

# เมื่อบ้านเกิดกลายเป็นจุดหมายปลายทางการท่องเที่ยว: ความคิดเห็นของเด็กวัย เรียนต่อผลกระทบการท่องเที่ยวประเภทเกาะ

## Our Homeland is A Tourist Destination: Voices of School-Aged Children towards Island Tourism Impacts

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### บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษานี้จัดทำขึ้นเพื่อตรวจสอบการรับรู้ผลกระทบจากการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวประเภทเกาะของเด็กต่างเพศ ความพึงพอใจในชีวิต และการสนับสนุนการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวประเภทเกาะ การวิจัยนี้เป็นการวิจัยเชิงปริมาณและศึกษาประชากรห้างหมัดได้แก่ นักเรียนในระดับมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 1-6 จำนวน 181 คน โรงเรียนลันตราษฎร์ฯ โดยใช้แบบสอบถามเป็นเครื่องมือการวิจัย และใช้โปรแกรมทางสถิติในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล ผลการศึกษาพบว่า เด็กนักเรียนมีการรับรู้ในแง่ต่อผลกระทบเชิงบวกทางเศรษฐกิจที่เกิดจากการท่องเที่ยว การรับรู้นั้นส่งเสริมให้เด็กพิจารณาการเติบโตขององค์กรท่องเที่ยวบนเกาะเป็นหนึ่งในปัจจัยหลักที่ก่อให้เกิดความพึงพอใจในชีวิต และความเป็นอยู่ที่ดีของชุมชน นอกจากนี้ผลประโยชน์ทางเศรษฐกิจจากการท่องเที่ยวที่ตอบสนองความต้องการทางกายภาพของเด็กได้โดยเป็นสิ่งกระตุ้นสำคัญในการสนับสนุนการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวในเกาะอีกด้วย

**คำสำคัญ:** การท่องเที่ยวประเภทเกาะ ผลกระทบการท่องเที่ยว ความพึงพอใจในชีวิต การสนับสนุนการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวประเภทเกาะ เด็กวัยเรียน

### Abstract

This study examines perceptions of children with different gender towards salient impacts from island tourism development, their life satisfaction in general and their support for island tourism development. This study employed quantitative research method and the census study, including 181 students who studied in the secondary school level 1-6 at Lantaratpracha-utthit School. A structured self-administered questionnaire was used as a research tool. Statistical analysis program was used to analyze the data. Research finding shows that the children have optimistic perceptions towards positive economic impacts generated from tourism. These perceptions encourage them to consider tourism growth on their island as one of main causes of their life satisfaction and their community's well-being. Furthermore, economic benefits acquired from tourism, which fulfil the children's physiological needs, are major stimuli that encourage the children to support island tourism development.

**Keywords:** Island tourism, Tourism impact, Life satisfaction, Support for island tourism development, School-aged children

**Paper Type:** Research

## 1. Introduction

Tourism has been an important industry at island destinations for centuries. Island tourism not only boosts islands' economic growth, but leads to the improved infrastructure and well-being of the hosts. Many islands have succumbed to the globalization pressures. Island tourism has been thriving worldwide, ranging from less- to over-developed examples, based on the potential cultural and natural resources on islands, such as Boa Vista Island, Cape Verde (Eusébio, Vieira, & Lima, 2018) and Little Liuqiu, Orchid and Green Islands, Taiwan (Yu, Huang, Yeh, & Chao, 2017).

Koh Lanta became a well-known island destination among the Thai and international tourists that has hosted the influx of large numbers of tourists since the year 2005. Total arrivals surpassed one million in the year 2017 ([www.krabi-magazine.com](http://www.krabi-magazine.com), 2018). The tourism development had profound effects on the destination and the local communities, similarly to other tourist destinations of the Triangle Andaman Provinces (Phuket, Phang-nga and Krabi) (The Phuket News, 2015).

The impact of tourism on children, their life satisfaction and support for tourism development in developing countries is a research area that could be further developed (Kim, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2013; Morrow, & Crivello, 2015). To achieve the sustainability of island tourism development, its impacts on children, as the future adult hosts should be thoroughly considered. As stated by Liu and Li (2018), residents' demographic factors influence the residents' perceptions towards tourism impacts such as age, gender, education, job and income. For example, women could be more conflicting to tourism than men according to increased traffic congestion, crime or occupational variances. In addition, the women were more attentive of negative tourism impacts and were likely to support tourism development in their communities.

