

DRIVERS IMPACTING RESIDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD SPORTS EVENT TOURISM: A HYBRID SEM-NEURAL NETWORKS APPROACH

Waranpong Boonsiritomachai

Faculty of Management and Tourism, Burapha University

Krittapat Pitchayadejanant

International College, Burapha University

ABSTRACT

Sports event tourism has seen a global rise in popularity. Not only does it help to promote the importance of wellbeing, yields excitement for individuals, but it also plays a significant role in boosting the economy of host cities and brings about many other benefits for local residents. To optimize sustainable sports event tourism, it is fundamental to understand local residents' views and concerns toward the happenings of sports events. Harmonious integration of all parties involved is critical to the success. Therefore, this study aims to explore the residents' attitudes toward sports event tourism development based on a triple-bottom-line approach for tourism impacts. As a part of this research, a theoretical framework was proposed and the required data was collected via a face-to-face survey conducted in Saensuk, a beach city along the Eastern Gulf Coast of Thailand that aspires to be recognized as a sport city. The 456 questionnaires were completed and were subsequently analyzed by applying the structural equation modeling (SEM) and artificial neural networks (ANN) techniques. The findings yielded by these strategies revealed that all sports event tourism impacts—including socio-cultural, economic, and environmental—are significant contributors toward the total impact on local residents' perceptions. In addition, this overall impact affects residents' level of encouragement for sports event development. These results can contribute to a better understanding of residents' perceptions of the impacts associated with sports event tourism.

Keywords: resident attitudes, sports events tourism, social exchange theory, neural networks

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable tourism development requires that the attitudes of residents toward tourism be assessed and understood. Any development can be successful and an event run long-term if the stakeholders participate or are directly involved in the processes (Lee, 2013). Investigating the perceptions of the host community is vital because the community is the central point in tourism planning processes and these perceptions can affect the local residents' behavior toward tourism (Getz & Page, 2016). Awareness of residents' perceptions of tourism development and its impacts allows planners and developers to discover and mitigate existent concerns and problems by setting applicable policies and taking timely action, thereby optimizing the benefits and lessening the difficulties.

Thailand is one of the most visited destinations in the world, and the number of travelers is continually increasing. According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (2017) report, the number of international tourists has increased from 81,000 in 1960 to 32.59 million in 2016, and this rise has been reflected in considerable revenue generated by the tourism industry. For example, in

2016, a 16% increase was noted from 2015, resulting in 698 billion Baht (US\$20 billion). Several cities in Thailand, including Saensuk, rely substantially on the tourism industry. Saensuk is located on the Eastern Gulf Coast of Thailand and is famous for its lovely beaches and gastronomy, especially seafood and sticky bamboo rice. Each year, approximately 1.1 million travelers visit Saensuk and spend an average of 1,300 Baht per person (approximately US\$40) (Saensuk Municipality, 2018). However, when compared to other cities located in the same province, such as Pattaya, these figures are relatively low. In 2017, approximately 9.2 million travelers visited Pattaya (Pattaya Municipality, 2017), even though both cities are beach resorts and not far from each other. Therefore, Saensuk faces the challenge of attracting more visitors. Sports event tourism is one such opportunity that can captivate local and international event visitors. Saensuk aspires to be a city with sustainable sports tourism. Consequently, many international world-standard sports events are hosted in Saensuk throughout the year, such as cycling, triathlon, half-marathon,

sailing racing, beach volleyball, and car racing (Saensuk Municipality, 2018).

Sports events are no longer merely about organizing quality activities, but rather offering a wide range of other tourist attractions and amenities. Sports event tourism is the fastest growing form of tourism and is considered to be an important approach for the economic expansion of a local community, region, or country (Alexandris & Kaplanidou, 2014). In North America, nearly all cities have initiated sports tourism and promote their events by relying on enthusiastic personnel and agencies. Proposal bidding and submitting process to win and attract a sports event is highly competitive (Getz & Page, 2016). Through these sporting activities, peoples' proclivity to travel away from their home to other parts of the country or overseas to attend these sporting events has significantly expanded. Moreover, sports events could be viewed as an appropriate way to market and promote the characteristics of a destination and the host community (Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007). A portfolio of sports events consistent with a community's infrastructure and human and cultural capital may be a viable form of sustainable tourism development (Gibson, Kaplanidou, & Kang, 2012). Sports events often have a positive impact on the host destination, because their organizers often use existing facilities, while attracting local, domestic, and international participants (Kim, Jun, Walker, & Drane, 2014). For example, city streets and roadways can become repurposed and / or temporary sportcapes for bicycle races, marathons, and car racing (Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007). Additionally, the increasing number of domestic and international participants can contribute to the local economy by raising revenue for many businesses, such as accommodation, retail outlets, and restaurants, while also creating job opportunities for local workforce (Kim et al., 2014).

