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Residents' Perceptions of the Costs and Benefits of Urban Tourism in Bui Vien Walking Street, Ho Chi Minh City

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Abstract
This study examines residents' perceptions of the costs and benefits of urban tourism in Bui Vien Walking Street, Ho Chi Minh City, using Social Exchange Theory (SET) as the main analytical framework. A mixed-methods design was employed, combining a quantitative survey of 180 residents from core and buffer residential areas with 11 in-depth interviews to contextualize and interpret the survey findings. The findings show that residents clearly recognize the economic benefits of tourism, particularly the expansion of services and commerce, employment opportunities, and increased household income. However, these benefits are accompanied by notable costs, including rising living expenses, price fluctuations, noise, light pollution, and latent social problems. Residents' perceptions of tourism impacts are not homogeneous but vary significantly by age, income, educational attainment, residential area, and distance from the walking street. Younger residents, those with higher education, and those living closer to the tourism core tend to be more sensitive to both the opportunities and pressures generated by tourism development. The study contributes empirical evidence to the application of SET in urban tourism contexts and suggests the need for tourism policies that better balance economic development, residents' quality of life, and the adaptive capacity of local communities.

Keywords: Urban tourism, Bui Vien Walking Street, residents' perceptions, costs and benefits, Social Exchange Theory, local community

1. Introduction

Urban tourism is a form of tourism that takes place in urban centers where populations, infrastructure, and services are concentrated, serving a wide range of visitor needs, including recreation, leisure, and business travel. According to UNWTO (2021, 2024b), [49, 50, 51] urban tourism encompasses diverse cultural, architectural, social, and natural experiences within urban spaces and is often associated with short-term trips and flexible travel patterns. Previous studies have also emphasized that this form of tourism develops through the combination of infrastructural resources, historical and cultural values, and urban service systems (Law, 1993; M Voultsaki, 2000) [27]. In the context of globalization and urbanization, urban tourism has increasingly become a central component of the economic and social development of major cities, while also exerting profound impacts on community structures and residents' everyday lives (UNWTO, 2019, 2024a) [48, 50, 51]. Among urban tourism products in major cities, pedestrian streets or walking streets have emerged as an important element in constructing the city's economic "brand" (Bùi Thanh Thủy, 2018) [10], contributing to tourism development and the expansion of local economic activities (Mendzina & Vugule, 2021; Prongmanee & Prongmanee, 2021; Wongsom *et al*., 2026) [39, 52], encouraging tourists

to stay longer in urban areas, and even increasing real estate values in walkable districts (Wongsom *et al*., 2026). [52]

Regarding the operation of pedestrian streets in Vietnam, existing studies generally suggest that this remains a relatively new form of urban tourism and therefore requires further consideration. For instance, the emergence and success of Nguyen Hue Walking Street have contributed to the development of various pedestrian streets across Vietnam, which has gradually led to a more dispersed body of research. The concept of the pedestrian street in Vietnam remains relatively ambiguous and is often confined to technical, construction, and urban design standards (Dang Huu Lieu *et al*., 2025) [28]. While some studies attribute the success of pedestrian streets to cultural factors, such as behavioral culture, business culture, and culinary culture (Do Thu Nga, 2022; Ton Nu Quynh Tran *et al*., 2019) [13, 45], others emphasize the participation of both local residents and authorities in the management and operation of pedestrian streets (Dang Huu Lieu *et al*., 2025; Do Thu Nga, 2022) [28, 13].

In the specific context of the Bui Vien–Pham Ngu Lao Walking Street area, now located in Ben Thanh Ward, this site can be regarded as a typical example of a globalized tourism space, where formal and informal economies intersect and where long-term local residents coexist with newer groups participating in the tourism value chain. Under the influence of this process, the local social structure has undergone noticeable transformations, reflected in the differentiation of economic positions, the restructuring of social networks, and changes in the organization of community life (Gibert & Peyvel, 2016; Hoang, 2015) [17, 21]. At the same time, the commercialization of space and the intensification of tourism activities in this area have also contributed to increasing inequality, conflicts of interest, and the erosion of stability within the resident community (Peyvel *et al*., 2018; UNWTO, 2024b) [38, 50, 51]. In terms of the living environment, a recent study by Tuan Cuong *et al*. (2024) found that, due to the continuous operation of nighttime economic activities until the early morning, together with prolonged and high-intensity lighting, the Bui Vien Walking Street area has generated considerable impacts on the lives of surrounding households, particularly in relation to health, daily rhythms, and the quality of residential space [19].

On this basis, the study addresses the following research questions: (1) How do residents perceive the costs and benefits of tourism in Bui Vien Walking Street? (2) Do socio-demographic characteristics produce significant differences in these perceptions? and (3) What do these differences reveal about the role of social position and level of exposure in the context of urban tourism? Academically, the study contributes additional evidence to the social exchange perspective by clarifying the stratified and heterogeneous nature of residents' perceptions. Practically, the findings provide a basis for designing tourism policies that more effectively balance economic development with the quality of life of local communities.

