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Residents' attitudes and perceptions towards cruise tourism development: A case study of Cartagena de Indias (Colombia)

Abstract

Cruise tourism is growing faster than any other sector of the tourism industry, producing different impacts on destinations. From the social and economic viewpoint, the interactions between the different actors of the exchange process – cruise passengers, crew, residents, and producers of the tourism products – can bring both positive and negative consequences. The aim of this paper is to analyse how the local population perceives the impacts of cruise tourism and which factors do affect the relationship between impacts and perceptions' formation. The research involves primary data collection in Cartagena de Indias during the peak of the cruise season in the last trimester of 2009. The number and quality of the 1,004 questionnaires collected allowed us to perform a quantitative analysis of the hosts' perceptions and attitudes. A cluster analysis demonstrated the existence of four different groups, within which members have common features and similar perceptions and attitudes. In general, it has revealed a positive recognition of the economic impacts of tourism. Also, social and cultural impacts are recognised to be positive, but at a lower degree. In terms of future tourism policies, the different groups identified in the cluster analysis exert different positions.