Based on the aforementioned statement, the purpose of this paper is to examine the perceptions of children of different gender towards salient impacts (economic, socio-cultural and environmental) from island tourism development, their life satisfaction in general and their support for island tourism development.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Island tourism

Small island tourism has become a very significant part of the tourism industry (Ramdas, & Mohamed, 2014). As tourism destinations, small islands provide beauty, exotic appeal and a diversity of natural habitats (Kurniawan, Adrianto, Bengen, & Prasetyo, 2016). In addition, island tourism denotes the miracle of tourism development on islands, which precedes the formation of tourism facilities along with an amalgamation of the island's picturesque locations and urban expansions. This highlights tourism's role as both a development tool to boost the economy (Croes, Rivera, & Semrad, 2017) and a destructive agent, which encroach the islands' local residents, jeopardize their environmental development and bring about deterioration of local culture (Yang, Ge, Ge, Xi, & Li, 2016).

### 2.2 Tourism impacts

In any area of tourism development, the local hosts often point out the development issues related to tourism, especially economic, socio-cultural and environmental changes on their life (Alaeddinoglu, Turker, & Can, 2016). It is believed that tourism provides the opportunity of better standard of living (Alaeddinoglu, et al., 2016), investment, infrastructure development (Yang, Ge, Ge, Xi, & Li, 2016), medical service and facilities development. However, tourism also creates significant problems such as pollution, demonstration effects, and commodification (Alaeddinoglu, et al., 2016; Liang, & Hui, 2016; Nunkoo, & So, 2016) and more so for vulnerable members of communities, such as the children, with the instances of sexual abuse, child prostitution and exploitation (Curley, 2014; Tirasattayapitak, & Thammajak, 2018). The carrying capacity of islands is usually weaker than the mainland so the higher resistance towards tourism is often observed (Monterrubio, 2016). The tourism impacts directly affect community development (Kim, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2013). The level of economic development and the local hosts' expectations underline the quality of life living in the community (Alaeddinoglu, et al., 2016). Hence, the hosts with positive perception of tourism benefits are more likely to support the tourism development and participate in exchange with the visitors (Woo, Kim, & Uysal, 2015).

### 3. Research methods

#### 3.1 Key informants

This study employed quantitative research method and the census study. The census study included 181 children who were studying at Lantarapracha-uthit School in the secondary school level 1-6. Study participants were 12-17 years-old at the time of study and lived with families at Koh Lanta Yai District, Koh Lanta, Krabi Province. The school-aged children were defined as individuals in between childhood and adulthood – of age between 12 and 17 years old (Spiers, 2017). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) was strictly adopted during the study process. The children received a thorough explanation about the research project before they were asked to decide if they would give consent for the data collection. The researcher treated the children with care and support within a safe environment during the field survey (Graham, Powell, Taylor, Anderson & Fitzgerald, 2013; Tirasattayapitak & Thammajak, 2018). The children were protected from all forms of exploitation (Beazley, Bessell, Ennew & Waterson, 2006).

#### 3.2 Research tool

A structured self-administered questionnaire was developed as a research tool. The questionnaire used a Likert scale (4 = strongly agree/ very high and 1= very disagree/ very low) to measure items. The questionnaire was reviewed by experts in tourism field to check the content

validity and the appropriateness of the research tools, using the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC). The study conducted the pretest with a sample of 40 school-aged children to examine the content validity, the construct validity, and the reliability of the questions using the Coefficient Alpha of Cronbach (Churchill, 1979). The reliability statistics of Cronbach's Alpha test are 0.788 which well-defined the reliability of the overall questionnaire.

#### 3.3 Data collection and analysis

Regarding the data collection, the children who were involved in the field survey freely self-administered the questionnaires. The program for statistical analysis in social science was used to support the data analysis and the uncomplicated data interpretation. As the questions included 4 level scales, ranging from strongly agree and very high (3.26 - 4.00) to strongly disagree and very low (1.00 – 1.75), the meaning of each assessed level was determined from an interval level of 0.75.

### 4. Results

#### 4.1 Analysis of demographic profiles of respondents

Of the 181 respondents, 105 (58.0%) were female while 76 (42%) were male (Table 1). Most of the respondents were 14-15 years old (42.5%), had lived at Koh Lanta for 10-14 years (48.6%), and had parents who did not work in tourism industry (74.0%).