2. Methodology

2.1. Social Exchange Theory (SET)

Social Exchange Theory is regarded as one of the key theoretical foundations for explaining individuals' attitudes and behaviors within social relationships, particularly in the context of tourism development.

According to Homans (1958) [22], social behavior is shaped by expectations of rewards and the minimization of costs; accordingly, individuals tend to choose actions that generate benefits greater than the costs incurred. Similarly, Blau (1964) [5] argued that social relationships are formed and maintained based on the principle of exchange, in which individuals weigh the benefits they receive against the costs they must bear. In tourism studies, this perspective has been widely used to explain how local residents evaluate and respond to tourism development. According to Ap (1992) [3], residents are likely to support tourism development when they perceive that the benefits gained outweigh the costs they experience. Conversely, when negative impacts such as pollution, overcrowding, or social conflict increase, residents' attitudes may become more negative. Subsequent empirical studies have also confirmed that perceptions of benefits and costs are central determinants of residents' support for tourism (Andereck *et al*., 2005; Dyer *et al*., 2007) [1, 15].

From a behavioral and governance perspective, this model has been extended to explain residents' support in contexts of uncertainty, where, in addition to perceived benefits, factors such as risk perception, the level of community participation, and destination management capacity also play important roles. A study conducted in Madrid by Gómez-Bruna *et al*. (2025) [18] shows that perceived benefits remain the main predictor of support for tourism, while risk management and community participation also significantly influence residents' attitudes. At the same time, tourism-led spatial restructuring, such as the development of Airbnb in residential neighborhoods, has altered the relationship between residents and their living spaces, thereby shaping the ways in which they assess the benefits and costs of tourism (Stors, 2022) [44]. These changes suggest that the process of "exchange" described in this theoretical perspective does not occur evenly across urban areas, particularly between central areas and adjacent neighborhoods.

2.2. Perceptions of the Costs of Urban Tourism

In the context of urban tourism, local residents often clearly recognize the benefits that tourism brings across multiple dimensions, particularly in terms of economic development, socio-cultural values, and infrastructure improvement. Previous studies have shown that tourism is viewed as a driver of local economic growth by creating employment opportunities, expanding service-based businesses, and attracting investment, while also contributing to infrastructure upgrading and the regeneration of urban spaces (Biagi *et al*., 2020; Sharma & Gursoy, 2015) [4, 42]. Beyond economic benefits, residents also value the socio-cultural contributions of tourism, such as opportunities for cultural exchange, increased community pride, and the expansion of local recreational and cultural activities (Peters *et al*., 2018; Zaidan, 2016) [36, 54]. These benefits not only help improve quality of life but also strengthen social ties within the community. In addition, residents' perceptions of tourism benefits are influenced by factors such as their level of participation in tourism activities, educational attainment, and economic dependence on the tourism sector. Residents who are directly involved in tourism activities or have greater access to tourism-related resources tend to evaluate tourism more positively (Kim *et al*., 2021; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010) [24, 34].

2.3. Perceptions of the Benefits of Urban Tourism

Alongside these benefits, urban residents are also clearly aware of the costs and negative impacts associated with tourism, particularly in contexts where tourism develops at high intensity. Commonly reported economic costs include rising living expenses, housing price inflation, and inequalities in the distribution of benefits, as not all residents benefit equally from tourism (Andriotis, 2004; Sharma & Dyer, 2009) [2, 41]. In socio-cultural terms, tourism may lead to the erosion of local identity, widening cultural distance between residents and tourists, and the emergence of social tensions within the community (Simpson & Bretherton, 2010; Zaidan, 2016) [43, 54]. Particularly in concentrated tourism areas, overcrowding, congestion, and changes in the functions of residential spaces may reduce residents' quality of life and weaken social cohesion. In addition, environmental and quality-of-life concerns are also emphasized by residents, including pollution, noise, overcrowded public spaces, and reduced access to urban amenities (Bonimy, 2011; Bornioli *et al*., 2022) [6, 7]. These impacts are especially pronounced in central areas or tourism hotspots, where residents are directly exposed to pressures generated by tourism activities.

2.4. Research Design

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining primary and secondary data. Secondary data were synthesized from academic sources and official reports issued by relevant management agencies in order to establish the theoretical foundation and contextual background of the study. For primary data, the quantitative component was conducted through a structured questionnaire survey.

