

The Effect of Local Community Attachment on the Support for the Development of Wellness Tourism for the Residents of Yeosu Island*

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ABSTRACT

In encouraging the development and promotion of local tourism, the local residents' extent of support for the relevant projects can have a significant effect. Thus, this study examines how the extent of community attachment affects Yeosu Island residents' attitudes and support for the development of wellness tourism, which has recently become a new tourism trend. Towards this end, a survey was conducted with 237 residents of Yeosu Island in October 2021, and the hypothesis was tested by structural equation modeling using AMOS 29. Results of the study are as follows. Community attachment has a significant correlation with the perceived benefits and perceived costs of wellness tourism development, and the perceived benefits of tourism development have a significant correlation with the extent of support for wellness tourism development. These results suggest that it is desirable to place more emphasis on the benefits of tourism development to encourage positive attitudes toward and awareness of a project.

1. Introduction

In 2012, the Ministry of Knowledge Economy defined wellness as “the pursuit of optimal conditions in the physical, mental, emotional, social, and intellectual domains, encompassing a healthy and vibrant human condition, activities, and efforts in a pleasant and safe space” (Knowledge Economy R&D Strategic Planning Unit·Korea Institute of Industrial Technology, 2023). That is, wellness is a compound word of “well-being”, “happiness”, and “fitness”, and means an ideal state of harmony that includes all actions to maintain the best condition of an individual (Park & Lee, 2021). It may be seen that, in the end, wellness is a concept that encompasses not only the opposite concept of disease but also the actions and efforts to reach the optimal state of health that humans seek,

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which is to change one's lifestyle through the balance and integration of physical, mental, emotional, social and intellectual health, and as a process of change and ultimately a process of improving the quality of life.

'Wellness tourism', which is combined with the concept of wellness with tourism, has emerged as a new tourism trend. Smith and Puczko (2010) defined wellness tourism as tourism in which a healthy person seeks treatment to maintain or promote health, and Yoo (2019) refers to a trip to a wellness tourism destination to improve wellness. Lee (2013) defined it as a trip to a tourist destination with wellness facilities to promote health and well-being. That is, wellness tourism refers to tourism activities aimed at improving the quality of life in harmony with one's health while experiencing hot springs, meditation, yoga, and healthy food through travel. Recently, with the increasing interest in healing and well-being, which seeks the stability of the body and mind of modern people, the wellness tourism market is growing domestically as well as internationally (Maeng, 2021).

Tourists participate in the tourism activities based on various motives, and the values they seek to pursue in tourism activities also manifest in various ways. Since the tourism motives and values to pursue are the most important factors that lead to tourism activities, wellness tourism can also be developed through tourist motives and tourism activities, it is important to understand the value they seek to gain (Yoo, 2018). The wellness tourists pursue physical, mental, emotional, social, and intellectual wellness through wellness tourism activities and seek to realize the value they seek through tourism experiences. Furthermore, wellness tourism aims to provide tourism satisfaction to wellness tourists by providing them with lifestyle improvement, health and physical fitness management, beauty, meditation and healing services (Yoo, 2018). As a result, wellness tourism should aim to create tourism satisfaction as much as possible through the realization of tourist values.

Currently, Korea's wellness tourism business is shifting from the treatment-oriented medical tourism, which is an early model, to the converged wellness tourism that connects health and healing with medical care. In 2017, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism's selection of 25 wellness tourist destinations recommended by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism began full fledged, and as of 2021, 51 selected nationwide have been designated, growing across four areas of oriental medicine, beauty/spa, nature/forest healing, and meditation/healing (Korea Tourism Organization, 2017; Korea Tourism Organization, 2021). That is, the wellness tourism in Korea aims to foster wellness tourism by linking and utilizing local resources as much as possible, centering on the region. While the level of operation of such wellness tourism products and establishment of tourist destinations is evaluated as good, it is evaluated as inadequate or inadequate in terms of strategies for attracting markets and establishment of business effects and utilization plans (Yoo, 2019). In particular, there is a problem that fostering wellness tourism centered on a specific region may cause a regional gap in the tourism business, resulting in an imbalance, so it is necessary to seek various regionally specialized wellness tourism business support measures.