A review of the current research indicates that the relationship between the perceptions of residents and the impact of tourism in countries has been extensively explored in, for example, Greece (Styliadis, Biran, Sit, & Szivas, 2014), Taiwan (Lee, 2013), Turkey (Sinclair-Maragh, Gursoy, & Vieregge, 2015), Australia (Gursoy, Chi, & Dyer, 2010) and USA (Woo, Kim, & Uysal, 2015). However, the residents' perceptions of sports events as a form of tourism remain insufficiently studied. The existing studies in this field also tended to focus on large-scale sports

events, such as the Super Bowl, Rugby World Cup, and Olympic Games (Kasimati & Dawson, 2009; Konstantaki & Wickens, 2010; Prayag, Hosany, Nunkoo, & Alders, 2013). However, sports tourism in Thailand, Saensuk in particular, remains understudied. To fill the existing research gaps, in the present study, a theoretical model was developed to examine the structural relationships between residents' encouragement for sports event tourism development and the precedent variables of socio-cultural, economic, and environmental impacts in Saensuk city.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ap (1992, p. 668) defined social exchange theory as "a general sociological theory concerned with understanding the exchange of resources between individuals and groups in an interaction situation" (p. 668). In the context of tourism development, social exchange theory has been used to evaluate the stakeholders' attitudes towards tourism development. In other words, social exchange theory specifies the exchange of tangible or intangible resources that residents and tourists may give and receive in the host residents' tourism context. The residents of a community make a decision whether to become dependent on the benefits and costs of tourism by weighing economic, social, cultural, and environmental concerns (Gursoy et al., 2010) or exchange based on the costs and benefits incurred as a result of that exchange (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005). For tourism to benefit a community, there must be an exchange between stakeholders. Andereck and Vogt (2000) argued that residents' needs and wants should take priority over developments targeting tourists. Local residents are willing to enter into the exchange with tourists if they receive more benefits than costs or are not burdened by unbearable expenses or disadvantages. In such cases, they will usually support additional tourism development. Conversely, if the local residents perceive that tourism is likely to bring more costs than benefits, they would reject further development (Ap, 1992).

Since tourism relies heavily upon the willingness of local residents, their encouragement is important for developing and successfully operating tourism, and making it sustainable. Sports event tourism is not an exception, as it may disrupt local residents' lives by causing interruptions to public transport, or necessitating road closures, as well as by generally affecting residents who live close to the sporting venue (Ntloko & Swart, 2008). Moreover, it can

also create other issues that could concern local residents, such as increased litter and waste, increased noise, damage to the environment, and increased vandalism from visitors (Kim et al., 2014). Briefly, if the residents believe that sports event tourism development costs more than the total perceived benefit that they or their community can gain, they are likely to oppose sports event tourism development (Stylidis et al., 2014). Since failure to secure support of residents could result in inability to organize such events, it is essential to address any feelings of anger, inattentiveness, or mistrust that will ultimately be projected onto the visitors. Most visitors tend to be uncertain of the travel destinations when they feel unwelcome (Yoon, Gursoy, & Chen, 2001). On the contrary, if residents have a positive perception of sports tourism, they will provide encouragement for additional development and will be likely to participate in a positive exchange with visitors (Kulczycki & Halpenny, 2014). Consequently, it is essential to ascertain how residents perceive total impact of sports event tourism on their community and individual lifestyle. The total impact is usually examined through several cost and benefit factors, such as socio-cultural, economic, and environmental impacts, and costs to the host community (Hritz & Ross, 2010; Ramseook-Munhurrin & Naidoo, 2011; Stylidis et al., 2014). The residents will evaluate the total benefits they receive and the cost they have to bear in order to encourage or discourage sports event tourism in their city or area. Hence, the following research hypothesis was tested as a part of the present study:

H1: Perceived total impact has significant effect on the encouragement of future sports event tourism.