A non-probability sampling strategy was adopted, combining quota sampling and snowball sampling. The spatial sampling design followed the zoning approach proposed by Trần Thị Minh Hoà (2013) [47], in which Neighborhoods 22 and 19 were identified as the core zone, while Neighborhood 27 was defined as the buffer zone. Data were collected through face-to-face structured interviews to increase the response rate, minimize missing data, and ensure the consistency and reliability of the information obtained (Nguyễn Hữu Minh *et al*., 2023) [33]. A total of 180 valid questionnaires were collected across the three neighborhoods, reflecting the spatial characteristics of the study area. After data collection, the dataset was cleaned, coded, and analyzed using SPSS 26.0. Descriptive statistics, independent-samples t-tests, and one-way ANOVA were employed to identify differences between groups.

The qualitative component was conducted in parallel through 11 in-depth interviews with residents and local officials, with the aim of complementing and interpreting the quantitative findings. The qualitative data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed using template analysis, which allowed the study to combine the theoretical framework with empirical findings in order to clarify the relationships under investigation (Brooks *et al*., 2015; King, 2004) [9, 25].

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Socio-demographic profile of the survey sample

The survey sample consisted of N=180 respondents. Female respondents accounted for the majority of the sample, at 66.1%, while male respondents represented 33.9%. In terms of age, the sample was predominantly concentrated among older residents, with those aged 50 years and above compromising 61.1%. Respondents aged 35–49 accounted for 21.7%, whereas those under 35 constituted 17.2%. This demographic composition indicates that the sample largely reflects the perspectives of long-term and older residents, who are likely to possess greater experiential familiarity with socio-environmental changes associated with tourism development in the area.

Table 1: Socio-demographic profile of the survey sample

Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	61	33.9
	Female	119	66.1
Age	Under 35 years old	31	17.2
	35–49 years old	39	21.7
	50 years old and above	110	61.1
Ethnicity	Kinh	166	92.2
	Chinese	14	7.8
Religion	No religion	64	35.6
	Buddhism	68	37.8
	Catholicism	31	17.2
	Protestantism	2	1.1
	Cao Dai	1	0.6
	Ancestor worship	14	7.8
Marital status	Single	51	28.3
	Married	101	56.1
	Divorced/Separated	11	6.2
	Widowed	17	9.4
Level of Education	Lower secondary or below	59	32.8
	Upper secondary	49	27.2
	Vocational/College	26	14.5
	University/Postgraduate	46	25.6
Average monthly income	Under VND 5 million	76	42.2
	VND 5 million to under VND 10 million	47	26.1
	VND 10 million to under VND 15 million	31	17.2
	Over VND 15 million	26	14.4
Residential status	Local residents living in the area before 2016	169	93.9

	Migrants living in the area since 2017	11	6.1
Field of employment	Services and tourism	55	30.6
	Trade and transportation	17	9.4
	Administrative and professional occupations	28	15.6
	Informal labor	30	16.7
	Retired/Not in the labor force	50	27.8
Housing ownership status	Own house	61	33.9
	Parents'/relatives' house	91	50.6
	Borrowed/staying with others	5	2.8
	Rented house/boarding house	23	12.8
Distance from home to Bui Vien Walking Street	Very close (≤100 m)	71	39.4
	Close (101–500 m)	51	28.3
	Moderate distance (0.5–1 km)	38	21.1
	Far (>1 km)	20	11.1
Residential area	Neighborhood 19	50	27.8
	Neighborhood 22	80	44.4
	Neighborhood 27	50	27.8

Source: Authors' survey data, April 2026.

Regarding ethnicity, the majority of respondents identified as Kinh, accounting for 92.2%, while Chinese ethnicity constituted 7.8%. In terms of religion, Buddhism represented the most prevalent religious affiliation, accounting for 37.8%, followed by respondents with no religion at 35.6% and Catholicism at 17.2%. The remaining respondents were affiliated with Protestantism, Cao Daism, and ancestor worship, each representing a minor proportion of the sample. With respect to marital status, more than half of the respondents were married (56.1%), while single respondents made up 28.3%. Divorced, separated, and widowed respondents represented minor shares of the sample. The educational profile of the sample reveals a relatively diverse and heterogeneous level of attainment. Respondents with lower secondary education or below accounted for 32.8%, followed by those with upper secondary education at 27.2%. Additionally, 25.6% had university or postgraduate education, and 14.5% had vocational or college-level qualifications. In terms of income, the sample was concentrated in lower-income groups: 42.2% reported an average monthly income of under VND 5 million, while 26.1% earned between VND 5 million and under VND 10 million. 14.4% reported an income of over VND 15 million per month. This income distribution indicates that a considerable proportion of the surveyed residents may face economic vulnerability and limited participation in tourism-related economic activity.

