

Understanding Residents' Resistance Towards Tourism: The Mediating Role of Attitudes in Response to Perceived Congestion and Pressure on Public Services

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ABSTRACT:

This study investigates residents' resistance to tourism and the mediating role of attitudes in response to perceived congestion and pressure on public services. A quantitative survey was conducted with 221 residents from Kuala Lumpur, Melaka, and Penang, using a 5-point Likert scale to measure responses. The results indicate that attitudes towards tourists significantly influence resistance to tourism ($\beta = 0.556$, $p < 0.001$). Congestion in public spaces indirectly affects resistance through attitudes towards tourists, with partial mediation observed ($\beta = 0.116$, $p = 0.005$). Pressure on public services also affects attitudes towards tourists ($\beta = 0.544$, $p < 0.001$) and subsequently, resistance to tourism ($\beta = 0.226$, $p = 0.009$), with full mediation observed in this relationship ($\beta = 0.303$, $p < 0.001$). The findings highlight the critical role of residents' attitudes in shaping their resistance to tourism, particularly in response to infrastructural pressures, offering valuable insights for policymakers aiming to manage tourism's social impact.

INTRODUCTION

Urban tourism has become an essential aspect of modern economies and cultural exchanges, yet it frequently engenders local resistance among residents. This resistance is primarily driven by the perceived negative impacts of tourism, including congestion in public spaces, heightened pressures on public services, and shifting community attitudes towards tourists. A growing body of research illuminates the intricate dynamics between these factors and the resultant negative behaviours exhibited by local populations towards tourism.

The growth of urban tourism has raised concerns about its negative physical and social impacts (Mashkov & Shoval, 2023). It has led to various issues, including congestion, strain on infrastructure and services, and environmental degradation (Peeters et al., 2018). Overcrowding in urban tourism, particularly during peak seasons, leads to congestion problems (Hua Yang, Huang, Huang & Huang, 2014) in traffic and parking concerns, as well as dissatisfaction in the community from misbehaving tourists (Azinuddin et al., 2022). In this sense, a significant increase in traffic can deteriorate residents' perception of the destination, leading to frustration and intolerance towards tourist flows (Curtale, Sarman, & Evler, 2024).

Furthermore, overcrowding can generate an overload of infrastructure (García-Hernández & Ivars-Baidal, 2019). As tourist numbers expand, local authorities may struggle to meet the demand for infrastructure upgrades, resulting in inadequate public services and wear and strain on buildings. The increased number of vehicles on the road also indicates that limited space must be shared by more people at one time, which leads to congestion and longer waiting times (Paramasivam, 2023). It can exacerbate residents' frustration, as they feel their needs are deprioritised compared to those of accommodating tourists (Ivanišević, 2024).

Congestion in urban environments is a prevalent concern for residents coping with increased visitor inflows. Studies indicate that urban residents often perceive tourism-related congestion as detrimental to their quality of life (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010). The salience of issues like traffic and crowding profoundly affects residents' attitudes toward tourism, with those living in urban destinations expressing heightened concerns about such problems compared to their rural counterparts (Stylidis et al., 2014). This perspective aligns with findings from Wang, which highlight that residents' perceptions of city crowding directly influence their support for ongoing

tourism development (Wang, 2016). As urban congestion escalates, the social fabric of communities can strain under the pressure, prompting individuals to perceive tourists not as contributors to local culture but as intruders disrupting their daily lives (Duignan et al., 2019).

This research is essential because overcrowding in urban tourism is becoming increasingly problematic (Billie et al., 2023). As the influx of tourists increases, residents often face congestion and pressure on infrastructure and services (Koohsari et al., 2024). It leads to a deterioration in the quality of life in the areas, and the experience becomes deteriorated (Patrichi, 2023), harming the residents' well-being and encouraging them to change their lifestyle (García-Hernández, Ivars-Baidal, & Mendoza de Miguel, 2019). Consequently, this increasing tension and conflict between tourists and residents (Abbasian, 2020). When the quality of life for residents and the experience for tourists deteriorates, the residents begin to protest, asking the authorities to reduce the number of tourists or create areas that are only accessible to residents (Panasiuk, 2019).

