

A Comparative Study on the Perception of Local Stakeholders Regarding the Development of Mountain Tourism in Gangwon Province

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Abstract: Tourism development based on natural resources such as mountain resources requires systematic development for minimizing environmental degradation and sustainability. For this, it is necessary to grasp the perceptions and attitudes of local stakeholders who are the target of tourism development and develop tourism accordingly. The survey was conducted from September 19, 2016 to October 14, 2016 and the subjects of the study were the residents of Taebaek City and the tourism experts directly involved in the development of Taebaek City mountain tourism. We conducted 60 questionnaires for tourism professionals including tourism officials. In addition, 450 questionnaires were collected and collected for local residents. Finally, 57 experts and 313 local residents were used for empirical analysis. The collected samples were analyzed by SPSS Ver. 22.0 were used for the comparative analysis, factor and reliability analysis, independent sample t-test. Among the tourism development effects, the average of experts in economic impact and cultural influence was higher than that of local residents. In preference tourism development type, it was found that there is a significant difference between types of environmental experience and type of natural scenery. Lastly, there was a significant difference in opinion on the support of tourism development among the local stakeholders. Both experts and local residents were found to have a positive attitude higher than 4.5 (7 point scale). Both experts and local residents can be interpreted as positive about mountain tourism development. However, there are some significant differences between experts and local residents. Especially, it was confirmed that there is a factor which shows difference of opinion between experts and local residents such as preferential tourism development type. Therefore in the future development of tourism, the opinions of local stakeholders on tourism development should be collected and conflicts should be prevented.

Key words: Tourism development, mountain tourism, perception of local stakeholders, impact of tourism development, preference tourism development type, support of tourism development, Gangwon Province

INTRODUCTION

In order to hold a successful mega event, large-scale investments are made in the physical redevelopment of cities, holding facilities and social infrastructures from the preparation stage. Therefore, mega event such as the Olympics have a huge impact on the host country and surrounding areas due to their large size and high investment costs (Ae-Lan *et al.*, 2016). This has lot of impacts on the region and surrounding areas in terms of tourism development (Deccio and Baloglu, 2002). Tourism is the profitable sector of the economy (Lubov *et al.*, 2016). The tourism development is considered as the interplay of social, historical and cultural resources supporting the potential touristic supply of the territory and contributing to its economic development (Muntele and Iatu, 2013). So, local governments are making a lot of effort to have a positive impact on the region through these developments. Unlike this hopeful view, there are

negative impacts against its tourism invigoration (Kook-Sup *et al.*, 2016). Large-scale development can cause a variety of adverse effects, particularly in the case of community-based development. Therefore, it is very important to understand the perception and attitude of local residents in regional development.

Especially, the space where tourism develops is the living space of local stakeholders. Therefore, it is essential to study the perception and attitude of local stakeholders including local residents in tourism development (Kim, 2006; Cho and Kim, 2002; Harrill, 2004). Also, local stakeholders affect the quality of tourist's tourism experience. Tourism development that local stakeholders do not agree on causes conflict and distrust. It has been pointed out by several previous studies that conflict and distrust can eventually lead to dissatisfaction with tourists (Vargas-Sanchez *et al.*, 2009; Cooke, 1982; Pizam, 1978; Allen *et al.*, 1988; Davis *et al.*, 1988; Johnson *et al.*, 1994; Ko and Stewart,

2002). The study of local residents in local stakeholders for tourism development has been steadily progressing. However, research on local stakeholders rather than local residents is insufficient.

Local stakeholders can be divided into local residents, tourism operators and tourism officials according to their role in the local community. Precedent research by Jafari (1986) also argues that there is a need to identify differences in attitudes and perceptions of tourism development among diverse community members. Therefore, it is necessary to study the attitudes of experts participating in actual tourism development such as tourism officials and consultants as well as local residents.

Gangwon Province which has abundant natural resources such as mountain resources is about to host the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics. The government will utilize the natural resources of Gangwon-do to promote the tourism in Gangwon-do and to improve the regional development and image through it. However, unlike other tourism development, tourism development based on natural resources such as mountain resources requires systematic development for minimizing environmental degradation and sustainability. In order to do this, it is necessary to grasp the perceptions and attitudes of local stakeholders who are the target of tourism development and develop tourism accordingly (Vargas-Sanchez, *et al.*, 2009). However, previous researches based on mountain tourism resources that can not be overlooked in tourism development of Gangwon-do, so far are insufficient and most research on tourism development focuses on attracting tourists rather than local stakeholders.

