

RESIDENTS PERCEPTIONS OF TOURISM IMPACT, A TOOL FOR GOVERNANCE: A STUDY ON RESIDENTS IN THE REGIONAL TOURISM AREA OF LISBON

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ABSTRACT

Tourism sector went through an evolutionary transformation that demands a revolutionary approach in terms of planning and governance. The 'triple bottom line' scenario that traditionally includes environmental, economic and social domains has been improved with two more domains to the 'sustainability' paradigm: public policy (i.e., government or public rules/regulations) and technology. So, we may say that proper governance is determinant for the development of sustainable tourism and must consider economic, sociocultural and environmental impacts of tourism and participation of citizens and residents. Consequently, knowing the perception of the citizens/resident regarding impacts of tourism activity can conduce to a more adequate public policy and more adequate governance models, adapted to resident's expectations.

This study is a work in progress (related to the research project TARGET-Projects of scientific research and technological development) and its main objective is to understand the perceptions of residents of Lisbon region concerning its tourism activity. Specifically, the study intends to understand the perception of the population regarding the impacts of this activity, as well as to assess whether the factors age, gender and level of education of residents can influence a more positive perception of tourism's impacts in Lisbon Region. Quantitative methodology was used to analyse respondent's perceptions. Descriptive statistics techniques were used to characterize and describe the sample.

The results of this research indicated that residents have a positive perception concerning economic, as well as cultural impacts, social impacts and environmental impacts.

Keywords: Governance, Impacts of Tourism, Sustainable Tourism

INTRODUCTION

It is consensual that economic benefits of tourism sector are relevant. In fact, the field of tourism has considerable attention due to its economic benefits as referred in several studies about economic performance and the economic impact of tourism (Balaguer and Cantavella-Jorda, 2002; Lee and Chang, 2008). Also, some international and national institutions reinforce and support the economic activity of tourism (WTTC, 2004; WTO, 2008). However, the relevant impacts of tourism are not only related with economic aspects but also with social, cultural and environmental aspects. In fact, sustainable tourism development began to gain ground due to an increase awareness of the environmental impact of tourism (Jones and Munday, 2007; Collins et al., 2007; Hunter and Shaw, 2007). Issues like spatial changes and resource consumption of the tourism sector, rapid urbanization and land use practices start to be considered as extremely relevant together to economic issues and determinant for the longevity of destinations for the welfare of future generations (Hunter, 2002; Huijbregts et al., 2008; Fleeter et al, 2017).

Numerous challenges, including global warming, economic recession, political conflict, population growth, and the need of alternative source of energy, demand a new paradigm for planning and marketing tourism products worldwide (Cetin et al. 2010; Aricak 2015; Cetin et al. 2016; Yucedag et al. 2018).

This study tries to understand the perceptions of residents of Lisbon region regarding its tourism activity. Specifically, the study intends to understand the perception of the population regarding the impacts of this activity, as well as to assess whether the factors age, gender and level of education of residents can influence a more positive perception of tourism's impacts in Lisbon Region.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Sustainable Tourism – The Need of an Appropriate Governance

Tourism sector went through an evolutionary transformation that demands a revolutionary approach to reforming its management regime (Alipour, Vaziri, Ligay, 2011). According with these authors, the 'triple bottom line' scenario that traditionally includes environmental, economic and social domains has been enhanced with the addition of two more domains to the 'sustainability' paradigm: public policy (i.e., government or public rules/regulations) and technological (i.e., appropriate, sustainable) (Steward and Kuska, 2010).

However, according with Benedetto et al. (2016), sustainability and sustainable tourism can be only beautiful and empty concepts. Also, Berno and Bricker (2001) refer that the challenges related with the nature of the industry, the fragmented way in which public and private decisions about tourism are made, and the conflicting interests of tourism stakeholders confirm the idea that sustainability needs governance to have a practical impact.

North et al (2008) define governance as the process, institutions and ways by which the function of governing is implemented were features like transparency, efficacy, legality, lack of corruption, respect of rights and participation must be present. According with Blasio and Selva (2016), open government policies (on transparency, participation, and collaboration, but also on digital technology) are spreading across Europe as a new governance model. For these authors the model of open government seems to stress innovation and openness in the sense of an enhanced transparency, and occasionally of public-private collaboration, but failing to achieve an open decision making.

