

Research and Thinking on the Perception of Tourism Impact by Residents Near Chitwan National Park in Nepal

Xin Gao

School of Tourism, Hainan Normal University 571158, China.

Abstract: Tourism has a profound influence on economy, society, culture and environment. Community residents have a direct perception of the impacts of tourism. This paper adopts the method of questionnaire survey and field interview to obtain the perception of residents near Chitwan National Park of Nepal on various impacts (economic, social, cultural, environmental, etc.) in the process of tourism development and their perception of tourism development attitude. In the research, it is found that the positive perception of residents is generally dominant at this stage; The residents of tourist destinations can be roughly divided into three categories: those who agree, those who are neutral and those who disagree; The residents' perception will be different due to different population characteristics, and the living time has a greater impact on the difference of tourism perception.

Key words: Chitwan National Park; resident participation; tourism management; case analysis

1. Introduction

From the perspective of sustainable development, the development of community tourism should be based on the needs and aspirations of residents. Community development is the main demand of tourism development, and community residents should become an important participant in tourism development. At the same time, community residents will inevitably become the main undertakers of the impact of tourism development. Their perception of the impact of tourism determines their attitude and support to the tourism industry, thus profoundly affecting the quality of life of community residents and the sustainable development process of local tourism. Therefore, to analyze the impact of tourism development from the perspective of local residents and seek the common development of tourism and community residents is considered to be an effective way to achieve local sustainable development ^[1].

The development of tourism will bring many impacts to community residents, including economic impact, cultural impact, environmental impact and social impact. Community residents' perceptions of these tourism impacts are called economic impact perception, cultural impact perception, environmental impact perception and social impact perception ^[2].

2. Study site

Nepal, a landlocked mountain country in South Asia, is located at the southern foot of the Himalayas, bordering China in the north and India in the other three sides, with a land area of about 147000km²; GDP is 29.3 billion US dollars (2018); Nepal has a population of about 30 million (2020). Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-surname, multilingual country. Nepali is the national language, and English is widely used in the upper class. Nepal implements a 10-year free education system, with free tuition and a total education rate of 65.94%. And 86.2% of the residents believe in Hinduism.

Founded in 1973, Chitwan National Park is the first national park in the United States to protect the world's endangered wildlife, especially the black unicorn rhinoceros and the royal Bengal tiger. There are more than 50 kinds of mammals, 525 kinds of birds and 55 kinds of reptiles and amphibians. These unique functions of the park attract thousands of tourists every year, making it the park with the most tourists in Nepal. In 1996, the surrounding area of 750 square kilometers where the local community lived was declared as a buffer zone to promote the participatory protection of Chitwan National Park, that is, through the partnership with the park

management agency, the local people can participate in the protection design and implementation activities of the surrounding areas^[3]. Nepal National Park is far ahead in its efforts to involve local communities not only in the management of protected areas, but also in other aspects of protection^[4].

3. Methods

3.1 Mathematical statistics method

In order to obtain the residents' perception of the impact of national park tourism development, a questionnaire survey is designed to obtain the data required by the article through surveys and interviews. The obtained sample data were analyzed by SPSS26.0 software, including reliability analysis, mean analysis, analysis of variance, correlation analysis and partial correlation analysis.

3.2 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire is designed in two parts: The first part is the basic information of the residents, including but not limited to gender, age, monthly income, education level, residence time, etc. The residents can fill in according to the actual situation. The second part of the questionnaire is divided into two parts: perception of tourism development impact and perception of tourism development attitude. Tourism development impact perception includes 33 variables including economic, social, cultural and environmental impact perception; There are 6 variables in tourism development attitude perception. There are 5 dimensions and 39 variables in total. The Likert 5 subscale was used for the measurement of all perceived variables: scored on a scale of 1 to 5. The higher the score, the higher the degree of approval. 1 to 5 respectively expressed very disapproval, disapproval, uncertainty, approval, and very approval.

The option design of this questionnaire design has the following two explanations:

Firstly, According to the interview, 50% of the people in Nepal have secondary education, and the average monthly income is 10000 rupees (532 RMB, exchange rate: 100 rupees=5.32 RMB). Nepal is a tipping country. People working in the tourism industry can speak English, and their monthly income is relatively high (tipping is 100-1000 RMB). Therefore, when designing the questionnaire, the monthly income is divided into seven levels.

Secondly, through research on relevant literature and interviews, it is learned that the education level of Nepalese people is divided into 8 levels^[5], including illiteracy, grade 8, grade 9-10, grade 10+2, bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctor's degree, etc. Therefore, the education level in this questionnaire is set according to the actual education level in Nepal.

3.3 Data Description

3.3.1 Sample Data Description

The survey covers groups of different ages, genders, education levels, living time and monthly income as much as possible. A total of 55 questionnaires were collected, 0 invalid questionnaires were removed, and 55 valid ones were removed. The effective rate of the questionnaire was 100%. The sample data were collated and analyzed with SPSS26.0 software, and reliability analysis was conducted on several dimensions of national park tourism development impact perception and development attitude perception respectively. The reliability coefficient was 0.952-0.980, that is, the dimension reliability level was good, and the topic reliability quality was good, meeting the requirements of the article.