With respect to residential duration, the sample was predominantly composed of long-term local residents, with 93.9% having lived in the area before 2016, while migrants who had lived there since 2017 accounted for only 6.1%. This residential profile indicates that the data predominantly reflect the perceptions of residents who had directly experienced the area's transformation prior to and following the formal development of Bui Vien Walking Street. In terms of employment, the largest group worked in services and tourism (30.6%), followed by retired or non-working respondents (27.8%), informal workers (16.7%), administrative and professional workers (15.6%), and those in trade and transportation (9.4%). This occupational structure reflects the coexistence of tourism-related livelihoods, informal labor, and non-labor-force groups within the local community. Housing status also shows that most respondents had relatively stable residential arrangements. More than half lived in houses owned by their parents or relatives (50.6%), while 33.9% lived in their own houses. Only 12.8% rented a house or boarding room, and 2.8% lived in borrowed or shared housing. This suggests a strong presence of residents with long-term attachment to the area, which may influence how they perceive both the benefits and costs of tourism. Spatially, 39.4% of respondents lived very close to Bui Vien Walking Street within 100 meters, and 28.3% lived within 101–500 meters. In other words, more than two-thirds of the sample lived within 500 meters of the walking street. This spatial distribution is suitable for examining tourism impacts because most respondents were directly exposed to tourism-related activities.

Overall, the sample reflects a community composed mainly of long-term, older, locally embedded residents, many of whom live close to the tourism core and have varying degrees of economic connection to tourism. These characteristics provide an appropriate empirical basis for analyzing residents' perceptions of tourism costs and benefits in Bui Vien Walking Street. However, the dominance of older residents and long-term locals should also be considered when interpreting the findings, as the views of younger residents and newer migrants may be less strongly represented in the sample.

3.2. Resident's Perceptions of the Costs of Urban Tourism

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics on residents' perceptions of the costs of tourism at Bui Vien Walking Street. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure perceptions of tourism costs and benefits, adapted from the measurement frameworks of Choi and Sirakaya (2005), Dyer *et al*. (2007), and Hanafiah *et al*. (2013) [12, 15, 20]. Items were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

Table 2: Residents' perceptions of urban tourism costs in Bui Vien Walking Street

	Mean	***SD***
Tourism increases living expenses (CP1)	3.47	0.94
Tourism increases fluctuations in the prices of goods and services (CP2)	3.42	0.91
Tourism increases community conflicts (CP3)	2.67	0.96
Tourism increases traffic congestion (CP4)	3.23	1.02
Tourism increases noise and light pollution (CP5)	3.46	1.03
Tourism increases waste and water pollution (CP6)	3.33	1.07

Source: Authors' survey data, April 2026.

Overall, residents in the Bui Vien Walking Street area generally expressed neutral to moderately positive perceptions regarding the costs of tourism, with mean scores ranging from 2.67 to 3.47. Among the cost dimensions examined, economic impacts were the most clearly recognized. The items pertaining to increases in living expenses (M = 3.47; SD = 0.94) and price fluctuations of goods and services (M = 3.42; SD = 0.91) received the highest ratings. This finding is consistent with previous studies indicating that tourism development often generates upward pressure on the cost of living in local communities (Dwyer & Forsyth, 1993; Látková & Vogt, 2012; MacKenzie & Gannon, 2019) [14, 26, 31].

In addition, environmental impacts, such as noise and light pollution, were also perceived at a relatively high level (M = 3.46; SD = 1.03). However, the considerable dispersion of responses suggests differences across resident groups. This result aligns with previous studies in urban tourism settings, where perceived environmental impacts have been shown to depend significantly on residential location and degree of exposure to tourism activities (Tuan Cuong *et al*., 2024; Lieu *et al*., 2025) [19, 28]. The qualitative data in the present study further support this interpretation, as households living near the core area or close to nighttime business establishments reported being more strongly affected by noise and lighting, even leading some to move away or rent out their houses. Notably, the findings also reveal the existence of an adaptive mechanism within the community, whereby negative impacts are gradually accepted as part of everyday life associated with tourism. As one local official shared:

"Generally speaking, we kind of turn a blind eye to it… the noise in Bui Vien… many people have complained about it, but if Bui Vien had no noise, how could Bui Vien do business" (CB_03, KP27)

This finding is in line with studies on urban tourism governance, which suggest that local authorities and communities often tend to negotiate a balance between economic development and the control of negative impacts, particularly in nighttime tourism spaces (González *et al*., 2023). Meanwhile, impacts such as traffic congestion (M = 3.23; SD = 1.02) and waste and water pollution (M = 3.33; SD = 1.07) were rated at a moderate level and showed considerable variation, reflecting differences in individual experiences. By contrast, the item indicating that tourism increases community conflict had the lowest mean score (M = 2.67; SD = 0.96), suggesting that social conflicts were not clearly recognized by residents. In Neighborhood 22, a local official referred to a form of "compensation" between business households and residential households as a kind of reciprocal exchange:

"I think that although they are doing business, they know that they may encroach to some extent, so they generally try to compensate… For example, when a household needs something, they are willing to help, as a way of making up for the inconvenience they cause. They have certain ways to reduce the discomfort of the surrounding residents. So I do not think there are many serious disputes, arguments, or complaints. It is mostly at the level of talking things through and giving each other feedback." (CB_01, KP22)

This result is consistent with studies suggesting that conflicts in tourism contexts are often latent, indirect, and more difficult to observe than economic and environmental impacts (Lulu *et al*., 2025) [30]. At a certain stage, such conflicts become more visible when the "costs" exceed the "benefits" that the community receives (Pai *et al*., 2023) [35]. When the number of tourists at a destination affects the quality of life of local residents, or when the deterioration of residents' lived experience exceeds their tolerance, overtourism may undermine the social sustainability of resident–tourist interactions (Tournois & Djeric, 2019) [46].