Some authors also considered that one of the major problems of policy decision-making is the lack of opportunities for citizens and residents to participate and then learn from one another in a public conference or forum (Arnstein, 2000; Putman, 2000). For these authors, this problem can induce managers and policymakers to make decisions in a selfish way, presuming to have the right to impose the best solution.

In conclusion, sustainable tourism needs a proper governance from different institutions public and private, awareness of economic, sociocultural and environmental impacts and participation of citizens and residents.

1.2. Residents: an Important Stakeholder

Frequently tourism is associated with destruction of the environment, devastation of resources (Kousis, 2000) and conflicts of interest among various stakeholders involved in this activity (Kuvan and Akan, 2005). Several authors have emphasized the need to manage the conflict of interest between the various stakeholders and the importance of social capital in relation to this issue (Belsky, 1999; Johannesson et al., 2003; Jones, 2005; Park et al., 2007; Zhao et al., 2011; Park et al. 2012).

The most conventional tourism development models focused principally on the expectations of the interests of the various stakeholders, nevertheless other alternative models value the involvement and collaboration of the population.

Regarding the development of tourism, several studies have analyzed the residents' reactions in relation to this activity (Lankford and Howard, 1994; Akis et al., 1996; Park and Kerstetter, 2002; Cho, 2003; Park et al., 2007; Park et al. 2012).

According with Muresan et al (2016), sustainable tourism development emerged in the last several decades as a necessity to ensure an efficient tourism sector based on three main components: environmental interests, socio-cultural and economic needs of the communities involved. Consequently, for these authors there is a need for balance positive and negative impacts that these three factors could generate. To understand the impacts of tourism and to establish this balance it is important to take into consideration the local community, that means the core element within the tourism development process and the most important stakeholder (Min, Xiaoli &

Bihu,2012). Analyzing the local community's perceptions regarding tourism impact becomes a major concern, because it is strongly connected to the will to support tourism development (Hu & Vogt, 2008; Bestard & Nadal,2007).

Generally, tourism is perceived by residents as having strong economic benefits, which outweigh any other possible negative impacts, encouraging residents to perceive tourist activity in a positive way and resulting in strong involvement and support.

1.3. Perceptions of Residents About Impacts of Tourism

Some studies show that resident expectations regarding the economic benefits of tourism have a positive effect on the assessment of impacts. There seems to be evident that residents receiving greater economic returns from tourism, through job creation and other opportunities (Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Korca, 1996; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Chen, 2000; McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Waitt, 2003; Andereck et al., 2005; Kim and Petrick, 2005; Bujosa & Rosselló, 2007) are easier supporters of tourism. Also, some residents believe that tourism produces greater opportunities to negotiate and consequently contributes to the development of local business environment (Chen, 2000; Yoon et al., 2001; Aguiló et al., 2004; Bujosa & Rosselló, 2007; Dyer et al., 2007). Other studies have emphasized the economic benefits of tourism for the population (Waitt, 2003; Kim and Petrick, 2005), referring to economic development in communities as a result of increased tax revenues, or job creation. Also, the contribution of tourism to the creation and enhancement of investments and the consequent increase in commercial activity is pointed out by Ritchie (1984) as a relevant benefit for the receiving communities.

Residents also considered that tourism contribute to the improvement of living standards (Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Korca, 1996; Saveriades, 2000; Sebastian & Rajagopalan, 2009; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011). Ritchie (1984) and Hall (1992) identified other positive impacts associated with tourism, such as strengthening community identity, tradition and values, and increasing community participation. Finally, Stein and Anderson (1999) evidenced the contribution of tourism in relation to social cohesion, greater sharing of ideas and increased knowledge of the culture of the regions.

However, residents realize that tourism increases the cost of living (Saveriades, 2000; McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Bujosa & Rosselló, 2007), and of the price of goods and services (Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Korca, 1996; Aguiló et al., 2004); the property value and housing prices grow (Korca, 1996; Korca (1998); Aguiló et al., 2004; Also Brida et al, 2011), and consequently enables population to buy their first home (Antón & González, 2008).

