shift in consumption patterns to more foreign tastes, which can cripple demand for local clothing or lead to a preference for foreign foods (Mbaiwa, 2005). Other adverse effects include commercialization of local culture, (Cooper & Hall, 2008; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996) and deterioration of moral, religious and social values of host communities, which are often related to increase in crime, prostitution, divorce rate, gambling and other social ills (Mbaiwa, 2005). Since local residents need to communicate with foreign tourists, they tend to neglect local languages, while children show a tendency to learn vulgar words (Butler, 1980; Mbaiwa, 2005).

Analysis of the impacts of tourism on the environment has also been extensively documented (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012; Holden, 2003; Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Tang, 2015). Positively, tourism offers a means of conserving and restoring important natural, archeological and historic sites through government funding, admission fees and donations (Cooper et al., 2008; Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012; Lickorish & Jenkins, 1997; Myers, 1974). Development of the tourism industry also helps create park systems and protect valuable natural and geological resources such as beaches and reefs (Cooper et al., 2008). Tourism

development can also increase environmental awareness and appreciation of the natural environment (Travis, 1984).

The detrimental effects of tourism development on the environment have perhaps been more actively discussed especially in connection with global concerns over climate change, the problems of urbanization and environment destruction. For example, small islands, coastal reefs, mountains and lakes have fragile ecosystems vulnerable to environmental damage and are readily destroyed by an influx of tourists (Burgin & Hardiman, 2015; Inskip, 1987; Wu & Chen, 2015). Some studies have also added that places with natural beauty are in danger of vandalism and spoiling by tourists (Wu, 2014). Other adverse impacts include crowding, noise, littering, property destruction, pollution, depletion of wildlife and ad hoc development planning (Carić & Mackelworth, 2014). Emission of greenhouse gases from transportation and accommodation, water pollution from the tourism industry and tourists, devastation of vegetation and desertification causes climatic changes and as a result deteriorate tourism resources (Hall, 2001; Higham, Reis & Cohen, 2016).

## **2.2. Benefits, community attachment and support for tourism development**

It is imperative to recognize that the relationship between perceptions of tourism impacts, benefits and subsequent support for tourism development by local residents, is explained by social exchange theory. Social exchange theory is based on the notion that human interaction is an interchange of physical or intangible activity based on rewards or costs obtained from the interaction (Homans, 1961). Individuals therefore weigh the costs and benefits of relationships and will enter into relationships from which they obtain the maximum benefits and incur the least costs. This is basically because rewards and costs obtained from an interaction guides how humans relate (Molm, 1991; Molm, Takahashi, & Peterson, 2000).

Tourism researchers have borrowed social exchange theory to explain resident's perception and support for tourism (e.g. Ap, 1992; Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005). Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2012) confirmed the theory in examining residents in Mauritius' support for tourism development. Hoi An residents are therefore expected to weigh the costs and benefits of tourism and this will serve as a determining factor in their support for tourism or otherwise.

The benefits community members perceive to gain from tourism and attachment to their community has an influence on their attitude towards and support for tourism (Besculides, Lee, & McCormick, 2002), 'Benefits' here, as identified by Besculides and colleagues (2002), can be said to have occurred when there is an improvement in the economic, social, cultural and environmental life of a community or individual or a lessening of a previously undesired condition. Residents who benefit personally from tourism, as may be deduced, tend to have a somewhat greater degree of support for its development (Lankford & Howard, 1994) and often tend to overlook the negative costs.

'Community attachment' refers to people's feeling about a place, and it has been discussed in the context of sense of place, national/regional identity, regional awareness and personality of place (Shamai, 1991). Community attachment is the connection or tie that individuals have towards a community at an emotional or affective level based on how they are assimilated into community life (McCool & Martin, 1994). It is linked to the concept of 'perceptual unity' by indicating 'a piece of the whole environment which has been claimed by feelings' (Lewis, 1979, p. 40). Since the concept is 'non-positivistic' or 'phenomenological'

its definition is a matter of discussion. Researchers have discussed a diversity of definitions in different academic fields including geography, sociology, environmental science, urban planning and landscape.

Researchers have attempted to apply attachment to a place to tourism since the 1990s (Hou, Lin, & Morais, 2005; Hwang, Lee, & Chen, 2005; Kyle, Bricker, Graefe, & Wickham, 2004; Lankford & Howard, 1994; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Yuksel, Yuksel, & Bilim, 2010). These studies identified a relationship between the degree of attachment to the community, perceived benefits and support for tourism development. People show their attachment to a community through how they identify with the community, bond with it and depend on it (Kyle et al., 2004). A stronger attachment to the community has been thought to strongly influence concerns about whether tourism will be beneficial to the local community (Andereck et al., 2005; McCool & Martin, 1994). As a consequence of community attachment, support for tourism development can be expressed in a diversity of ways, such as voting, donations and willingness to participate in community meetings in a tourism community (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Kyle et al., 2004).

Overall, although most communities, individual community members and local governments are aware of certain drawbacks of tourism, they still tend to view tourism as beneficial (King, Pizam, & Milman, 1993). These benefits cut across sociocultural, economic and environmental lines and vary between individuals and communities (Byrd et al., 2009; Byrd & Gustke, 2004).

