Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management 43 (2020) 157–168

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jhtm

How resident perception of economic crisis influences their perception of tourism

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Residents' perceptions
Support for tourism development
Place attachment
Economic crisis
Social exchange theory
Place attachment theory
Iran

ABSTRACT

Residents are one of the most valuable assets for a tourist destination, so their perceptions of tourism constitute a crucial pillar for designing tourism development strategies that promote sustainable development. This paper investigates the determinants of both resident perception and willingness to support tourism development. The proposed model, which combines the social exchange theory (SET) and place attachment theory (PAT), was tested via structural equation modeling (SEM) using data collected from 409 residents of Isfahan. In addition, as the global economy has been suffering from a severe downturn, which likely influences perceptions and attitudes, this article tests the impact of resident perception of economic crisis on their perception of tourism and their willingness to support its development. Results indicate that those who perceive a higher level of economic crisis are more likely to view the impacts of tourism positively and support its development. Results also show that higher level of place attachment among residents is associated with a higher level of tourism development support. These empirical findings provide valuable theoretical contributions to researchers and have practical implications for local authorities.

1. Introduction

While tourism development requires resources and well-developed infrastructure, the hospitality of locals is also considered a crucial factor in the sustainable development of tourism (Rasoolimanesh, Jaafar, Kock, & Ramayah, 2015; Zamani-Farahani & Musa, 2012). A lack of community dedication to tourism development or hostile resident behavior toward tourists often leads to the tourists traveling somewhere else (Fridgen, 1991; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015). Residents' satisfaction with tourists in their living area is a significant factor in the decision-making process of managers, researchers, and tourism planners because the success of any development depends on local community's active support (Almeida-Garcıa, Pelaez-Fernandez, Balbuena-Vazquez, & Cortes-Macias, 2016; Lee & Jan 2019), as dissatisfaction results in a decrease in or elimination of tourism in the host community (Diedrich & García-Buades, 2009; Gannon, Rasoolimanesh, & Taheri, 2020; Sirakaya, Teye, & Somez, 2002). Furthermore, researchers believe that sustainable tourism development is impossible without the local community's support (Lee & Jan 2019; Nunkoo, Smith, & Ramkissoon, 2013). As a result, recognizing residents' perception of tourism and understanding the foundation of this perception is considered vital (Sharpley, 2014).

Residents perception of tourism has become a focal issue in tourism research and one of "the most systematic and well-studied areas of tourism" (McGehee & Andereck, 2004, p. 232). This topic has garnered interest recently due to the increasing evidence of negative impacts of tourism development on locals (Sinclair-Maragh, Gursoy, & Vieregge, 2015). A close look at the literature on resident perception reveals a number of gaps and shortcomings. First, the majority of the studies on this topic have been conducted in developed countries (North America and the United Kingdom) being the most frequent (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; Rasoolimanesh, Roldán, Jaafar, & Ramayah, 2016; Sharpley, 2014). Few studies have focused on the developing world (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2016; Strzelecka, Boley, & Woosnam, 2017; Strzelecka, Boley, & Strzelecka, 2016(. This disparity has prompted calls for more studies in tourist destinations throughout the developing world to analyze different antecedents of resident attitudes (Gannon et al., 2020; Nunkoo et al., 2013; Sharpley, 2014; Vargas-Sanchez, Porras-Bueno, & Plaza-Mejía, 2011). Moreover, despite the well-established fact that economic uncertainty influences perceptions and attitudes (Garau-Vadell, Diaz-Armas, & Gutierrez-Tano, 2014; Voon & Voon, 2012), no previous studies have investigated the effect of

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https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2020.02.009
Received 8 August 2019; Received in revised form 25 February 2020; Accepted 29 February 2020

Table 1
Tourism perceived impacts.

	Positive impacts	Negative impacts
Economic	Recovering of poor regions (1), improving the standard of living (1, 3, 4, 5, 9), increasing employment opportunities (1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17), increasing the income of local businesses (3, 9, 11, 13, 22), increase of quality of life (11, 12, 13)	increasing unstable employment (2, 3, 8, 17), Increasing cost of land and housing (10, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19), increasing the cost of living (1, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19,20, 22), generating low-paid jobs (2, 8, 17)
Environmental	Improving public facilities (1, 2, 14, 15, 16, 8, 22), improving in standards of living (10, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19,20,22), increasing leisure opportunities for residents (21), increasing locals' awareness and appreciation of environmental preservation (15,16),	spoiling historic sites(8, 15, 16, 10,18),Traffic congestion(1, 18, 19, 28), Overcrowding (8, 10, 15, 16, 20, 22), environmental damage and degradation (1, 3, 18, 19, 20), increases in waste and pollution (1, 3, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20), congestion in the use of public infrastructures (8, 10, 16, 22, 28)
Socio-cultural	Improving revival of local handicrafts& cultural activities (8, 20), increasing in the locals' interest in the preservation of resources(8, 20), improving cultural interaction between residents and tourists (1, 8, 16, 20, 22), preserving residents' identity and the cultural pride (1, 3, 5, 15, 81, 20, 22)	drug and alcohol addiction (8, 10, 11, 17, 22), increasing prostitution and crime (1, 10, 14, 15, 16, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28), commodification of local cultures (23, 24), loss of authenticity (23, 24), dilution of traditional values (1, 8, 15, 20), trivialization of culture (10, 22, 26, 28)

1: Williams and Lawson (2001); **2:** McCool & Martin (1994); **3:** Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, and Vogt (2005); **4:** Oviedo-García, Castellano-Verdugo, and Martín-Ruiz (2008); **5:** Yoon, Gursoy, and Chen, (2001); **6:** Andereck and Nyaupane (2011); **7:** Bujosa and Rossello (2007); **8:** Sheldon and Abenoja (2001);**9:** Garau-Vadell, Díaz-Armas, and Gutiérrez-Taño (2014); 10: Belisle and Hoy (1980); **11:** Diedrich and García-Buades (2009); **12:** Gursoy and Rutherford (2004); **13:** McDowall and Choi (2010) ; **14:** Ko and Stewart (2002); **15:** Vargas-Sanchez, Plaza-Mejia, and Porras-Bueno (2009); **16:** Sirakaya, Teye and Somez, (2002); **17:** Tosun (2002); **18:** Ritchie and InkarI (2006); **19:** Tovar and Lockwood (2008); **20:** McGehee and Andereck (2004); **21:** Perdue, Long, and Allen (1990); **22:** Liu and Var (1986); **23:** Bonard and Felli (2008); **24:** Fagnoni (2013); **25:** Cohen (1988); **26:** Lindberg and Johnson (1997); **27:** Fredline and Faulkner (2000); **28:**Látková and Vogt (2012).

economic crises in host destinations on local attitudes toward tourism and their willingness to support tourism development. Recently, an economic crisis has engulfed many countries, developing ones in particular. Researchers believe that the individual decision-making process is subject to various types of economic and psychological influences (Giesen & Pieters, 2019; Thaler, 1994) and when individuals are financially strained, they change their behavior and attitudes (Graham, Chattopadhyay, & Picon, 2010; Voon & Voon, 2012). It is thus reasonable to assume that a bleak economic environment can influence residents' attitudes toward tourism and that ignoring this relationship can bias resident perceptions' evaluations in an unknown direction.