The City of Yeosu is organized in Jeollanam-do as an administrative district and is located on the Yeosu Peninsula in the center of the south coast. It is also bordered on the east by Namhae-gun, Gyeongsangnam-do, on the west by the Goheung Peninsula at Yeojaman Bay, on the south by the South Sea, and on the north by Suncheon and Gwangyang (Wikipedia, 2023). It consists of

365 attached islands, including 48 inhabited islands and 317 uninhabited islands, including Dadohaesang National Park and Hallyeohaesang National Park. Yeosu National Industrial Complex moves in, and the manufacturing industry centered on the petrochemical industry is prevalent. Since the 2012 Expo was held, the tourism industry has been significantly revitalized due to the continuous increase in tourists (City of Yeosu-Yeosu Industrial Complex Joint Development Council, 2022). Recently, it has announced plans to put wellness first in tourism development in Yeosu, such as creating an island marine tourism belt, hosting the 2026 Yeosu World Island Expo, promoting beauty and spa wellness tourism base projects, and developing ecotourism resources.

As such, the City of Yeosu is a place that can unite local residents and attract tourists by developing tourism resources and products through regional distinctiveness and unique resources such as marine resources, historical and cultural resources, and wellness-related tourism resources, so it is sufficient to secure sustainable tourism competitiveness (Choi, Lee, & Oh, 2020). Since it has sufficient capacity to respond to the changed tourism trend that connects healing and recreation through the rapid growth of wellness tourism and grow as a sustainable tourism city that coexists with residents, it is necessary to prepare accordingly.

The matters to consider for tourism development and vitalization include accessibility, tourism value and attractiveness, regional image and safety, legal and institutional services, infrastructure composition, and service quality (Kim, 2020). In particular, for the success of the tourism business, the interest of the local residents and their support for the business are essential. It is also known that the level of interest and support of the residents may differ from person to person, and it is known that the level of support for a tourism development project has a significant impact depending on the extent of community attachment (Jurowski, Uysal, & Williams, 1997). Consequently, a study examining the relationship between community attachment and support of local residents in tourism development can help to understand local residents and suggest ways to lead the success of local tourism. However, domestic and foreign studies on tourism development and activation have focused on measuring support for tourism development, focusing on the attitude of local residents toward tourism development. In particular, while wellness tourism has established itself as a new trend, there is a lack of the studies on whether local residents support wellness tourism development when developing wellness tourism in each region, and what factors affect such wellness tourism development support are inadequate.

Hence, this study examines the extent of attachment to the region of residents living in the island area of City of Yeosu and how it affects the perceived perception and support for the wellness tourism business, thereby providing theoretical and practical implications for the City of Yeosu's smooth promotion of the wellness tourism development project.

2. Theoretical Considerations

2.1 Community attachment

In regards to the community attachment, Stokols and Shumaker (1981) defined it as 'attachment

to a place', and Low and Altman (1992) defined it as 'affinity to a physical place'. Song and Han (2012) understand it as a broader and more complex concept, defining it as 'interactions between tourists or local residents in the local community'. As a result, the community attachment may be seen as a state of psychological solidarity between a specific region and an individual (Han & Shin, 2017).

Age, length of residence, marital status, and extent of urbanization are known to be factors influencing this extent of community attachment (Sampson, 1988). The higher the actual age, the longer the residence period, the unmarried, and the less urbanized area, the higher the intimacy with the local community. Jang and Lim (2015) also suggested age and length of residence as factors influencing community attachment, and other variables such as housing type, community satisfaction, and awareness of the severity of local problems were also found to have an effect. This means that those who own their own home had higher community attachment than those who did not, and the higher the satisfaction with the community and the lower the level of awareness of the seriousness of community problems, the higher the extent of community attachment.