In summary, residents in the Bui Vien Walking Street area primarily identified the costs of tourism in economic and environmental terms, while social impacts were less clearly recognized. This difference suggests that issues associated with direct experience, such as prices, living expenses, and noise, generated higher levels of agreement than more structural issues such as community conflict. At the same time, adaptive and "compensatory" mechanisms within the community help reduce the visibility of conflicts, preventing them from becoming prominent issues in residents' perceptions.

3.3. Resident's Perceptions of the Benefits of Urban Tourism

As shown in Table 3, residents in the Bui Vien Walking Street area expressed positive attitudes toward the economic and service-development benefits of tourism, with mean scores ranging from 3.31 to 4.19.

Table 3: Residents' perceptions of urban tourism benefits in Bui Vien Walking Street

Items	**Mean**	**SD**
Tourism increases personal/household income (LI1)	3.78	1.04
Tourism creates more employment opportunities (LI2)	4.00	0.79
Tourism contributes to the development of the service and commercial sectors (LI3)	4.19	0.68
Tourism contributes to preserving the traditional culture of local residents (LI4)	3.89	0.75
Tourism helps reduce the rate of social problems in the locality (LI5)	3.31	1.04

Source: Authors' survey data, April 2026

Among the items, the statement that tourism contributes to the development of the service and commercial sectors received the highest level of agreement (M = 4.19; SD = 0.68), indicating a strong consensus regarding the role of tourism in stimulating commercial activities. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that tourism functions as a driver of commercial expansion and the restructuring of urban economic spaces (Bozhko & Zaitseva, 2021; Gannon *et al*., 2020) [8, 16]. In terms of employment and income, tourism was also perceived by the community as an important factor in creating employment opportunities (M = 4.00; SD = 0.79) and increasing income (M = 3.78; SD = 1.04). This result aligns with studies suggesting that tourism can generate spillover effects across multiple economic sectors and create livelihood opportunities for local communities, particularly in urban contexts (Bozhko & Zaitseva, 2021; Andereck *et al*., 2005) [8, 1]. The qualitative data further support this interpretation by documenting diverse forms of tourism-related livelihoods. Notably, economic benefits are not limited to direct income but also extend to the extraction of value from urban space through flexible uses of personal assets. As one local official noted:

"Here, there is a distinction between renting and subleasing. People rent a house and then divide it up. For example, they may rent it out from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. But from 7 p.m. until the next morning, it is used for another type of business, such as a bar or club, through subleasing. Or they divide the house by floors." (CB_02, KP22)

This phenomenon suggests the emergence of a flexible mechanism for exploiting urban space, which resonates with Annette's (2021) observation regarding the temporal transformation of spatial functions in urban life, as well as studies on the commercialization of residential space in tourism contexts (Jover & Cocola-Gant, 2022; Pettas *et al*., 2024) [23, 37]. However, alongside these economic benefits, the findings also reveal latent contradictions in community perceptions. Although the statement that tourism contributes to preserving the traditional culture of local residents received a relatively high level of agreement (M = 3.89; SD = 0.75), the qualitative data reflect concerns about the erosion of cultural identity during the commercialization and standardization of service activities. This interpretation is consistent with previous studies suggesting that tourism can simultaneously contribute to the preservation of local culture and threaten cultural values under the pressures of commercialization (Bozhko & Zaitseva, 2021; Capocchi *et al*., 2020) [8, 11].

In particular, the statement that tourism helps reduce the rate of social problems in the locality had the lowest mean score (M = 3.31; SD = 1.04), indicating differentiated views among residents. This result reflects the ambivalent nature of tourism: on the one hand, it may contribute to strengthening security control and infrastructure investment; on the other hand, it may also be associated with an increase in deviant behaviors within tourism spaces (MacNeill & Wozniak, 2018; Zhang & Xiang, 2022; Ross, 1992) [32, 55, 40]. The qualitative data in the present study also indicate that phenomena such as drug use, sex work, and informal activities exist as part of the tourism ecosystem, making regulation and control more complex.