This study is to identify the impacts of tourism development on local residents and participating experts on tourism development based on natural resources such as mountain resources from the perspective of local residents and experts involved in tourism development, Tourism development type and tourism development attitude. The purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions of local residents and participating experts on tourism development impact, preference development type and tourism development attitude and to suggest the direction of tourism development based on future mountain tourism resources.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research model and hypothesis: This study is to present the direction of tourist development based on mountain tourism resources by analyzing the perception of tourism development, preference tourism development type and tourism development attitude on mountain tourism

development between local residents and participating experts. The following hypotheses were set for this:

- H₁: there will be a significant difference in the opinions of the local stakeholders on the impact of mountain tourism development
- H₂: there will be a significant difference in the opinions of the local stakeholders on the preference tourism type of mountain tourism development
- H₃: there will be a significant difference in the opinions of the local stakeholders on the tourism development attitude of mountain tourism development

Data analysis: In this study, Taebaek city in Gangwon Province where mountain tourism development has been carried out was selected as the study area. The survey was conducted from September 19, 2016 to October 14, 2016 and the subjects of the study were the residents of Taebaek City and the tourism experts directly involved in the development of Taebaek City mountain tourism. We conducted 60 questionnaires for tourism professionals including tourism officials. In addition, 450 questionnaires were collected and collected for local residents. Finally, 57 experts and 313 local residents were used for empirical analysis. The collected samples were analyzed by SPSS Ver. 22.0 were used for the comparative analysis, reliability analysis, factor analysis and independent sample t-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Feasibility and reliability analysis: The following are the results of factor analysis and reliability analysis of 'Impact of tourism development', 'Preference tourism development type', 'Tourism development attitude'. 'Impact of tourism development' was divided into four factors and named each factor culture impact, economic impact, social impact, environment impact. 'Preference tourism development type' was named (Table 1).

Hypothesis 1 verification: In order to verify the hypothesis, we performed the comparative analysis and independent sample t-test. The results are as follows like Table 2. As a result of comparative analysis and independent sample t-test, the experts and local residents recognized the economic impact (4.91) and the environmental impact (4.61), respectively the highest. Also economic impact ($p < 0.05$) and cultural impact ($p < 0.01$) were statistically significant difference.

Hypothesis 2 verification: As shown in Table 3, the most favorable tourism development type was recognized as environmental experience type (5.41) and recreational

Table 1: Feasibility and reliability analysis

Factor name	Factor loading	Eigen value	Disperison (%)	Cronbach's α
Culture impact				
Cultural property protection	0.851	0.284	350.226	0.886
Natural environment preservation	0.838			
Natural landscape maintenance	0.773			
Restoration of traditional culture	0.753			
Increase interchange of neighbors	0.682			
Economic impact				
Creating a job	0.906	30.102	200.678	0.881
Increase in local income	0.898			
Improve living environment	0.791			
Create a new local image	0.658			
Social impact				
Destruction of living standards	0.9121	0.63010	0.863	0.862
Conflict between local residents	0.891			
Conflict with tourists	0.801			
Environment impact				
Locality destruction	0.839	10.114	70.425	0.801
And congestion				
Garbage increase	0.818			
Pollution	0.764			
Environmental experience				
Cave experience	0.834	60.647	390.102	0.889
Mining experience	0.806			
Ecological park	0.804			
Safety experience	0.739			
Sports experience	0.700			
Natural scenery				
Cable car	0.875	20.402	140.129	0.887
Monorail	0.871			
Mountain train	0.850			
Mountain road	0.648			
Cultural education				
Exhibition	0.856	10.657	90.746	0.871
Convention	0.847			
Museum	0.765			
Leisure sport				
Mountain bike	0.827	10.119	60.581	0.771
Climbing/rock	0.790			
Climbing/ice climbing				
Cart Racing/Cart/ATV	0.733			
Recreation				
Ski/Board/Golf	0.879	10.022	60.010	0.843
Resort	0.848			
Support of tourism development				
Tourism development will contribute to regional development	0.882	30.585	710.702	0.899
Support tourism development	0.869			
I will participate in tourism development	0.853			
I will give an opinion on tourism development	0.812			
I agree to attract tourists	0.806			

