Impacts of Tourism Development on Coastal Communities in Cha-am Beach, the Gulf of Thailand, through Analysis of Local Perceptions

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Abstract: Coastal tourism development can appropriately contribute to the livelihood of the community. To date, few studies have been conducted on the impacts of tourism development on the coastal communities in Thailand. This study assessed these impacts through the analysis of local perceptions based on four criteria of tourism development—the economic, environmental, social, and cultural impacts—using a five-point Likert scale. A survey of 116 households (HHs) was conducted at Cha-am Beach in the Gulf of Thailand. We found that the impacts of tourism development on coastal communities were 3.13 ± 1.02 (± refers to standard deviation) for social impact and 2.85 ± 1.03 for economic impact, indicating that tourism development had neutral and positive impacts. However, impacts on the other two criteria were below the average scores, indicating that tourism development had a negative impact on the local environment (2.50 ± 1.05) and local culture (2.41 ± 0.95). For overall impacts, the average score was 2.72 ± 1.02, indicating the coastal communities accepted tourism development in their communities. Nevertheless, as the overall score of tourism development was still far below the maximum point of 5, more efforts by the government as well as the private sector are needed to protect the local culture and coastal communities while improving the positive impacts on economic development and social integrity.

Keywords: coastal tourism; local perceptions; tourism development impacts; tourism management; Cha-am Beach; Gulf of Thailand

1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the world’s largest industries interconnected with all other life sectors: economic, social, cultural, environmental, and political [1]. In the recent decade, the growth of tourism in coastal areas has reached its peak due to a distinctive resource combination of land and sea offering diversified cultures and activities [2]. Increasing coastal tourism trend involves the physical condition upon the development of tourism capacities and infrastructure [3]. It regards its magnitude and contribution to the wellbeing of coastal communities worldwide that are greatly influenced by the tourism related to the receiving environment of socio-economic features [4]. However, the development of tourism is still based on financial resources while the environment depends on the perspectives of minimising effects under the available budget and challenges facing the unsustainable growth to the coastal communities on their environment and society [5].

Tourism is recognised as an agent of social and cultural change [6]. The socio-cultural theories of Ferdinand Tonnies [7] and Zygmunt Bauman [8] implicate that tourism represents modernity, making a social structure transition through personal relationships, communication habits, lifestyles, value systems, meanings, and knowledge that drive life change faster than it takes [9]. Social structure changes in the community due to changed
perceptions of individual self-interest freeing from community’s social control [10]. Modern lifestyle and demographic change from tourists influence local attitude and perception changes [11]. Personal interaction shifts from the traditional social network of kinship and being tied together by shared values and interests to formal interaction of a larger social network whose ties are looser [12]. One previous study suggested that when there are too many visitors, locals tend to lose their sense of security and community pride [13].

The local perception change links to overall life satisfaction or quality of life affected by two senses of wellbeing: liveability of environment and utility of life and inner qualities, life-ability of the person, and appreciation of life [13]. Previous studies uncovered that perceived tourism economic, social, cultural, and environmental impacts on local people connect to the evaluation of sense of material wellbeing, community wellbeing, emotional wellbeing, and health and safety [14]. Communities at tourism destinations engage in a trade-off between the perceived benefits of tourism and the negative social and environmental outcomes of its development [15]. The implications of perceived negative and positive impacts of tourism will draw local conclusions based on the relative weighting to the costs and the benefits [16]. Since such studies confirm the importance of understanding local responses and their involvement in tourism to achieve sustainability in destinations [17], the balance of local perceptions of costs and benefits of tourism is a major factor in the success of the tourism industry [16]. Therefore, understanding local perceptions of tourism development and its impacts can facilitate the appropriate development policy and planning to take place with optimistic benefits and minimised problems [18].