3.3.2 Analysis of sample population characteristics

From the sample, the proportion of men and women is 63.64:36.36, and the proportion of men is higher than that of men; In terms of age, the 18-30 age group accounted for the majority (63.64%); In terms of education level, the group with 10+2 educational background accounts for the majority (45.45%); In terms of monthly income, 27.27% of people's average monthly income is less than 10000 rupees (less than 532 RMB, exchange rate: 100 rupees=5.32 RMB), and 38.64% of people's average monthly income is 10000-30000 rupees (532-1595 RMB). According to the interview, some residents still rely on traditional agriculture for survival, and the income of those engaged in tourism is relatively high. In terms of living time, 50% of them have lived for more than 20 years. In terms of participation in tourism, 70.45% of them or their families participate in tourism. It can be seen that the direct participation of Nepalese community residents in tourism still needs to be improved.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Overall analysis of tourism development impact perception and attitude perception

In general, if the mean value of each variable in the Likert scale is less than 2.5, it means objection, if it is greater than 3.4, it means agreement, and if it is between 2.5 and 3.4, it means neutrality. The average scores of each dimension are calculated according to the scores of the measurement indicators. The results are shown in Table 2, which shows that residents have a positive perception of the overall impact of tourism development. Comparing the average values of various dimensions, it can be seen that residents of Chitwan National Park have relatively weak perception of economic impact, but there is little difference from the average values of other dimensions.

Through field investigation and in-depth interview, it is learned that although Chitwan National Park is the national park with the largest number of tourists in Nepal, the economic situation of local community residents is not optimistic. According to the specific situation of Nepal, Nepal is a developing country, and only a few people can benefit from the tourism development in terms of increasing income. When visiting the Chitwan National Park in Nepal, it is obvious that there are few opportunities for residents to participate in tourism. There are occasional fairs, but the goods sold are limited. Tourism benefits local residents in terms of employment, etc.

4.2 Correlation analysis

Monthly income is positively correlated with gender and education level; The gender factor has a significant impact on the social perception of the impact of national park tourism development; The overall perception of the impact of residence time on the tourism development of national parks is significant.

5. Results

The research shows that among the various impacts (economic, cultural, social and environmental) brought about by the tourism development of Chitwan National Park, the residents near Chitwan National Park have a higher perception of the positive impact as a whole, and the positive demonstration effect of the tourism development of Chitwan National Park is significant, but the unbalanced tourism development affects the views of different residents; At the same time, there are also some negative effects, such as rising house prices and traffic congestion.

Firstly, based on the social exchange theory, the positive perception of residents is generally dominant at this stage. In general, residents' perception of tourism impact is relatively positive. In the dimensions of economic, social, cultural, environmental and attitude perception, residents' perception of economic impact is relatively weak, and residents are not satisfied with employment.

Secondly, residents in tourist destinations can be roughly divided into three categories: those who agree, those who are neutral and those who disagree very much. Most of the residents are those who agree, but there are still a small number of residents who do not agree with the concept in the tourism impact perception survey.

Thirdly, different residents' personal internal factors lead to a certain degree of difference in their perception of tourism impact. The extent to which residents near Chitwan National Park support Chitwan National Park tourism is usually related to their living time. The difference of residents' perception of tourism impact based on different education levels is not very significant, and everyone's views tend to be consistent.

6. Suggestions

6.1 Government

Government policies should consider how best to promote the inevitable indigenous governance practices at the national, regional and local levels.

Firstly, establish a vocational training and education guidance mechanism for community residents. Tourism can promote the development of local economy and promote the local employment rate. The government should actively provide training opportunities

and jobs for residents to promote their employment and improve their employment rate.

Secondly, timely adjust the benefit distribution plan. Part of the income from national park tickets can be used to build local community infrastructure, improve residents' production environment, improve residents' quality of life, and improve residents' satisfaction and identification with the national park.

Thirdly, assist residents to establish self-organization. Some residents simply take an attitude of non cooperation or indifference. The government should help residents to spontaneously form self-organization, effectively communicate with other stakeholders, so that all residents can join in and work together for the sustainable development of the national park.

6.2 Community residents

Community residents should actively participate in tourism development and environmental protection.

Firstly, residents should realize that participating in tourism development can not only bring about the improvement of family income, but also bring about a certain degree of inheritance to the spread of traditional culture. Residents feel the importance and necessity of participating in tourism, take the initiative to spread national culture, carry forward national spirit, improve their comprehensive quality and at the same time improve the family employment rate, engage in tourism commodity management, and obtain more economic income through tourism, It can make life better.

Secondly, residents should improve their sense of ownership, cherish and protect the wealth shared by everyone, improve their awareness of forest fire prevention, participate in folk performances, display national culture, and actively contribute to the environment, society, culture, etc. of the National Park.

References

- [1] Baral, Stern, MJ, et al. Contingent valuation of ecotourism in Annapurna conservation area, Nepal: Implications for sustainable park finance and local development[J]. *ECOL ECON*, 2008, 2008,66(2-3)(-):218-227.
- [2] Guo AX, Guo YZ, Li HJ, Sun XF. Research on the relationship between tourism impact perception and quality of life perception of community residents in tourist destinations [J]. *World Geographic Research*, 2017,26 (05): 115-127.
- [3] Nepal SK. Involving Indigenous Peoples in Protected Area Management: Comparative Perspectives from Nepal, Thailand, and China[J]. *Environmental Management*, 2002, 30(6): 0748-0763.
- [4] Sharma UR. An overview of park-people interactions in Royal Chitwan National Park, Nepal[J]. *Landscape & Urban Planning*, 1990, 19(2):133-144.
- [5] Pandit, Ram & Dhakal, Maheshwar & Polyakov, Maksym. (2015). Valuing access to protected areas in Nepal: The case of Chitwan National Park. *Tourism Management*. 50. 1-12.