

***Perception of the Resident Population Towards Tourist Presence:
A Survey Research in Alcossebre, Valencian Community Region, Spain.***

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Abstract

The objective of the survey was to analyze the attitudes that residents of Alcossebre have towards tourism, focused on their perception of the impacts on the community and on the natural and built environment. Alcossebre is located on the Mediterranean coast. It's representative of the sun and beach tourism model that Spain has been offering since the 1960s. The resident population is 8218 inhabitants but in summer, due to the tourism, it increases by 150%.

So, residents feelings towards different, both positive and negative impacts, that tourism has had on their personal lives were observed. Sustainability requires residents to participate in the decision-making process for future development. Local perception of the social, economic and environmental impacts of tourism, allow to know the problems of the tourism phenomenon they detect, so planners can implement solutions, and as a result review and improve the most suitable responses.

For the survey development, 367 residents were categorized into four variables: Sex (Gender), Age, Occupation and Origin. A 13 mixed-item questionnaire was divided into two sections that used different calculation methods: one section used a Likert scale and the other, a ranking question type.

The results showed that residents have a favorable perception of tourism due to its economic and social benefits and highlights tendencies to minimize environmental costs attributable to visitors. Moreover, residents felt that government should prevent and resolve the possible impacts. This communication shows the variable Age results and discusses about the different perspectives about tourism impacts on their town and natural environment.

Keywords: Sustainable tourism, Urban planning, residents' perception, coastal tourist places, environmental impact.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism development has been identified as an effective way to revitalize the economy of a town or destination, whether rural or urban (Castelli & Cowboy Ortega, 2008; Chen & Chen, 2010; Suarez-Sanchez, 2007). However the tourism industry depends largely on the goodwill of the residents, their involvement and support (Andriotis, 2005; Long, 2012; Yoon, Gursoy, & Chen, 2001).

These authors refer the ideal practice, but when the planning decisions are taken, it is not done.

In the 60s, during the dictatorship of Francisco Franco, the Spanish State realized an opportunity to attract foreign investment, by offering good weather, beautiful beaches, landscapes and land from the Mediterranean shores to new investors as well as a cheap and abundant hand labor. Government favored the real estate development to create infrastructures in the short term, could meet the demands of accommodation, restoration and mobility of future visitors. At the beginning, new jobs were generated in the urban real estate industry and then, in the services sector, changing the way of life of the inhabitants of the coast, who used to be farmers, fishermen and masons. To adapt themselves to the emerging phenomenon of tourism, residents had to acquire knowledge that would enable them for tourist sector labors. Since then, that residents' generation and the following ones, have been living with visitors and adapting their lifestyle to the changing needs of the tourism demand, in order to capitalize and maximize the profits for themselves.

Local economy is the main concern that drives a region to become a tourist destination, especially when it has some natural or cultural values that can attract visitors. Many Spanish regions with limited funding sources adopt tourism as a solution to their economic development problems and therefore in these destinations, the expected economic benefits make the local population reaction to be very favorable to tourism. (Cater, 1987) (Cardona, 2012; Dogan Gursoy, Jurowski, & Uysal, 2002; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996).

In the Valencian coast, particularly Alcossebre, tourism has become the main engine of the local economy since the 80s. Therefore, it seems that the inhabitants of the small coastal towns should be very pleased with the presence of visitors and to ensure at all costs their enjoyment of the tourist experience for getting the maximum benefits for themselves.

1.1 Residents towards the tourist presence.

"Tourist activity in Spain has been the most important motor for the national economy growth and in particular for the Valencian coasts. It is one of the main activities which contribute to the development of many municipalities with attractiveness and other tourist destinations around these cities. However, for many years, this positive impact over society has overshadowed other aspects and implicit negative effects, such as environmental impacts or cultural ones in local populations".
García Pérez Mesanat & Sancho, 1999.