"They sell it through organized networks. That is why people say that inside Bui Vien Walking Street is a drug street; we have been cracking down heavily. Foreign tourists who want to use drugs can buy them as long as they have money." (CB_03, KP27)

Overall, the findings show that the local community in Bui Vien Walking Street operates within a logic of trade-off between the costs and benefits of tourism development. Economic benefits are clearly recognized and receive a high level of agreement, whereas socio-cultural impacts are perceived in more complex and sometimes contradictory ways. This is consistent with Social Exchange Theory, which argues that community support for tourism depends on whether the perceived benefits outweigh the associated costs (Andereck *et al*., 2005; Gannon *et al*., 2020; Lin *et al*., 2017) [1, 16, 29].

4. Differences in Tourism Impacts by Socio-demographic Characteristics

4.1. Differences in Perceptions of Tourism Costs by Socio-demographic Characteristics

To examine differences in residents' perceptions of tourism costs across socio-demographic characteristics, the study employed independent-samples t-tests for two-group variables and one-way ANOVA for variables with three or more groups. The results indicate that perceptions of tourism costs varied significantly across several demographic characteristics.

Table 4: Differences in Urban Tourism Costs by Socio-demographic Characteristics

		CP1	CP2	CP3	CP4	CP5	CP6
Gender	Male	3.44	3.38	2.69	3.26	3.52	3.44
	Female	3.48	3.47	2.69	3.22	3.42	3.28
	p ≤ 0.05						
Age	Under 35 years old	3.81	3.77	3.16	3.68	3.84	3.71
	35–49 years old	3.85	3.67	2.64	3.10	3.49	3.46
	50 years old and above	3.24	3.26	2.57	3.15	3.34	3.18
	p ≤ 0.05	0.00	0.004	0.009	0.027	0.05	0.035
Average monthly income	Under VND 5 million	3.34	3.28	2.66	3.09	3.53	3.21
	VND 5 million to under VND 10 million	3.34	3.36	2.62	3.23	3.38	3.47
	VND 10 million to under VND 15 million	3.65	3.55	2.87	3.39	3.23	3.16
	Over VND 15 million	3.85	3.92	2.69	3.46	3.65	3.65
	p < 0.05	0.05	0.003				
Zone	Core Zone	3.42	3.38	2.71	3.29	3.56	3.35
	Buffer Zone	3.58	3.58	2.64	3.08	3.18	3.28
	p ≤ 0.05					0.025	
Distance from home to Bui Vien Walking	Very close (≤100 m)	3.45	3.46	2.96	3.31	3.55	3.28

Street	Close (101–500 m)	3.31	3.14	2.35	3.31	3.55	3.51
	Moderate distance (0.5–1 km)	3.63	3.63	2.63	2.92	3.32	3.11
	Far (>1 km)	3.60	3.75	2.70	3.35	3.15	3.50
	p ≤ 0.05		0.02	0.003			
Level of Education	Lower secondary or below	3.32	3.29	2.68	2.86	3.20	2.76
	Upper secondary	3.53	3.47	2.78	3.47	3.71	3.71
	Vocational/College	3.42	3.46	3.00	3.15	3.15	3.50
	University/Postgraduate	3.61	3.59	2.43	3.50	3.67	3.57
	p ≤ 0.05				0.003	0.01	0.000
Housing ownership status	Own house	3.21	3.20	2.64	3.25	3.25	3.16
	Parents'/relatives' house	3.57	3.53	2.71	3.22	3.68	3.47
	Borrowed/staying with others	3.68	3.68	2.71	3.25	3.18	3.25
	p ≤ 0.05	0.032	0.028			0.01	
Field of employment	Services and tourism	3.60	3.45	2.96	3.00	3.07	3.11
	Trade and transportation	3.29	3.47	2.71	3.35	3.76	3.65
	Administrative and professional occupations	3.71	3.61	2.54	3.50	3.57	3.57
	Informal labor	3.43	3.57	2.53	3.40	3.80	3.37
	Retired/Not in the labor force	3.26	3.24	2.56	3.20	3.50	3.32
	p ≤ 0.05					0.019	
Single	None	3.23	3.38	2.67	3.23	3.41	3.49
	Yes	3.77	3.52	2.71	3.24	3.52	3.14
	p ≤ 0.05	0.00					0.031
Religion	No religious affiliation	3.51	3.42	2.78	3.40	3.36	3.31
	With religious affiliation	3.43	3.45	2.62	3.11	3.53	3.35
	p ≤ 0.05				0.05		

Source: Authors' survey data, April 2026.