Over three decades, increasing academic studies of local perceptions of tourism development impact and becoming one of the most researched topics indicate the broader concerns in tourism sustainability issues and the importance of communities in tourism development [18]. Nevertheless, the studies are limited to scholars devoted to the developing countries that depend heavily on natural resources, and variables used for the developed country context may not be applicable [19]. Previous studies used various approaches to assess the local perceptions of the impacts of tourism development with particular emphasis on environmental, economic, social, and cultural aspects [20,21], while other studies looked at the impacts of tourism development in relation to scale and stage of development [22]. Much research is focused on tourism rather than the impact of tourism on the quality of life or wellbeing of local communities that may overlook adverse effects that cannot be revealed by observation but are necessary for a tourism planning tool [18].

The previous studies addressed the fact that there is a need to fill the research gap, especially in developing country contexts, because different communities have different cultures and traditions, and tourism development has different effects on them [23]. Other studies suggest that future research of tourism impact studies need to extend the survey of different destinations to understand how different contexts of tourism development affect destination communities from a trade-off between the benefits they perceive to obtain from tourism and the undesirable socio-cultural and environmental consequences [24].

However, despite the importance of tourism development to Thailand and that understanding the local perception is essential for assessing the tourism development success, only a few studies exist on the assessment of the impacts of tourism development on coastal communities in Thailand. This kind of study is especially important given that tourist arrivals in Thailand were the ninth highest in the world in 2018 [1]. Tourist arrivals in Thailand increased from less than 50,000 in 1960 to more than 14 million in 2008 [25]. In 2019, prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, the number of tourist arrivals amounted to almost 40 million [26]. In the first quarter of 2020, tourism contributed 5.65 per cent, around THB 539.2 billion, to Thailand’s gross domestic product (GDP) [27]. In a survey of the most popular destinations in Thailand, it was found that more than 70 per cent favour coastal tourism by the sea, sand, and sun with both international and domestic tourists [28]. However, the outbreak of COVID-19 in late 2019 demonstrated the impact of Thailand’s tourist-dependent economy with the downturn of the tourism business revenue and household income from supply chain disruption [29].
Until recently, only several case studies of local perceptions of tourism impacts have been conducted in the famous coastal tourism destinations in the southern region [30]. The situation points out that the coastal tourism development planning in Thailand needs to look at challenges and opportunities to distribute value to the local communities that suffered from tourism in many ways with meaningful community context of the environment and their livelihoods [19].

Cha-am, one of the popular coastal tourism destinations located in the Western Gulf of Thailand (WGOT), has witnessed significant coastal urbanisation growth well before the outbreak of COVID-19 [31]. The area is connected to Hua-hin, the famous international beach. Driven by the regional tourism development campaign of Royal Coast Tourism Destinations since 2004 and the Second National Tourism Development Plan 2017–2021 [32] (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, MOTS, 2017), Cha-am has been merged to Thai Riviera (the western coast tourism development scheme) to promote corridor of eastern-to-western tourism hubs of Hua-hin and Pattaya [33]. Still, the study of tourism development and its impact on Cha-am’s coastal communities is absent to comprehend how decision-making affects their lives. Because of research scarcity, coastal tourism in Cha-am lacks the knowledge to recognise tourism impact and enhance suitable tourism development plans.

This study aimed to enhance the existing body of knowledge of Cha-am and fill the gap in research on the tourism development impacts of the WGOT. The multi-dimensional approach of four impact indicators—economic, environmental, social, and cultural—with qualitative and quantitative methods, was used to understand the tourism development context and the effects of tourism development on the coastal communities, as well as prevent recurrent cases such as Pattaya and Hua-hin. The study results demonstrate the impact of various factors on local perceptions of how tourism development affects their livelihoods and wellbeing. This study will shed light on the community perspectives on tourism development impacts and the future orientation towards tourism management and development, compromising coastal communities’ co-existence.