Residents also find some negative economic impacts of tourism, namely the irregularity of labor income related with seasonality (Cerezo & Lara de Vicente, 2005). Generally, economic benefits are an important influence on residents' attitudes towards tourism (King et al., 1993; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997) due to the fact that, according to many residents, tourism improves, benefits or increases the local economy (Gursoy et al., 2002).

Other studies focused on residents' attitudes towards social and cultural impacts of tourism. Residents appreciate positively the fact that tourism has a positive influence on the services offered by the community (Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Andereck et al., 2005). Among these services, some authors refer leisure activities (Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Yoon et al., 2001; Gursoy et al., 2002; Bujosa & Rosselló, 2007; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011) and others cultural activities (Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Chen, 2000; Yoon et al., 2001). Also some authors refer the positive effect of tourism regarding the maintaining and preserving historic buildings and archaeological sites (Yoon et al., 2001; Andereck et al., 2005; Oviedo et al., 2008) the increasing of pride and cultural identity (Yoon et al., 2001; Besculides et al., 2002; Andereck et al., 2005) and preservation of cultural values (Andereck et al., 2005; Oviedo et al., 2008). McGehee & Andereck (2004) considerer positive impacts on the quality of life of the residents. And finally, other authors understand that tourism stimulates cultural exchange and enrichment to local people (Yoon et al., 2001; Besculides et al., 2002; Dyer et al., 2007).

Though, other studies describe negative aspects perceived by residents, such as, traffic congestion (Mason & Cheyne, 2000; Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001; McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Andereck et al., 2005; Bujosa & Rosselló, 2007; Dyer et al., 2007) and parking problems (Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001). In a social perspective, some studies refer the negative residents perception about a possible increase delinquency and vandalism or crime (Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Andereck et al., 2005;

Diedrich & García, 2009), or increased drug or alcohol use, breakdown of codes of conduct and customs, prostitution (Saveriades, 2000; Diedrich & García, 2009; Sebastian & Rajagopalan, 2009).

Other studies focused in environmental impacts of tourism. For some residents, tourism can protect and preserve resources or may damage or destroy them. Some residents believe that tourism helps preserve natural resources (Andereck et al., 2005; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011), improves the appearance of cities (Andereck, et al., 2005; Oviedo et al., 2008). Yet in other studies some negative perception on tourism impacts are referred, namely pollution (Yoon et al., 2001), overcrowding and congestion (Yoon et al., 2001; Andereck et al., 2005) and accumulation in public facilities (Aguiló et al., 2004; Bujosa & Rosselló, 2007).

METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on a quantitative approach, in the form of a questionnaire applied to a convenience sample, following a non-probability sampling method and using a group of residents easy to contact or to reach in the Regional Tourism Area of Lisbon. In order to achieve the objective defined in this study, a questionnaire consisting of two sections was developed: the first referring to the sociodemographic characteristics of respondents, namely age, gender, education level and profession. In the second part of the questionnaire, it was held to evaluate the perception of respondents about the economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of tourism. This section consisted of 10 statements on economic impacts (Q1 to Q10), 7 statements on social impacts (Q11 to Q17), 7 statements on cultural impacts (Q18 to Q24) and, lastly, 8 statements on environmental impacts (Q25 to Q32). In 32 statements (table 1), a five-point Likert scale was used, in which 1 meant "totally disagree" and 5 meant "totally agree."

Data collection was carried out between March and September 2018 and the questionnaires were sent to the residents of the Regional Tourism Area of Lisbon through the Municipal Councils and Higher Education Institutions involved in the study (Estoril Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotel Studies and Polytechnic Institute of Setúba), through a database with the e-mail addresses of employees, students, teachers and non-teachers. The choice of the use of e-mail in the data collection is related to a set of advantages enumerated by Aaker (2007), namely: 1) the possibility of sending the questionnaires is made in the number of times that the investigator considers necessary; 2) greater speed in sending and receiving responses; 3) the possibility of the questionnaires can be answered according to the convenience and time of the interviewee. After the data collection, the statistical treatment was performed using the software program SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). It was used descriptive statistic techniques to characterize the collected sample and to describe, in average terms, the perceptions of the respondents.