### ***2.3. Tourism impacts, benefits, community attachment and support for tourism development in Vietnam***

Tourism, especially community based tourism, is increasing in Vietnam but little attention has been paid to the impacts and planning especially on local residents (Long & Kayat, 2011). Research on the above in Hoi An, Vietnam, is necessitated because tourist numbers are ever increasing and the impact of this is heaviest of local residents. Tourism has become a major economic force in Hoi An and tourist numbers have risen considerably reaching 7.5 million international tourists in 2013 and many hotels, shopping malls, souvenir shops have been built in response to tourist numbers (Hoi An World Heritage, 2014). The sale of lanterns and souvenirs brings income to the residents with most local souvenir shops sourcing local materials for their products (Trinh, Ryan, & Cave, 2014). Tourism in Hoi An has also been positive in many ways including the restriction of vehicular traffic in the centre, grants from external bodies for the funding of tourism and the involvement of locals in trading in merchandise to tourists (Brooks, 2008).

The development of tourism in Hoi An has also come at a cost to residents. 'While Hoi An's success was achieved comparatively quickly – in a little over a decade – the road was not direct nor was it terribly easy for locals' (Di Giovine, 2009, p. 212). It has been suggested that tourism has created growing materiality and foreign tastes among locals, followed western style approach in development, and there has been little local resident involvement except a few enthusiastic and well informed residents (Di Giovine, 2009). Avieli (2013) suggests that the increasing alteration of local dishes in Hoi An to suit foreign tourist palates gradually affects the authenticity of local cuisines and the increasing outsourcing of ingredients for local cuisine.

Hoi An residents also have a sense of attachment to their community. The retailers of shops are very much connected and attached to Hoi An with many being born in the town. Even those born outside Hoi An consider the town as their adopted home and are strongly attached to it (Trinh et al., 2014). How this attachment affects their view on the impacts and benefits of tourism is relevant for any further tourism development in the town. Invariably, it is the locals who have to adjust and find ways of dealing with the ever increasing tourism in Hoi An.

### **3. Conceptualization**

After analysing the literature on the impacts of tourism, benefits and support for tourism development, the conceptual framework of this study showcases causal relationships among perception of impacts, perception of benefits, community attachment and subsequent support for tourism development.

#### **3.1. Impacts of tourism and perceived benefits**

When the scale of tourism development is large, the tourism impacts will be bigger and more extensive. According to previous studies, most residents consider economic gains to be crucial benefits from tourism development. Residents are sensitive to the level of financial benefits generated from tourism development because the benefits directly influence their household economy (Chon & Devereux, 1999; Wang & Pfister, 2008; Youell, 1998).

In socio-cultural aspects, positive impacts as mentioned earlier, mostly include cultural preservation, community unity and enhancement of local image while negative impacts, include destruction of local culture and tradition, influx of tourist culture, disruption of family structure, crime and gambling (Besculides et al., 2002; Clements, Schultz, & Lime, 1993; Driver, Brown, & Peterson, 1991; Yoon, Gursoy, & Chen, 2001). Unlike differences in perceptions of the benefits from the economic impacts differences in people's perceptions of benefits from sociocultural impacts is based on their individual or family values (Cohen, 1982; Liu, Sheldon, & Var, 1987; Opperman & Chon, 1997).

The relationship between the socio-cultural impacts of tourism and how locals perceive to benefit is explained by the fact that residents are able to share their culture with visitors and also understand the culture of the visitors which results in beneficial cultural enlightenment (Besculides et al., 2002). Where this exchange is deemed beneficial, residents tend to have a positive perception of the socio-cultural impact of tourism. The benefits are often in the form of improving the image that locals have of their community, ethnic identity and an increased willingness to support initiative that bring community enhancement (Driver et al., 1991). When residents are exposed to other cultures they tend to become more accommodating and tolerant of different cultures and people (Besculides et al., 2002). As they present their culture, they increase their sense of value of their own culture and increasingly develop more attachment and support for their local community (Delamere & Hinch, 1994).

Environmental impacts, including positive impacts such as beautification of community sites and recreational opportunities can result from tourism, but negative impacts including pollution, noise, crowding, sewage or garbage and destruction of the environment also occur (Jurowski, Uysal, & Williams, 1997; Kendall & Var, 1984; McCool & Martin, 1994; Travis, 1984). These studies commonly reported that community residents are concerned

about deterioration of environmental quality attributed to tourism development. Negative environmental impacts can be minimized through small-scale development, sustainable development planning and implementation and education (Liu et al., 1987). However, residents tend to be less interested in outcomes from environmental and sociocultural impacts than economic impacts (Milman & Pizam, 1988; Pizam, 1978).

Overall, tourism development generates diverse impacts in economic, sociocultural and environmental domains and local residents perceive these impacts as beneficial or harmful. The perception of benefits from tourism impacts in the economic, sociocultural and environmental domains is hypothesized as follows.

Hypothesis 1-1: Residents in Hoi An who perceive that tourism development has positive economic impacts are more likely to report benefits from tourism development.

Hypothesis 1-2: Residents in Hoi An who perceive that tourism development has positive socio-cultural impacts are more likely to report benefits from tourism development.

Hypothesis 1-3: Residents in Hoi An who perceive that tourism development has negative socio-cultural impacts are less likely report benefits from tourism development.

Hypothesis 1-4: Residents in Hoi An who perceive that tourism development has negative environmental impacts are less likely to report benefits from tourism development.