2. Study Area and the Analysis of Coastal Tourism Development Circumstance

The research was conducted on the Cha-am coast, a popular beach tourism destination. Cha-am coast is located in CATM, Phetchaburi Province, 170 km south of Bangkok and 20 km north from Hua-hin, the renowned international beach tourism destination [34]. The study covered 27 communities and 110 km² with 30 km of the front beach [35], as shown in Figure 1. Tourism management in Cha-am was authorised by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MOTS) and the provincial governor of Phetchaburi. Hotel and resort entrepreneurship in Cha-am has been undertaken by the industrial tourism sector of the Thai Hotels Association Western Chapter since 1963 [36].
A study on urban expansion on the Cha-am coast between 2008 and 2017 discovered that building areas have increased by 1.86%, whereas forest areas and barren lands have decreased by 1.48% and 0.48%, respectively, as shown in Figure 2. Population density in the region is 348.6 persons per km$^2$, which is more than twice the national average (136 pers./km$^2$) [39].

Our analysis of tourism development inspired by Butler’s Tourism Area Life Cycle Model (TALC) [40] demonstrated that the region is approaching the consolidation stage of mass industrial development by international tourism and observed trends of entering maturity as in the cases of Hua-hin and Pattaya, as shown in Figure 3. The exploration stage began with the farming and fishing villages of migrants from Phetchaburi Province [31]. The involvement stage started in the year 1911 with the visit of the royal family and the elite groups of Bangkok to explore the beach for summer houses. The development stage began with the first mass tourist arrival in 1916 after the establishment of the Southern State Railway, the first front beach, and the second home project [41]. The popularity brought more visitors which gave way to the second beach property allocation project and attempts at infrastructure development to connect it to Bangkok [42]. However, a downturn was experienced during World War II and due to the opening of Pattaya public beach between 1939 and 1978 [43].

Figure 1. Location map of Cha-am Beach (Source: Google, 2020 [37]; Cha-am Town Municipality (CATM), 2017 [38]).
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3. Methodology

3.1. Criteria and Indicators for Evaluating Tourism Development Impacts

The criteria for evaluating tourism development impacts were inspired by the Sustainable Tourism Management Standard 2018 proposed by the Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA) [44] influenced by Elkington’s Triple Bottom Line (TBL) of sustainability that measures the impacts of tourism on people, planet, and profit, including three essential dimensions of sustainable development: environmental quality, social equity, and economic benefits [45]. Based on previous studies, the criteria for assessing the impacts of tourism were categorised into four: economic, environmental, social, and cultural.
cultural [46,47]. Thirteen indicators for assessing the impacts were included under these four criteria; they were used to monitor sustainable tourism impacts at the community level, as shown in Figure 4. The indicators under each criterion reflect the burden that tourism economies pose on household (HH) living, coastal natural resources consumption, community’s social status in liberal tourism development decision-making, and obstacles to the local adaption to tourism development. Details of the criteria, indicators, and sub-indicators are described in Table 1a–d.

3.2. Data Collection

The eleven coastal communities in Cha-am were selected for this study, namely Klong-tien, Pak-klong, Sa-ha-ka Kam, Nong-jang, Bo-kam-Nue, Bo-kam-tai, Huay-sai-nue, Huay-sai-tai, Bo-pud-sa, Bang-sai-yoi, Nuen-su-ra, and Sa-pan-hin, because they were covered by the specific area plan for Cha-am to link coastal tourism to the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) development [48,49]. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. A field survey was conducted among households (HHs) between July 2017 and February 2018 to collect socio-economic data and the perceptions of locals (Supplementary Materials).

The selected HHs were the registered population whose members have been living and working in the selected coastal communities for 10 or more years. The sample size of the HHs for interviews was determined using Yamane (1) (1973) [50]. With the registered population of 37,792, a sample size of 100 HHs was obtained. To reduce sampling biases, a pilot survey was conducted. Due to limited accessibility to the study area, a snowballing approach was adopted to include the local HHs. Accordingly, we reached a sample size of 116 HHs.

