

## EXTENDED ABSTRACT

# THE IMPACTS OF TOURISM IN SPAIN: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COASTAL DESTINATIONS AND INLAND DESTINATIONS

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The objective of this article is to evaluate how Spanish residents perceive the impacts of tourism and to analyse whether the typology of destination (inland or coastal) has an influence on how they are perceived. The main interest of the study lies, fundamentally, in the peculiarity of the subject matter, since there is a limited amount of studies that analyse the influence of the typology of destination on the perception of the residents.

In order to reach the given objectives, a review of the secondary sources from a double perspective was realized. On the one hand, a review was made of those studies that investigated the impacts of tourism from a theoretical point of view, in order to identify which typologies were the most favoured between the experts. On the other hand, a review was made of the current state of art of the main studies related to the perception of the impacts of tourism and the different factors that determine such perception.

Between the most notable features of the specialized literature, it was established that, even though traditionally the economic impacts were the most studied, lately there has been a shift towards the inclusion of environmental and social impacts as well. Therefore, a study like this one must tackle the impact of tourism from a triple perspective (economic, environmental and social).

With regards to studies related to the measurements of the impacts, this article focused on those based on the perception of the impacts, since they are the ones that best reflect the attitude of the residents towards tourism (Pizam, 1978; Thomason, Crompton, y Kamp,

1979; Liu y Var, 1986; Jurowski y Gursoy, 2004; Almeida-García, 2016). The predominant methodology in all these studies is a quantitative methodology. Furthermore, it should be noted that even though Spain has been a well known tourist destination at the global level, these kind of studies have started to proliferate only in the last decade.

With regards to the variables that affect the perception of the aforementioned impacts, there is a predominance of studies that investigate variables that are sociodemographic and intrinsic to the individual, psychosocial (concerned with the society) or extrinsic, such as the type of holiday, level of development of the destination or level of overcrowding of the destination. Nonetheless, there are not many studies that explore, like in this case,

the way in which the typology of destination has an influence on those impacts (Sharma y Dyer, 2009; Markovic y Klovic, 2015; Rasoolimanesh et al. 2017).

This review has allowed the development of the following hypotheses:

H1. There are significant differences between the residents' perceptions of the positive impacts generated by tourism in the Spanish coastal destinations and the inland ones.

H2. There are significant differences between the residents' perceptions of the negative impacts generated by tourism in the Spanish coastal destinations and the inland ones.

H3. The residents of the inland tourist destinations perceive more intensely the positive impacts generated by tourism.

H4. The residents of the coastal tourist destinations perceive more intensely the negative impacts generated by tourism.

In order to validate the hypotheses this study adopted a quantitative methodology, applying a bivariate analysis through parametric tests for the comparison of means (variance analysis). References to the typology of destination (coastal or inland) were taken as factors or independent variables, and variables of the scale that describe the impact of tourism were taken as dependent factors.

From a total of 11.251 individuals were gathered 1.027 online questionnaires with a margin of error of +/- 2.91% and a level of confidence of 95%, considering  $p=q=50$ . The obtained answers have been processed using the IBM software SPSS Version 20.0.

The obtained answers reveal that the variables that have produced the best results have been those related to the impact of tourism on the employment or the contribution of tourism to the amplification of the cultural offer and in general to the infrastructures of the destination. Instead, the variables that have perceived smaller impacts are those that have to deal with the damages towards the environment and the preservation of the heritage. Therefore, from a first glance at the variables it can be said that, in general, the sample has a positive perception of the impacts of tourism.

Taking into consideration the results obtained it is possible to validate H1 only partially, fact from which it can be derived that, even though there exists significant differences with regards to the impact of tourism on the preservation of the heritage, to the contribution towards social exchanges or to the local identity, the same does not happen with the other variables.

In turn, it is possible to accept H2 since there have been identified significant differences in the perception of the negative impacts of tourism with regards to the typology of destination.

With regards to the hypothesis H3, the residents of the inland communities have shown a more positive perception of the sociocultural impacts of tourism.

At last, it is possible to accept H4 since indeed the residents of the coastal tourist destinations have perceived more substantially the negative impacts generated by tourism, in particular those related to the environment.

These results allow us to confirm that, as a matter of fact, there are differences in the perception of the tourism impacts depending on whether such tourism takes place in a coastal or inland district.