Many researchers concur that comprehending socio-cultural value domains of tourism development is highly significant (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Yu, Chancellor, & Cole, 2011). Wang and Pfister (2008) further asserted that non-economic value domains, such as social and cultural value domains, must also be examined, as they could influence attitudes towards tourism. The exchange approach can be viewed in terms of social interaction and intangible benefits (Ap, 1992). Wang and Pfister (2008) claimed that non-economic value domains should not be overlooked in exchange that is strictly based on economic activity. For instance, social aspects, aesthetic components, community pride, and other intangible components need to be included when exchange processes are evaluated. However, it is evident that the aforementioned

studies have yielded contradictory results. Specifically, a number of researchers found that sports events could have negative social and cultural impact on the host community. For instance, Collins, Flynn, Munday, and Roberts (2007) revealed that hosting sports tourism events caused over-crowding, increased crime rates, and security costs, while Kim et al. (2014) found traffic problems and security risks when hosting a sports event. Conversely, Ntloko and Swart (2008) conducted a study on the impact of Red Bull Big Wave Africa on the host community and found that the event promoted community pride and acted as a regional showcase, while causing minimal disruption to host residents' use of public facilities.

The impact of tourism consists not only of the socio-cultural aspects, such as increasing local awareness and recognition of the local culture, but also of economic and environmental components. Findings yielded by numerous studies indicate that economic benefits are the most significant component sought by local residents from tourism development (Ramseook-Munhurrin & Naidoo, 2011). Residents who recognize a higher level of economic gain or are dependent on the tourism industry tend to have a more positive attitude toward tourism (Stylidis et al., 2014). Based on an extensive review of pertinent studies, it can be posited that sports event tourism can be a source of revenue for the host cities and countries (Kasimati & Dawson, 2009; Saayman, Saayman, & Du Plessis, 2005). For example, Kasimati and Dawson (2009) conducted a study in Greece and revealed that events related to sports tourism produced 1.3% increase in domestic growth and reduced unemployment rates by 1.9% in the 1997–2005 period. However, skepticism over claimed benefits, including economic gains and legacies from sport events, has increased over the past few decades. Mills and Rosentraub (2013) found that overstatement of expected benefits seems to be the norm, and a few legitimate attempts have been made to demonstrate achievement of forecasts. Furthermore, costs related with sport events are often hidden, and distributional effects, such as who gains and who pays and externalities, are usually omitted.

Apart from economic impact, a number of studies have shown that the environmental aspects are important to tourism development and contribution to the host destination. Sports events, especially mega events, can assist in the preservation of the physical environment and local heritage (Lorde, Greenidge, & Devonish, 2011). Such events can also serve as catalysts for

enhancing the level of environmental consciousness among residents. The 2002 FIFA World Cup in South Korea, for example, promoted conservation of natural resources and historical buildings (Kim & Morrision, 2005). Similarly, the Olympic Village developed for the 2012 Olympic Games in London was built to high eco-ratings (Konstantaki & Wickens, 2010). Sports event tourism, and tourism development in general, has been recognized for the positive environmental impact on the host community (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005). However, results yielded by extant studies focusing specifically on the environmental impacts are inconsistent. Some studies have shown that such events have negative environmental impact. For example, Kim et al. (2014) who found that sports events can lead to more traffic congestion and noise pollution, and destruction of the natural and physical environment, as well as bring changes to land use patterns.

In sum, a review of relevant literature indicates that the local residents' perceptions of sports event tourism are highly diverse. Some residents recognize the fact that sports event tourism generally provides both positive and negative impacts. Others tend to be more concerned with socio-cultural and environmental issues, and deem that these are adversely affected by sports event tourism. These assertions have led to the following hypotheses:

H2: Socio-cultural impact has significant effect on total impacts.