It is not possible to propose an unlimited tourism development (Hwansuk Chris Choi & Murray, 2010; Garcia, Sancho, & Valencia, 1999; García Pérez Mesanat & Sancho, 1999; Giussani, Luengo, & Poujol, 2010). It should be found a balance between the level of demand from visitors and the absorption capacity which the tourist territory and its resources can withstand without being damaged (Vera Rebollo & Ivars Baidal, 2003).

Furthermore, there is a social carrying capacity or tolerance threshold in all destinations, beyond which tourism development levels are unacceptable and the presence of tourists is intolerable by the local population. If local people perceived more strongly impacts negative than positive, it can lead to taking a belligerent stance against tourism, as we might say that this activity would be exceeding its capacity (Blasco Peris, 2009).

Therefore, trying to analyze if the threshold is exceeded or not is interesting.

While the volume of tourists and cumulative negative impacts are kept within reasonable limits of carrying capacity, tourism is accepted by residents (Garcia Perez Mesanat & Sancho, 1999; Suárez Sánchez, 2015). However, if this threshold is exceeded, the local population begins to show frustration and discontent signs that are perceived by the visitor. It is therefore important to measure if, for example, the local population experiences a set of negative environmental impacts that they considered are produced by tourism and the importance that residents give to this fact.

2. ALCOSSEBRE. Case study Research

This small coastal town is the holiday destination with the tourist model of sun and beach prevailing on the Mediterranean coast since the profitable business of mass tourism was released in the early 70's. Alcalá de Xivert municipality is located in a privileged area within the Mediterranean coast. Located between the Costa de Azahar and the interior Maestrat region, It surprises with an original landscape, rich, diverse and full of contrasts, where the plains and mountains alternate with beaches and rocky coastal areas.

There, surrounded by history, protected by the mountains of Irta and Murs, on a vast expanse of alluvial formation, belonging to the Alcalá de Xivert municipal term, the town of Alcossebre is found.



Figure 1. Alcossebre location in the province of Castellon.

Along the more than 10 Km. coastline belonging to Alcalá de Xivert-Alcossebre, it can be found a wide variety of beaches, from small secluded coves to large fully accessible beaches equipped with all the utilities necessary to rest and relax. They are beaches which have kept the blue flag (FEE, 2007) since its introduction.

Also, the supply of both hotel accommodation and second homes is mainly in the first line of the coast. To complete this tourism model, nautical recreational activities at the Las Fuentes marina, such as diving, sailing, sailing and excursions to the nearby Columbretes Islands are offered.



Figure 4. Alcossebre. Romana Beach. August 2014.

This tourism model, associated to the real estate industry, has provided of secure employment in the services sector and construction to the people of Alcossebre and in general, to the population of the Mediterranean coastal region. They have reached a better quantity of life, but tourism involves the problem of saturation associated with the summer season.

This adds overhead natural habitat, an increased demand for resources in a short period of time each year, an overflow capacity of infrastructure services and therefore, a deterioration of the overall tourist experience and the local people quality of life.

2.1. Demography

Alcossebre has experienced a notable increase in its population in recent times. In 1996, the municipality had 4,902 inhabitants and in 2012, this number had almost doubled. Table 1 shows its evolution since 2002, according to the IVE (Statistics Valencian Institute):



http://www.ive.es/porta1/page/porta1/IVE_PEGV/CONTENTS/fichas_mun/cas/Fichas/12004.pdf

People from all over Spain and the entire world, have come to settle in this town and in the neighboring ones, searching the employment opportunities that offer tourism and real estate industries. Due to tourism, the resident population has gone from being mainly local (61.3%), to a set of Northern European (24.45 %), Maghreb (11.3%), Latin (1.6%) and Eastern European (1.5%) nuclei.

3. THE SURVEY

3.1 General

In this work, a study of a well-known aspect of tourist activity like the impacts that tourism may have on host populations is realized. To meet the feelings of people in Alcossebre (Castellón province) and their attitude towards tourism and visitors, to also know the problems faced as residents and their possible reaction to the solutions that could be implemented to solve them.