However, while the issue of urban tourism overcrowding is gaining global attention, the importance of understanding the residents' perspective on this matter is still overlooked, especially in Malaysia. Besides, it pays little attention to how directly affected residents respond to the social impacts of overcrowding in urban tourism, particularly in major urban tourism areas in the country. Understanding residents' perceptions is crucial since they are the people who are affected, and these perceptions can influence tourism support or rejection (Gautam, 2023). If the residents' opinion is ignored, the possibility of tourism resistance and protest increases, thus affecting urban tourism in the future (Smith, 2019). Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by examining how residents of urban tourism in Malaysia respond to overcrowding and how this perception influences their attitudes towards tourists and resistance to tourism. The research questions are as follows.

1. How do congestion in public spaces and pressure on public services affect residents' attitudes towards tourists?
2. How do negative attitudes toward tourists contribute to residents' resistance to tourism?
3. Do residents' attitudes towards tourists mediate the relationship between tourism stressor factors and resistance to tourism?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Resistance Towards Tourism

Urban tourism has increasingly faced backlash from residents due to the negative externalities associated with overtourism. Scholars have observed that urban centres like Barcelona, Amsterdam, and Venice have become focal points of local resistance, where tourism is perceived as a threat to residents' quality of life, local culture, and urban functionality (Martínez, 2023). The concentration of tourism in central urban areas often leads to congestion, noise pollution, overcrowding of public spaces, and pressure on infrastructure. These impacts result in what Koens, Postma, and Papp (2018) describe as a "hostile narrative," in which residents actively reject tourism as unsustainable and disruptive. The root of this resistance lies in the perceived imbalance between the economic benefits of tourism and the socio-cultural costs borne by local communities.

The expression of resistance varies across cities and contexts but generally includes both active and passive forms. Active resistance includes organised protests, anti-tourism graffiti, and public campaigns, as seen in the "Tourists Go Home" movements in Spain and Italy (Martínez, 2023). Passive resistance, on the other hand, manifests in subtle forms such as declining hospitality toward tourists or avoidance of tourist areas by residents. In Hong Kong, Zekan and Wöber (2024) found that conflicts over shared urban spaces among residents, tourists, and migrant domestic workers created friction and reinforced territorial behaviour among locals. This illustrates how resistance is not always overt but can be embedded in everyday spatial interactions and social tensions within urban environments.

Recent studies have emphasised the need for inclusive tourism planning that acknowledges and mitigates local resistance. Gore, Uysal, and Kim (2024) examined Lucerne, Switzerland, and concluded that residents' support for tourism was conditional upon regulatory oversight and the perceived fairness of tourism development. They argue for the integration of community voices in policymaking to foster a more equitable distribution of tourism's

costs and benefits. Similarly, Martínez (2023) suggests that the post-pandemic period presents an opportunity to reshape urban tourism into a more sustainable model, balancing visitor demand with local well-being. Addressing resistance, therefore, requires a shift from growth-oriented strategies to those grounded in social sustainability and community participation.

Congestion in Public Spaces

Public space refers to any area within a public domain that encourages social contact and community bonds, including spots in a neighbourhood, city centre, special district, or other places (Hamzah and Krishna Sinniah, 2022). Hamzah and Krishna Sinniah (2022) found that public spaces are known as parks, plazas, town squares, markets, shopping malls, and so on. Additionally, public space is a shared area where people engage in daily activities and interact with one another (Moleiro, Carneiro & Breda, 2021). These spaces are typically public and facilitate social and cultural interaction (Moleiro et al., 2021). Based on Moleiro et al. 2021, the construction of a city is influenced by the design of these spaces and how well they meet people's social or economic needs.