H3: Economic impact has significant effect on total impacts.

H4: Environment impact has significant effect on total impacts.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Questionnaire Development

The survey instrument employed in the present study was divided into two sections, the first pertaining to the respondents' demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, income, and occupation. For the second section, an interdisciplinary approach was adopted, in line with those employed in pertinent literature, and the survey focused on the perceived impact from the residents perspectives and their level of encouragement for future sports event tourism development. The items in this section required a response on a 7-point Likert scale, to represent a continuum from very positive to very negative. All question-statements were adopted from previous studies and were evaluated by a panel of

experts—including five university professors with acumen in sport and tourism management—in order to enhance clarity, relevance, and effectiveness.

A pilot test of the questionnaire was conducted to ensure reliability and relevance of all questions for the study purpose. The question language and style was also examined to facilitate understanding by the participants. As a part of this pilot study, 25 questionnaires were distributed to the local residents in Saensuk. Their comments mainly related to poor formatting and inappropriate wording in some questions. Therefore, to increase comprehension of the survey questionnaire, the suggested adjustments were made. Furthermore, a reliability analysis was conducted on all 25 items. Based on a rule of thumb, Cronbach's alpha values above 0.70 are considered acceptable (Nunnally, Bernstein, & Berge, 1978) and this may decrease to 0.6 in the exploratory research (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2010). In this research, the values pertaining to each item ranged from 0.791 to 0.925, which is satisfactory.

2. Data Collection

The sampling frame focused on residents living in Saensuk city. This area was selected because of increased sports tourism development, as it already offers multi-faceted world-standard sports events, such as marathon, triathlon, cycling, beach volleyball, and car racing. In addition, this city has many attractions, such as historical and cultural sites, theme parks, beaches, and other tourist amenities. Based on the population size, a stratified random sampling method was used to collect data for this study. This method can reflect the diverse geographical distribution of the residential area of the community (Zikmund, 2003). As Saensuk city is divided into 25 communities, the sample size for each community was proportional to its contribution to the total population of Saensuk city. In employing the stratified sampling technique, was carried out between January 17th, 2018 and February 17th, 2018 by distributing the questionnaires door-to-door to the selected household members. If an individual was unwilling to participate, the next household was approached for participation.

RESEARCH FINDING

The study sample comprised of 456 completed questionnaires, which were first analyzed by applying the SEM technique, and the results were subsequently confirmed via neural

networks technique. The majority of respondents were female aged between 18-29 and working in private companies. When using the SEM analysis, it is necessary to investigate the appropriateness of data and assumptions. The main assumptions implicit in SEM analysis include normality of dataset, outliers, multicollinearity, construct reliability and validity, and adequate sample size. In this study, all of these criteria were tested and confirmed in the acceptance level. Moreover, Goodness-of-Fit Index was used to measure the unidimensionality of all constructs and the

analysis of the results show that all values in goodness-of-fit are all in acceptable levels (Hooper & Mullen, 2008). The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was also performed to identify the underlying relationships between measured variables. In this study, all the items surveyed that were considered to impact the residents from sports event tourism were grouped under each factor including socio-culture impact, economic impact and environmental impact as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Construct Unidimensionality, Reliability and Convergent Validity

Indicator/Constructs	Factor Loading	Unidimensionality (GFI)	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	CR
EC2: Economic benefits to host residents	0.833				
EC5: Better standard of living	0.822				
EC4: New markets for the local products	0.804				
EC3: Improving the quality of services.	0.796	0.992	0.927	0.6145	0.9050
EC6: Generating substantial tax revenues	0.738				
EC1: Increasing employment	0.702				
SC5: Re-visiting by travellers	0.755				
SC6: Becoming well known city	0.741				
SC3: Changing in Life style	0.733				
SC1: A variety of cultural activities	0.731	0.996	0.921	0.5365	0.8741
SC2: Enhancing pride of the city	0.720				
SC4: Understanding tourists' culture	0.714				
EN4: Increasing the level of urbanization	0.811				
EN3: The development of infrastructure	0.805				
EN2: A high standard of public facilities	0.771				
EN5: Not cause traffic congestion, noise and pollution	0.710	0.994	0.903	0.5467	0.8778
EN1: Better quality of natural environment	0.679				
EN6: Not cause unpleasantly overcrowded beaches and parks	0.644				
ENC4: Helping to encourage the event	0.897				
ENC5: Distributing the event information	0.892				
ENC3: Encouraging the development of places for the tourist	0.872	0.992	0.922	0.7633	0.9416
ENC2: Encouraging local government to fund the event	0.869				
ENC1: Planning to participate in related activities in the sport events	0.837				