According to the extensive literature on tourism in recent years, the perception of residents is an added value to take into account in the decision-making towards sustainable tourism (Hwan Suk Chris Choi & Sirakaya, 2006; Miller & Louise Twining-Ward, 2006; Pine, 2001). Beyond joint local Agendas21 programs, analyzing the feelings of the local people has not yet been implemented systematically towards sustainability in many localities.

The ways in which the inhabitants of Alcossebre perceive and feel towards the presence of visitors, in their role as host community, is explored. These purely subjective and difficult to measure effects which it also suffers to the problems associated with human and vehicular seasonal overloading were interpreted.

The methodology employed is based on a survey conducted in Alcossebre during the months August, September and October 2014, with a valid sample of 367 residents. The econometric treatment to quantify those unquantifiable aspects of tourism was through a questionnaire designed with such questions ranking and Likert scale.

3.2 Method of work

To measure the tourism impact experienced by the local population, it has chosen the direct method based on the first hand information provided by the local population, in order to know their perception about the advantages or disadvantages of the life in a tourist destination.

This is why it has used this method and no other type of indirect or observable. The simplest mechanism to figure out how to value the citizen resident tourism impacts is to ask them directly through a survey.

3.3 Technical details of the survey

Scope: Local, Spanish: Alcossebre, a town of *Alcalá de Xivert*, Castellón Province

Universe: Resident Population.

Data source: Questionnaires.

Sample: 459 residents / questionnaires completed. The response rate of valid questionnaires was 79.96%, corresponding to 367 questionnaires. The sample constituted 4.5% of a population of 8218 inhabitants, with a confidence interval of 5 and with a confidence level of 95%. The sample calculation was performed by the portal <http://es.gmi-mr.com/solutions/sample-size-calculator.php>

Data collection method: By questionnaire with thirteen items, realized by 5 identified residents.

Data processing: The answers were entered into a database created in Excel. First, the graphics and tables corresponding to the results of each question in each category percentages were performed. Then, using matrix functions (according to formula) the weighted average of each question for each category of the 4 variables chosen was obtained. The results provide insight into the likelihood of response or perception of the population towards each raised situation.

Undertaken Survey: August to October 2014.

3.4 Methodology

3.4.1 Questionnaire Design

The measuring instrument applied to surveys of residents was based on a 13-item questionnaire that addresses the demographic profile of residents in the sample, seeks commenting on the economic, cultural, social and environmental aspects in general (Jinx, Ma, 2012) they have observed about the impact of tourism in their environments. It ends with questions about his attitude and disposition toward tourist (Cardona, 2012; Vega Perez, 2011). This questionnaire has been adapted to the particularities of the case study, such as culture, rooted to the spot and socioeconomic status of the population, among other considerations.

Due to the length of the questionnaire and the objectives of the survey, blocks of questions were condensed into 13 items divided into 4 sections:

THEMATIC BLOCK I: The attractiveness tourists are looking for visiting Alcossebre (question 1)

THEMATIC BLOCK II: The benefits that tourist arrivals bring to residents (questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

THEMATIC BLOCK III: The deterioration, problems and impacts that residents attribute to tourists (questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12)

THEMATIC BLOCK IV: Predisposition to invite tourists to return (question 13)

Questionnaire design for a mixed approach, combining Ranking closed questions with other valuation was used. 9 questions are designed to be measured according to the Likert scale (1 = none, disagree, and 5 = Very much, totally agree, definitely Yes, completely satisfied) and 4 closed ones (Ranking) with different options for choosing from. These closed questions facilitate the respondent's answer and are easy to encode. Some have introduced the *Others* option. Thus, the respondent expressed if desired, in more detail its views (Sharpley, 2000; SurveyMonkey, 2008; Walonick, 2012).

The measurement method used for the valuation questions was the psychometric Likert scale (1932) (Cardona, 2012; Clason & Dormody, 1994; D. Gursoy et al, 2010; Hitchcock & Porter, 2004; Long, 2012; Sharpley, 2014), which specifies the level of agreement or disagreement with a statement or question. Unlike dichotomous questions with yes / no, the Likert scale measure attitudes and determine the degree of compliance of respondent with any of the statements or questions that are proposed. It has chosen to use it because the questionnaire raises situations in which it is intended that the person to tinge his/her opinion. In this regard, the response categories were used to capture the intensity of the feelings of the respondent to that statement or question.