Specifically, age was the factor that produced the clearest differences across most indicators. Respondents under 35 years old tended to rate tourism costs more highly, particularly for CP1, CP2, CP4, CP5, and CP6, whereas those aged 50 and above reported lower levels of perceived costs. These differences were statistically significant for most indicators (CP1: $p < 0.001$; CP2: $p = 0.004$; CP3: $p = 0.009$; CP4: $p = 0.027$; CP5: $p = 0.05$; CP6: $p = 0.035$). Regarding income, respondents with a monthly income of VND 10 million or higher gave higher ratings to costs related to prices and living expenses (CP1, CP2), with statistically significant differences observed for both indicators (CP1: $p = 0.011$; CP2: $p = 0.002$). By contrast, the remaining indicators did not show significant differences. In terms of residential space, both residential area and distance from the walking street showed certain differences. Residents in the core area, as well as those living either very close to or far from the walking street, tended to report higher levels of certain costs than those living at a moderate distance. The tests indicated statistically significant differences in CP2 and CP3 by residential distance (CP2: $p = 0.02$; CP3: $p = 0.003$).

With respect to educational attainment, respondents with higher levels of education tended to report higher levels of perceived environmental and socio-spatial costs (CP4, CP5, CP6), with statistically significant differences observed for these indicators (CP4: $p = 0.003$; CP5: $p = 0.01$; CP6: $p < 0.001$). Factors such as housing status, occupation, and marital status also showed several differences for specific indicators, whereas gender and religious affiliation did not produce statistically significant differences ($p > 0.05$). Viewed across the indicators, economic cost items, particularly CP1 and CP2, appeared more frequently as statistically significant than the other indicators. By contrast, environmental and social cost items showed significant differences only for certain socio-demographic characteristics, while CP3 was the least differentiated indicator.

The results suggest that perceptions of tourism costs are stratified by socio-demographic characteristics, particularly age, educational attainment, and residential location. Younger residents, those with higher education, and those living closer to the tourism area tended to perceive tourism costs more clearly, reflecting the role of exposure and access to information. This finding is consistent with previous studies that emphasize the influence of age, education, and direct experience on residents' perceptions (Ap, 1992; Gursoy *et al*., 2002; UNWTO & IPSOS, 2019) [3, 53]. At the same time, the existence of a spatial "two-pole effect" suggests that residents' perceptions are shaped not only by direct experience but also by indirect sources of information. In addition, economic costs (CP1, CP2) showed clearer differentiation because they are directly linked to everyday life, whereas environmental and socio-spatial costs appear to depend more strongly on residents' living contexts. Therefore, perceptions of tourism costs are not homogeneous but are shaped by residents' social position, level of exposure, and living conditions.

4.2. Differences in Perceptions of Tourism Benefits by Socio-demographic Characteristics

Building on the analysis of residents' perceptions of tourism costs, the study further examines differences in perceptions of tourism benefits in order to determine whether these socio-demographic factors produce similar patterns of variation.

Table 5: Differences in Urban Tourism Benefits by Socio-demographic Characteristics

		LI1	LI2	LI3	LI4	LI5
Gender	Male	3.80	4.07	4.25	3.85	3.18
	Female	3.76	3.97	4.16	3.90	3.38
	p ≤ 0.05					
Age	Under 35 years old	4.19	4.48	4.61	3.48	3.19
	35–49 years old	4.03	4.23	4.31	4.15	3.46
	50 years old and above	3.57	3.78	4.03	3.90	3.29
	p ≤ 0.05	0.003	0.00	0.00	0.001	
Average monthly income	Under VND 5 million	3.51	3.84	4.03	3.94	3.36
	VND 5 million to under VND 10 million	4.02	3.98	4.19	3.80	3.36
	VND 10 million to under VND 15 million	3.87	4.32	4.45	3.90	3.16
	Over VND 15 million	4.00	4.12	4.35	3.84	3.27
	p ≤ 0.05	0.02	0.31	0.12		
Zone	Core Zone	3.83	3.97	4.12	3.76	3.25
	Buffer Zone	3.64	4.08	4.36	4.20	3.46
	p ≤ 0.05			0.032	0.001	
Distance from home to Bui Vien Walking Street	Very close (≤100 m)	3.63	3.69	3.94	3.62	2.94
	Close (101–500 m)	4.12	4.39	4.45	4.02	3.71
	Moderate distance (0.5–1 km)	3.74	3.82	4.13	4.05	3.29
	Far (>1 km)	3.50	4.45	4.50	4.20	3.65
	p ≤ 0.05	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.001	0.00
Level of Education	Lower secondary or below	3.51	3.73	3.93	4.03	3.51
	Upper secondary	3.63	3.94	4.06	3.67	3.16
	Vocational/College	3.96	3.92	4.42	4.00	3.31
	University/Postgraduate	4.17	4.46	4.52	3.87	3.22
	p ≤ 0.05	0.005	0.00	0.00		
Housing ownership status	Own house	3.70	4.03	4.15	3.96	3.30
	Parents'/relatives' house	3.80	3.99	4.21	3.80	3.34
	Borrowed/staying with others	3.86	3.96	4.21	4.00	3.25
	p ≤ 0.05					
Field of employment	Services and tourism	3.71	4.00	4.16	3.83	3.15
	Trade and transportation	4.41	3.88	4.35	3.76	3.47
	Administrative and professional occupations	4.11	4.21	4.43	3.89	3.18
	Informal labor	3.47	4.07	4.03	4.20	3.63
	Retired/Not in the labor force	3.64	3.88	4.12	3.80	3.32
	p ≤ 0.05	0.002				
Single	None	3.74	3.98	4.22	4.03	3.23
	Yes	3.82	4.03	4.15	3.70	3.42
	p ≤ 0.05				0.006	
Religion	No religious affiliation	3.94	4.12	4.24	3.75	3.14
	With religious affiliation	3.66	3.91	4.15	3.99	3.44
	p ≤ 0.05				0.04	