Indicator/Constructs	Factor Loading	Unidimensionality (GFI)	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	CR
TT1: Overall, I am excited in sport events.	0.937	1.000	0.862	0.8780	0.9350
TT2: Benefits of sport tourism are greater than the costs.	0.937				

In structural equation modeling analysis, R-squared indicates the variance explained by the model. Based on the study findings, total impact (TT) as explained by socio-cultural (SC), environment (EN), and economic impact (EC) has R-squared = 0.545. Moreover, TT is able to explain about 86.2% of the encouraging sport event tourism (ENC) component. In addition, the significance of effect is identified depending on its p-value (set at 0.05 for the present study). The findings reveal that SC ($\beta = 0.281, p < 0.0001$),

EN ($\beta = 0.193, p < 0.0001$), and EC ($\beta = 0.124, p < 0.05$) have a statistically significant positive impact on TT. The strength of the effect on TT can be ranked as follows: SC, followed by EN, and finally EC. Moreover, the effect between TT and ENC is found to positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.883, p < 0.0001$). Model of drivers affecting residents' attitudes to encourage sports event tourism generated by SEM is shown in Figure 1, while the summary of hypothesis testing results is provided in Table 2.

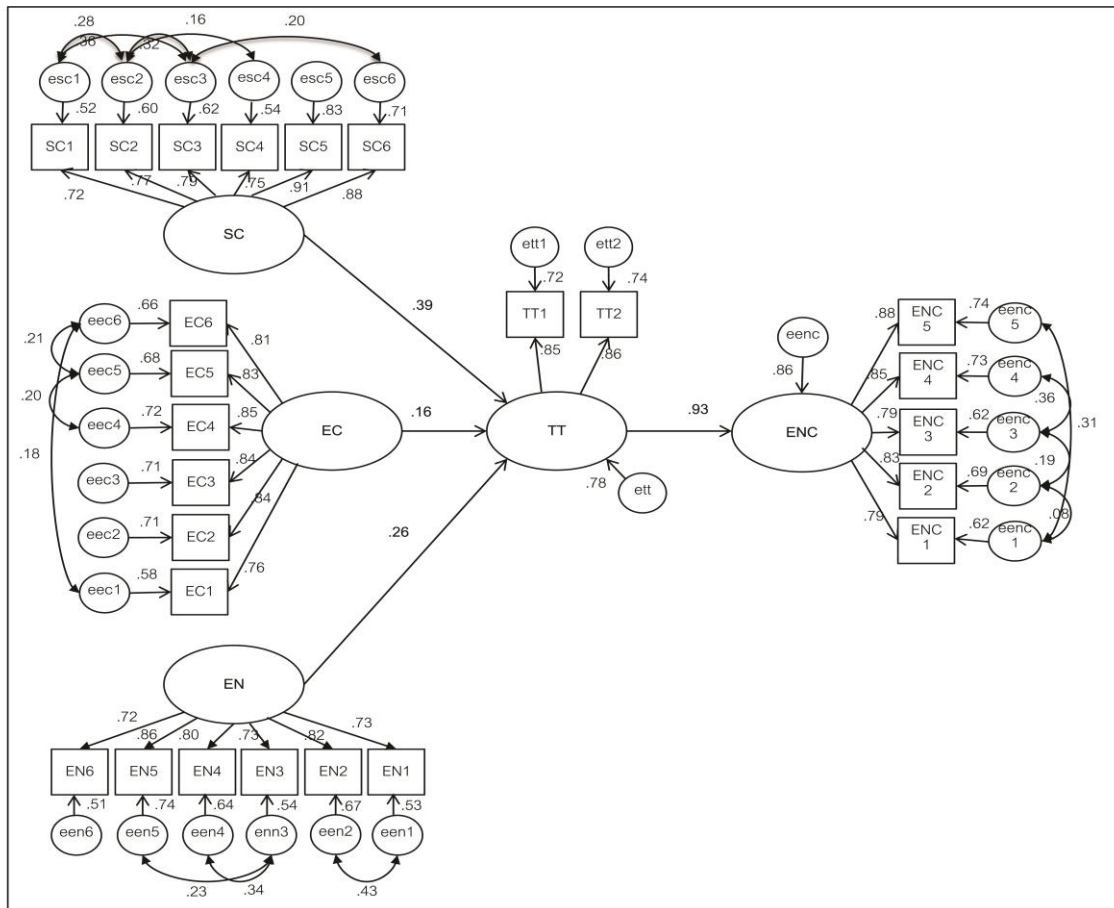


Figure 1 Model of drivers impacting residents' attitudes to encourage sports event tourism (with standardized solution values)

Table 2 Summary of Hypothesis Testing results

Path	Std. Estimate	Estimate	Std. Error	Critical ratio	p-value	Remarks
SC → TT	0.389	0.281	0.057	4.924	< 0.000	Supported
EN → TT	0.260	0.193	0.053	3.644	< 0.000	Supported
EC → TT	0.159	0.124	0.047	2.652	0.008	Supported
TT → ENC	0.928	0.883	0.047	18.977	< 0.000	Supported

R-square: TT = 0.545, ENC = 0.862

Note: SC = Socio-cultural Impact; EN = Environment Impact; EC = Economic Impact; TT = Total Impact; ENC = Encouraging Sport Event Tourism

As indicated by the SEM findings, the total impact is a function of socio-cultural impact, environmental impact, and economic impact. However, only one variable, the total impact affects the encouragement of sports event tourism by inhabitants. Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) analysis was performed in this study in order to discover the relative influence of significant predictors between SC, EN, EC, and TT obtained from SEM. The reason in using ANN technique is its ability in producing more accurate results than would be yielded by the traditional statistical techniques, such multiple, logistic regression, or SEM. Also, ANN is not appropriate for hypothesis