The sample of 367 participants who answered the entire questionnaire was segmented in 4 groups of variables as proposed by Cardona (2012):

By sex (gender), by age (since 16 to 75), by occupation (officer, worker by their own, employed, retiree, housekeeper, student and others) and by place of origin, regarded as residents foreign immigrants with more than 7 years in the territory, because their belonging and integration sense.

As for the fieldwork, the amount of questionnaires, lack of funds and the need to have employees who could identify residents were major difficulties, which made the task of interviewing and data collection to be extended. On the other hand, the low response from groups with aversion to surveys, whatever their means of interview, was an added risk for the study.

3.4.2 Weighted Average

Calculate the weighted average is appropriate to obtain a measure of central tendency and when a data has a relative importance (or weight) related to other data, such as questions of valuation (scale Likert). It is obtained by multiplying each of the weighting data (weight) and then adding them, thereby obtaining a weighted sum. Then it is divided by the sum of the weights, resulting in a weighted average (Conceptual, 2010; Soler, Arias, & Pizarro, 2014). This survey data set taken was the number of participants in each category of the 4 variables and weights, from 5 to 1, according to the Likert scale.

3.4.2.1 Formula

$$WA = \frac{w_1X_1 + w_2X_2 + \dots + w_nX_n}{w_1 + w_2 + \dots + w_n}$$

Where:

(X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n) is the data set and (w_1, w_2, \dots, w_n) the weights.

The result is the weighted weight of the response trend.

4. RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This study is immersed in the knowledge and the understanding of the residents' perceptions about the impacts of tourism over their lives. Their attitudes toward tourism development are critical to the success and sustainability of decisions and actions of planners, especially in heavily dependent on this phenomenon populations. Similarly, this research is getting to meet the problems that matter to local people, to what extent are to tourism attributed and the given importance.

The Age variable was the most significant for better knowing the feelings and attitudes. Youngest people, often as students and tourist sector employees were more condescending towards tourist presence and tended to minimize the potential environmental impacts.

4.1 Sociodemographic Profile

Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents by number and percentage, according to the 4 variables. By sex, by age, by occupation and by place of origin and their corresponding categories are shown.

Sociodemographic Profile					
Population 8.218 inhabs.			Sample 367 questionnaires		
VARIABLE	CATEGORIES			Total of the category	PERCENTAGE
SEX		GENDER			
		MEN		156	42,51
			WOMEN	211	57,49
		MEN	WOMEN		
AGE	16-25	16	25	41	11,17
	26-35	27	33	60	16,35
	36-45	29	38	67	18,26
	46-55	32	42	74	20,16
	56-65	30	39	69	18,80
	66-75	22	34	56	15,26
OCCUPATION	Officer	11	16	27	7,36
	Worker with their own	26	9	35	9,54
	Employee	59	47	106	28,88
	Retiree	29	41	70	19,07
	Housewife	6	63	69	18,80
	Student	22	20	42	11,44
	Others	3	15	18	4,90
ORIGIN	Native	48	53	101	27,52
	Born in the region	35	76	111	30,25
	Born in Spain	54	50	104	28,34
	Inmigrant with over 7 years of residence	19	32	51	13,90

Table 2. Socio-demographic profile of the sample surveyed. 4 variables and their corresponding categories in which respondents were distributed is.

Of the 367 respondents, 156 were men and 211 women, of whom 168 were under 45 and 199 aged 46 to 75. The largest number of participants, 106, worked as an employee. Only 51 respondents were rooted immigrants, with 316 nationals. It was noted more willing to answer the questionnaire in women, people over 46 and Spanish residents as well as employees who are mostly engaged in tourism services.

The design of the questionnaire, to be short and direct (13 questions prepared by the mixed method), was a facilitating factor for the high survey response. The questions, being mostly valuation, were easily collected and calculated in an Excel spreadsheet for the trend of the answers.