Total dispersion: 740.192, 750.568, 71.702, KMO measure of sampling adequacy: 0.836, 0.861, 0.809; Bartlett's test of sphericity Chi-square 33130.268 (df = 105, p<0.000), 37290.308 (df = 136, p<0.000), 12580.255 (df = 10, p<0.000)

Table 2: Hypothesis 1 verification (Impact of tourism development)

Variables	Local residents		Experts		t-values	p-values
	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean		
Culture	3	3.99±10.120	2	4.56±10.069	-3.482	0.001**
Economic	2	4.56±10.140	1	4.91±10.393	-2.007	0.046*
Social	4	3.74±10.185	4	3.51±10.391	1.124	0.265
Environment	1	4.61±10.212	3	4.36±10.220	1.388	0.166

Table 3: Hypothesis 2 verification (Preference tourism type)

Variables	Local residents		Experts		t-values	p-values
	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean		
Environmental experience	2	4.90±10.120	1	5.41±00.987	-3.150	0.002**
Natural scenery	4	4.75±10.327	2	5.29±10.148	-2.819	0.005**
Cultural education	5	4.36±10.227	5	4.64±10.331	-1.530	0.127
Leisure sport	3	4.80±10.105	4	4.75±10.160	0.259	0.796
Recreation	1	4.98±10.328	3	5.10±10.591	-0.623	0.533

Table 4: Hypothesis 3 verification (Attitude)

Variables	Local residents		Experts		t-values	p-values
	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean		
Support of tourism development	-	4.900±	-	5.800±	-6.081	0.000***

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Table 5: Result of verifying all the hypothesis

Hypothesis	Path	Results
H ₁	There will be a significant difference in the opinions of the local stakeholders on the impact of mountain tourism development	Partial accepted
H ₂	There will be a significant difference in the opinions of the local stakeholders on the preference tourism development type	Partial accepted
H ₃	There will be a significant difference in the opinions of the local stakeholders on the tourism development attitude of mountain tourism development	Accepted

entertainment type (4.98), respectively and it was found that there was a significant difference between groups in the environmental experience type (p<0.01) and the natural scenery sightseeing type (p<0.01).

Hypothesis 3 verification: Finally, support for tourism development showed a significant difference between the groups (expert: 5.80, local residents: 4.90, p<0.001, Table 4) and it was confirmed that experts were higher than local residents. As a result of verifying all the hypothesis as shown in Table 5, it can be summarized as shown in Table 5.

CONCLUSION

Among the tourism development effects, the average of experts in economic impact and cultural influence was

higher than that of local residents. This suggests that experts who can directly acquire more information and participate directly in tourism development respond positively to the impact of tourism development rather than local residents.

This is the same as the results of previous studies. In preference tourism development type, it was found that there is a significant difference between types of environmental experience and type of natural scenery. This is because the tourism development project in which experts are participating is the development of mountain tourism based on natural resources. Considering various factors such as tourism development resources and sustainability, experts prefer environment-friendly tourism development type and local residents prefer to develop recreational entertainment tourism in expectation of revitalization of local economy.

Lastly, there was a significant difference in opinion on the support of tourism development among the local stakeholders. Both experts and local residents were found to have a positive attitude higher than 4.5 (7 point scale). Therefore, even if there is a significant difference between the groups, it can be interpreted that the experts who participate directly in the tourism development have a more positive attitude than the local residents. This does not mean that there is a significant difference between experts and local residents with opposing views.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the comparative analysis and independent sample t-test for the hypothesis test, both experts and local residents can be interpreted as positive about mountain tourism development. There are some statistically significant differences between experts and local residents. Especially, it was confirmed that there is a factor which shows difference of opinion between experts and local residents such as preferential tourism development type. This suggests that the development of tourism can cause conflicts among local people. Therefore, in the future development of tourism, the opinions of local stakeholders on tourism development should be collected and conflicts should be prevented.

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