testing in causal relationships (Leong, Hew, Lee, & Ooi, 2015). Therefore, the results from ANN can used to confirm the result in SEM in this study.

According to the data reported in Table 3, the error rate produced by training and testing ranges between 0.012157 and 0.012784, which is quite low and indicates a high predictive accuracy. As a result, the model for predicting TT shows good performance. The effect rank obtained by ANN shows identical results to those produced by SEM. In other words, SC is the most essential determinant of TT, followed by EN and EC.

Table 3 RMSE values and Relative Importance results

Neural Network	Input: EC SC EN Output: TT		Neural Network	Relative Importance		
	MSE of Training	MSE of Testing		EC	SC	EN
1	0.012709	0.010360	1	0.278	0.379	0.343
2	0.011776	0.016152	2	0.365	0.339	0.295
3	0.013872	0.012347	3	0.339	0.294	0.367
4	0.012740	0.013150	4	0.323	0.353	0.324
5	0.013640	0.011696	5	0.368	0.318	0.315
6	0.012571	0.011488	6	0.322	0.376	0.302
7	0.012440	0.012176	7	0.311	0.391	0.298
8	0.012350	0.012723	8	0.319	0.41	0.271
9	0.013234	0.012870	9	0.233	0.43	0.337
10	0.012512	0.008609	10	0.306	0.375	0.319
Mean RMSE	0.012784	0.012157	Mean relative importance	0.3164	0.3665	0.3171
S.D.	0.00063	0.001952	Normalized importance	86.3	100.0	86.5

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

The SEM results revealed presence of a relationship between socio-cultural impact and total impact. Among the three sports tourism

impacts examined, the socio-cultural aspect was found to exert the highest effect, as confirmed by the neural networks approach. The direct positive effects of residents' perceived socio-cultural

impact and total impacts imply that host residents believe that sport events tourism can provide a variety of cultural activities, as well as serve as a source of pride, while improving their lifestyle and city reputation, as well as offering valuable opportunities to interact with sport tourists. These findings are consistent with the results reported by Kim et al. (2014) who found that community visibility and image enhancement are more important than economic impacts of the sport events.