### **3.2. Impacts of tourism and community attachment**

Since a place is a combination of different human and physical environments, residents in tourism destinations are naturally affected by their environmental milieus. Community attachment is formed under a multifaceted interaction of personal experience, personality of place, symbols, local customs, personal preference, generational heritage, ritual, geographical traits, regional history, economic development, scale of the locality and population (Butler, 1980; Shamai, 1991; Tuan, 1980).

Previous studies have focused on how community attachment influences residents' perceptions of tourism's impact and not how tourism's impacts affect community attachment. However, it may be thought that the more people are aware of tourism's impact, the more people have stronger attachment to their places. For instance, Gursoy, Jurowski, and Uysal (2002) found that, when locals see a greater need for capital/investment inflows into the local economy, they tend to see the positive impacts of tourism as more important and downplay the negative impacts. As a consequence, they found that the local residents' community attachment was affected by their perception of tourism impacts. Moreover, community attachment was reinforced by perceptions of more positive economic gain and less negative environmental impacts (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Jurowski et al., 1997). However, this finding was inconsistent with Lankford and Howard's (1994) study, which failed to establish any concrete link between perception of impacts of tourism and community attachment. Therefore, the casual relationship between tourism impact and community attachment requires further investigation. In this study, it is argued that residents who recognize more tourism impacts are likely to possess stronger community attachment as follows.

Hypothesis 2-1: Residents in Hoi An who perceive positive economic impacts of tourism development are more likely to report strong community attachment.

Hypothesis 2-2: Residents in Hoi An who perceive positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism development are more likely to report strong community attachment.



Hypothesis 2-3: Residents in Hoi An who perceive negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism development are more likely to report weak community attachment.

Hypothesis 2-4: Residents in Hoi An who perceive negative environmental impacts of tourism development are more likely to report weak community attachment.

### **3.3. Perception of benefits of and support for tourism development**

Research indicates that people who benefit more from tourism economically tend to regard tourism as more economically beneficial and tend to support tourism, and are less sensitive to cultural and environmental benefits (Milman & Pizam, 1988; Pizam, 1978). One study found a direct relationship between how residents perceive the benefits of tourism businesses and their support for tourism development, indicating that more positive perceptions lead to a greater likelihood of support for tourism development (Gursoy et al., 2002). In addition, Perdue, Long, and Allen (1990) posited that support for additional tourism development is positively related to perceptions of tourism impacts and benefits from tourism development.

In accordance with social exchange theory, residents' weighing of benefits and costs brought about through tourism development (and this weighing can be positive or negative) determines support for tourism (Ap, 1992; Gursoy et al., 2002; Jurowski et al., 1997). That is, residents who are satisfied with the exchange of resources according to social exchange theory are likely to support new or continuous tourism development. Many empirical studies have confirmed that the relationship between community residents' perception of the benefits of tourism development is positively related to their support for tourism development (Gursoy et al., 2002; Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Kaltenborn, Andersen, Nellemann, Bjerke, & Thrane, 2008; Nicholas et al., 2009). This conclusion underlies the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: Residents in Hoi An who perceive benefits from tourism development are more likely to support tourism development.

### **3.4. Community attachment and support for tourism development**

As described before, residents' community attachment is affected by their dependence on the community, their feelings toward the community, or social bonds. As a consequence of community attachment, support for tourism development can be expressed in a diversity of ways, such as voting, donations and willingness to participate in community meetings in a tourism community (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Kyle et al., 2004; Sheldon & Var, 1984; Williams et al., 1995).

The degree to which residents are attached to a community is thought to be related to the extent to which they will support tourism development in their community (Allen, Hafer, Long, & Perdue, 1993; Davis, Allen & Cosenza, 1988; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Moore & Graefe, 1994; Sheldon & Var, 1984; Tosun, 2002; Williams et al., 1995). For example, some researchers found that residents who have lived in the community for long are more attached to the society and are more willing to support tourism development (Davis et al., 1988; Tosun, 2002). In a similar context, Hwang et al. (2005) found that respondents who expressed place attachment to a national park in Taiwan were more satisfied with and supportive of park development. The more attached people are to their community, the more

likely they are ready to support its development (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Williams et al., 1995). Similarly, studies have found that residents who are favourable toward tourism development have a strong level of attachment to their town (Allen et al., 1993; Moore & Graefe, 1994; Tosun, 2002). In modelling the effect of tourism impacts on support for tourism development, studies have found that community attachment influences support for tourism through the mediating effects of perceived benefits (Choi & Murray, 2010; Gursoy et al., 2002; Gursoy & Kendall, 2006). Researchers have also found that people in communities with a high level of tourism development display a stronger sense of community attachment (McCool & Martin, 1994; Um & Crompton, 1987). The relationship between community attachment and tourism development is therefore hypothesized as:

Hypothesis 4: Residents in Hoi An who have stronger community attachment are more likely to support tourism development.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1. Measurement**

Items about tourism impacts consisted of positive and negative impacts in economic, socio-cultural and environmental domains from previous studies (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Lankford & Howard, 1994). To operationalize benefits from tourism development, two items were selected from previous studies (McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Yoon et al., 2001). Items to assess community attachment were chosen from previous studies (Kyle et al., 2004; Prayag & Ryan, 2012). Two items assessing support for tourism development were selected from previous studies (Byrd & Gustke, 2004; Clements et al., 1993). Lastly, residents' socio-demographic variables were included in the survey. Instruments to assess the impacts of tourism, benefits from tourism development, community attachment and support for tourism development were measured using five-point Likert scales: '1' = 'strongly disagree', '3' = 'neutral' and '5' = 'strongly agree'.