4.2 Calculation of results

The questionnaire consists of 13 questions, 4 of them closed type ranking, that is to say that there are different options to choose from in order of importance to the respondent. This is the case questions 1, 9, 11 and 12 (see questionnaire). The rest of the questions were designed to be measured according to the Likert scale, that is, considering the following assessment:

5 = A lot; 4 = Pretty, Enough; 3 = Regular; 2 = Something or somewhat and 1 = little or nothing.

In these questions, the results showing the likely trend of the response is through the Weighted Average formula calculated. (section 3.4.2.1). That is, if the answer gets a score of 3.4 the result will be more tending to *Regular* and if 3.8, shall be construed to be more prone to *Pretty*.

The questions were designed according to this scale are the 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 13. (See questionnaire in Table 6. Table Abstract).

4.2.1. Sample of calculation based on the type of question

Variable: Gender (Sex)

Categories: Men and Women

A breakdown of the calculation of the results according to the type of question, for example variable Gender, comprising two categories shown.

In the ranking type questions, you can see the result of the trend response, calculated in percentages by their characteristics. For example, in question 1, the requirement to mark *What are the reasons do you think attract tourists to visit Alcossebre?* The most chosen answer was *The beaches*. In the tables below you can note that it was chosen by 46.79% of men and 31.28% women.

You may also notice that as the second reason for visiting Alcossebre, the *Gastronomic offer* was selected by 27.49% of women while men felt that it was in *Real Estate Offer* 22.44%.

Calculation of the most probable trend of response in the survey "Perception of Resident Alcossebre towards tourism"					
Ranking closed questions	Options		GENDER		
			%Men	%Women	Response Trend
1. What grounds do you think attract tourists to visit Alcossebre? Please rank the following options.	1	The Beaches	46,79	31,28	The beaches
	2	The Gastronomic Offer	21,15	27,49	The Gastronomy
	3	To share cultural experiences with residents	5,13	11,37	
	4	For the supply of real estate products: holiday apartments	22,44	17,06	The real state products offer
	5	To visit markets and fairs (purchases)	-	7,11	
	6	By offering recreational activities naturalist: hiking, walking, diving, etc.	4,49	0,95	
	7	Others	-	4,74	

Table 3. Calculation of the most probable answer to the question type ranking.

Question no. 1.

In the valuation questions, Likert scale, the results of the calculation of the weighted average can also be seen in the example of the Gender variable, along with the results for percentages of the responses of men and women.

In Question 2. *Do you think the visit of tourists benefits economically to Alcossebre residents.* It shows that 54.49% of men valued it with the highest appreciation (5), as well as 45.50% of women.

Calculating the weighted average by categories and by the total population, a value of 4.10 is obtained, which is interpreted like most of people in Alcossebre, both men and women, believe that the visit of tourists benefits *pretty* or *enough* to the locals.

LIKERT type question	Weight	Interpretation	Gender % Men	Gender % Mujeres	Weighted Average Men	Weighted Average Women	Ttotal population Weighted Average
2. Do you think that the visit of tourists to Alcossebre benefits economically to its residents?	5	Much, A lot	54,49	45,50	2,72	2,27	2,50
	4	Pretty	23,08	28,91	0,92	1,16	1,04
	3	Regular	10,26	13,74	0,31	0,41	0,36
	2	Somethig	6,41	9,00	0,13	0,18	0,15
	1	Little	5,77	2,84	0,06	0,03	0,04
			100,00	100,00	4,14	4,05	4,10

Table 4. Calculation of the weighted average to determine the trend of the response to question Likert. Question no. 2.

The same procedure was performed to calculate other variables and categories, as described in the table in socio-demographic profile (section 4.1).

4.4 Overall results by thematic blocks and variables for the Age variable.

In the case of the variable Age, it specially determines the outcome of the response. Note that this variable has been the one that has produced the most interesting data from the survey and that it represents the feelings of the host community.