The studies on community attachment across the field of tourism since the 1990s suggest that community attachment is important for successful regional tourism development in promoting regional tourism development. A study by Jurowski et al. (1997) reported that the higher the extent of community attachment, the more positively the social and economic effects of tourism were evaluated, and thus, the more favorable the perception of tourism development. Jang et al. (2015) analyzed the relationship between residents' attachment and development support in the development of the Saemangeum International Tourism Complex, and consequently, it turned out that the higher the degree of attachment, the more positively perceived development, which also had a positive effect on development support. A study by Jeong et al. (2019) discovered that as a result of examining the relationship between residents' attachment to the Siheung Gaetgol Festival and their support for local festivals, it turned out that the higher the attachment, the higher the value of the festival benefits, and this is related to the support for holding the festival. Ko and Kim (2003) examined the relationship between community attachment and attitude toward tourism development targeting residents in Taebaek, Gangwon-do and Jeju-do, and found that there was a positive correlation between tourism influence and support attitude at the introduction stage of tourism development. However, at the stage after a certain period of tourism development, this relationship turned out to be weakened or limited. That is, it demonstrates that the extent of community attachment of local residents in the support of local residents for tourism development can appear as a major predictor variable in the tourism introduction stage. Meanwhile, some results have demonstrated that the stronger the attachment to the community, the more negatively the impact on tourism development is perceived, and there are also cases where the clear relationship between attachment to the community and attitudes to tourism development is not clear (McCool & Martin, 1994; Um & Crompton, 1987). This is because different attachment attitudes are demonstrated according to the length of residence, and new residents demonstrate a much stronger community attachment in the physical aspect, while the long-term residents appear to have stronger social bonds (McCool & Martin, 1994).

Kang (2001) explains that community attachment is composed of 'identity in the mental aspect,

dependence in the functional aspect, and closeness in the social aspect'. Identity here means a sense of belonging to a physical place, which means an emotional connection to the local physical place that an individual feels (McCool & Martin, 1994). Dependence refers to the functional connectivity one has to a particular place or environment and relates to a particular place that fulfills an individual's goals or needs (McCool & Martin, 1994). Furthermore, social kinship refers to friendship, bond, and attachment formed through social relationships among community residents (Sampson, 1988).

2.2 Perceived benefits and perceived costs of the tourism development

Meanwhile, the domestic and foreign studies have observed the approach to local residents' perceived benefits and costs of tourism development through various perspectives. McCool and Martin (1994) classified it into impact, benefit, equity, and extent. The impact here refers to the negative effects of tourism development, and the benefits mean the positive effects of tourism development on the economy, society, culture, and environment. Furthermore, fairness refers to an item representing whether the cost of negative effects caused by tourism development is fairly borne, and the last range is classified as an item representing the extent of perception by residents of how much economic benefits are equally distributed to residents are doing. However, in general, the perceptions and attitudes toward tourism development are divided into the socio-economic, environmental, and cultural aspects. That is, the local residents' perceptions or attitudes toward tourism development are evaluated and formed based on benefits and costs in social, economic, and environmental aspects (Choi, Lee, & Lee, 2005).

The economic benefits or quality improvement of the local community, such as employment increase, income increase, and investment increase due to tourism development, are evaluated positively and recognized as benefits (Ha & Kim, 2022). Furthermore, it includes not only improving community services, improving image, and improving or increasing social convenience facilities, but also discovering and encouraging cultural activities, promoting cultural exchange, and improving or increasing cultural convenience facilities (Park, Kim, & Lee, 2004).

Local community problems such as high prices, destruction of facilities, noise, disruption of daily life, and increased traffic congestion due to tourism development are evaluated negatively and recognized as costs (Ha & Kim, 2022). Furthermore, the changes and declines in traditional values, including the increase in crime, and social conflict and confusion, such as materialism and consumerism, are also included.

The benefits and costs of such tourism development tend to be evaluated differently depending on the extent of community attachment. That is, the higher the extent of attachment to the community, the more positive the positive benefits of tourism development are evaluated and, conversely, the more negative the cost is evaluated (McCool & Martin, 1994; Um & Crompton, 1987). Furthermore, the local residents with a high level of community attachment evaluate the expected level or impact of tourism development more highly (Jurowski et al., 1997). As a result, the perceived benefits or costs of tourism development may be evaluated differently depending on the characteristics of local residents, so this must be taken into account (Kim, 2012).

2.3 Level of support for the tourism development

The local residents' support for tourism development is a key concept in regional development (Lee, 2013). Development support may be explained through the social exchange theory, where local residents decide whether to support or not support the development in consideration of costs and benefits arising from social, economic, environmental, and cultural aspects (Lee, 2013). That is, the local residents' support for tourism development may be said to be the belief that local residents believe that development can coexist with the region and residents when judged subjectively (Han & Shin, 2017). However, if the results of development are negatively evaluated by local residents, local residents have no choice but to take a hostile attitude toward development (Han & Shin, 2017).