With these research gaps in mind, this study aims to breathe new air into the literature on resident perception of tourism development and explore how economic difficulty affects this perception and their willingness to support tourism development. The hypothesized relationship is examined in Isfahan, Iran. Our choice of Isfahan as a case study was motivated by the study from Rasoolimanesh et al. (2016) that called for more emphasis on developing destinations; it also pairs well with our hypothesis. The sanctions imposed on Iran by the United States have dramatically hurt Iran's economy. In particular, its oil-oriented economy was affected by sanctions against crude oil exports (Dudlák, 2018). The austerity measures imposed by the Iranian government affected significantly the life of the vast majority of Iranians. Iran is struggling with extremely high unemployment, job insecurity, loss of income, loss of wealth, currency depreciation, uncertainty, and pessimism about the future (Dudlák, 2018).

Isfahan is located in the center of Iran, and is home to many tangible and intangible heritage assets. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) calls Isfahan a top Iranian tourist destination; the city possesses 22,000 historical sites and monuments, 850 of which are nationally recorded and four of which are considered world heritage sites by UNESCO. This destination provides an excellent opportunity to explore the effects of economic struggle on residents' perception of tourism and their willingness to support its development. This study may be the first one to incorporate the effect of local economic crisis in modeling local support for tourism development. It provides new insights for marketers and managers to formulate strategies that will encourage residents to support tourism development in their area.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows: Section 2 reviews resident perception and related theories and develops hypotheses to propose a conceptual framework for the empirical study. The authors then explain the study method and detailed results before discussing the findings and implications.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Resident perception of tourism impacts on host community

The perception that residents have of tourism impacts (TI) has been shown to predict their attitudes toward tourism. Local perception of TI has been extensively investigated since the 1970s. The majority of studies have focused on whether residents recognize tourism as a "blessing or blight" (Young, 1973). Earlier work (Madrigal, 1993; Pizam, 1978) evaluated only the perception of tourism's economic impacts. Several researchers, however, believed that the impacts of tourism development are not limited to economic impacts. A three-dimensional model or triple-bottom-line approach focusing on economic, environmental, and socio-cultural impacts on the local community has been conducted by several scholars (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Stylidis & Terzidou, 2014). The rationale behind this is that tourism, as does any other human activity, occurs within the context of both place and environment. In general, these studies concluded that residents' support for tourism development is a function of their assessment of the potential economic, socio-cultural, and environmental benefits as well as the costs of tourism development. Accordingly, researchers have divided perceived TI into positive (i.e., benefits) and negative (i.e., costs) categories (Rasoolimaesh et al., 2016; Stylidis & Terzidou, 2014). They then divided them further into economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Gursoy, Ouyang, Nunkoo, & Wei, 2018; Rasoolimaesh et al., 2016; Stylidis & Terzidou, 2014).

Table 1 shows TI that can be used to assess resident perception of tourism.

2.2. Factors influencing resident perception of tourism impacts (TI)

Factors influencing resident perception of tourism impacts (TI) and its development have received extensive attention from academics (Xu & Fox, 2014). Previous studies have been heterogeneous in scope (i.e., different geographic areas and tourist segments) and in their variables, theories, and methodology. For example, there have been papers analyzing resident perceived TI in various destinations, such as Arizona, USA (Andereck et al., 2005; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011), South Carolina, USA (Draper, Woosnam, & Norman, 2009), Virginia, USA (Boley, McGehee, Perdue, & Long, 2014), Gold Coast, Australia (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000), Wales, UK (Palmer, Koenig-Lewis, & Jones, 2013), and Choczewo, Poland (Strzelecka et al., 2017). In addition, previous studies have differed in their conceptual frameworks, e.g., institutional theory (Sinclair-Maragh et al., 2015), quality of life (Andereck &

Nyaupane, 2011), model of attitude-behavior (Carmichael, 2000), theory of reasoned action (Bestard & Nadal, 2007; Lepp, 2007), social representations theory (Andriotis & Vaughan, 2003), Butler's tourism area life cycle theory (Akis et al., 1996; Diedrich & Garcia-Buades, 2009; Lee & Jan 2019; Lee, Kim, & Kang, 2003), Doxey's irridex model (Diedrich & García-Buades, 2009; Mason & Cheyne, 2000), place attachment theory (Eusébio, Vieira, & Lima, 2018; Gu & Ryan, 2008), Weber's theory of rationality and empowerment (Boley et al., 2014), stakeholder theory (Nicholas, Thapa, & Ko, 2009), and emotional solidarity (Woosnam, 2012). Many frameworks have been employed to explain residents' attitudes toward tourism, but social exchange theory (SET) is most frequently used by researchers to understand this topic (Gursoy et al., 2002, 2018; Ko & Stewart, 2002; Nunkoo et al., 2013; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015, 2016; Vargas-Sanchez et al., 2011). Finally, in a review of factors that directly or indirectly impact the formation of resident attitude toward tourism, Sharpley (2014) indicated that, in terms of the choice of variables included in the analysis, the variation is substantial and we can classify these independent variables in two main categories:

a) intrinsic variables: for instance, residents' socio-demographic profile (Almeida-Garcia et al., 2016; Fredline & Faulkner, 2000; Mason & Cheyne, 2000; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015), their community attachment (Almeida-Garcıa et al., 2016; Gursoy et al., 2002; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015), community concern (Gursoy, Chi, & Dyer, 2010; Gursoy et al., 2002; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Perdue et al., 1990), residents' empowerment (Boley et al., 2014; Strzelecka et al., 2016), distance from tourism zone (Belisle & Hoy, 1980), interaction with tourists (Andereck et al., 2005; Eusébio et al., 2018), place attachment (Eusébio et al., 2018; Gu & Ryan, 2008; Wu & Chen, 2015).
b) extrinsic variables: for instance, level of tourism development in destination (Butler, 1980; Doxey, 1975; Gu & Ryan, 2008; Lepp, 2007; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010; Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001; Vargas-Sanchez et al., 2011), density of tourists (Bestard & Nadal, 2007; Vargas-Sanchez et al., 2011), and tourists type (Vargas-Sanchez et al., 2011).

In Table 2 we present a summary of some recent studies mentioned above, which can be considered to be representative of resident perception analysis. The table provides a brief description of these papers in terms of the geographic area of analysis, the chosen framework and methodology and the main empirical results

In consideration of the foregoing, some variables have been extensively examined, including economic dependence on tourism, resident sociodemographic characteristics, community attachment, and host-tourist interactions. In other words, the literature offers significant empirical links between these variables and resident perception. Therefore, we do not focus on these variables despite their ties to resident perception. Some variables have received little attention in the literature, such as place attachment (Eusébio et al., 2018), community concern (Gurosy et al., 2002; Gursoy et al., 2010), involvement (Gannon et al., 2020; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2016); hence, we focus on these variables as predictors of resident perceived tourism impacts. Moreover, despite rhetoric of economic uncertainty and crisis having an important role in perceptions and attitudes (Kayat, 2002; Voon & Voon, 2012), insufficient focus has been placed on determining its influence on residents' perceptions toward tourism and their willingness to support its development. This gap in the literature is surprising since economic crises are considered one of the most influential exogenous factors on tourism (Ritchie, Molinar, & Frechtling, 2010; Sheldon & Dwyer, 2010; Smeral, 2010).