The questionnaire was first developed in English. Then, a draft of the questionnaire was translated into Vietnamese by three Vietnamese graduate students who were fluent in both English and Vietnamese. After translation, they had two meetings to refine their translation. As a pilot test, a sample of 10 Hoi An residents was selected to check for vagueness of statements, grammatical errors and suitability of the items for Hoi An. Based on the results of the pilot test, some items were revised or deleted because they did not reflect the geographical and cultural uniqueness of Hoi An.

### **4.2. Survey procedure**

The data collection was carried out by three well-trained interviewees over a period between September and October, 2010 in the ancient town of Hoi An, which was designated as a World Heritage Site in 1999. The data were collected with respondents being approached randomly in major attractions, restaurants, hotel, bars, handcraft-making company, gift shops and private house located in Hoi An. Whether approached directly, respondents were asked whether they were residents in Hoi An and then were asked to participate in the survey. After completing the questionnaire, a gift was provided to residents. Questionnaires were collected starting two days after the distribution of 380 questionnaires. Thirty-one

questionnaires were not collected during the two collection rounds and thus these respondents were requested to mail in their questionnaires. A total of 359 questionnaires were returned. After checking for multiple omissions, non-serious responses, unreadable answers and inconsistent responses, 16 questionnaires were ruled out for further data analysis.

## 5. Results

### 5.1. Profiles of respondents

Based on a frequency analysis of the respondents' socio-demographic profiles, 38% of the respondents were male, 61% were married and 46% were in their 30s and 40s. Forty-three per cent indicated that Hoi An is their hometown. Half of the respondents own a house. Thirty-two have children. With regard to household income, 35% earn less than US\$200 per month, while 27% earn between US\$200 and 299. Regarding duration of residence, 44% had lived in Hoi An for less than 5 years, whereas about 56% had lived in Hoi An more than 5 years. Regarding their educational level, 16% are primary and middle school graduates; 43% are university graduates. Concerning occupation, 18% are workers at restaurants and 15% work at hotels. About 14% of respondents work in gift shops, followed by employees of handicraft-making company (10.8%) and those in other tourism businesses (8%).

### 5.2. Factor analysis and reliability tests

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to identify the underlying dimensionality of the 21 items assessing tourism impacts. Principal axis factoring and oblique rotation methods were chosen to identify the minimum number of dimensions that explain common variance in the data (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

The factor analysis generated a four-factor solution in which each factor had an eigenvalue of over than 1.0. Examination of a scree plot supported the factor solution. The four domains explained 46.21, 16.39, 5.87 and 4.31% of the variance. The value of the KMO measure of sampling was .94, which indicates that factor analysis can be considered a useful validation to extract the factor structure. The factor loadings, which measure the correlation between the observed measurements and the factors, were between .60 and .94. These values far exceeded the .45 criterion proposed by Comrey and Lee (1992). In terms of the internal consistency, the reliability alphas for Factors 1, 2, 3 and 4 were greater than .89. The reliability alpha for all five factors exceeded the threshold (.60) recommended by Allen and Yen (1979).

The factor analyses of the local residents' benefits, community attachment and support for the development of tourism created single-factor models with an eigenvalue of greater than 1.0. Analyses of scree plots supported the single-factor dimensionality structures. The single-factor models for the three constructs accounted for 78.72, 72.04 and 79.00% of the variance. Values for KMO measure of sampling adequacy were .50, .88 and .50. In addition, Barlett's test of sphericity had values of 136.38 ( $p < .001$ ), 1017.63 ( $p < .001$ ) and 139.60 ( $p < .001$ ). The factor loadings on the three constructs were greater than .83. The reliability alpha values of the three factors were greater than .72, having good internal consistency. These results are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1.** Results of the factor analysis of tourism impacts.

Domains and items	Factor loading	Mean	Variance (%)
<i>Factor 4: negative environmental impacts (reliability alpha = .92, Eigen value: 6.50)</i>			
Water pollution has been increased	.86	3.71	46.24
Quantity of litter has been increased	.83	3.76	
Natural environment has been destructed	.73	3.70	
Traffic environment has been increased	.72	3.71	
Crowding due to an increase of visitors has been increased	.70	3.72	
Noises have been increased	.67	3.59	
<i>Factor 3: negative social-cultural impacts (reliability alpha = .93, Eigen value: 7.58)</i>			
Political corruption has been increased	.94	3.54	16.39
Alcoholism and drug abuse have been increased	.86	3.35	
Prostitution has been increased	.83	3.36	
Crimes have been increased	.83	3.54	
Traditional value or customs have been destructed	.70	3.43	
<i>Factor 2: positive social-cultural impacts (reliability alpha = .89, Eigen value: 6.60)</i>			
Pride of local residents has been enhanced	.78	3.95	4.31
Local customs and cultural have been preserved	.67	3.76	
Cultural exchange with tourists has been increased	.68	3.97	
Educational environment for children has been enhanced	.64	3.76	
Opportunities for using recreation facilities have been increased	.63	3.89	
<i>Factor 1: positive economic impacts (reliability alpha = .89, Eigen value: 6.83)</i>			
Standard of living has been increased	.86	3.83	3.07
Income of residents has been increased	.76	3.84	
Tax revenues have been increased	.69	3.82	
Tourist spending has been increased	.64	3.78	
Public utilities and infrastructure have been made better	.60	3.78	

Note: Items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ('strongly disagree' (1), 'neutral' (3), 'strongly agree' (5)).