On the other hand, beyond the statistical measurement, feedback collected by pollsters as marginal notes of the answers given are presented. These comments reflect the opinions of the residents who felt motivated to provide more information about the current problems in Alcossebre and the natural environment, the reasons that cause them and some concerns about the regional development.

The overall results for the four thematic blocks into which the questionnaire (Section 3.4) are integrated considering the variables and their categories, are presented below:

THEMATIC BLOCK I

- The attractive to tourists looking to visit Alcossebre

QUESTION

1. Mark the reasons you think tourists would visit Alcossebre.

The most chosen option to this question was *the beaches*, as the main reason to visit Alcossebre with 46% of the total, regardless of variables (sex, age, occupation and origin). The second place was for the option *the gastronomy* with 23% and the third one, for *the supply of real estate products* with 17% of responses.

To this first question, young people between 16 and 25 years (11,17% of total sample), 63.41% responded that the beaches were the main reason for the visit to Alcossebre and for the overall result this assessment contributes to this attraction be the most likely answer; but also in this question, the youngest people was the only age group that said there were other reasons for the visit, as were the night clubs, parties in pubs and also the only group that did not mention the real estate offer as a reason, not surprisingly because of age, they believe not buy any property as an investment yet. Students and employed persons also gave more weight to the beaches as the main reason for the visit, with 60% of the answers the first ones, reinforcing the results by age and 56% the second ones, which generally have jobs in hospitality industry and restoration. Entrepreneurs more often chose *the cuisine or gastronomy* (40%) followed of retirees by 36%. Note that in this last group of occupation, more willing to respond enthusiastically, it was women who weighted the gastronomic value of the products of their land and traditional dishes to be devoted mostly to be housekeepers.

The third option most voted, *the real estate option*, residents over 36 years thought that it was another attraction to visit Alcossebre, since 90% chose.

THEMATIC BLOCK II

- The benefits that tourist arrivals bring to residents (questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

QUESTIONS

2. *Do you think that the visit of tourists benefits economically to Alcossebre residents?*

3. *Do you think that tourist arrivals ensures long-term socio-economic benefits among which is stable employment opportunities and social services to raise the quality of life of the residents?*

4. *Do you consider that tourism stimulates local culture?*

5. *Do you consider that tourist arrivals to the city have improved Alcossebre infrastructure services (roads, transportation, access to the beaches, information technology, businesses etc.)?*

6. *Are you satisfied with the arrival of tourists to the residential / developments Alcossebre areas?*

Although no full unanimity in the response by groups of variables was observed, the weighted average of this answer is 3.83, suiting the trend towards *moderately satisfied*. In this thematic block about the socio-economic and cultural benefits that tourism could bring to improve the quality of life for residents of Alcossebre, youngest people responded with a resounding *Much* (85%), followed by those between 26 and 35 (68%). The other options were only by the eldest people mentioned. Residents feel that tourism results on more employment opportunities than traditional productive activities.

Therefore, it is fair to say that the younger residents are hopeful about developing themselves professionally in their hometown. They have their employment and economic expectations set in the presence of tourists and the activities involved in tourism. They realise it's possible to achieve their own company in the sector at the medium and long term.

However, residents between 36 and 55 years were more conservative about the same questions, because at the time they were asked, they mentioned that they would like the city and the region in general, to have greater industrial, agricultural and livestock development and not rely both the dynamics of tourism as at present.

However, they acknowledged it would take to propel political will and a shift in the mentality of young people to engage in other economic activities away from the tourist sector.

Young people between 16 and 35 years responded most enthusiastically to the question *Do you think that tourism stimulates local culture?*, question 4, with 72% between the two groups (16-25 and 26-35). The other age ranges considered mildly stimulates tourism and precisely the answers of young people made the tendency for the overall opinion is that the stimulated *enough*.

As young people referred, tourism provides the late tendencies in fashion, technology and mainly in music. Besides, due to tourism they have the opportunity of meeting new people from other places and they feel encouraged to visit other countries and to learn another languages.