In addition, due to the explanatory power of the social exchange theory (Hadinejad, Moyle, Scott, Kralj, & Nunkoo, 2019; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2016), it has been applied most frequently by researchers to understand the formation of residents' perception of tourism. According to the SET prediction, residents evaluate tourism's impacts and support its development if they believe the benefits of said development (i.e. positive impacts) exceed its costs (i.e., negative impacts) (Ap, 1992; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012; Sharpley, 2014; Stylidis & Terzidou, 2014). However, a recent body of literature has called this framework's explanatory power into question (Andereck et al., 2005; Boley et al., 2014; Sharpley, 2014; Strzelecka et al., 2017). Some scholars argue that SET overemphasizes the economic aspect of the relationship between residents and tourists. Latkova & Vogt, (2012) assert that this issue can be addressed by integrating SET with another theory to “provide a better insight into residents' attitudes toward tourism.” Therefore, several scholars endeavored to tackle this shortcoming by combining SET with different theoretical perspectives and new constructs. For instance, Ward and Berno (2011) integrated SET with threat theory; Boley et al. (2014) and Strzelecka et al. (2016) tested the resident empowerment through tourism scale alongside the combined Weber/SET theoretical perspective; Shakeela and Weaver (2018) integrated it with social representations theory; Eusébio et al. (2018) combined it with place attachment theory. These revised frameworks for SET were the building blocks for the maturation of resident perception studies.

In view of aforementioned, this study adopts SET and extended it by incorporating two less-examined constructs, community concern and involvement, as well as place-attachment theory and residents' perceived economic crisis (PEC) to investigate residents’ perceptions of tourism and their willingness to support its development.

2.3. Model and hypotheses

According to logic behind SET and a number of prior studies (including Andereck et al., 2005; Boley et al., 2014; Látková & Vogt, 2012; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012; Gursoy et al., 2010) resident perceived TI, both positive and negative, influence their willingness to support tourism development (STD). Essentially, residents who perceive more positive impacts (PI) are inclined to support tourism development while residents who perceive more negative impacts (NI) are less likely to support tourism development. Therefore, the following hypotheses have been developed:

H1. A direct positive relationship exists between residents' perceived PI and their STD.

H2. A direct negative relationship exists between residents' perceived NI and their STD.

2.3.1. Community Concern

As mentioned above, early work primarily modeled resident perception of tourism as a function of perceived personal economic gain using SET. Recently, scholars have critiqued SET for overstating the importance of personal economic benefit (Boley et al., 2014; Gurosy et al., 2002; Látková & Vogt, 2012; Woosnam, 2012). Among others, Gurosy et al. (2002) attempted to solve this shortcoming and improve the explanatory power of SET by incorporating community concern (CC) into the model. They believed that a focus on CC marked a departure from SET's original overemphasis on individual economic benefits. Based on the group gain rule, they argued that resident perception of tourism is formed not only on objective personal cost and benefit judgments, but also on their community. They concluded that people who are highly concerned about their local community are more likely to have a positive attitude toward tourism impacts (TI). This is in line with previous studies, which found concerned residents to have positive views on tourism (Andereck et al., 2005; Gursoy et al., 2018). Thus, the level of concern residents feels about various community aspects (such as, crime, economy, culture, and tradition) is expected to impact resident perceived TI (Andereck et al., 2005; Gursoy et al., 2010; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Therefore, the following hypotheses have been developed:

Table 2
Studies on resident perception of tourism.

Reference	Geographic area	Framework	Methodology	Empirical results
Chen (2001)	Virginia, USA	n/a	Quantitative	economic and social costs/benefits, cultural enrichment, and environmental deterioration influence STD.
Andriotis and Vaughan (2003)	Crete, Greek	SET & SRT	Quantitative	Less educated and residents reliant to tourism-related jobs are the most likely to support tourism development.
Gursoy and Rutherford (2004)	Washington and Idaho, USA	n/a	Quantitative	CC, CA, sensitivity to environment and using tourism resources are influence on perception of TI and perceptions of benefits & costs and local economy are significant explanatory variables of their support for tourism development.
McGehee and Andereck (2004)	Arizona, USA	SET	Quantitative	individual characteristics (except age and having lived in the community as child) did not predict attitudes toward tourism but dependence on tourism can consider as a predictor.
Andriotis (2005)	Crete, Greek	SET	Quantitative	tourism employment, non-reliant residents and tourism business people have higher odds to positive perceptions about tourism development
Andereck et al. (2005)	Arizona (state-wide), USA	SET	Quantitative	residents who received greater personal benefit from tourism and are more knowledge also perceived greater PI of tourism development on their community and consequently have greater support toward tourism.
Bestard and Nadal (2007)	Balearic Islands Spain	SET & TRA	Quantitative	the level of dependence of the family's incomes on tourism and some socioeconomic characteristics of residents influence on their perception. Besides, in municipal with higher density of tourist accommodation residents are usually less prone to perceived NI of tourism and have greater tolerance.
Lepp (2007)	Bigodi, Uganda	TRA	Quantitative	residents have positive attitudes towards tourism. Positive attitudes result from resident's belief that tourism creates community development, improves agricultural markets, generates income, and finally, that tourism brings random good fortune.
Gursoy et al. (2010)	Sunshine Coast, Australia	n/a	Quantitative	level of CC, CA, locals' environmentally sensitive, use of the tourism resource, state of the local economy, and the residents' perceptions toward TI are the important factors that affect their support for tourism development.
Woosnam (2012)	Galveston, County, Texas, USA	Emotional solidarity	Quantitative	each of the three Emotional Solidarity Scale (ESS) factors (such as, welcoming nature, emotional closeness, and sympathetic understanding) significantly predicted residents' perceived impacts, their support toward tourism and contributions tourism makes to the community.
Zamani-Farahani and Musa (2012)	Masooleh and Sare'in, Iran	n/a	Quantitative	Islam is not against the development of tourism industry. 'Islamic Belief' and 'Islamic Practice' have negative relationships with the perceptions of socio-cultural impacts of tourism are not supported.
Boley et al. (2014)	Floyd, Botetourt, and Franklin County, Virginia	SET, WFSR, and RETS	Quantitative	Residents' perceived positive impacts, psychological empowerment and personal economic benefit having direct and positive effects on support for tourism, and perceived negative impacts has negative effect on support for tourism. In addition, psychological empowerment, social empowerment, and political empowerment have direct and positive effects on residents' perceived positive impacts of tourism, and negative effects on their perceived negative impacts.
Wu and Chen (2015)	Macau and Singapore	n/a	Quantitative	Macau residents tended to be higher scores regarding the consequences of gambling in their living area (more than Singaporeans)
Strzelecka et al. (2016)	Choczewo, Poland	SET, WFSR, and RETS	Quantitative	psychological empowerment was the best predictor of STD, however, political empowerment and economic benefits from tourism did not predict STD.
Eusébio et al. (2018)	Boa Vista Island, Cape Verde, Africa	SET, PAT, and social contact.	Quantitative	residents' attitudes are positively affected by PA, host–tourist interaction, and perceived PI; and negatively affected by perceived NI. Residents' perceived PI & NI have significant impacts on STD.
Shakeela and Weaver (2018)	Maldives	SET, SRT	Qualitative and quantitative	in the more tourism-affiliated destination, social exchange and social representations influenced how tourism is rationalized as a 'managed evil'.