In order for smooth regional tourism development to proceed, communication and consultation among stakeholders are necessary, and above all, active support for development must be accompanied (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Local officials aim to promote the economic development of the local community through the tourism industry, and investors seek the purpose of generating profits. Furthermore, it may be seen that local residents form interests as they seek to improve the quality of life, including income from tourism development. That is, the local residents form their support for tourism development by considering not only benefits but also the cost aspects (Kang, 2001).

While the studies on the local residents' support for early tourism development have been interpreted primarily in connection with regional economic vitalization, such as employment and income growth, later studies focus on predicting variables that can affect the local residents' support. McGehee and Andereck (2004) found that the higher the perception of individual benefits brought by local tourism development, the more positively they perceived tourism development and furthermore supported tourism development. While not an influencing variable, the tourism dependence was demonstrated to be a major predictor of support. Yu, Cole and Chancellor (2018) derived the result that when local residents positively evaluate the social, cultural, and environmental impacts of tourism, they increase their satisfaction with the area, which can promote support from residents for future regional tourism development activities.

Thus far, the domestic studies have focused on what factors affect local residents' support for tourism development. A study by Oh and Yoon (2009) demonstrated that support for tourism development varies according to demographic characteristics, that is, age, occupation, and institution of residence, and that preference for tourism development and perception of tourism impact are also major factors influencing tourism development. A study by Lee (2013) demonstrated that the perceived benefits of tourism development had a positive effect on development support, but the perceived costs had a negative effect on support. A study by Ha and Kim (2022) also found that perceptions of negative impacts such as noise generation, living inconveniences, and local price rises related to tourism development were also negative factors in development support. As such, most of the studies on the local residents' support for tourism development suggest that local residents are important in regional tourism development, and have suggested ways to promote their positive support.

In particular, it has been suggested through several studies that there is a high correlation between the local residents' community attachment and the local residents' support for tourism development. However, the results of some studies show that the high extent of attachment of local residents rather

demonstrates a negative attitude towards tourism development (Um & Crompton, 1987; Devine-Wright & Howes, 2010). That is, it may be seen that local residents form support for development by predicting how the impact or result of tourism development will be realized in the region.

3. Methods

3.1 Research model

The purpose of this study is to examine and understand the relationship between community attachment, perceived benefits, and perceived costs on wellness tourism development support. Towards this end, a research model was established as demonstrated in Figure 1 based on previous studies.

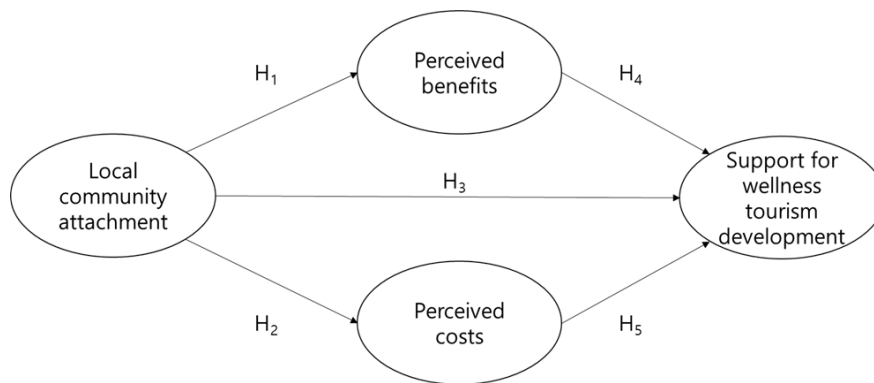


Fig. 1. Research model

3.2 Setting of hypothesis

3.2.1 Relationship between community attachment, perceived benefits and perceived costs, and wellness tourism development support

It has been known that the extent of attachment to a region and the perceived perception or attitude toward tourism are highly correlated. The extent of attachment to the local community forms positive and negative attitudes toward tourism development of local residents (Mason & Cheyne, 2000). Most of the studies demonstrated that the higher the attachment to the region, the higher the support for tourism development (Kang, 2001).