**Table 1:** Demographic profiles of respondents

Demographic items	Frequency (N=181)	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	76	42.0
Female	105	58.0
<b>Age</b>		
Younger than 14 years old	45	24.9
14-15 years old	77	42.5
Older than 15 years old	59	32.6
<b>Duration of stay at Koh Lanta</b>		
Less than 10 years	21	11.6
10-14 years	88	48.6
15-20 years	71	39.2
<b>Occupation of parents</b>		
Occupations related to tourism	47	26.0
Occupations not related to tourism	134	74.0

4. 2 Children's perceptions towards salient economic impacts from island tourism development at Koh Lanta, Krabi Province

As shown in Table 2, the island tourism on Koh Lanta created the positive economic impacts on children, their families and villagers in the community at very high level

for an indicator "the quality of life of my family is improving, for example; the family is happier, and I have good food to eat" ( $M = 3.48$ ,  $SD = .573$ ). In addition, tourism created the negative impacts at very high level for an indicator "the price of lands and houses is increasingly expensive" ( $M = 3.24$ ,  $SD = .819$ )

**Table 2:** The children's perceptions of economic impacts from island tourism development

Economic Impacts	Mean (N=181)	Std. Deviation	Level of impact
1. The quality of life of my family is improving, for example; the family is happier, and I have good food to eat.	3.48	.573	Very high (Positive)
2. The villagers have more job employments.	3.21	.707	High (Positive)
3. My parents earn more income and are able to buy variety of goods needed by the family.	3.18	.589	High (Positive)
4. The villagers earn more income.	3.10	.692	High (Positive)
5. The price of lands and houses on Koh Lanta is increasingly expensive.	3.24	.819	High (Negative)
6. The daily cost of living, price of food and other goods are increasing.	3.19	.822	High (Negative)

Table 3 revealed that the children of different gender did not perceive the economic impacts differently for all indicators with the p-values 0.890, 0.524, 0.435, 0.106, 0.134, and 0.722. The p-value of each indicator was higher

than the significant level at 0.05. This determined that there were not statistically significant differences of opinions between the respondents of different gender.

**Table 3:** Children's perceptions of economic impacts from island tourism development analyzed by genders (t-Test)

Economic Impacts on Koh Lanta	Gender	Number (N=181)	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value (df =179)	p-value
1. The quality of life of my family is improving, for example; the family is happier, and I have good food to eat.	Male	76	3.47	.599	-.139	.890
	Female	105	3.49	.557		
2. My parents earn more income and are able to buy variety of goods needed by the family.	Male	76	3.14	.534	-.622	.524
	Female	105	3.20	.626		
3. The daily cost of living, price of food and other goods are increasing.	Male	76	3.13	.869	-.783	.435
	Female	105	3.23	.788		
4. The villagers earn more income.	Male	76	3.20	.712	1.627	.106
	Female	105	3.03	.672		
5. The villagers have more job employments.	Male	76	3.30	.674	1.505	.134
	Female	105	3.14	.726		
6. The price of lands and houses is increasingly expensive.	Male	76	3.26	.806	.357	.722
	Female	105	3.22	.832		

*4. 3 Children's perceptions towards salient environmental impacts from island tourism development at Koh Lanta, Krabi Province*

As shown in Table 4, the children voted that the island tourism created very high and high negative impacts on the environment for all indicators such as "the number of

buildings and construction on Koh Lanta is very increasing" ( $M = 3.31$ ,  $SD = .805$ ), and "tourism causes the natural resources on Koh Lanta degraded such as the deterioration of forests, and the change of paddy fields to hotels and villas" ( $M = 3.06$ ,  $SD = .935$ ).

**Table 4:** The children's perceptions of environmental impacts from island tourism development

Environmental impacts	Mean (N=181)	Std. Deviation	Level of impact
1. The number of buildings and construction on Koh Lanta is very increasing.	3.31	.805	Very high (Negative)
2. Tourism causes the natural resources on Koh Lanta degraded such as the deterioration of forests, and the change of paddy fields to hotels and villas.	3.06	.935	High (Negative)
3. I see the cumulative garbage and waste on beaches and everywhere on Koh Lanta.	2.91	1.031	High (Negative)
4. There are often a traffic jam and accidents on Koh Lanta	2.79	.978	High (Negative)

In addition, Table 5 showed that the children of different gender perceived some environmental impacts differently. They voiced that the island tourism development created the negative consequences for the indicators of "I see the cumulative garbage and waste on beaches and everywhere on Koh Lanta" for male children ( $M = 2.72$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ) and female children ( $M = 3.04$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ) conditions;  $t (179) = -2.042$ ,  $p = .043$ , "There are often a traffic jam and

accidents on Koh Lanta" for male children ( $M = 2.54$ ,  $SD = .94$ ) and female children ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = .97$ ) conditions;  $t (179) = -2.998$ ,  $p = .003$  and "Tourism causes the natural resources on Koh Lanta degraded such as the deterioration of forests, and the change of paddy fields to hotels and villas" for male children ( $M = 2.84$ ,  $SD = .95$ ) and female children ( $M = 3.21$ ,  $SD = .89$ ) conditions;  $t (179) = -2.652$ ,  $p = .009$ .