TI: Tourism impacts; **PI**: Positive impacts; **NI**: Negative impacts; **STD**: support tourism development; **CC**: Community concern, **CA**: Community attach; **PA**: Place attachment; **SET**: Social exchange theory; **SRT**: Social representations theory; **PAT**: Place attachment theory; **TRA**: Theory of reasoned action; **WFSR**: Weber's theory of formal and substantive rationality; **RETS**: Resident Empowerment through Tourism Scale.

H3a. The level of CC is directly and positively associated with residents' perceived PI.

H3b. The level of CC is directly and negatively associated with residents' perceived NI.

2.3.2. Place attachment

The concept of place attachment (PA) can be traced back to attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969). Derived from this theory, any positive or negative association an individual has with a particular location/place is often characterized as place attachment (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001; Strzelecka et al., 2017). It has multiple and complex dimensions (Wang & Chen, 2015; Wu & Chen, 2015) and by using numerous approaches and scales, this intricate concept has been measured. The literature on environmental psychology primarily has concentrated on the attachment of people to places; some other researchers have proposed that PA can also include other aspects, such as family, friends, society, as well as local culture (Kyle, Graefe, & Manning, 2005).

Once theories of place identity are applied to clarify attitudes of residents towards the growth of tourism, two aspects are often used to measure the attachment to place: place identity (a symbolic or affective place attachment); and place dependence (associated with the place functionality for recreational activities) (Eusébio et al., 2018; Lee, 2013). Several scholars, however, conceptualize attachment to place according to other aspects, including nature bonding (Strzelecka et al., 2017), place social bonding and place affect (Kyle et al., 2005; Ramkissoon, Weiler, & Smith, 2013).

Referring to Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001), individuals' perceptions and attitudes may be shaped by analyzing the feelings they develop towards the places they live in. This concept, however, has not usually been analyzed as a determining factor of residents' perceptions towards tourism development (Eusébio et al., 2018; Gu & Ryan, 2008) perhaps due to its difficulty to both describe and operationalize. Similar terms to PA have also been applied as well, including community attachment (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015), place identity (Wang & Chen, 2015), and sense of community (Van Winkle & Woosnam, 2014).

Given that, in the literature, various terms were applied to describe the association of an individual with a particular place, the conceptualization of the PA was on the basis of theories of place identity for this study. Place identity and dependence are central elements of PA in this context (Eusébio et al., 2018; Strzelecka et al., 2017). PA is affected not only by the physical elements but also the meanings, commitment, knowledge, as well as satisfaction an individual links to a particular place (Wang & Chen, 2015). Highly attached residents are, thus, expected to have a tendency to perceive tourism development more favorably than those less attached (Stylidis, 2017). In other words, residents with strong affinity to the place have higher odds for a positive attitude towards tourism development in their society (Eusébio et al., 2018; Stylidis, 2017) and consequently they will support tourism development (Eusébio et al., 2018). The following three hypotheses are suggested in line with few studies on the association between residents' PA and their perceptions of tourism effects and willingness to support tourism development.

H4a. Residents' PA has a direct positive impact on residents' perceived PI.

H4b. Residents' PA has a direct negative impact on residents' perceived NI.

H4c. Residents' PA positively and directly predicts their willingness to STD.

2.3.3. Economic benefit and involvement

At the core of the literature on resident perception of tourism, researchers argue that the more potential economic benefits (EB) stem from tourism, the more residents perceive tourism positively (e.g., Andereck et al., 2005; Gursoy et al., 2002; Ko & Stewart, 2002; McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015). This is in line with self-interest theory, "the assumption that individuals seek to maximize their own material gains in interactions and expect others to do the same" (Baiman, 1982). However, the effect of personal EB on perceived NI is ambiguous. Some empirical evidence has concluded that there is a direct negative relationship between residents' economic gain and their perceived NI (Látková & Vogt, 2012) while some researchers have found that economic benefits are not a significant explanatory variable of residents' perceived NI (Boley et al., 2014; Gursoy et al., 2002; Ko & Stewart, 2002). Therefore, the following hypothesis has been developed:

H5a. EB has a direct positive impact on residents' perceived PI.

H5b. EB has a direct negative impact on residents' perceived NI.

Murphy (1985) provided evidence that tourism may not be viewed as sustainable without resident involvement (IN) in decision-making. Community IN enables residents to take part in tourism development and be social actors instead of passive subjects; they can control activities that affect their lives (Gannon et al., 2020; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2016). Since community IN can empower residents and inspire them to align more closely with the local region, it can lead to more positive perceptions of tourism development (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Boley et al., 2014; Gannon et al., 2020; Látková & Vogt, 2012; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2016). The degree to which community IN inspires support and perceived control over the process of tourism development is emphasized in this paper (Zuo, Gursoy, & Wall, 2017). Residents' IN also fosters awareness of the benefits for locals at both the individual and community level (Richard & Hall, 2002; Boley et al., 2014). Tosun (2002) noted that residents participating in the tourism development decision-making process have a chance to increase the benefits and reduce the costs associated with tourism development by influencing the process early on. Therefore, the following hypothesis has been developed:

H6a. IN has a direct positive impact on residents' perceived PI.

H6b. IN has a direct negative impact on residents' perceived NI.

2.3.4. Perceived economic crisis

Because of the rise of unemployment, financial issues, investment failures occurring during economic crisis, the condition of local economy plays a determinative role in individuals' lives. Researches, in different disciplines, have underlined that economic crisis exerts a frictional effect on public health (Levy & Sidel, 2009), consumption rate (Hurd & Rohwedder, 2010; Voon & Voon, 2012), individual's behavior (Graham et al., 2010; Voon & Voon, 2012) and hotel occupancy rate (Song, Lin, Witt, & Zhang, 2011).

Nonetheless, by objective evaluation of economic conditions through GDP and data available on unemployment rate, the multiple phenomenon of economic crisis cannot be understood precisely (Hayo, 2005). For instance, Campbell and Converse (1972) verify that even though betterment of national income in the US, people did not perceive a progress in their socioeconomic situation. Therefore, by analyzing individuals' perception of economic life, the economic crisis can be defined more precisely. As suggested by Gabel and Whitten (1997), subjective economy rather than the objective one affects residents' attitudes. Therefore, in the case of Isfahan, Iran, which has one of the most fragile economic conditions in the world, we measure residents' perceived economic crisis (PEC).

Conducting research on residents' perception of local economy in tourism destinations is crucial to the tourism development in destinations, especially the Middle East, due to the financial limitations of these destinations. Literature shows the influence of local economy on tourism demand has been gaining increased attention (Ritchie et al.,

2010; Sheldon & Dwyer, 2010; Smeral, 2010). On the other hand, it has been proven that economic instability affects individuals' attitudes and perceptions (Graham et al., 2010; Kayat, 2002; Voon & Voon, 2012), and leaves effects on people's decision making process (Thaler, 1994). However, the topic still remains intact for studying the effect of PEC on residents' perceptions of tourism and their inclination to support tourism development (STD).