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    n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}
\]

where \( n \) = the minimum number of HHs for interviews in the study site; \( N \) = total HH population in the coastal communities; and \( e \) = accepted margin of error (set at 10% or 0.10; i.e., 90% confidence level).

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**Figure 4.** The four criteria of tourism development impacts and their 13 indicators (Source: Adapted with permission from Ahmed, 2015 [46]). HH = household.

A semi-structured questionnaire with a mixture of open- and closed-ended questions was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire consisted of three
parts. Part 1, with nine questions, referred to the demographic characteristics of the HHs. Part 2 contained 50 statements relating to the sub-indicators of tourism development impact assessment criteria. A five-point Likert scale was used for measuring the HHs’ perceptions, thus allowing them to express the extent of their agreement and disagreement with each statement. The five-point scale allowed adequate interpretation of the HHs’ opinions and attitudes, adapted from McLeod (2020) [51], as shown in Table 2. In Part 3, focus group discussions were organised to request the HHs’ comments regarding their perceived impacts of tourism development in their communities to further clarify the responses.

Table 1. (a) Economic impact and its indicators. (b) Environmental impact and its indicators. (c) Social impact and its indicators. (d) Cultural impact and its indicators.

| Assessment Criteria | Criteria for Assessment | Indicators | Sub-Indicators |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------|----------------|
| (k)                 | (j)                     | (i)        | (i)            |
| 1. Economic impact  | HH incomes’ buffer from  | 1.1 HH     | 1.1.1 House     |
|                     | living standard         | living      | condition       |
|                     | improvement             | standard    | 1.1.2 Quality of |
|                     |                         |            | HH fixed assets |
|                     |                         |            | 1.1.3 Quality   |
|                     |                         |            | of HH durable   |
|                     |                         |            | assets          |
|                     |                         |            | 1.1.4 Public    |
|                     |                         |            | facility        |
|                     | 1.2 HH income           |            | 1.2.1 HH        |
|                     | opportunity             |            | incomes         |
|                     |                         |            | 1.2.2 Tourism   |
|                     |                         |            | related incomes |
|                     |                         |            | 1.2.3 Sufficient |
|                     |                         |            | savings from    |
|                     |                         |            | income          |
|                     |                         |            | 1.2.4 Employment|
|                     |                         |            | opportunity     |
|                     | 1.3 Cost of living      |            | 1.3.1 Opportunity|
|                     |                         |            | of land         |
|                     |                         |            | ownership       |
|                     |                         |            | 1.3.2 Land and   |
|                     |                         |            | property        |
|                     |                         |            | taxation        |
|                     |                         |            | 1.3.3 Price of  |
|                     |                         |            | goods and       |
|                     |                         |            | services        |
|                     | 1.4 Distribution of     |            | 1.4.1 Good      |
|                     | benefit to HH           |            | relationship    |
|                     | entrepreneurship        |            | between the     |
| 2. Environmental    | Environmental           |            | owners of       |
| impact              | conservation/protection |            | tourism         |
|                     | Whether coastal land    |            | accommodation   |
|                     | functions are maintained|            | facilities and  |
|                     | 2.1 Coastal environment |            | the communities |
|                     |                         |            | in tourism      |
|                     | 2.2 Coastal modification|            | service         |
|                     |                         |            | activities      |
| 3. Social impact    | Improvement in          | 3.1 Community|
|                     | community’s social      | attachment  |                |
|                     | status                  |            |                |
|                     | 3.1.1 Kinship relation  |            |                |
|                     | 3.1.2 Community members’|            |                |
|                     | involvement in the      |            |                |
|                     | community-tourism events|            |                |
|                     | 3.1.3 Community         |            |                |
|                     | participation in         |            |                |
|                     | community business      |            |                |
Table 1. Cont.