**Table 5:** The children's perceptions of environmental impacts from island tourism development analyzed by gender

Environmental impacts on Koh Lanta	Gender	N	Mean	Std deviation	t-value (df =179)	p-value
1. The number of buildings and construction is very increasing.	Male	76	3.21	.869	-1.409	.160
	Female	105	3.38	.752		
2. I see the cumulative garbage and waste on beaches and everywhere.	Male	76	2.72	1.028	-2.042	.043*
	Female	105	3.04	1.018		
3. There are often a traffic jam and accidents.	Male	76	2.54	.944	-2.998	.003*
	Female	105	2.97	.965		
4. Tourism causes the natural resources degraded such as the deterioration of forests, and the change of paddy fields to hotels and villas.	Male	76	2.84	.953	-2.652	.009*
	Female	105	3.21	.895		

*4.4 Children's perceptions towards salient socio-cultural impacts from island tourism development at Koh Lanta, Krabi Province*

The results in Table 6 exposed that the children considered the very high positive socio-cultural impacts from island tourism development for an indicator "I am proud and significantly help preserve the culture of Koh Lanta" ( $M =$

3.55,  $SD = .609$ ) and the high negative impacts for indicators "I heard from the adults that the problem of thefts and crimes on Koh Lanta is much increasing because of the tourism" ( $M = 2.58$ ,  $SD = .931$ ), and "my parents and I have less time to participate the important religious practices and traditions" ( $M = 2.56$ ,  $SD = 1.007$ ).

**Table 6:** The children's perceptions of socio-cultural impacts from island tourism development

<b>Socio-cultural impacts</b>	<b>Mean (N=181)</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Level of impact</b>
1. I am proud and significantly help preserve the culture of Koh Lanta.	3.55	.609	Very high (Positive)
2. I always have the opportunity to speak English with the foreigners.	3.05	.845	High (Positive)
3. I heard from the adults that the problem of narcotics abuse on Koh Lanta is much increasing because of the tourism.	2.80	.993	High (Negative)
4. I heard from the adults that the problem of thefts and crimes on Koh Lanta is much increasing because of the tourism.	2.58	.931	High (Negative)
5. I am worried about the epidemic outbreaks and pest from tourists on Koh Lanta.	2.57	1.001	High (Negative)
6. My parents and I have less time to participate the important religious practices and traditions.	2.56	1.007	High (Negative)

As illustrated in Table 7, the study explained that the children of different gender perceived only one indicator of impacts differently. The children's perception about the socio-cultural impact was significant for the indicator "I am

worried about the epidemic outbreaks and pest from tourists on Koh Lanta." for male children ( $M = 2.39$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ) and female children ( $M = 2.70$ ,  $SD = .96$ ) conditions;  $t$  (179) = -2.010,  $p = .046$ .

**Table 7:** The children's perceptions of socio-cultural impacts from island tourism development analyzed by gender

<b>Socio-cultural impacts on Koh Lanta</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>N (181)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>t-value (df = 179)</b>	<b>p-value</b>
1. I always have the opportunity to speak English with the foreigners.	Male	76	3.01	.887	-.494	.622
	Female	105	3.08	.817		
2. I am proud and significantly help preserve the culture of Koh Lanta.	Male	76	3.57	.639	.249	.803
	Female	105	3.54	.589		
3. I heard from the adults that the problem of narcotics abuse is much increasing because of the tourism.	Male	76	2.74	1.063	-.676	.500
	Female	105	2.84	.942		
4. I heard from the adults that the problem of thefts and crimes is much increasing because of the tourism.	Male	76	2.50	.959	-.985	.326
	Female	105	2.64	.911		
5. I am worried about the epidemic outbreaks and pest from tourists.	Male	76	2.39	1.034	-2.010	.046*
	Female	105	2.70	.962		
6. My parents and I have less time to participate the important religious practices and traditions.	Male	76	2.64	1.042	.985	.326
	Female	105	2.50	.982		