In the literature there is only a short list of research studies focusing on the relationship between resident's perception of the local economic state (not necessarily during an economic crisis) and their attitudes towards tourism impacts. These studies identify diverse connections between the local economy and residents' perceptions of tourism (Gursoy et al., 2010; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010). That is, those residents who had a better understanding of the local economy showed more concern about the positive sides of tourism development (Lepp, 2007). In the context of a struggling local economy, even residents who are economically independent of tourism also have more positive attitudes toward tourism impacts, fearing that if the tourism industry fails, ultimately it will end up affecting them negatively (Wyllie, 1998).

In relation to the perceived economic impacts, it appears that in a bleak economic environment, residents failed to understand the economic costs (i.e. negative economic impacts) of tourism development (Gursoy et al., 2002), such as, increasing cost of land and goods (Ko & Stewart, 2002). Regarding the perceived socio-cultural impacts, Gursoy and Rutherford (2004) and Gursoy et al. (2010) concluded that there is a significant negative relationship between the state of the local economy and residents' perceived tourism socio-cultural costs. In other words, that residents overlook their socio-cultural values in favor of economic values and they prioritize economic benefits over their perceived socio-cultural costs (Akis et al., 1996; Kayat, 2002; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010). In respect to the perceived environmental impacts, studies illustrate a direct relationship between residents' perceptions in relation to the local economy and their perceived negative environmental impacts of tourism (Gursoy et al., 2010; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010; Stylidis & Terzidou, 2014). This behavior is in line with a general view (i.e., non-touristic) that indicates individuals prefer to sacrifice the environment for achieving economic benefits; for example, where unemployment is an issue, residents do not prefer development for environmental protection (Harris, 2006; Vargas-Sanchez et al., 2011). So, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H7a. Residents who perceive economic crisis (PEC) have higher odds for STD.

H7b. There is a positive direct relationship between PEC and residents' perceived PI.

H7c. There is a negative direct relationship between PEC and residents' perceived NI.

The focus of this study is on how PEC in a destination affects residents' perceived TI and their willingness to STD as well as how PEC moderates the relationship between these two constructs (i.e., perceived TI and STD). Therefore, the following hypothesis has been developed:

H8a. PEC moderates the relationship between residents' perceived PI and STD.

H8b. PEC moderates the relationship between residents' perceived NI and STD.

3. Method

3.1. Measures

This research model is composed of eight constructs: place attachment (PA), community concern (CC), economic benefits (EB), involvement (IN), perceived positive impacts (PI), perceived negative impacts (NI), perceived economic crisis (PEC), and support for tourism development (STD). All constructs were measured using multiple-item scales adapted from extant literate on a five-point Likert scale (1 indicated "strongly disagree" and 5 indicated "strongly agree").

Questionnaires were used to collect data. They were completed by local residents who have lived in Isfahan for at least one full year and are over 18 years old. The questionnaire asked about a set of variables based on this study's theoretical model and, in order to ensure validity, the measurement items were adapted from previous studies.

3.2. Sample design and data collection

Our target population consists of residents who are 18 years old or older and have resided in Isfahan for at least one full year. The population of Isfahan is 2.5 million with 554,000 households (Statistical Center of Iran report, 2018). About 775,000 people in the city are under 18-years-old, so they were excluded from our sampling. The sample size was determined according to the Cochran (1977) equation, which is standard in social science research, especially when addressing large populations.

$$n = \frac{Z^2\,(pq)}{d^2}$$

Z is the selected critical value of the desired confidence level; p is the (estimated) proportion of the population that has the attribute in question; q is 1-p; d is the desired level of precision (i.e., the acceptable margin of error).

For this study, with a 95% confidence level and ± 5% precision, the necessary sample size was 385. A sample size of 385 questionnaires was also sufficient according to the requirements of SEM, the primary method for data analysis in this study (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014). In addition, the "ten-times rule" is a rule of thumb for PLS-SEM (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015); it states that the minimum sample size has to be ten times that of the most significant number of paths in the measurement or structural model. For our model, a sample size of 50 would be sufficient. Therefore, the Cochran's sample size exceeds this assumption too.

A multi-stage sampling strategy was used to obtain this sample. Initially, since each postcode denotes one of the city's six districts, street names were geographically clustered based on their postcodes (Iran Post Office, 2019). To obtain a balanced representation of residents in all six districts, stratified random sampling was applied (Graziano & Raulin, 2004). Next, applying the street directory, streets were randomly sampled in each district using the street directory. Then, by house number, households were randomly approached and invited to participate in the research. According to Selvanathan, Selvanathan, Keller, Warrack, and Bartel (1994) this process is useful in obtaining a symbolic sample.

The data was collected between April and May 2019 using a structured self-administered questionnaire that was hand-delivered to 450 households by a researcher. The researcher explained the research to whoever opened the door and invited them to take part; if the offer was accepted, the researcher waited while the respondent filled out the questionnaire. This technique was employed because it likely gets higher response rates than the drop-off and pick-up strategy (Stylidis, Biran, Sit, & Szivas, 2014). Respondents were assured that their involvement would be voluntary and anonymous so that they would express their personal views as honestly despite the potential bias brought about by the interviewer-participant interaction. Only one individual from each household was invited to take part because household members typically have similar opinions to each other (Andriotis, 2005; Stylidis et al., 2014). Finally, 90.88% of questionnaires (409) were completed and returned. This rate of return, according to Dillman (1978), was acceptable. After initial cleaning and data screening, 383 responses were used for analysis and entered into SPSS (26 questionnaires were omitted, due to incomplete answers). Table 3presents

Table 3
Demographic Characteristics of study sample.

variable	N	%
Gender		
men	280	73.1
women	103	26.9
Age		
18–24	43	11.2
25–34	92	24
34–44	137	35.8
45–65	78	20.4
65 and older	33	8.6
Marital Status		
single	102	26.6
married	211	55.1
separated/divorced	70	18.3
Education		
up to diploma	165	43.1
university degree	218	56.9
Income (Toman)		
under2.000.000	66	17.2
2.000.000–5.000.000	136	35.5
5.000.000–8.000.000	131	34.2
8.000.000 and over	50	13
Length of Residence		
1 year-4year	62	16.2
4year-8year	135	35.2
8year and more	186	48.6

demographic characteristics of study sample.

4. Data analysis and results

SPSS version 22.0 was used for descriptive statistics and Smart PLS software was used for partial least squares (PLS). Hair et al. (2014) state that PLS-SEM is increasingly being used across several disciplines to assess structural models. Due to its ability to analyze complex models with formative and/or reflective constructs with non-normal data and small sample sizes, PLS-SEM has become a popular choice for marketing and management researchers (Hair et al., 2014).

Initially, the outer model was examined to assess convergent validity by considering item loadings (**λ**), average variance extracted (AVE), composite reliability (CR), and Cronbach's alpha (α). As seen in Table 4, findings indicated that all latent constructs have an α value above the cutoff point of 0.70 (between 0.728 for perceived economic crisis and 0.967 for support for tourism development), implying high levels of internal consistency (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Similarly, AVE and CR for all latent constructs exceeded the cutoff values of 0.5 and 0.7, respectively (Hair et al., 2014). As shown in Table 4, the highest value of CR (0.978) was for support for tourism development and the lowest value was for perceived economic crisis (0.786), both of which are above the cutoff value 0.7. Moreover, the AVE value of the latent constructs varied from 0.574 for perceived negative impacts to 0.937, both of which are above the cutoff value of 0.50.