Table 1 – Questionnaire 32 statements

Q1	Tourism brings important economic benefits for residents and the community
Q2	Tourism creates employment opportunities for community residents
Q3	One of the important aspects of tourism is the creation of a variety of jobs for community residents
Q4	Tourism helps to improve the economic situation for many residents of this community
Q5	Local businesses benefit from tourists
Q6	Tourism brings more investments to the economy of the community
Q7	Tourism generates tax revenues for local governments
Q8	Tourism tax revenues are used to improve infrastructure
Q9	The price of many goods and services has increased due to tourism
Q10	Real estate prices have increased due to tourism
Q11	Because of tourism, roads and local services are in good condition
Q12	Tourism is one of the main reasons for the variety of entertainment in the community
Q13	During the high season of tourism, it is harder to get tickets to the theatre, movies, concerts or sporting events
Q14	Tourism leads to undesirable overloads in pedestrian pathways for local residents
Q15	Tourism leads to undesirable overhead in parks for local residents
Q16	Tourism leads to the overload of commercial spaces for local residents.
Q17	Tourism contributes to increase social problems in the community (eg.crime, the use of drugs, among others)
Q18	Meeting tourists from all over the world is definitely an enriching life experience
Q19	I would like to meet tourists from as many countries as possible in order to learn about their cultures
Q20	Cultural exchanges between residents and tourists are important for residents
Q21	Tourism has increased the pride of residents in the local community culture
Q22	Tourism encourages the variety of cultural activities for local residents
Q23	Tourism helps keep culture alive and helps maintain the ethnic identity of local residents
Q24	Tourism encourages residents to imitate the behaviour of tourists and to abandon cultural traditions
Q25	Hotels, airlines and other tourism-related companies that serve tourists, produce tons of waste
Q26	Tourism does not contribute to the negative effect of vegetation and the loss of meadows and green spaces
Q27	Tourism leads to constrains at the level of automobile traffic
Q28	Tourist activities, such as recreational boating, produce problems of water pollution in lakes, bays, rivers or ocean
Q29	Tourism contributes to the preservation of the natural environment and the protection of wildlife in the community
Q30	The waste caused by tourists destroys the beauty of the landscape
Q31	Tourism has improved the ecological environment of the community in many ways
Q32	Tourism produces noise that disturbs local residents

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

3.1. Sociodemographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study has collected a sample of 350 individuals, whose mean age is approximately 35 years, 62% are males and 38% are females. Almost 50% of respondents have a degree and more than 60% have a higher education level. The municipality with the highest representativeness is Setúbal, with more than 30% of respondents. The majority of respondents are workers, of whom 46% work for others. 72% states that their professional activity is not related to tourism.

3.2. Perception of Respondents on the Impacts of Tourism in Regional Tourism Area of Lisbon

To analyze the perceptions of the residents in the Regional Tourism Area of Lisbon regarding the impacts of tourism in the community, respondents were asked to comment on a set of 32 statements about the economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of tourism.

Table 2 summarizes the results of the descriptive statistics related to the perception of the respondents against the 32 statements related to economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts.

Table 2 – Results of descriptive statistics

Questions	Results
Q1 - Tourism brings significant economic benefits to community residents	More than 80% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale 1 to 5) is greater than 4
Q2 - Tourism creates job opportunities for community residents	More than 80% of the respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is greater than 4
Q3 - One of the important aspects of tourism is the creation of a variety of jobs for community residents	More than 80% of the respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is greater than 4
Q4 - Tourism helps improve the economic situation for many residents of this community	More than 50% of the respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 4
Q5 - Local businesses benefit from tourists	More than 80% of the respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is greater than 4
Q6 - Tourism brings more investment into the community economy	More than 80% of the respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is greater than 4
Q7 - Tourism generates tax revenues for local governments	More than 80% of the respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is greater than 4
Q8 - Tourism tax revenues are used to improve infrastructure (roads, highways and public services for residents)	In this case 43% do not agree or disagree and 32% of respondents disagree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is less than 3, the midpoint of the scale
Q9 - The price of many goods and services increased due to tourism	Approximately 80% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 4
Q10 - Real estate prices have increased in the community due to tourism	More than 80% of the respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is greater than 4
Q11 - Due to tourism, the roads and local services are in good condition	In this case 34% do not agree or disagree and 42% of respondents disagree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is close to 3, the midpoint of the scale, although lower
Q12 - Tourism is one of the main reasons for the variety of entertainment in the community	In this case 32% do not agree or disagree and 48% of respondents agree, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 3, the midpoint of the scale
Q13 - During the high season of tourism it is more difficult to get tickets for the theater, movies, concerts or sporting events	In this case 38% do not agree or disagree and 42% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 3, the midpoint of the scale