However, congestion in public spaces has become a significant issue in urban tourism. This congestion occurs when the number of tourists exceeds the destination's capacity (Ji, Guo, Chen, & Morgan, 2022). It usually happens in popular urban tourist spots such as shopping malls (Hamzah and Krishna Sinniah, 2022), city centres (Simoes Aelbrecht, 2023), or historical buildings (Merylova et al., 2023). In cities like Kuala Lumpur (Yap, Omar, & Ismail, 2022), Melaka (Md Khairi, Ismail, & Jaafar, 2020), George Town (Fan, 2024), and Kota Kinabalu (Besar et al., 2020), congestion typically occurs on weekends, public holidays, and during peak times when excessive numbers of tourists continuously enter the destination (Tan, 2020). This causes issues such as traffic jams, overcrowded sidewalks, and difficulties accessing public facilities like transportation, restrooms (Effiong, 2024), parks, streets, and squares (Koohsari et al., 2024).

Based on Social Exchange Theory (Hassan, 2022), residents evaluate tourism based on perceived benefits and costs. Residents are likely to support tourism if they perceive benefits, such as economic opportunities. However, when public spaces like parks, streets, and public transportation become overwhelmed with tourists, residents may see tourism as a burden rather than a benefit. This empirical study is supported by Koohsari et al. (2024); when public spaces become overcrowded, it can disrupt residents' quality of life due to noise pollution, making it challenging to rest and sleep at night (Cocola-Gant, 2020). Consequently, this leads to annoyance and inconvenience for residents (Pathmanandakumar, 2021). Residents may resist tourism due to a negative perception of its benefits and fear that an increasing influx of tourists will restrict their use of public spaces (Moleiro, 2021). This can foster negative attitudes towards tourists and the activity itself (Moleiro, 2021) because it disrupts residents' daily lives, resulting in parking problems, traffic congestion, overcrowding, noise, garbage, crime, increasing living costs, and conflicts between residents and tourists (Pai, 2023).

Pressure on Public Services

A public service is a service that is provided by the government to people living within its jurisdiction, either directly (through the public sector) or by financing the provision of services (Matt Rowley, 2020). These services are aimed at improving the quality of life for the community and ensuring the well-being of the public. Public service encompasses various sectors such as education, healthcare, transportation, public safety, social services, and infrastructure. Employees in public service roles are responsible for implementing and managing programs that address the needs and interests of the public (Robert Clayton Wurich, 2024). Improving service quality in the tourism industry is crucial for ensuring business sustainability and competitiveness, particularly in the hotel and resort sector. Superior service is the key to building customer loyalty in the service industry (Frangky Silitonga et al., 2025).

Problems such as accessibility and the general experience of tourists put pressure on the development of some elements of tourist infrastructure, such as transport, accommodation facilities, food services, and also digital technologies, since all these elements count for the attractiveness and sustainability of tourist destinations (Răzvan-Andrei Corbos et al., 2024). The physical development of tourist destinations can be achieved through investment in tourist infrastructure. Investments in the rehabilitation of roads, the construction and modernisation of airports, ports, and accommodation facilities (Răzvan-Andrei Corbos et al., 2024). Tourism investment refers

to the funds allocated for developing and enhancing tourism-related infrastructure, services, and attractions. It plays a critical role in the growth and sustainability of tourism regions (Study Smarter, 2024).