Adults and older residents were concerned about that tourism leaves a negative influence over the youth when local culture begins to be modified and impact the identity and traditions or, in some cases makes them to disappear.

They feared above all the emergence of new ways of thinking, foreign to local and national ones. However, they appreciated that the presence of tourists was a motivator item for young people in search of cultural experiences in other countries.

Another question that appreciates significantly the younger people satisfaction by the arrival and presence of tourists is in question 6. Residents between 16 and 25 mostly responded that they were very satisfied with this situation because they can get job stability and meet new people by 76%.

This enthusiasm shows in the weighted average of the age group that is the highest of all categories of this variable by far. Difference is especially noticeable with the responses of retired residents, who perceive in excessive tourist presence a source of oppression, scarcity of goods and rising prices, especially in the summer. 76% responded that they were *moderately satisfied* with this situation.

THEMATIC BLOCK III

- The deterioration, problems and impacts that residents attribute to tourists (questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)

QUESTIONS

7. Please, remark what extent is it important to you as a resident of Alcossebre, beaches and natural surroundings to be respected as a tourist attraction.

8. Do you consider the natural landscape (beaches, Sierra de Irta Natural Park, etc.) is being degraded by effects of tourism?

9. How has the natural landscape been deteriorated due to tourism, in your point of view?

10. Have you noticed any urban environment deterioration due to tourism?

11. How has the urban environment been deteriorated due to tourism, in your point of view?

12. Where do you notice major problems due to tourism?

The satisfaction of 16 to 25 years old people about the presence of tourists is complemented by the importance given to respect the beaches and the natural environment, and that 72% thought so. The age groups of 26-35 and 36-45 years were the most concerned about, with 73 and 74% respectively, and were more alert. This can be seen in the weighted averages of these categories in Question 7 and while recognizing that there are environmental problems, not entirely attributed to tourists, but often attributed to the immigrants in their opinion, with no Environmental education and therefore they do not know how to care for the natural environment.

This question is also observed in adults between 46 and 65. These groups give slightly less importance to the behavior of tourists (67%), because they consider that currently the tourist has learned to care for the environment and helps to maintain it.

However, most respondents (82%) agreed that undoubtedly exists an environmental deterioration, mainly perceived in the lack of clean beaches, due to human overload summer, although the attribute more while the inefficiency of municipal cleaning and apologize greatly to tourism.

As for the deteriorating city center (question 10), the young people perceive minor damage, 48%, reaffirming their pleasure at the presence of visitors. The remaining age groups were more critical reaching 85% by summing responses and *pretty much* in the group of 36-45 years. Oldest population mostly complained that the effects of tourism were left particularly strong in increasing the *amount of waste, in the increase of people and vehicles in the center of town, as also as affecting its image*. They also regretted with younger ones about rising prices (23 and 22% of each group) at the peak tourist seasons. While this perception was widespread, it was further strengthened between these age groups because students or retirees have less economic resources.

THEMATIC BLOCK IV

- Predisposition to invite tourists to return (question 13)

QUESTION

13. Would you invite a tourist to return for another stay in Alcossebre?

Residents are proud of their landscapes and gastronomy mainly and mostly of them want the world to know and appreciate their natural beauties. They are also aware that tourism is currently the main driver of the local economy and it is essential for the survival of its inhabitants and the development of the region.

In the last 60 years tourism has occupied the leading place as a generator of local wealth, so the residents have already learned to live with tourists and with the advantages and disadvantages of their presence, so there are especially reluctant to keep coming on vacation to Alcossebre, but even they wish. The advantages obtained with this are largely weighted to the disadvantages and trust that tourists value the natural beauty and the services offered and respect them during your stay.

4.5 Summary Table

Below, in Table 6, the overall results of the completed questionnaire are summarized. These data refer to the weighted averages and percentages, obtained according to the type of question, the 4 variables (Sex (gender), Age, Occupation and Origin) and their corresponding categories.