To investigate the discriminant validity of all constructs, we employed Fornell & Larcker's (1981) procedure; the square root of the AVE of each latent construct was compared with its inter-construct correlation (Table 5). To obtain a sufficient discriminant validity level, all of the square roots of AVEs should be higher than the correlation between any two pairs of constructs (for more information, see: Kline, 2015). The results indicated satisfactory discriminant validity, as all of the diagonal values exceeded inter-construct correlations.

Additionally, a global fit measure for PLS path modeling has been suggested by Tenenhaus, Vinzi, Chatelin, and Lauro (2005). Goodness of fit (GOF) is an indicator that ensures that the model adequately describes the empirical data. It is measured by employing the geometric mean AVE and R^2 values. GOF values range from 0 to 1 ($0 \leq GOF \leq 1$), where values of 0.10 (small), 0.25 (medium), and 0.36 (large) point out the worldwide validation of the path model (Wetzels, Odekerken-Schroder, & Van Oppen, 2009). An acceptable model fit proves that a model is parsimonious and reliable.

Our complete model achieved a GOF value of 0.747, indicating that it can reliably predict local support for tourism development.

$$GOF = \sqrt{\overline{AVE}} \times \sqrt{\overline{R^2}} = 0.855 \times 0.874 = 0.747$$

Having validated our model, we can conclude that it was a suitable way to asses our hypotheses. The final structural model with path values is depicted in Fig. 1 The hypotheses testing results are presented in Table 6. The results support all of our hypotheses except H_{4a}, H_{4b}, H_{6a}, and H_{6b}.

The findings show that residents' perceived positive impacts (PI) were predicted by community concern (β = 0.185), economic benefits (β = 0.239), and, most significantly, perceived economic crisis (β = 0.525). In contrast, place attachment (PA) and involvement (IN) were not shown to be significantly associated with residents' perceived PI ($|t| < 1.96$).

Community concern (β = −0.161), economic benefits (β = −0.206), and, once again most significantly, perceived economic crisis (β = −0.585) were shown to significantly influence residents' perceived NI. It is worth mentioning that the negative value of β indicates a negative effect, meaning that an increase in the activity measure in one structure leads to a direct, proportional decrease in the activity measure of the structure it projects to, proportional to the size of the coefficient. However, neither place attachment (PA) nor involvement (IN) significantly influence the residents' perceived NI (the standardized coefficients are not significant at the 95% confidence level). Thus, H_{4b} and H_{6b} are rejected.

In terms of the total effect of each determinant on support for tourism development (STD), perceived PI is the strongest predictor with a total standardized effect of 0.490 followed by perceived NI (β = −0.323) and PEC (β = 0.196). Additionally, PEC is a quasi-moderator variable, as it has a direct effect on support for tourism development (H_{7a} is supported) and also moderates the relationships between PI/NI and STD (PI*PEC- > STD, β = −0.707 and NI*PEC- > STD, β = −0.139). Thus, H_{8a} and H_{8b} are supported. The negative values of β indicate that, as the level of PEC increases, the influence of PI and NI on STD decreases.

The Squared Multiple Correlations (SMC) also known as coefficient of determination (R^2) was calculated for the endogenous constructs of the empirical model. This coefficient, which varies between 0 and 1, is an indication of a model's explanatory power and predictive accuracy. It indicates the portion of the variance of the endogenous variable which is explained by the exogenous variable(s) (Hair et al., 2014). The R^2 of the support tourism development (STD) was 0.905, which indicated that the proposed model explained substantial amount of the variance of the dependent variable. In other words, all independent and moderating variables explain 90.5% of the variance in residents' willingness to support tourism development. The rest of the coefficients were as follow: perceived positive impacts (R^2 = 0.71), and perceived negative impacts (R^2 = 0.677). This in addition to the fact that all criteria related to measurement model—model fitness, construct reliability, and validity—were successfully achieved.

5. Discussion

First, this study developed and tested a structural model on the influence of place attachment, community concern, economic benefits, involvement, perceived economic crisis, and the positive and negative perceptions of tourism impacts on residents' attitudes toward tourism

Table 4
Validity and reliability for constructs.

construct	Item	λ	t-value	AVE	CR	α
Place Attachment	I strongly identify myself with Isfahan.	0.882	82.909	0.719	0.911	0.869
	I have an emotional attachment to Isfahan - it has meaning to me.	0.875	64.177			
	For living, I wouldn't replace Isfahan with any other place	0.807	45.821			
	Isfahan is the best place for the activities I like to do.	0.824	58.712			
Community Concern	I have concerned about future economic development in Isfahan	0.824	51.358	0.583	0.802	0.746
	I have concerned about crime rate in Isfahan.	0.873	65.426			
	I have concerned about Isfahan culture and tradition	0.555	12.931			
Economic Benefits	Tourism increases my personal income level	0.975	454.894	0.932	0.976	0.963
	A high percentage of my/my family current income comes from the money spent by visitors.	0.970	351.617			
	Most of the income of the company I work for (or business I own) comes from the tourist trade	0.951	197.537			
Involvement	I actively participate in tourism planning.	0.892	75.208	0.852	0.945	0.913
	I have desire to be involved in decision making process	0.936	146.298			
	Most of the time my opinions have been asked regarding planning and development of tourism	0.942	229.069			
Perceived Positive Impacts	Tourism generates employment opportunities for residents	0.560	19.157	0.590	0.895	0.868
	Tourism increases the standard of living in Isfahan.	0.773	37.409			
	Tourism contributes to the increase of residents' quality life	0.710	33.157			
	Tourism encourages residents to appreciate their own cultural identity.	0.784	43.171			
	Tourism encourages cultural activities.	0.797	48.286			
	Tourism improves revival of local handicrafts, cultural activities, and traditions	0.624	19.982			
	Tourism increases locals' awareness and appreciation of environmental preservation	0.706	30.425			
	Tourism preserves the natural environment.	0.685	27.264			
	Tourism improves public facilities	0.624	20.415			
Perceived Negative Impacts	Tourism increases in the goods & services' price level	0.245	6.380	0.574	0.885	0.849
	Tourism increases unstable employment	0.725	31.995			
	Tourism increases in real estate value	0.785	33.316			
	Tourism increases crime (robbery, violence, prostitution).	0.682	25.472			
	Tourism is causing the loss Iranian Islamic culture	0.766	34.668			
	Tourism increases drug abuse and alcoholism among locals.	0.608	20.950			
	Our historical sites are being spoilt by tourist visitations	0.650	21.477			
	Tourism is the major cause of traffic congestion in Isfahan.	0.790	39.664			
	Tourism causes significant contamination and pollution problems	0.772	36.035			
Perceived Economic Crisis	Isfahan has high unemployment rates and loss of income.	0.651	15.243	0.656	0.786	0.728
	Iranian economy collapses by the sanctions.	0.942	137.333			
Support for Tourism Development	The positive benefits of tourism outweigh negative impacts	0.968	415.552	0.937	0.978	0.967
	I strongly support tourism development in Isfahan	0.973	530.354			
	Tourism should be boosted as one of the key drivers of the economy of Isfahan.	0.964	336.513			

impacts. Second, it sought to recognize the factors influencing local communities' willingness to support tourism development. Third, and the most important, this study sought to broaden the scope of the literature by evaluating the effect of residents' perception of economic crisis on their perceptions of tourism and willingness to support its development.

