

ABSTRACT

The overall objective of this research was to investigate the perception of tourists and locals towards issues of positive and negative impacts of cultural tourism development in Lhasa. In order to understand the difference of these variables, relevant theories and concepts were reviewed and synthesized to form the theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

The methodology used in this research was sample survey research. The research instrument was questionnaire that was distributed to 200 tourists and 200 locals in Lhasa. Descriptive statistics were used for the presentation of the data on the respondents' demographic profile. Independent samples t-test was employed to examine the difference in the perception of tourists and locals towards issues of positive and negative impacts of cultural tourism development in Lhasa. Almost all tourists as respondents were Chinese domestic tourists and not foreign tourist.

The result of this study showed that there were some differences between the perceptions of tourists and locals towards positive impact of cultural tourism in Lhasa, which includes promoting cultural exchange, displaying local traditions, strengthening communities, facilities development, revitalizing traditions and helping locals practise self-determinism. Meanwhile, there were some differences between the perceptions of tourists and locals towards negative impact of cultural tourism in Lhasa, which includes selling monastic festival as cultural products, standardization, irritation due to tourist behavior and economic inequality.

In addition, this study found that tourists and locals had no different perception of

the positive impact of cultural tourism development on issues such as finding a good strategy for development, contributing to local economy, stimulating conservation, enhancing community cohesion and pride of cultural identity. For negative impact of cultural tourism development, tourists and locals had no different perception towards mass production of traditional goods, loss of authenticity and staged authenticity, adaptation to tourist demands, increasing criminal activities, encouraging the number of begging children, vandalism, littering, pilferage and illegal removal of cultural heritage items.

Recommendations based on the findings would be applicable for Lhasa Tourism Bureau and other stakeholders in Lhasa for planning and implementing of cultural tourism development, which include training tour guides, preserving the original forms of traditional festivals, developing more infrastructures, increasing local profit, providing safety for tourists and decreasing the number of begging children.