**Table 2.** Results of the factor analysis of benefits, community attachments, and support for development of tourism.

Domains and items	Factor loading	Mean	Variance (%)
<i>Factor 1: benefits (reliability alpha = .72, Eigen value: 1.57)</i>			
I have earned monetary benefits from tourism development in Hoi An	.89	3.52	78.72
I think tourism development is beneficial to Hoi An residents	.89	3.93	
<i>Factor 1: community attachments (reliability alpha = .90, Eigen value: 3.60)</i>			
I feel very unhappy if I move to other regions	.85	3.44	72.04
Friendship with other residents here are important to me	.86	3.54	
Hoi An is a specially meaningful city to me	.85	3.57	
I feel proud of living in Hoi An	.86	3.59	
I hope that my children or relatives have continuously lived in this region	.83	3.54	
<i>Factor 1: support for the development of tourism (reliability alpha = .73, Eigen value: 1.58)</i>			
I will do my best for developing this city	.89	3.51	79.00
I think tourism development is desirable for this city's development	.89	3.70	

Note: Items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ('strongly disagree' (1), 'neutral' (3), 'strongly agree' (5)).

### 5.3. Results of the confirmatory factor analyses

A confirmatory factor analysis was used to test the proposed measurement model specifying the relationships of the observed variables to the latent constructs using maximum likelihood estimation. This analysis was undertaken before conducting the structural equation modeling (SEM) procedures. Table 3 reports the results of the confirmatory factor analysis using the seven constructs. Assessment of a variety of goodness-of-fit measures to

**Table 3.** Results of the confirmation factor analysis.

Construct	Items	Factor loading	t-value	SMC	AVE <sup>b</sup>	CCR <sup>c</sup>
Positive economic impact	X1	.78	15.59	.61	.63	.90
	X2	.76	14.94	.57		
	X3	.85	17.18	.71		
	X4	.80	16.13	.65		
	X5	.79	— <sup>a</sup>	.62		
Positive sociocultural impact	X6	.81	15.21	.66	.61	.89
	X7	.81	15.17	.66		
	X8	.79	14.83	.63		
	X9	.75	13.85	.56		
	X10	.75	— <sup>a</sup>	.56		
Negative sociocultural impact	X11	.86	16.73	.73	.73	.93
	X12	.87	17.00	.75		
	X13	.90	17.68	.81		
	X14	.87	16.99	.75		
	X15	.75	— <sup>a</sup>	.57		
Negative environmental impact	X16	.80	16.41	.64	.66	.92
	X17	.83	17.21	.69		
	X18	.84	17.52	.70		
	X19	.81	16.71	.66		
	X20	.81	16.65	.65		
	X21	.79	— <sup>a</sup>	.63		
Benefits	Y1	.72	— <sup>a</sup>	.51	.58	.73
	Y2	.80	10.97	.64		
Community attachments	Y3	.78	15.77	.61	.65	.90
	Y4	.80	16.31	.65		
	Y5	.82	16.77	.68		
	Y6	.84	17.22	.70		
	Y7	.78	— <sup>a</sup>	.61		
Support for the development of tourism	Y8	.83	— <sup>a</sup>	.68	.59	.74
	Y9	.70	14.85	.49		
Fit indices	$\chi^2(384) = 785.55$ ( $p = .000$ ), GFI = .86, AGFI = .83, CFI = .95, RMR = .04, RMSEA = .06, TLI = .95					

<sup>a</sup>In the measurement model, the estimated parameter was fixed at 1.0.

<sup>b</sup>Average variance extracted (AVE) =  $(\sum \text{standardized loadings}^2) / [(\sum \text{standardized loadings}^2) + \sum \epsilon_j]$ , where  $\epsilon_j$  is the measurement error.

<sup>c</sup>Composite construct reliability (CCR) =  $(\sum \text{standardized loadings}^2) / [(\sum \text{standardized loadings}^2) + \sum \epsilon_j]$ .

evaluate the overall model fit produced the following results:  $\chi^2(384) = 785.55$  ( $p < .001$ ), comparative fit index (CFI) = .95, root mean residual (RMR) = .04, root mean square of approximation (RMSEA) = .06 and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) = .95. All of the goodness-of-fit indices, with the exception of the chi-square value, were within acceptable levels. These other measurements should be seen as more important in assessing the model because the chi-square test is sensitive to the sample size (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993). As shown in Tables 3 and 4, the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct was greater than the squared correlation coefficients for the corresponding inter-constructs, except for the 'community attachment' and 'support for the development of tourism' construct, showing that these two constructs are highly correlated. However, since the difference in AVE and the squared correlation coefficient was not large, and the literature clearly distinguish between community attachment and support for tourism, it is concluded that this measurement model is acceptable in terms of discriminant validity. Based on these tests, it can be concluded that the measurement model is acceptable in terms of both construct reliability and discriminant validity.