- H1: Community attachment has a significant positive effect on the perceived benefits.
- H2: Community attachment has a significant positive effect on the perceived cost.
- H3: Community attachment has a significant positive effect on the wellness tourism development support.

3.2.2 Relationship between perceived benefits and perceived costs with support for wellness tourism development

Many studies have demonstrated that the perceived benefits of tourism development have a positive effect on the local residents' support for tourism development (Jurowski et al., 1997). Furthermore, the previous studies suggest that the perceived cost of tourism development, which considers the cost as well as the benefits of tourism development, has a negative effect on the attitude of local residents toward tourism development (Jurowski et al., 1997).

- H4: Perceived benefits have a significant positive effect on the wellness tourism development support.
- H5: Perceived costs have a significant negative effect on wellness the tourism development support.

3.3 Manipulated definitions and metrics

The community attachment's measurement was formed by selecting a total of 10 questions among the questions selected in the studies of Ko and Kim (2003), which used the measurement items used in the studies of McCool and Martin (1994) and Um and Crompton (1987) based on the study of Yoo and Lee (2018), Lee (2011), and Han and Yoon (2020). As for the measurement of perceived benefits and costs, Sheldon and Var (1984) based on the study of Lee (2011). The support for tourism development was measured by selecting a total of 4 questions from among the questions selected in the study of Ko and Kim (2003) based on the study of Yoon and Lee (2017).

Community attachment, perceived benefits and costs, and wellness tourism development support questionnaire items were each measured with 'not at all', 'not so', 'normal', 'yes', and 'very much so' on a 5-point Likert scale.

3.4 Data collection and analytical method

The subjects of this study are the people residing on the island area of City of Yeosu, and the survey was conducted 4 times on October 6, 2021, October 12, 2021, October 13, 2021, and October 28, 2021, respectively. This was conducted based on the on-site surveys and postal surveys through visits to the Nam-myeon Office in Yeosu (for those on Geumo-do), Wolho-dong Community Center, Dolsan-eup Community Center, and Hwajeong-myeon Community Center. A total of 1,500 questionnaires were distributed, and 321 copies were collected (recovery rate: 21.4%). Of which, 237 copies were used for the statistical analysis, excluding 84 copies with insincere responses (including missing value responses).

As for the analytical method of this study, frequency analysis was conducted on the demographic and sociological characteristics of the study participants using SPSS 23, and reliability and validity of the measurement items were verified by conducting factor analysis and reliability analysis. Furthermore, hypothesis verification was conducted by evaluating the structural equation model using AMOS 29.

4. Results

4.1 Demographic characteristics of the survey subjects

As demonstrated in Table 1, there were more males (56.5%) than females (43.5%). As for the age distribution, 60s (35.4%) were the most common, followed by 50s (24.9%), 40s (19.0%), 70s or older (11.4%), 30s (5.9%), and 20s (3.4%), in their respective order. As for occupation, excluding others (43.4%), fishery (25.3%) was the most common, followed by agriculture (19.0%), lodging (6.8%), restaurant (3.4%), and tourism (2.1%). The average monthly income per household was less than 2 million Won (38.0%), followed by 2 million to 2.99 million Won (37.5%), and over 3 million Won (24.5%). As for educational level, middle school graduates (30.4%) had the highest level of education, and as for marital status, married (74.3%) was more than single (9.3%). As for residential area, Geumo-do (34.6%) was the most common area of residence, followed by Baekya-do (22.4%), Gae-do (14.0%), Sang/Hahwa-do (9.7%), Nangdo/Sado (8.4%), Jobal/Dunbyeong/Jeokgeum (6.3%), Dolsan (3.0%), Yeojado (0.8%), Gyeongdo (0.4%), and Geomundo (0.4%), in their respective order. As for the residential period, 1-10 years were the most (47.3%).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the respondents (N=237)