**4.5 Children's opinion towards their life satisfaction in general**

As shown in Table 8, the children showed their opinion towards their life satisfaction in general at a very high level for indicators "in overall, my family and I are happy to live on Koh Lanta" ( $M = 3.60$ ,  $SD = .584$ ), followed by "in overall, tourism is good for family, my Koh Lanta community and me" ( $M = 3.29$ ,  $SD = .673$ )

level for indicators "in overall, my family and I are happy to live on Koh Lanta" ( $M = 3.60$ ,  $SD = .584$ ), followed by "in overall, tourism is good for family, my Koh Lanta community and me" ( $M = 3.29$ ,  $SD = .673$ )

**Table 8:** Children's opinion towards their life satisfaction in general

Life satisfaction and tourism	Mean (N=181)	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
1. In overall, my family and I are happy to live on Koh Lanta.	3.60	.584	Very high
2. In overall, tourism is good for family, my Koh Lanta community and me.	3.29	.673	Very high
3. In overall, tourism directly affects my good sense of well-being in all aspects.	3.14	.651	High

Table 9 showed that the children of different gender did not perceive their life satisfaction differently in general for all indicators with the p-values at 0.952, 0.501, and 0.162. The p-value of each indicator was higher than the

significant level at 0.05. This determined that there were not statistically significant differences of opinions between the respondents of different gender.

**Table 9:** Children's opinion towards their life satisfaction in general

Life satisfaction affected by island tourism	Gender	N (181)	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value (df=179)	p-value
1. In overall, my family and I are happy to live on Koh Lanta.	Male	76	3.61	.591	.060	.952
	Female	105	3.60	.582		
2. In overall, tourism directly affects my good sense of well-being in all aspects.	Male	76	3.11	.741	-.674	.501
	Female	105	3.17	.579		
3. In overall, tourism is good for my family, Koh Lanta community and me.	Male	76	3.21	.789	-1.404	.162
	Female	105	3.35	.571		

**4.6 The children's opinion towards the support for island tourism development**

Table 10 explained that the children supported the island tourism development at a very high and high levels for all indicators. For example, they voted a very high support for the indicators "tourism should establish more rules and regulations to manage tourism on Koh Lanta" at a very high

level ( $M = 3.49$ ,  $SD = .647$ ), followed by "the tourism development should provide my family, the community and me more happiness, the good quality of life, the good environment and good economics" ( $M = 3.45$ ,  $SD = .600$ ).

**Table 10:** Children's opinion towards the support for island tourism development

The support for island tourism on Koh Lanta	Mean (N=181)	Std. Deviation	Level of support
1. Tourism should establish more rules and regulations to manage tourism on Koh Lanta.	3.49	.647	Very high
2. The tourism development should provide my family, the community and me more happiness, the good quality of life, the good environment and good economics.	3.45	.600	Very high
3. I want to have a job related to tourism in the future.	3.42	.624	Very high
4. Tourism should increase the number of tourists on Koh Lanta to encourage the tourism growth.	3.35	.610	Very high
5. I am willing to participate in supporting tourism whether in any roles both now and in the future.	3.25	.682	Very high
6. I want my parents and family members to participate in tourism and gain the advantages from tourism.	3.12	.877	High

As illustrated in Table 11, the study revealed that the children of different gender did not perceive their life satisfaction differently in general with the p-value 0.172, 0.542, 0.558, 0.081, 0.833, and 0.756. The p-value of each

indicator was higher than the significant level at 0.05. This determined that there were not statistically significant differences of opinions between the respondents of different gender.

**Table 11:** Children's opinion towards the support for island tourism development analyzed by gender

Support for island tourism on Koh Lanta	Gender	N (181)	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value (df=179)	p- value
1. Tourism should increase the number of tourists to encourage the tourism growth.	Male	76	3.42	.617	1.372	.172
	Female	105	3.30	.603		
2. Tourism should establish more rules and regulations to manage tourism on Koh Lanta.	Male	76	3.53	.621	.612	.542
	Female	105	3.47	.666		
3. The tourism development should provide my family, the community and me more happiness, the good quality of life, the good environment and good economics.	Male	76	3.42	.678	-.587	.558
	Female	105	3.48	.539		
4. I want my parents and family members to participate in tourism and gain the advantages from tourism.	Male	76	3.14	.778	-1.753	.081
	Female	105	3.32	.596		
5. I want to have a job related to tourism in the future.	Male	76	3.41	.715	-.211	.833
	Female	105	3.43	.552		
6. I am willing to participate and support the tourism in whatever role now and in the future.	Male	76	3.09	.926	-.311	.756
	Female	105	3.13	.844		