**Table 4.** Correlation matrix.

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	1.000						
2	.755** (.57)	1.000					
3	.343** (.12)	.324** (.10)	1.000				
4	.508** (.26)	.478** (.23)	.679** (.46)	1.000			
5	.549** (.30)	.543** (.29)	.096 (.01)	.243** (.06)	1.000		
6	.651** (.42)	.590** (.35)	.405** (.16)	.536** (.29)	.462** (.21)	1.000	
7	.602** (.36)	.600** (.36)	.340** (.12)	.512** (.26)	.490** (.24)	.824** (.68)	1.000
Mean	3.81	3.87	3.44	3.70	3.73	3.54	3.60
Standard deviation	.79	.75	.94	.82	.91	.88	.92

Notes: Construct 1 (positive economic impact), construct 2 (positive sociocultural impact), construct 3 (negative sociocultural impact), construct 4 (Negative environmental impact), construct 5 (benefits), construct 6 (community attachments), construct 7 (support for the development of tourism).

\*\* $p < .001$ .

#### 5.4. Results of SEM

Table 5 shows the goodness-of-fit indices for the hypothesized structural model. First, the model shows that, given that the chi-square value was statistically significant  $\chi^2(389) = 795.23, p < .001$ , the model should not be considered adequate. However, the other overall fit indices were satisfactory: CFI = .95, RMR = .04, RMSEA = .06 and TLI = .94. Out of the 10 estimated path coefficients, seven were statistically significant at the .05, .01, or .001 levels. Regarding the relationships between 'tourism impacts' and 'perceived benefits from tourism,' the significant relationships were between 'positive economic impacts' and 'benefits' ( $Y_{11} = .38, t = 3.03, p < .01$ ), 'positive sociocultural impacts' and 'benefits' ( $Y_{12} = .42, t = 3.34, p < .001$ ) and 'negative sociocultural impacts' and 'benefits' ( $Y_{13} = -.19, t = -2.35, p < .05$ ). This means that people who perceived more positive economic impacts and positive sociocultural impacts were more likely to perceive benefits through tourism. Respondents who perceived more negative sociocultural impacts were less likely to perceive benefits through tourism.

Concerning the relationships between 'tourism impacts' and 'community attachment,' there was a positive relationship between positive economic impacts and community attachment ( $Y_{21} = .43, t = 4.15, p < .001$ ). This indicates that people who perceived more positive economic impacts were more likely to report strong community attachment. The relationship between negative environment impacts and community attachment was also significant and negative ( $Y_{24} = -.24, t = -3.15, p < .01$ ). This indicates that respondents who perceived more negative environmental effects from the development of tourism showed a lower degree of community attachment.

Regarding the relationships between 'perceived benefits from tourism' and 'support for development of tourism,' and between 'community attachment' and 'support for development of tourism,' 'benefits' was positively related to 'support for development of tourism' ( $\beta_{31} = .13, t = 2.75, p < .01$ ). This means that the people who perceived more benefits showed stronger support for the development of the tourism in Hoi An. 'Community attachment' was positively related to 'support for development of tourism' ( $\beta_{32} = .95, t = 15.51, p < .001$ ). This clearly shows that the respondents who have more community attachment showed stronger support for the development of tourism in Hoi An. Based on these results,

**Table 5.** Results of the SEM analyses.

Hypotheses	Standardized coefficient	t-Value	p-Value	Total effect	Indirect effect	Decision
Hypothesis 1-1 ( $\gamma_{11}$ ): (+)Economic impact → benefits	.38	3.03**	.002	.43	.00	Accept
Hypothesis 1-2 ( $\gamma_{12}$ ): (+)Social-cultural impacts → benefits	.42	3.34***	.000	.71	.00	Accept
Hypothesis 1-3 ( $\gamma_{13}$ ): (-)Social-cultural impacts → benefits	-.19	-2.35*	.019	.03	.00	Accept
Hypothesis 1-4 ( $\gamma_{14}$ ): (-)Environmental impacts → benefits	.02	.23	.818	.24	.00	Reject
Hypothesis 2-1 ( $\gamma_{21}$ ): (+) Economic impact → attachment	.43	4.15***	.000	.38	.00	Accept
Hypothesis 2-2 ( $\gamma_{22}$ ): (+) Social-cultural impacts → attachment	.17	1.74	.082	.42	.00	Reject
Hypothesis 2-3 ( $\gamma_{23}$ ): (-) Social-cultural impacts → attachment	.03	.42	.678	-.19	.00	Reject
Hypothesis 2-4 ( $\gamma_{24}$ ): (-) Environmental impacts → attachment	-.24	-3.15**	.002	.02	.00	Accept
Hypothesis 3 ( $\beta_{31}$ ): Benefits → support tourism	.13	2.75**	.006	.95	.00	Accept
Hypothesis 4 ( $\beta_{32}$ ): Attachment → support tourism	.95	15.51***	.000	.13	.00	Accept

$\chi^2(389) = 795.23$  ( $p = .000$ ), GFI = .86, AGFI = .83, CFI = .95, RMR = .04, RMSEA = .06, TLI = .94

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Hypotheses 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 2-1, 2-4, 3 and 4 were accepted, while Hypotheses 1-4, 2-2 and 2-3 were rejected. These results are shown in Table 5 and Figure 1 (Figure 2).