The findings demonstrate that the locals have a comparatively stronger perception of tourism positive impacts as compared to negative impacts, which is more evident in developing countries (Eusébio et al., 2018; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Hypotheses 1 and 2 tested the core SET hypotheses that if local residents recognize that positive benefits can outweigh negative impacts, the result of cost-benefit analysis will be positive and they will support tourism development more. The study results show a positive relationship between residents perceived positive impacts of tourism and their support for tourism development, and a negative relationship between residents perceived negative impacts of tourism and their support for tourism development. This finding is in accordance with the previous literature (Boley et al., 2014; Eusébio et al., 2018; Gannon et al., 2020; Gursoy et al., 2002; Ko & Stewart, 2002; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015) and the notion of SET. There is a strong need for Isfahan's local authorities and policy-makers to promote initiatives to improve the positive impacts and reduce the

Table 5
Discriminant Validity and correlation among constructs.

construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Mean	$\sqrt{AVE}$
Place Attachment (1)	1								3.881	0.848
Community Concern (2)	0.57	1							3.775	0.763
Economic Benefits (3)	0.565	0.573	1						2.139	0.965
Involvement (4)	0.585	0.551	0.583	1					2.038	0.923
Positive Impacts (5)	0.635	0.514	0.655	0.627	1				3.42	0.768
Negative Impacts (6)	−0.635	−0.502	−0.589	−0.548	−0.504	1			2.822	0.757
Economic Crisis (7)	0.516	0.563	0.559	0.589	0.597	−0.598	1		4.093	0.810
Support for Tourism Development (8)	0.648	0.556	0.596	0.617	0.506	−0.573	0.544	1	3.620	0.968

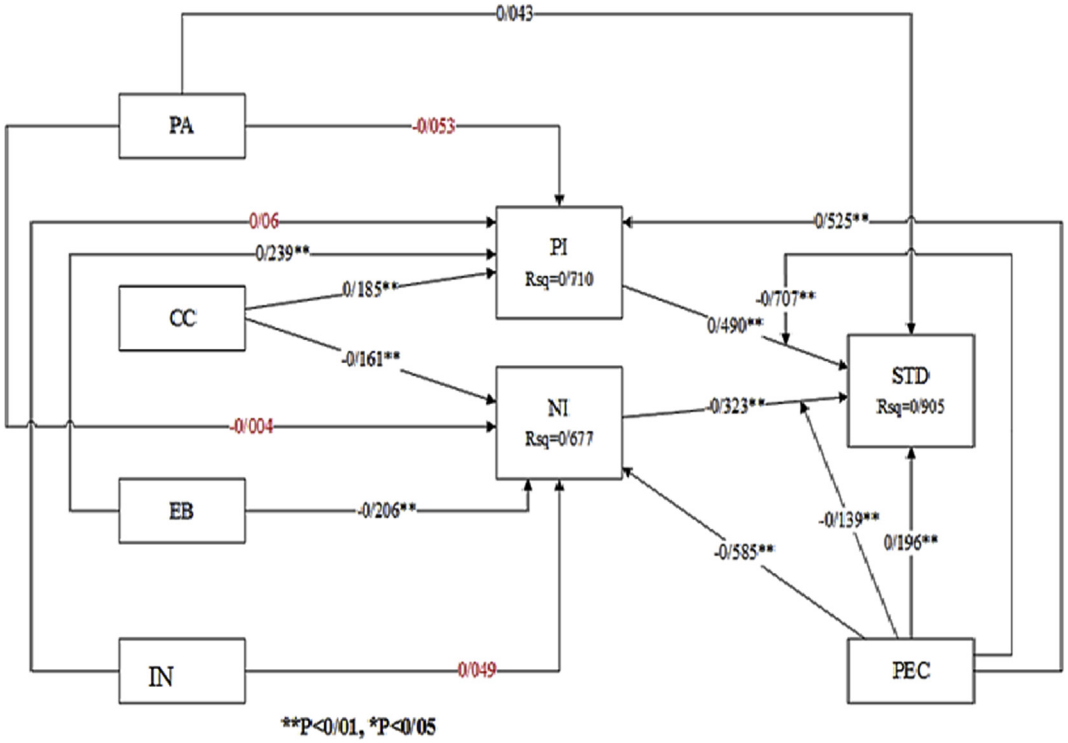

Fig. 1. Structural Empirical Model. Note: Place Attachment **(PA),** Community Concern **(CC),** Economic Benefits **(EB),** Involvement **(IN),** Residents' Perceived Positive Impacts **(PI),** Residents' Perceived Negative Impacts **(NI),** Perceived Economic Crisis **(PEC),** Support for tourism Development **(STD).**

Table 6
Hypotheses tests summary.

Hypothesis	Beta (β)	t	R^2	Result	Sign
Place Attachment - > Residents' Perceived Positive Impacts	−0.053	−1.234		Rejected	
Community Concern - > Residents' Perceived Positive Impacts	0.185	4.738		Supported	+
Economic Benefits - > Residents' Perceived Positive Impacts	0.239	7.035	0.710	Supported	+
Involvement - > Residents' Perceived Positive Impacts	0.060	1.694		Rejected	+
Perceived Economic Crisis - > Residents' Perceived Positive Impacts	0.525	13.840		Supported	+
Place Attachment - > Residents' Perceived Negative Impacts	−0.004	−0.110		Rejected	
Community Concern - > Residents' Perceived Negative Impacts	−0.161	−4.153		Supported	–
Economic Benefits - > Residents' Perceived Negative Impacts	−0.206	−5.825	0.677	Supported	–
Involvement - > Residents' Perceived Negative Impacts	0.049	1.217		Rejected	
Perceived Economic Crisis - > Residents' Perceived Negative Impacts	−0.585	−14.324		Supported	–
Residents' Perceived Positive Impacts - > Support for Tourism Development	0.490	14.998		Supported	+
Residents' Perceived Negative Impacts - > Support for Tourism Development	−0.323	−9.809		Supported	–
Perceived Economic Crisis - > Support for Tourism Development	0.196	6.207	0.795	Supported	+
Place Attachment - > Support for Tourism Development	0.043	4.0881		Supported	+
Perceived Positive Impacts * Perceived Economic Crisis - > Support for Tourism Development	−0.707	−5.453		Supported	–
Perceived Negative Impacts * Perceived Economic Crisis - > Support for Tourism Development	−0.139	−5.173	0.11	Supported	–

$|t| > 1.96$ Significant at $P < 0.05$, $|t| > 2.58$ Significant at $P < 0.01$.

negative impacts of tourism on residents. In particular, making residents more aware of the positive impacts is a useful tool (Gannon et al., 2020; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015).

Hypotheses 3_a and 3_b focused on testing the influence of community concern (CC) within the model. Based on our results, residents' perceived positive impacts (PI) was found to be significantly predicted by community concern (β = 0.185), and residents' perceived negative impacts (NI) has a negative relationship with their level of community concern (β = −0.161). Thus, both hypotheses were supported by the study. This finding is coherent with several previous empirical studies (Andereck et al., 2005; Gursoy et al., 2010; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004) which concluded that that resident perception of tourism impacts is a function of the level of concern residents feels about various community aspects (such as, crime, economy, culture, and tradition). Moreover, as indicated in Table 5, Isfahan's local communities are concerned about their community (Mean = 3.775). This implies that managers and planners should focus on the aspects that residents are concerned about.