Category		N	%	Category		N	%
Sex	Male	134	56.5	Marriage	Married	176	74.3
	Female	103	43.5		Unmarried	22	9.3
Age group	20-29	8	3.4		ETC.	39	16.4
	30-39	14	5.9	Residence	Geumo island	82	34.6
	40-49	45	19.0		Baegya island	53	22.4
	50-59	59	24.9		Gae island	33	14.0
	60-69	84	35.4		Sang/Hahwa island	23	9.7
	Over 70	27	11.4		Nang island/Sa island	20	8.4
	Occupation	Fishery workers	60		25.3	Jobal/Dunbyeong/Jeoggeum	15
Agricultural workers		45	19.0		Dolsan	7	3.0
Housekeeping		16	6.8	Yeojado island	2	0.8	
Restaurant services workers		8	3.4	Gyeong island	1	0.4	
Tourism workers		5	2.1	Geomun island	1	0.4	
ETC.		103	43.4	Residence period	1-10 years	112	47.3
Monthly income		Under ₩2,000,000	90		38.0	11-20 years	28
	₩2,000,000 - ₩2,999,999	89	37.5		21-30 years	29	12.2
	Over ₩3,000,000	58	24.5		31-40 years	20	8.4
Education	Middle school	72	30.4		41-50 years	14	5.9
	High school	55	23.2		51-60 years	12	5.1
	Over college	46	19.4		61-70 years	13	5.5
	ETC.	64	27.0	Over 71 years	9	3.8	

4.2 Analytical results of reliability and validity verification

4.2.1 Community attachment

The factor analysis was conducted to verify the reliability and validity of items related to community attachment, and the results are demonstrated in Table 2.

For the factor extraction method, a standard eigenvalue of 1 or more was used, and a factor loading of 0.4 or more, which indicates the extent of correlation between each variable and factors, was used. Furthermore, KMO and Bartlett identity matrix checks were conducted to verify whether the study variables were suitable for factor analysis.

As a result of factor analysis for the community attachment, the KMO coefficient was .928 and the sphericity test chi-square value was 2184.796 ($p < .001$), which was statistically significant, ensuring validity. The community attachment was factored into identity, social closeness, and dependence. The factor loadings of the 4 items of identity ranged from .705 to .838, with an eigenvalue of 3.124 and a variance explanatory value of 31.241%, with Chronbach's α value of .925. The factor loadings of the 3 items of social affinity ranged from .648 to .807, with an eigenvalue of 2.520, an explanatory variance of 25.202%, and a Chronbach's α value of .913. The factor loadings for the three dependent items ranged from .703 to .848, and the eigenvalues, variance explanatory quantities, and Chronbach's α values were 2.777, 27.766%, and .883, each respectively.

Table 2. Result of confirmatory factor analysis on local community attachment

Local community attachment	Loadings	Communality	Eigenvalue	% of variance	Cronhach's α
Identity			3.124	31.241	.925
1. I can tell a lot about this community I live, if I asked.	.760	.817			
2. This community is very special to me.	.838	.880			
3. I am proud of I am living in this community.	.784	.891			
4. This community takes a big part of my life.	.705	.830			
Bonding			2.520	25.202	.913
5. I participate in local events actively.	.648	.764			
6. I know the member of residents well.	.788	.897			
7. I have neighbors in this community with whom I can talk comfortably.	.807	.890			
Dependence			2.777	27.766	.883
8. This community is the best for my work.	.731	.823			
9. Most of my life are in this community.	.848	.875			
10. I would be very sad if I had to leave this community.	.703	.755			

% of cumulative: 84.209% KMO test: .928 Bartlett's test: 2184.796($p < .001$)

4.2.2 Perceived benefits and perceived costs

As a result of factor analysis of perceived benefits for tourism development, the KMO coefficient was .853 and the sphericity test (Chi-square=751.195, $p<.001$) was statistically significant, ensuring validity (Table 3). At which time, the factor loading was .878~.939, the eigenvalue was 3.281, the variance explanation was 82.018%, and the Cronbach's α value was .926.

As a result of factor analysis on perceived cost, the KMO coefficient was .833 and the sphericity test Chi-square value was 856.994 ($p<.001$), confirming that it was statistically significant. The factor loadings for the 4 items of perceived benefit were .899-.953, with Cronbach's α value of .936, eigenvalue of 3.366, and variance explanatory power of 84.141%.