SURVEY SUMMARY TABLE "Alcossebre Residents' perception toward tourism"

Ranking closed questions	Question Type	Total Average percentage(TAP) %	Most voted response
1. What grounds do you think attract tourists to visit Alcossebre? Please rank the following options.	Options	46,08	The beaches
9. Under your point of view, check how the natural landscape has been deteriorated due to tourism.	Options	46,04	The cleanliness of the beaches
11. Mark please, how the urban environment has been deteriorated due to tourism.	Options	38,69	The cleanliness of the town
12. What items do you think are the best shown of the impacts or effects due to the tourist presence in Alcossebre? Rank them, please.	Options	31,53	The amount of garbage
LIKERT type Questions	Type of Question	Total Weighted Average (TWA)	Response trend
2. Do you think that the visit of tourists to Alcossebre benefits economically to its residents?	Likert escale 5-1	4,28	Pretty
3. Do you think that tourist arrivals ensures long-term socio-economic benefits such as stable employment opportunities and social services to raise the quality of life of the residents?	Likert escale 5-1	4,32	Pretty
4. Do you consider that tourism stimulates local culture?	Likert escale 5-1	3,40	Regular
5. Do you think the arrival of tourists to the area have been improved Alcossebre infrastructure services (roads, transportation, access to the beaches, information technology, businesses etc.)?	Likert escale 5-1	4,34	Pretty
6. Are you satisfied with the arrival of tourists to the residential areas in Alcossebre ?	Likert escale 5-1	3,65	Moderately satisfied
7. Check what extent is it important to you as a resident of Alcossebre that beaches and natural surroundings are respected as a tourist attraction.	Likert escale 5-1	4,45	Pretty important
8. Do you consider the natural landscape (beaches, natural park of Sierra de Irta, etc.) is being degraded by effects of tourism?	Likert escale 5-1	4,33	Pretty
10. Have you noticed about deteriorating urban environment (people) due to tourism?	Likert escale 5-1	4,17	Pretty
13. Would you invite any tourist to return for another stay in Alcossebre?	Likert escale 5-1	4,16	Probably YES

Likert scale: 5= A lot, much; 4= Pretty; 3=Regular, Moderatly; 2= Something; 1= Little

Table 6. Summary table of the survey. The questionnaire are divided by questions type for better understanding of the results.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Having to rely heavily on tourism, it is not surprising that respondents put high hopes on it for their economic well-being and tend to have positive attitudes towards tourism. Despite the perception of some negative impacts, residents perceived as beneficial overall effects. They associate tourism with a significant industry that supports the local economy, giving employment opportunities, business and investment, a variety of cultural activities, cultural exchange with tourists, recreational activities and restoration of historic buildings. However, the local population blamed the tourism raising prices of real estate products, the cost of many goods and services, causing traffic congestion, waste, water pollution, air and soil, noise and decrease the availability of landscapes natural and farmland.

They indicated however, that tourism can help improve the quality of life of residents, making them proud of their land and local culture, bringing products and quality services to transport tourists and make Alcossebre visible at international level.

Therefore, they adapt or resign themselves to live with the negative consequences because the benefits have a greater weight. Respondents were fairly moderate further in attributing exclusively to tourism environmental costs and socio-cultural. The study suggests that respondents highly support tourism development, but were concerned about the roles of government and the local community in control and support tourism. The value of this study is that through knowledge generated by the responses of the local population in terms of the perceived problems, mainly environmental, it can help to consider the perception of the host community to the tourist presence as an important part in the decision making and implementation of actions and policies towards sustainable tourism development. Also, it is useful to understand the environmental, social and economic problems that residents are detecting on their area and day to day and contribute equally to decision-making to prevent negative reactions towards the tourist presence. Such is the case of human and vehicular overhead in summer, mainly in the urban environment, so it should take notice of the tourist volume control in arriving and about the seasonality.

Overall, resident people in Alcossebre have a quite satisfactory perception of tourism because the favorable impact on their welfare and the improvement of their quality of life. Tourism carries economic profits, employment and services improvement and residents tend to minimize the environmental impacts attributable to the presence of tourists. They blame the government to avoid the negative effects of tourism.

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