## 6. Discussion and conclusion

Based on the empirical analyses using data of Hoi An residents, the main findings and discussions are as follows. First, residents in Hoi An who perceived favourable economic impacts from tourism development reported that they received more benefits. This result is supported by most previous studies, which found a positive association between economic impacts and perceived benefit of tourism (Cooper et al., 2008; Holloway, 1998; Wang & Pfister, 2008; Witt, 1991; Youell, 1998). Sociocultural impacts were also related to benefits from tourism development. Since sociocultural impacts are attributed to the flow of foreign tourists, residents easily see the impacts in their community. As many respondents (56.3%) indicated living in Hoi An for five or more years, they are likely to be abreast with socio-cultural benefits and impacts of tourism on their community. The findings are consistent with those of most studies that have reported a positive association between positive perceptions of sociocultural impacts and perceptions of benefits (Cooper & Hall, 2008; Gee et al., 1989; Kim & Petrick, 2005; Yoon et al., 2001). It was found out that negative environmental impacts did not significantly affect perceived benefits of tourism in this study. One of the

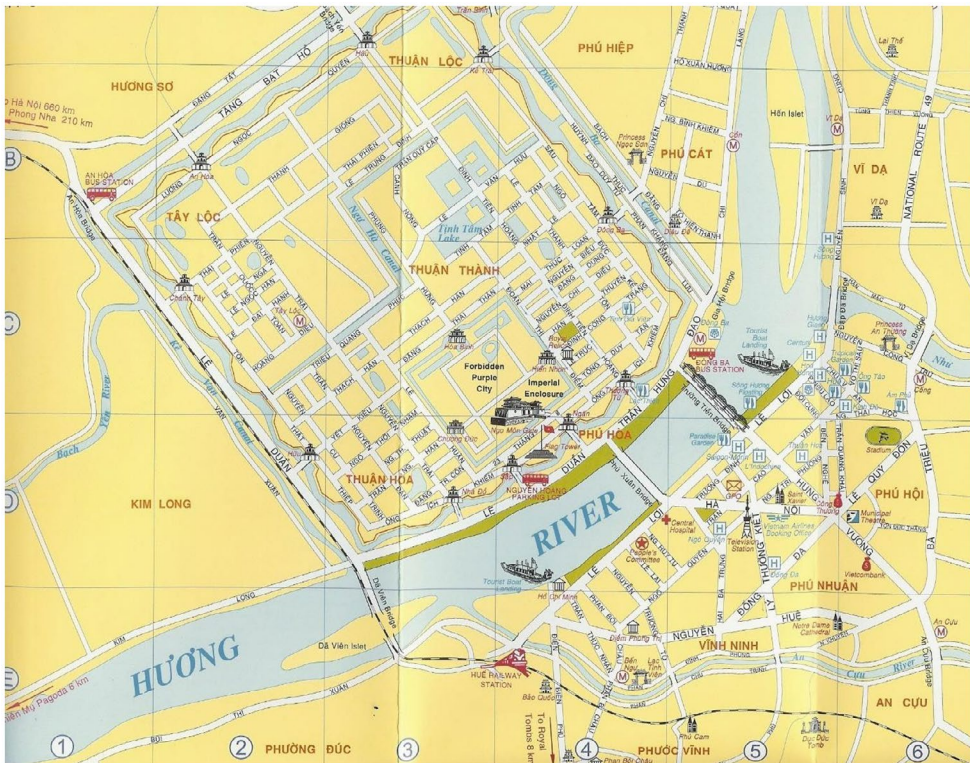


Figure 1. Tourist sites of Hoi An.

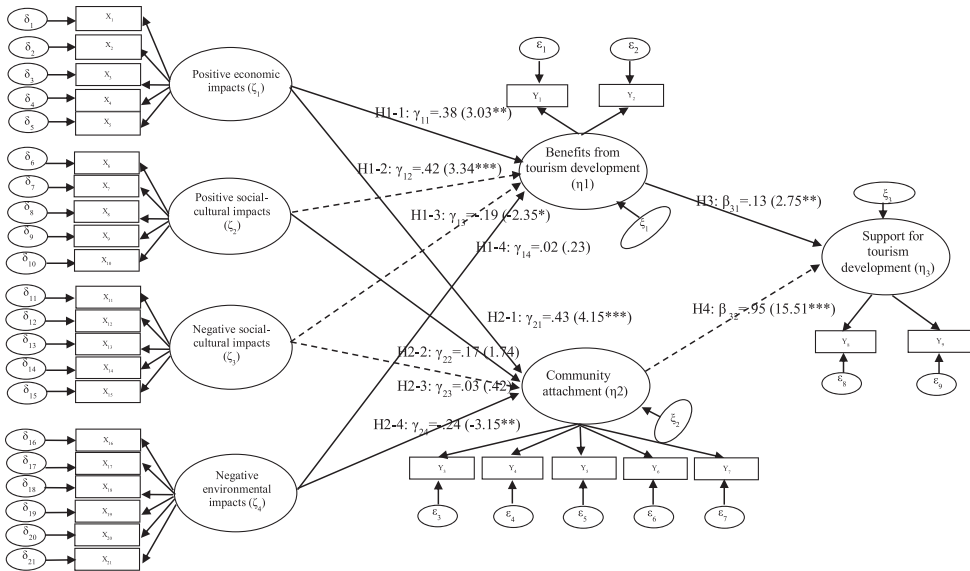


Figure 2. Results of the structural model analyses.