Table 3. Result of confirmatory factor analysis on perceived benefits and costs

Perceived benefits and costs	Loadings	Community	Eigenvalue	% of variance	Cronhach's α
Benefits ^a			3.281	82.018	.926
1. Increase in income	.878	.770			
2. Increase in cultural events	.939	.881			
3. Livable community	.912	.832			
4. Increase in leisure facilities	.893	.798			
Costs ^b			3.366	84.141	.936
1. Increase in disturbance	.905	.820			
2. Increase in invasion of privacy	.953	.909			
3. Increase in distracted atmosphere	.899	.808			
4. Deterioration of community environment	.910	.829			

^a KMO test: .853 Bartlett's test: 751.195 ($p<.001$)

^b KMO test: .833 Bartlett's test: 856.994 ($p<.001$)

4.2.3 Support for the wellness tourism development

Cronbach's α value, which is a method of verifying reliability for wellness tourism development support, demonstrated high reliability at .956, and the eigenvalue was 3.539, which was extracted as more than 1 (Table 4). In the case of tourism development support, it was measured by four single factors, and the factor loading demonstrated .917-.949, and the variance explanation was analyzed as 88.467%. At which time, the goodness of fit results according to the factor analysis demonstrated that the KMO value was .868 and the Bartlett's sphericity test Chi-square value was 1044.582 ($p<.001$), which turned out to be statistically significant.

Table 4. Result of confirmatory factor analysis on support for wellness tourism development

Support ^a	Loadings	Communality	Eigenvalue	% of variance	Cronhach's α
1. I have been supported new wellness tourism development in this community.	.917	.841			
2. I have been supported tourism development.	.947	.898			
3. The development of wellness tourism has economic benefits for this community.	.949	.900	3.539	88.467	.956
4. I will participate in the development of wellness tourism.	.949	.901			

^a KMO test: .868 Bartlett's test: 1044.582(p<.001)

4.3 Results of the hypothesis verification

As a result of evaluating the structural equation model, Chi-square value 486.573, extent of freedom 201, significance probability <.001, GFI .848, AGFI .809, RMR .085, RMSEA .078, NFI .914 were found, and hence, the research model was determined to be acceptable.

As demonstrated in Figure 2, as a result of the structural model analysis, the perceived benefit (β community attachment \rightarrow perceived benefit=.609, p<.001) and the perceived cost (β community attachment \rightarrow perceived cost=.296, p<.001), hypotheses H1 and H2 were supported. The perceived benefits appeared to have a significant positive effect on the wellness tourism development support (β -perceived benefits \rightarrow wellness tourism development support=.416, p<.001), and hypothesis H4 was supported. Meanwhile, the community attachment and perceived cost did not appear to affect wellness tourism development support, and hence, the hypotheses H3 and H5 were dismissed.

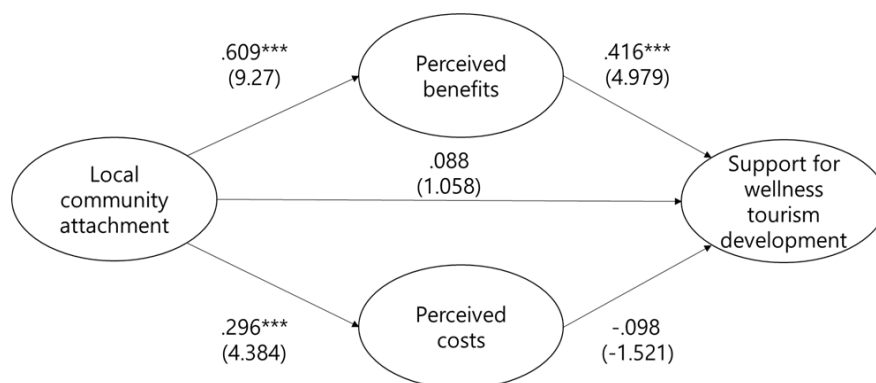


Fig. 2. Result for structural equation modeling

5. Discussion and Conclusions

This study sought to find out the relationship between community attachment and wellness tourism development support in the region. To this end, the relationship between community attachment to the local residents' perceived benefits and perceived costs of tourism development and wellness tourism development support was articulated.

The specific results of this study are presented as follows. First, the extent of community attachment turned out to have a mutually significant positive relationship between the perceived benefits and perceived costs of wellness tourism development. Second, the perceived benefits of tourism development were found to have a mutually significant positive effect on the wellness tourism development support, but the perceived costs were found to have no significant relationship with the development support. Third, community attachment turned out to have no significant relationship with the wellness tourism development support.