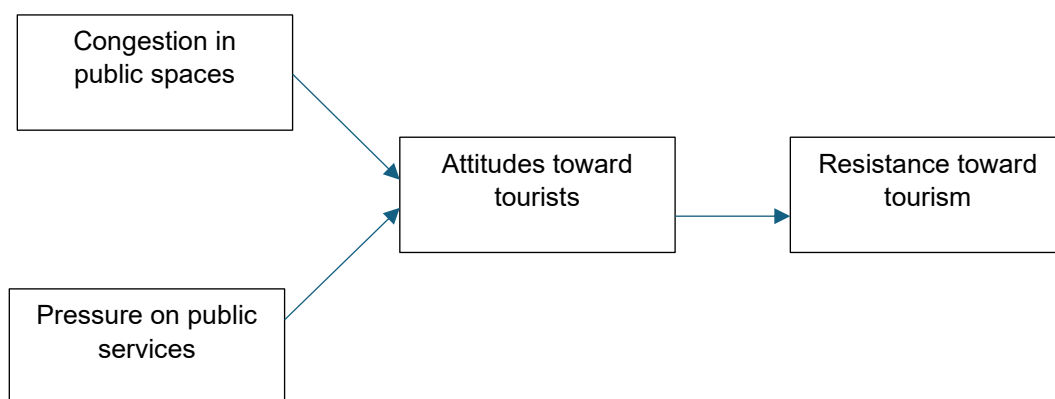
Attitudes Toward Tourists

Attitudes refer to a psychological tendency expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or unfavourably (Verplanken & Orbell, 2022). These describe the essential element of an attitude as the tendency to produce an evaluative response (Verplanken and Orbell, 2022). Residents' attitudes toward tourists play a vital role in mediating how diverse overcrowding-induced pressures influence their resistance to tourism. Urban areas often lead to overcrowding, environmental degradation, strain on infrastructure and services, and congestion (Rahaman, Kalam & Al-Mamun, 2023), which can disrupt residents' daily lives and quality of life (Pai, 2023).

This mediating relationship is strongly supported by Social Exchange Theory (SET) (Hassan et al., 2022), which establishes a relationship between the benefits and costs of tourism, negative and positive perceptions, and support or resistance to tourism in urban areas. SET explains that residents are supportive of tourism when the benefits of tourism outweigh the losses, and residents are resistant to tourism when the costs outweigh the benefits (Hassan et al., 2022).

Blackie, Tsholetso and Keetile (2023) found that positive attitudes towards tourists in tourist destinations are driven by the tangible benefits that tourism brings to local community, including the generation of employment opportunities, which serve as a critical source of income for residents, foreign currency gains, the boost to the city's commercial activity, enhancement of residents' quality of life, and protection of historical, archaeological sites, and cultural assets (Pathmanandakumar, 2021). As long as the influx of tourists does not exceed the capacity of the destinations, the relationship between tourists and residents will develop positively, and tourists are often welcomed by residents (Blackie, Tsholetso & Keetile, 2023). Giango (2022) also explains that tourism leads to negative attitudes toward tourists, which results from exceeding the area's human capacity limit. Pathmanandakuma (2021) explains that when this balance is disrupted and the influx of tourists exceeds limits, residents may develop negative attitudes, including hostility towards tourists, which can negatively impact the tourism destination's appeal and long-term sustainability. The conceptual framework of this research is presented below in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The conceptual framework of this study



METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to investigate the effects of urban tourism overcrowding on residents' attitudes and resistance to tourism in three high-tourism urban areas in Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur, Melaka, and George Town. The research examines how congestion in public spaces and pressure on public services affect residents' attitudes towards tourists and how these attitudes, in turn, contribute to resistance behaviours. The target population comprises residents from these cities.

A mixed sampling approach was also implemented to balance statistical representativeness with practical feasibility. Stratified sampling ensured proportional representation of significant subgroups, while convenience sampling enabled the efficient recruitment of participants under time and resource constraints. Data collection aimed for 385 respondents, although 221 participants completed the survey. This sample size was considered sufficient for conducting both descriptive and inferential analyses, including mediation analysis. Ethical approval was obtained from Universiti Teknologi MARA, ensuring compliance with ethical standards such as informed consent, anonymity, and voluntary participation.

For data analysis, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was employed to assess the hypothesised relationships between tourism-related stressors (independent variables), residents' attitudes (mediating variable), and resistance to tourism (dependent variable). One of the key advantages of using PLS-SEM is its ability to ensure validity and reliability through measurement model analysis and structural model analysis. The measurement model analysis evaluates the validity of the constructs by examining convergent and discriminant validity, while reliability is assessed through indicators such as Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (Hair et al., 2017). Additionally, PLS-SEM enables robust hypothesis testing, particularly in complex models with multiple relationships, by using structural model analysis to evaluate path coefficients and assess the direct and indirect effects between variables (Hair et al., 2014).

The PLS-SEM approach is particularly well-suited for exploratory research and complex models, as it does not require normally distributed data and can handle smaller sample sizes, which is beneficial for studies where data collection is limited (Chin, 2010). By applying PLS-SEM, the study gains a comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationships among the variables, ensuring that the measurement and structural models are both valid and reliable. This methodology contributes valuable insights into the social impacts of urban tourism overcrowding in Malaysia, while acknowledging the limitations of convenience sampling on the generalisability of the findings.