## 5. Discussion

Both adult and children residents of the local communities are important parties for tourism and the tourism planners should consider their quality of life in tourism planning and management (Pham, Andereck & Vogt, 2019). The perceptions of local hosts towards tourism and their support for tourism development are influenced by the level of satisfaction with their quality of life affected by the tourism impacts (Rivera, Croes & Lee, 2016; Woo et al., 2015).

Children as community members viewed the tourist arrivals and the size of island tourism development, which generated both costs and benefits on the children's well-being, in the same way as the adults (Alaeddinoglu et al., 2016). Variables that influenced the children's perceptions of the salient impacts were age, gender, duration of stay in the community, parents' income, and occupations of their parents (Tirasattayapitak & Thammajak, 2018; Simão & Môsso, 2013). Regardless of the type of tourism development and the time when the tourism occurred, the environment and the socio-culture of the communities were often exploited in exchange for the economic benefits expected by stakeholders (Wang & Chen, 2015). The children's perceptions towards the factors of study could be used to interpret the level of losses and benefits for their quality of life. When the give-and-take of resources in the community was well balanced and with the perceived benefits, the children hosts viewed tourism development positively. They supported more the island tourism development, wanted to interact with visitors, and exchanged their socio-culture with the tourists (Chili, 2015). It could be denoted that the children who saw the direct benefits from island tourism development, for example through their parents' jobs in tourism industry, would positively perceive tourism as beneficial for their life and their family (Kim, et al., 2013). The higher their life satisfaction was, the more they supported island tourism development (Choi & Murray, 2010; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012; Strzelecka, Boley & Strzelecka, 2017). With regards to the children's opinion towards the support for island tourism development, their very high satisfaction was about the happiness for their families and themselves to live on Koh Lanta and the positive benefits of tourism for their families, communities and themselves. They also desired that tourism develops and the number of tourists increases, to encourage the tourism growth on their island. This could signify that

tourism development significantly improved the quality of life of people in local communities.

## 6. Conclusion

Children with different genders had similar perceptions towards three studied variables of island tourism impacts namely economic impacts, life satisfaction in general, and support for island tourism development. However, male and female children perceived environmental impacts and socio-cultural impacts differently. Female children's perceptions towards issues of waste in beach-areas and natural degradation of Koh Lanta seemed stronger than male children. In addition, male children's perceptions towards issues of epidemic outbreaks and pest caused by tourists seemed stronger than their female counterparts. Lastly, the analysis of the children's perceptions of island tourism showed that they were most concerned about the happiness of themselves, their families, and their communities. They also anticipated that number of tourists must be increased in order to create quality of life of themselves, their families, and their communities, which will be, in turn, exaggerated the children's support for the development of island tourism.

The theoretical contribution of this research is placed on the children's perceptions towards impacts of an island tourism destination, which are dissimilar from other adult-perspective-based researches. Several academic papers in the context of residents' perceptions towards tourism impacts and life satisfaction of host people in tourism islands have investigated perceptions of residents who are adults. A few studies have paid consideration to children's perspectives of tourism impacts, therefore, this study can contribute to the underdeveloped research area of tourism. In this study, the research-finding of island children's perceptions towards their lives, once their hometown becomes a popular tourism destination, can serve as a good theoretical support for future studies using island children as researched targets. The researchers encourage all tourism scholars to further explore research-area of children in island tourism by identifying contemporary factors influencing the children's perceptions towards island tourism impacts with special attention on their gender-difference. This will give nuances to this under-researched field, as well as strengthen importance of the children's voices towards tourism development.

Furthermore, the managerial implication of this study should direct to a need of both Thailand's national and local policy-makers to include perceptions of children when they make tourism development policy. We, as researchers, sincerely realize that children are the future of their community. As reported in this study, the children of Koh Lanta revealed constructive perceptions towards positive economic impacts generated from tourism and, thus, encourage them to consider tourism growth on their island as one of main causes of their life satisfaction and their community's well-being. The children's positive and negative perceptions towards impacts of tourism development and a participation of children in policy-formulation are very vital inputs in a process of island tourism-planning which should also be encouraged to ensure a sustainable development of Tourism in island-destinations.

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