The academic implications of this study are as follows. First, the results supporting the claim of the existing social exchange theory that the perceived benefits of tourism development have a positive effect on tourism development support (Allen, Long, & Perdue, 1993). Furthermore, the community attachment turned out to be related to the perceived benefits of tourism development, resulting in support for the claims of previous studies. Second, it turned out that community attachment and wellness development support did not have a mutually positive effect, which was not consistent with existing literature (Mason & Cheyne, 2000). However, this may be seen as meaning that the level of community attachment of local residents should be considered when establishing the direction of tourism development, as the extent of attachment of local residents varies from region to region. The results of a study examining the factors that affect individual attachment to Incheon residents show that awareness of cultural history, employment stability, and the foundation for stable living are related to the extent of attachment (Lee, 2013). Consequently, in order to improve the level of attachment in the social unit at the individual level, it is emphasized that regional publicity and marketing strategies should be established based on this. Third, it demonstrates that, like perceived benefits, community attachment is related to the perceived cost of tourism development, which is consistent with previous research results (Ko & Kim, 2003).

However, the perceived costs did not demonstrate to have an impact on support for wellness tourism development. This means that each local resident may evaluate the expected costs differently depending on the stage of tourism development. Emphasizing the benefits may be suggested as a more reasonable way to attract tourism support from local residents (Ko & Kim, 2003). Fourth, the need to consider all of identity, social closeness, and dependence in community attachment was suggested. In the study by Han and Yoon (2020), regional identity, which means place symbolism, and regional dependence, which demonstrates functional connectivity, help form attachment, but social affinity, which means social bond, rather does not help form community attachment have demonstrated the results. This is because as the social bond of local residents is strengthened, they may form a negative attitude that social cohesion may be hindered or destroyed due to conflicts between residents due to social friction, such as conflicts with stakeholders due to tourism development. However, in the case of the wellness tourism development which the City of Yeosu is currently

pursuing, it is evaluated that social closeness does not have a negative effect on the extent of community attachment, as it does not fall under a project that causes friction between stakeholders. Such results suggest the need to consider the fact that social closeness can have a negative effect on attachment when wellness tourism is developed in Yeosu in the future.

The practical implications of this study may be presented as follows. First, as it was discovered that the perceived benefits of local residents for wellness tourism development rather than local attachment are an important antecedent factor in increasing the support for the wellness tourism development, publicity that emphasizes the benefits of wellness tourism development in order to attract support from the local residents is quite urgent. That is, a specific blueprint for how much the income of local residents may be increased according to the development of wellness tourism and how to improve the quality of life or increase leisure life according to the increase of healing facilities for the local residents according to the development of wellness tourism is necessary to make an effort to present together. Second, while it was not statistically significant, it should be noted that the cost-side concerns perceived by local residents in supporting wellness tourism development may rather reduce support for tourism development. That is, if the development of wellness tourism does not sufficiently consider issues such as local disturbances and environmental pollution in advance, it may continue to cause the conflicts among local residents even after the wellness tourism makes progress, which will continue to hinder the project from proceeding smoothly. It is necessary to prepare sufficient countermeasures for problems that may be solved and responded to in advance by thoroughly investigating the problems that will arise as a result. Third, in order to increase the extent of attachment of local residents, it will be important to strengthen their identity, dependence, and social closeness to the region. That is, the development and promotion of differentiated tourism products from other regions can instill pride in local residents, which will help to enhance the identity of the region. Furthermore, it is necessary to contribute to promoting social affinity and dependence of local residents by seeking ways to actively utilize the participation of local residents in the development and progress of tourism products as well as in terms of the evaluation of project effects and performance.

Notwithstanding the implications above, this study used convenience sampling for the survey, and hence, there may still be limitations in generalizing the analysis results. Hence, in the future studies, it would be desirable to generalize the study by conducting research targeting the residents of various regions with a view to overcome such limitations. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about drastic changes in the society as a whole, including not only medical care, but also society, economy, and education, and has also caused significant damages to the tourism business. Since this study was conducted at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is difficult to distinguish whether the response results are a temporary phenomenon during the COVID-19 pandemic or a general result. Hence, it would be necessary to conduct the additional repeated studies in the future to ensure the universal validity of the research results.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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