Place attachment is one of the variables that we expected to be effective on resident perceived tourism impacts based on the primary assumptions and existing studies and theories (Eusébio et al., 2018; Gu & Ryan, 2008; Stylidis, 2017; Stylidis et al., 2014). Hypotheses 4_a, 4_b, and 4_c focused on testing the influence of place attachment within the model. This study showed a strong place attachment among locals (Mean = 3.881); however, there is no statistically significant association between resident PA and PI or NI. Therefore, the results of hypotheses testing were inconsistent with our expectations and led us to

reject both 4_a and 4_b. This finding is inconsistent with the empirical studies on the relationship between PA and perceived TI (Eusébio et al., 2018). In addition, results allude to the positive effect of PA on STD. Therefore, Hypothesis 4_c "Residents' PA positively and directly predicts their willingness to STD" was supported by the study. The positive sign indicates that residents who are highly attached to Isfahan tend to be more supportive of tourism development. This finding aligns with the work of Eusébio et al. (2018). Therefore, PA is one of the most prominent non-economic constructs used to explain why locals support or oppose tourism development; resident PA should be included in tourism development plans. One way to accomplish this is to develop an inventory of places in the community that residents value and use zoning or other strategies to protect these places (Williams, McDonald, Riden, & Uysal, 1995).

In terms of residents' economic benefits, results indicate that economic gain has positive and significant impact on resident perceived positive impacts (β = 0.239), and negative impact on their perceived negative impacts (β = −0.206). This finding is coherent with several previous empirical studies (Ko & Stewart, 2002; McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015) and the notion of SET. Coupled with this strong support is another theoretical support from self-interest theory, as Pechlaner and Volgger (2013) have acknowledged that particularly in the context of a severe economic crisis, the notion of self-interest theory can be among the key drivers that form individuals' behavior and priorities. This means that local authorities and managers should work to improve the local communities' economic gains by involving residents in tourism activities that enable them to access more economic benefits. An alternative practical strategy is to raise awareness among residents on the direct and indirect socioeconomic benefits of tourism for their local community, as some may simply lack information on the matter.

Hypotheses 5_a and 5_b tested the relationship between residents' involvement and the perceptions of the positive and negative impacts of tourism. We expected the effects of residents' involvement on their perceived impacts; however, we did not find any significant relationship between the level of involvement and PI or NI. This finding is inconsistent with several previous studies (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Látková & Vogt, 2012) that found that residents' involvement in tourism activity had positive effects on their perceived PI of tourism development as well as a negative effect on their perceived NI. This could stem from the low level of resident involvement in tourism development within Isfahan (Mean = 2.038). In other words, local people in Isfahan felt that they were generally not involved. This finding indicates the absence of effective planning and understanding of local community involvement in the Isfahan tourism industry. Tosun (2000) sees operational, cultural, and structural issues as major impediments to community involvement in developing countries. Moreover, Cole (2006) believes that leakage of revenue and the lack of ownership, capital, skills, knowledge, and resources all constrain the ability of communities to fully control their involvement in tourism development. This may be due to the fact that the government plays a major role in Iranian tourism activities; the main stockholders are government institutions. Therefore, to promote sustainable development, it is crucial to reconsider extant policies and design suitable strategies to empower local communities and stimulate their involvement (for instance, by offering resources to small enterprise development, maximizing linkages to the local economy, and minimizing leakages.). Another reason for this dissimilar outcome might lay under the fact that almost all of the previous studies were conducted in developed destinations (Gannon et al., 2020; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015). In the present case, research has been conducted in a developing tourism destinations, facing a financial austerity.

Hypotheses 7 and 8 focused on testing the influence of perceived economic crisis (PEC) within the model. Our findings show that perceived economic crisis was found to be the best predictor of residents' perceived positive impacts of tourism (β = 0.525; Hypothesis 7_a), negative impacts of tourism (β = −0.585; Hypothesis 7_b) and their willingness to support its development in their community (β = 0.196; Hypothesis 7_c). This means that the more residents perceive economic crisis in their community, the more they will perceive tourism positively and the more willing they will be to support its development. An explanation is that, in a struggling economic environment, residents tend to overestimate the economic benefits of tourism (Lepp, 2007) and underestimate the negative impacts (especially socio-cultural and environmental) by hoping for a better economic situation (Kayat, 2002; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010). In other words, locals become more friendly with tourists amid economic troubles if they believe that tourism development will help them and their community achieve a better economic environment; this sacrifice of environmental, social, and cultural beliefs has the potential to result in socio-cultural discord or environmental and cultural degradation. This leads unsustainable tourism development in destination. Therefore, destination managers and local authorities must be keenly aware of tourism's negative impacts being marginalized by community members. This study hypothesized that perceived economic crisis would have a moderating effect on the relationships between residents' perceived impacts of tourism and support for tourism development. As seen in Table 6, as the level of resident's perceived economic crisis increases, the influence of the perceived impacts of tourism (both positive and negative impacts) on resident willingness to support tourism increases as well. Thus, Hypotheses 8_a and 8_b were both supported by the study. Despite the fact that economic downturn exerts a frictional effect on individual's quality of life, it can create an opportunity for a destination in the context of a severe economic crisis, to restructure its tourism industry and alleviate poverty in societies under economic crisis (O'Brien, 2012).

This is one of the first studies to take perceived economic crisis as an antecedent of residents perceived tourism impacts and their support for tourism. It reacts to the calls of Gursoy et al. (2018) and Smeral (2010) to examine exogenous variables that constitute the residents' perceptions of tourism impacts. It is also a response to Gannon et al. (2020) and Sharpley (2014) about the scarcity of research into residents' perceptions in developing destinations. However, as with any piece of research, several limitations narrow the scope of our conclusions. This study took place in Isfahan, Iran. So, in order to generalize the results, it would be of interest to test perceived economic crisis's influence on resident perception within and across alternative developed and developing contexts with different levels of economic crisis and comparing residents perceived tourism impacts among them. Moreover, it should be noted that as Rasoolimanesh et al. (2015) assert the results of an investigation in a developing country can be significantly different from those in developed countries. For instance, we did not find any significant relationship between involvement and perceived impacts of tourism (PI and NI), which is in contrast to previous studies done on developed countries. Since the results are not generalizable, there is a need for similar studies in other developing countries, where the involvement in tourism is more widely felt. The second limitation is associated with the decision to use quantitative methodology to investigate resident perception rather than using qualitative methods. Future research should conduct detailed semi-structured interviews with residents to capture a deeper level and answer the question of why they support or oppose tourism development. Finally, this study did not use longitudinal data and conducted in a particular time. Another option to future research should be based in an attempt to identify how residents' perception of tourism are formed during an economic crisis. A longitudinal research, in particular, would allow a deeper examination of the potential change in residents' perception of tourism in relation to the economic crisis.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our very great appreciation to Amid Miraeinejad for his valuable and constructive suggestions during the

development of this research work. Acknowledgements are also extended to the anonymous reviewer for his/her constructive comments on the earlier draft of this paper.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2020.02.009.

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