Q14 - Tourism leads to undesirable pedestrian overloads for local residents	In this case 28% do not agree or disagree and 41% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 3, the midpoint of the scale
Q15 - Tourism leads to undesirable overload of parks for local residents	In this case 33% do not agree or disagree and 40% of the respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 3, the midpoint of the scale
Q16 - Tourism leads to the overload of commercial spaces for local residents	In this case 34% do not agree or disagree and 38% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 3, the midpoint of the scale
Q17 - Tourism contributes to the increase of social problems in the community, such as the increase in crime, the use of drugs, among others	In this case 31% do not agree or disagree and 59% of respondents disagree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 2, below the midpoint of the scale
Q18 - Meeting tourists from all over the world is definitely an enriching life experience	About 87% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is higher than 4
Q19 - I would like to meet tourists from as many countries as possible in order to learn about their cultures	About 79% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is higher than 4
Q20 - Cultural exchange between residents and tourists is important for residents	About 77% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is over 4
Q21 - Tourism has increased the pride of residents in the local community culture	In this case 30% do not agree or disagree and 57% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 4
Q22 - Tourism encourages a variety of cultural activities for local residents	About 60% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 4
Q23 - Tourism helps keep culture alive and helps maintain the ethnic identity of local residents	About 51% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 4
Q24 - Tourism encourages residents to imitate the behaviour of tourists and to abandon cultural traditions	About 58% of respondents disagree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 2
Q25 - Hotels, airlines and other tourism-related companies that serve tourists produce tons of garbage	About 50% of the respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is higher than 3
Q26 - Tourism does not contribute to the negative effect of vegetation and the loss of meadows and green spaces	In this case about 43% do not agree or disagree, about 29% disagree and about 29% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 3, the midpoint of the scale
Q27 - Tourism leads to constrains at the level of automobile traffic	In this case 31% do not agree or disagree and 37% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 3, the midpoint of the scale
Q28 - Tourism activities, such as recreational boating, produce serious problems of water pollution in lakes, bays, rivers or the ocean	In this case 41% do not agree or disagree and about 32% of respondents agree, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 3, the midpoint of the scale
Q29 - Tourism contributes to the preservation of the natural environment and the protection of wildlife in the community	In this case 31% do not agree or disagree and about 43% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 3, the midpoint of the scale
Q30 - The waste caused by tourists destroys the beauty of the landscape	In this case 35% do not agree or disagree and about 34% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 3, the midpoint of the scale

Q31 - Tourism has improved the ecological environment of the community in many ways	In this case, 47% do not agree or disagree and about 27% of respondents disagree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is close to 3, the midpoint of the scale
Q32 - Tourism produces noise that disturbs local residents	In this case about 39% do not agree or disagree, about 31% disagree and about 31% of respondents agree with the statement, the average (on the Likert scale) is approximately 3, the midpoint of the scale

To summarize, from the 32 questions, 10 questions have an average of more than 4, and in these about 80% of respondents agree with the statements (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q5, Q6, Q7, Q18, Q19, Q20). These results indicate positive perceptions of tourism particularly in economic and cultural dimensions (questions from Q1 to Q7 refer to economic impacts and Q18 to Q20 to cultural dimensions). Also 5 questions, from economic and cultural dimensions, have an average close to 4 (Q4, Q9, Q21, Q22, Q23). Finally, 15 questions have an average of more than 3 (Q8, Q11, Q12, Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16, Q25, Q26, Q27, Q28, Q29, Q30, Q31, Q32). These questions belong mainly to social (Q11, to Q16) and environmental dimension (Q25 to Q32).