FINDINGS

The findings from this study provide significant insights into the relationship between urban tourism overcrowding and residents' attitudes and resistance to tourism in Malaysia. The study's demographic profile reveals that a substantial proportion of the respondents (77.8%) were female, with a predominant age group (67.9%) between 35 and 45 years. This demographic skew towards younger individuals is reflective of the importance of urban tourism in attracting younger populations. Additionally, the high percentage of Malay respondents (94.6%) and a long average residency period (42.1% with 15 years and above) suggest that the sample is well-positioned to offer insights into the long-term effects of tourism in these urban areas, particularly in destinations like Melaka, Kuala Lumpur, and Penang.

Regarding the direct relationships, the study found that attitudes towards tourists significantly influence resistance to tourism ($\beta = 0.556$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that residents' attitudes are a crucial determinant in shaping their resistance behaviours. Congestion in public spaces was also found to affect residents' attitudes towards tourists significantly ($\beta = 0.208$, $p = 0.003$), highlighting the discomfort caused by overcrowded spaces and how it fosters negative perceptions of tourists. However, congestion in public spaces did not have a significant direct effect on resistance to tourism ($\beta = 0.075$, $p = 0.306$). This suggests that while congestion may influence attitudes, it does not directly translate into resistance behaviour. This finding underscores the complexity of how different stressors interact with residents' perceptions and reactions to tourism.

In contrast, pressures on public services had a significant direct effect on both attitudes towards tourists ($\beta = 0.544$, $p < 0.001$) and resistance to tourism ($\beta = 0.226$, $p = 0.009$). This suggests that when public services are overwhelmed, residents may feel that tourism exacerbates their daily challenges, leading to more negative attitudes and greater resistance.

The analysis of indirect effects revealed that both congestion in public spaces and pressures on public services have partial mediation effects on the relationship between tourism stressors and resistance behaviours. Specifically, the indirect effect of congestion in public spaces on resistance towards tourism through attitudes towards tourists was significant ($\beta = 0.116$, $p = 0.005$), suggesting that attitudes mediate, but do not fully explain,

the relationship. Similarly, the indirect effect of pressures on public services on resistance to tourism through attitudes was highly significant ($\beta = 0.303$, $p < 0.001$), indicating a strong mediating role of attitudes. The direct effects and indirect effects are shown in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Direct effects

	B	Mean	Std.Dev.	T	P values	Results
Attitudes toward tourists -> Resistance towards tourism	0.556	0.555	0.079	7.040	0.000	Supported
Congestion in public space -> Attitudes toward tourists	0.208	0.208	0.070	2.988	0.003	Supported
Congestion in public space -> Resistance towards tourism	0.075	0.076	0.073	1.024	0.306	Not supported
Pressures toward public services -> Attitudes toward tourists	0.544	0.550	0.067	8.132	0.000	Supported
Pressures toward public services -> Resistance towards tourism	0.226	0.229	0.086	2.615	0.009	Supported

Table 1: Direct effects of the research

Indirect effects

	β	Mean	Std.Dev.	t	P values	Results
Congestion in public space -> Attitudes toward tourists -> Resistance towards tourism	0.116	0.115	0.041	2.803	0.005	Partially mediated
Pressures toward public services -> Attitudes toward tourists -> Resistance towards tourism	0.303	0.306	0.060	5.056	0.000	Partially mediated

Table 2: Indirect effects of the research

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study offer valuable insights into the impact of urban tourism stressors on residents' attitudes and resistance to tourism in Malaysian cities. This research highlights the significant role that congestion in public spaces and the pressure on public services play in shaping residents' perceptions and behaviours towards tourism.

Congestion in Public Spaces

Congestion in public spaces emerged as a significant predictor of residents' attitudes towards tourists. The study found that increased congestion in urban environments directly influenced residents' attitudes, fostering negative perceptions of tourism. These findings resonate with previous studies, such as those by Koens, Postma, and Papp (2018), who highlighted that residents of urban tourism destinations often experience reduced quality of life due to overcrowding. Residents' discomfort from overcrowding, especially in key tourist spots, mirrors the negative attitudes observed in studies from cities like Barcelona and Venice, where residents perceive tourism as a disruptor to daily life and urban functionality (Martínez, 2023).