The relationship between perceived economic impacts and total impact on residents' perception is found to be significant in this study, supporting the findings reported by other authors (Homafar, Honari, Heidary, Heidary, & Emami, 2011; Kasimati & Dawson, 2009). This relationship can indicate that people consider sports events as a means to provide new job opportunities, create new markets, generate substantial tax revenues, and increase living standards of local residents. As Saensuk is a nature tourism destination with its beaches and mountains, there is low and high holiday season for travelers. By transforming it into a sports tourism destination, it can attract travelers during low holiday season, which would prompt the media to review the destination, thus increasing brand awareness of the city (Getz & Page, 2016). However, when comparing all three sports tourism impacts, the economic factor has the lowest value. It is possible that local residents believe that the majority of income is still derived from travelers visiting natural destinations, as the number of sports events in Saensuk has only recently started to increase. Moreover, the sports events that have been organized so far were of short duration, typically only one day in length. Saayman et al. (2005) found that, even if the sport event is popular but only comprises a few days, it will only provide slight economic impact on the host city. This should also be taken into consideration when a destination is planning for or organizing sports events.

Environmental issues are among the more critical concerns of hosting sports events. This study indicated that hosting events can bring more attention to the natural environment. The results yielded by this study revealed that the environmental impact can affect the overall impact and lead to residential encouragement of sports events, in line with prior research (Lee, 2013). The direct positive effect of environmental impact on residents' perception implies that people are highly concerned with the effects of sports events on their

environment. This is especially the case in highly developed tourism destinations, such as Saensuk, where the residents are directly affected by the problems created by sports tourism. Organizing bodies involved with promoting sport event tourism in Saensuk would be encouraged to emphasize how the negative impact on the environment can be reduced and promote environmental sustainable systems and policies.

It is interesting to note that sport events were not deemed by the respondents as a source of traffic congestion in this study. This result contrasted the findings yielded by previous studies (Kim et al., 2014; Prayag et al., 2013). For example, Kim et al. (2014) found that traffic problems were one of the worst impacts derived from hosting F1 Korean GP. Kim and Petrick (2005) explained that traffic problems could not be avoided because of the unique nature of mega-scale sports tourism events. The incongruence among the findings yielded by the present study and similar research may be due to the size of the sports events. The location where this study was conducted has never hosted mega-scale events prior studies had focused on. However, as the local government has aspirations for Saensuk to become an international sports event destination with ambitions to attract more travelers from around the world, the event planners or administrators should consider traffic issues when expanding the size of such events.

Ensuring residential encouragement for development of sports event tourism requires understanding of how residents perceive the impact because these can reflect the residents' concerns. In this study, socio-cultural, economic, and environmental impacts were significant contributors to the total impact on residents. Moreover, the residential perceived total impact was an important determinant of their encouragement for future sport events. These results could reflect how Saensuk city could interact with their local people to turn a city into a sports tourism destination. Although sports events that have been held at Saensuk so far were not large-scale, these events can be organized throughout the year and generate income for residents with little or no community opposition. The organizing bodies can prepare the local residents to better respond to the needs of future active tourists by way of services and products through informational events so the tourists are encouraged to return to Saensuk, building sustainable sport events tourism.

Based on the results yielded by this study, all dimensions in a triple-bottom-line approach for tourism impacts—socio-cultural, economic, and

environmental factors—are significant contributors towards the residential support for the development of sports event tourism. As local residents in Saensuk already enjoy income from being a nature destination, the local residents do not only consider the financial benefits from sports events. However, they also are concerned with how the sports events would affect their environment and society. If sports events generate income but simultaneously damage their society and environment by causing traffic congestion, noise, overcrowded beaches, and pollution, they may not support the development of sports tourism. Government and event administrators could consider this aspect when organizing sports events with the view of transforming the city into a

sports event destination. To understand the local residents' perceptions toward sports event tourism, relevant parties must manage and plan such events in a way that would satisfy the local residents. Failure to do so would jeopardize the success of those events, as well as make it less likely that similar events will be held in the city.

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