These results confirm the findings of several studies referred in literature review, namely the ones that confirm the economic benefits of tourism for the population (Waitt, 2003; Kim and Petrick, 2005) and the contribution of tourism to the creation and enhancement of investments and the consequent increase in commercial activity (pointed out by Ritchie, 1984). The results also confirm other important evidences referred in literature review, that mention economic returns from tourism, through job creation and other opportunities (Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Korca, 1996; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Chen, 2000; Waitt, 2003; McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Andereck et al., 2005; Kim and Petrick, 2005; Bujosa & Rosselló, 2007) and more commercial opportunities to negotiate and consequently to develop local business environment (Chen, 2000; Yoon et al., 2001; Aguiló et al., 2004; Bujosa & Rosselló, 2007; Dyer et al., 2007).

Also the positive results about perceptions of cultural impacts are confirmed in literature review, namely the ones that confirm the positive influence on the services offered by the community (Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Yoon et al., 2001; Andereck et al., 2005; Gursoy et al., 2002; Bujosa & Rosselló, 2007; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011) and others cultural activities (Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Chen, 2000; Yoon et al., 2001), or its contribution to the maintaining and preserving historic buildings and archaeological sites (Yoon et al., 2001; Andereck et al., 2005; Oviedo et al., 2008), the increasing of pride and cultural identity (Yoon et al., 2001; Besculides et al., 2002; Andereck et al., 2005) and preservation of cultural values (Andereck et al., 2005; Oviedo et al., 2008).

The same can be said about social impacts, that are confirmed in literature review, in particular aspects concerning improvement on the quality of life of the residents (McGehee & Andereck, 2004). The more reserved perception of concerning overload (Q14, Q15 and Q16) are also present in literature review, in studies that describe negative aspects perceived by residents, such as, traffic congestion (Mason & Cheyne, 2000; Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001; McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Andereck et al., 2005; Bujosa & Rosselló, 2007; Dyer et al., 2007) and parking problems (Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001). Concerning environmental impacts, literature review also confirm the positive results (Andereck et al., 2005; Oviedo et al., 2008; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011).

However, 4 questions have an average of less than 3 and only 2 of these questions have average approximately to 2 (Q17 - Tourism contributes to the increase of social problems in the community, such as the increase in crime, the use of drugs, among others and Q24 - Tourism encourages residents to imitate the behaviour of tourists and to abandon cultural traditions). This results are also confirmed in literature review, through several studies that refer negative residents perception about a possible increase on delinquency and vandalism or crime (Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Andereck et al., 2005; Diedrich & García, 2009), or increased drug or alcohol use (Saveriades, 2000; Diedrich & García, 2009).

CONCLUSIONS

The research objectives of this study were to understand the perceptions of residents of Lisbon region about impacts of tourism activity, as well as to assess whether the factors age, gender and level of education of residents can influence a more positive perception of tourism's impacts in Lisbon Region. The results of this research indicated that residents have a positive perception concerning economic, as well as cultural impacts, social impacts

and environmental impacts. The most positive perceptions concerning tourism impacts refers to economic and cultural dimensions. However, more reserved perceptions were recognized by residents, namely “possible increase on delinquency and vandalism or crime or the increased drug or alcohol use” and “encouragement of residents to imitate the behaviour of tourists and to abandon cultural traditions”.

This study also highlights the importance of the inclusion of not only the environmental, economic and social dimensions concerning sustainable tourism but also reveals the importance of other domains like public policy and technological. Consequently, we believe that the results of this study can provide useful clues about the perceptions of different resident profiles allowing the adjustment of policies and strategies concerning the sustainable development of tourism in Lisbon region.

This study has some limitations: primarily the fact that it was used a convenience sample, secondly it is a study based on the perceptions of the residents and it's difficult to understand if their perceptions were based in reality/experience or in expectations and more in what they believe or would like it to be.

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