However, this study also found that while congestion influenced residents' attitudes towards tourists, it did not directly translate into resistance behaviours. This suggests that residents' attitudes may be a more complex

mediator of their resistance to tourism, as compared to studies that show a more direct relationship between congestion and resistance (Gore et al., 2024). Our finding underscores the need for a deeper exploration of how attitudes mediate the perceived negative impacts of congestion, which has not been fully addressed in the literature. For instance, while the congestion may lead to frustration, residents may adapt over time, as indicated by studies from Hong Kong (Zekan & Wöber, 2024), where resistance takes on more subtle forms, such as avoiding tourist-heavy areas.

Additionally, studies by Duignan et al. (2019) and Simoes Aelbrecht (2023) suggest that while residents may express dissatisfaction with congestion, they may not necessarily act on it through overt resistance. This finding aligns with our study, which emphasises the indirect nature of the relationship between congestion and resistance. The challenge, therefore, lies in identifying and mitigating these subtle forms of resistance, which could eventually escalate into more overt opposition if not addressed early.

Pressure on Public Services

The significant role of pressure on public services in shaping residents' attitudes towards tourists also corroborates existing literature. Specifically, the study found that the overwhelming demand for public services due to tourism exacerbates residents' dissatisfaction, leading to greater resistance behaviours. This finding is consistent with González-Torres et al. (2023), who argue that the negative impacts on residents' quality of life increase as the demand for public services exceeds the local infrastructure's capacity. This was particularly evident in urban destinations, where pressure on services such as healthcare, transportation, and sanitation was directly related to residents' negative attitudes towards tourism.

The findings also align with studies by Koohsari et al. (2024) and Pathmanandakumar (2021), who discuss the strain on public services due to tourism as a crucial stressor for residents. However, our study extends this perspective by quantitatively assessing the indirect effect of public service pressure on resistance through residents' attitudes. Unlike the more direct relationships observed in previous studies (e.g., Peeters et al., 2018), our research suggests a more nuanced mechanism where residents' negative attitudes towards tourists serve as a mediator between the pressure on public services and their resistance behaviour.

This nuanced finding suggests that while the direct impact of public service strain on resistance has been documented in the literature, the mediating role of attitudes warrants further examination. It indicates that residents may first develop negative attitudes towards tourists, which then amplify the effects of pressure on public services, ultimately fostering resistance behaviours. It is a significant contribution to the literature, as it provides a deeper understanding of the psychological processes behind resistance in urban tourism settings.

The Mediating Role of Attitudes

A novel aspect of this study is the identification of residents' attitudes as a crucial mediator between tourism-related stressors and resistance to tourism. The findings suggest that attitudes play a substantial role in how residents perceive and respond to tourism-related stressors, which is consistent with Social Exchange Theory (SET) as discussed by Hassan et al. (2022). SET posits that residents evaluate tourism based on the perceived benefits and costs, which ultimately influences their support or resistance.

The mediating role of attitudes found in this study is consistent with the findings of Ribeiro et al. (2023), who observed that residents in crowded European cities exhibited strong resistance when tourism disruptions to daily life became frequent. Our study extends this by highlighting how residents' attitudes amplify both direct and indirect effects of congestion and public service pressure. It contrasts with the findings of Martínez (2023), who suggested that the primary form of resistance in urban tourism is driven directly by perceived costs and benefits, with less emphasis on the role of attitudes. Our study indicates that attitudes should be seen not just as a reflection of residents' feelings, but as a key mediator in how stressors like congestion and public service strain translate into resistance behaviours.