Source: Authors' survey data, April 2026.

The analysis shows that perceptions of tourism benefits varied across several socio-demographic characteristics, particularly age, income, residential area, residential distance, and educational attainment. Respondents under 35 years old tended to rate benefits more highly across most indicators (LI1–LI3), whereas those aged 50 and above reported lower levels of perceived benefits. These differences were statistically significant for LI1 ($p = 0.003$), LI2 and LI3 ($p < 0.001$), and LI4 ($p = 0.001$). In terms of income, middle- and upper-middle-income groups, particularly those earning VND 5–15 million per month, tended to report higher benefit perceptions; however, only LI1 showed a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.02$).

Regarding residential space, residents in the buffer area reported higher levels of agreement with LI3 ($p = 0.032$) and LI4 ($p = 0.001$).

Notably, residential distance emerged as the most influential factor, with statistically significant differences observed across most indicators (LI1: $p = 0.05$; LI2 and LI3: $p < 0.001$; LI4: $p = 0.001$; LI5: $p < 0.001$). Educational attainment also showed significant variation, with respondents with higher levels of education evaluating tourism benefits more positively, particularly for LI1 ($p = 0.005$), LI2, and LI3 ($p < 0.001$). By contrast, housing ownership did not produce statistically significant differences. Other variables, such as occupation ($p = 0.002$), marital status ($p = 0.006$), and

religious affiliation (LI4: p = 0.04), showed differences only for specific indicators. Viewed across the benefit items, LI2 and LI3 appeared most frequently as statistically significant, reflecting clear differentiation between groups. LI1 and LI4 showed a moderate level of differentiation, whereas LI5 was the least differentiated indicator, with significance observed only by residential distance.

Overall, the results indicate that perceptions of tourism benefits are stratified by socio-economic position and residential space. Younger residents and those with higher levels of education tended to evaluate tourism more positively, which is consistent with previous studies emphasizing the role of age and education in shaping residents' perceptions (UNWTO & IPSOS, 2019) [53]. In addition, spatial factors and degree of exposure play an important role. Residents living at a moderate distance from the tourism area tended to report higher perceived benefits, whereas those living very close to the walking street evaluated some benefits less positively. This pattern reflects a form of "benefit saturation" resulting from frequent exposure to the negative impacts of tourism. The finding is consistent with the arguments of Ap (1992) and Gursoy *et al*. (2002) [3, 15] regarding the role of direct experience in shaping residents' attitudes.

Importantly, economic and service-related benefits (LI2, LI3) showed the highest levels of differentiation, indicating that these are the most readily recognizable benefits and are directly connected to residents' everyday lives. This also aligns with Social Exchange Theory, which suggests that groups with better access to tourism-related resources tend to evaluate tourism more positively because they receive greater benefits from tourism development (Andereck *et al*., 2005) [1].

4. Conclusion

Based on SET approach, residents' attitudes toward tourism are shaped by their assessment of benefits and costs. In Bui Vien, economic benefits such as increased income, employment opportunities, and commercial activities were clearly recognized and received a high level of agreement. However, these benefits were accompanied by environmental and social costs, including pollution, pressure on daily life, and latent social problems. Therefore, residents' support for tourism can only be maintained when the perceived benefits are sufficient to compensate for these negative impacts. Perceptions of tourism impacts are also stratified by socio-demographic characteristics. Younger and more highly educated residents are more responsive to economic opportunities, while also being more critical of tourism-related costs. In addition, spatial factors and degree of exposure play an important role, as residents living close to the tourism core are more likely to experience "benefit saturation" due to their direct exposure to pressures generated by tourism activities.

In this context, strengthening community capacity functions as a key regulatory mechanism, enabling residents to enhance their autonomy, overcome resource constraints, and adapt more effectively to tourism-induced changes. The case of Bui Vien shows that flexible livelihood strategies based on the use and exploitation of urban space provide evidence of this adaptive capacity.

Therefore, tourism development should be linked to community capacity building from the outset. The use of appropriate assessment tools can help identify local resources and latent conflicts, thereby enabling more effective control of negative impacts and contributing to more equitable and sustainable tourism development.

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6. Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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