Notes:  $\chi^2 (389) = 795.23 (p = .000)$ , GFI = .86, AGFI = .83, CFI = .95, RMR = .04, RMSEA = .06, TLI = .94.  
 $*p < .05$ ;  $**p < .01$ ;  $***p < .001$ .



reasons could be that residents may not consider adverse environmental impacts such as environmental destruction, as their own personal concern, despite noticing them. People who live in developing countries tend to place more importance on monetary gain than the environmental effects of tourism development (Liu et al., 1987; Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Youell, 1998) and also that local residents might not have enough environmental knowledge (Nyaupane & Thapa, 2006).

Second, the results show that people who perceive a higher level of positive economic impacts tend to like their community. Other studies agree that residents' perceptions of economic impacts affect their community attachment (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Jurowski et al., 1997; Williams et al., 1995). However, perceptions of the sociocultural impacts did not entail community attachment. That is, whether residents perceive sociocultural impacts as beneficial or harmful did not necessarily affect community attachment. Since what influences and constitutes attachment to a community goes beyond tourism to include other factors such as family, other community members, personal feelings and other aspects of community immersion, the sociocultural impacts of tourism may not be significant enough on its own to affect community attachment of residents.

On the other hand, negative environmental impacts significantly affected community attachment. This finding is interesting because as discussed above, perception of negative environmental impacts were not related to residents' perceptions of benefits from tourism. Local residents who perceive negative environmental impact might not consider the issues as individual concerns. However, people who perceived more about negative environmental impacts are not likely to be proud or highly attached to their community. Since tourism towns are a residential and spiritual space where they will live out their life and where future generations will continue to live, residents may worry about the direct influences on their lives and community (McCool & Martin, 1994; Yuskal et al., 2010).

Third, perceptions of the benefits of tourism was positively related to support for tourism development. Previous studies have established that residents' perception of benefits from tourism development leads to support for tourism development (Ap, 1992; Gursoy et al., 2002; Jurowski et al., 1997). As social exchange theory dictates, when residents see they are benefiting from tourism, they are willing to support tourism development. This outcome is also consistent with the results of previous studies that found that people who are satisfied with the benefits of tourism show a tendency to participate in decision-making processes relating to tourism development (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Nicholas et al., 2009). The association between benefits sought and support for tourism development will be stronger when residents perceive direct benefits from tourism development such as growth in household income (Kaltenborn et al., 2008; Pizam, 1978; Thomason, Crompton, & Dan Kamp, 1979); or the more dependent residents are on tourism, the more likely they are to support its development (Bryant & Napier, 1981; Mathieson & Wall, 1982).

Fourth, community attachment was positively related to support for tourism development. This means that residents who are more attached to the community tend to support tourism development in communities with a high level of tourism development (McCool & Martin, 1994; Pizam, 1978; Um & Crompton, 1987). People who are attached to their communities tend to be concerned about the well-being of their communities. When the benefits of tourism are visible, especially from an economic perspective (as has been established in this study), people support for tourism. Also, since the negative effects of tourism (especially, the socio-cultural and environmental) is still not ubiquitous enough to affect

how residents in Hoi An feel about and view their community, support for tourism and its development remains unchanged.

Having a better understanding of residents' perceptions about tourism impacts, benefits, community attachment, and support for tourism could assist tourism planners in Hoi An in better predict the reactions of residents in the future. Tourism planners may gain more insights into which aspects should be given greater emphasis in order to increase the level of support for tourism. Based on the discussion above, some practical implications can be suggested.

It is imperative that addressing and continually monitoring residents' perceptions about tourism development be part of the plan of tourism organizations. Socio-economic benefits and impacts clearly dominate decisions to support tourism in Hoi An. This is not uncommon in developing regions. Thus, in order to achieve support for tourism, positive economic and sociocultural impact should be emphasized to local residents. However, the socio-economic and environmental impacts of tourism (especially the negative) often tend to follow later after the economic. These impacts will have to be factored into tourism planning and development as tourist numbers increase. Greater attention should be given to negative sociocultural and environmental impacts in order to make tourism in Hoi An sustainable. Government and tourism organizations should proactively engage residents and tourism related businesses in meetings to listen to their concerns, lessen negative feelings toward tourism development and help have a concerted effort in dealing with any negative impacts tourism brings.

The implication for local businesses is that they will have to run their business in such a way that utilizes local sources and material for producing artefacts and souvenirs as well as local dishes. This will reduce leakages and retain the income from tourism in Hoi An thereby increasing the benefit tourism brings. Another is that local businesses are also likely to consider the economic benefits but they will also need to consider the environmental and socio-cultural aspects of their operations since adverse impacts will eventually affect local resident's responses to tourism and tourist inflows as well.

This study has some limitations. Since this research did not investigate the negative economic impact and positive environmental impacts and how that relates to perceived benefits from tourism, as well as the relationship between community attachment and perceived benefits from tourism development, this is an area that requires further attention in future research. Also, this model did not consider moderating factors that can influence the structural model test such as residents' economic status, length of residence, occupation, or direct commitment with tourism business can influence perceptions of tourism impacts, community attachment, and support for tourism development. Therefore, a future study is needed to test structural models with multi-group analysis to assess the moderating effects of these factors. Lastly, tourism impacts can change based on the passage of time or the level of development and will need to be considered.

### **Disclosure statement**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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