Moreover, the study's findings also highlight the potential for adaptive behaviours in residents, as negative attitudes may not always lead directly to resistance. The "Tourists Go Home" movements in cities like Venice

and Barcelona, as noted by Martínez (2023), are examples of how residents can take active, public stances against tourism. However, in Malaysia, the resistance observed was more passive, underscoring the importance of attitude shifts in determining whether resistance escalates. This highlights a critical area for future research: understanding how long-term exposure to tourism-induced stressors influences residents' attitudes and whether these attitudes eventually lead to more overt forms of resistance.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study provides valuable insights into the effects of urban tourism overcrowding on residents' attitudes and resistance to tourism in Malaysia. However, several limitations must be considered when interpreting the findings. One major limitation is the geographical scope of the research, which was limited to selected urban tourism destinations in Malaysia—Kuala Lumpur, Melaka, and Penang. While these locations are significant in terms of tourism, other areas such as Langkawi and the Cameron Highlands, which have also experienced rising overtourism concerns, were not included in the study. These destinations have seen increased domestic tourism and the influence of social media post-pandemic (Mohd et al., 2022; Lee & Jamal, 2023). Consequently, the findings may not be fully generalisable to all urban tourism contexts in Malaysia.

Another limitation arises from the use of a cross-sectional research design, which restricted data collection to a single point in time. This approach limits the ability to observe how residents' perceptions of overcrowding may change across seasons, cultural events, or in response to tourism policy changes. As Li et al. (2021) pointed out, residents' attitudes towards overcrowding can vary significantly during peak tourism periods or cultural festivals, suggesting that future studies should adopt longitudinal designs to capture these temporal variations and offer a more dynamic understanding of residents' attitudes over time.

The study also relied on self-reported data and convenience sampling. While these methods allowed for efficient data collection, they introduced potential self-selection bias, which may have affected the representativeness of the sample. Some respondents displayed disengagement during data collection, such as taking photographs of the questionnaire without providing responses or leaving large sections unanswered, possibly due to lack of interest or time constraints. This behaviour resulted in a smaller sample size (221 respondents) than the originally targeted 384, which may limit the robustness and generalisability of the findings. Similar issues have been highlighted in other tourism studies employing non-probability sampling methods, where participant disengagement undermined data quality (Tan & Abdullah, 2022). These challenges highlight the need for more rigorous sampling strategies in future research.

To address these limitations, several recommendations are proposed for future studies. Firstly, it is recommended that the geographical scope of future research be expanded to include a broader range of urban and semi-urban tourism destinations in Malaysia, such as Langkawi and the Cameron Highlands. These areas, which have seen substantial growth in domestic tourism and social media-driven travel trends, would benefit from a comparative analysis that could enhance the generalisability of findings and offer a more holistic view of urban tourism dynamics (Mohd et al., 2022; Lee & Jamal, 2023).

Secondly, future studies should consider adopting longitudinal designs to track how residents' perceptions of overcrowding evolve over time, particularly during peak seasons or in response to significant tourism events or policy interventions. Li et al. (2021) noted that residents' attitudes towards overcrowding can shift considerably during cultural festivals and peak tourism seasons, making longitudinal research critical for understanding the long-term impacts of tourism on local communities.

Additionally, it is recommended that researchers expand the existing conceptual framework by incorporating additional variables, such as psychological well-being, tourism-phobia (negative sentiments or resentment towards tourists), and the impact of social media-induced tourism, such as "Instagram tourism". Recent studies have highlighted the growing importance of these factors in shaping residents' attitudes towards tourism (Martinez & Nguyen, 2023; Williams et al., 2024). Including these variables would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how urban tourism overcrowding affects residents.

Furthermore, to improve the representativeness of the sample, future research should consider employing

probability or quota sampling techniques. Although convenience sampling is time-efficient, studies have shown that it often fails to adequately represent marginalised populations, particularly those who are most affected by tourism overcrowding (Tan & Abdullah, 2022). Using more robust sampling methods would ensure that the study captures a wider range of resident experiences.

Finally, from a practical perspective, tourism planners and policymakers are encouraged to implement visitor management strategies based on the findings of this study. Measures such as tourism caps, dynamic pricing, and the improvement of public facilities, which have been successfully implemented in cities like Barcelona, Kyoto, and Venice, could be adapted to the Malaysian context (OECD, 2023). Additionally, involving residents in participatory tourism planning processes is essential for minimising the negative impacts of tourism, improving their quality of life, and promoting sustainable urban tourism development.

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