| Assessment Criteria (k) | Criteria for Assessment | Indicators (j) | Sub-Indicators (i) |
|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 3.2 Healthy social life |                         | 3.2.1 Improvement in living from recreation facility development |  |
|                        |                         | 3.2.2 Preservation of community gathering space |  |
|                        |                         | 3.2.3 Tourism interference in the community |  |
| 3.3 Contribution of community autonomy |                 | 3.3.1 Community’s capability for tourism operation |  |
|                        |                         | 3.3.2 Financial provision from the local governments to support community activities |  |
|                        |                         | 3.3.3 Tourism knowledge provision to community |  |
| 4. Cultural impact     |                         | 4.1 Community’s cultural conservation |  |
|                        |                         | 4.1.1 Continuity of traditional living |  |
|                        |                         | 4.1.2 Enhancement of community’s cultural activities |  |
|                        |                         | 4.1.3 Maintenance of traditional income activities |  |
|                        |                         | 4.1.4 Community cultural promotion via tourism events |  |
|                        |                         | 4.2 HHs’ knowledge improvement |  |
|                        |                         | 4.2.1 Local confidence in their skills and experiences to find good jobs |  |
|                        |                         | 4.2.2 Local improvement for learning different cultures |  |
|                        |                         | 4.2.3 Local improvement of occupational skills |  |
|                        |                         | 4.3 HHs’ awareness of tourism impacts |  |
|                        |                         | 4.3.1 Understanding of tourism benefits |  |
|                        |                         | 4.3.2 Awareness of tourism costs |  |
|                        |                         | 4.3.3 Opportunity to participate in coastal environmental impacts |  |

HH = household.

Table 2. Interpretation of the HHs’ opinions and attitudes on the five-point Likert scale.

| Score | Levels of Agreement |
|-------|---------------------|
|       | Agreement | Intensity | Quality | Frequency | Livelihood |
| 5     | Strongly agree | Highest | Excellent | Always | Definitely |
| 4     | Agree | High | Good | Often | Probably |
| 3     | Neutral/undecided | Moderate | Fair | Sometimes | Possible |
| 2     | Disagree | Low | Poor | Rarely | Probably not |
| 1     | Strongly disagree | None | Very poor | Never | Definitely not |

Adapted from McLeod (2020) [51].

3.3. Data Analysis

Data collected from the 116 HHs were analysed by comparing the mean, median, and standard deviation (2) of the HHs’ scores to understand the local perceptions regarding each criterion of tourism development impacts. The scores of each sub-indicator described the levels of impacts on the negative, neutral, and positive responses.

$$\bar{x}_{ijk} = \frac{1}{116} \sum_{i=1}^{116} x_{ijk}$$

(2)

where $\bar{x}_{ij}$ = weighted average of each sub-indicator $i$ of criteria $j$; $x_{ij}$ = score of each indicator assessed; $i =$ the sub-indicator; $j =$ indicator for assessing tourism development impacts on criteria $k$; and 116 = total number of HHs.
The overall impact on the criteria of tourism development in Cha-am Beach can be assessed by (3).

$$\bar{y}_k = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{4} x_{ij}}{4}$$

where $\bar{y}_k$ = weighted average of the overall impact of criteria $j$ of tourism development; $\sum$ = summation; $x$ = value in the data set; $i$ = sub-indicator; $j$ = indicator; and 4 = the number of criteria.

The average of the overall tourism development impact was derived from a five-point Likert scale that ranges between strongly disagree = 1 and strongly agree = 5 and the weighted mean score of responses using the upper and lower limits of the range, adapted from Robinson and Leonard (2016) [52] and Robinson (2020) [53], as shown in Table 3.

A correlation coefficient analysis was also conducted to investigate the strength of the relationship between the socio-economic factors of HHs’ demographic profiles affecting the tourism development impact perception.

Table 3. Local perception analysis using weighted average of the five-point Likert scale.

| Assessment Range | Interpretation of the Impacts | Evaluation of the Impacts of Tourism Development |
|------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 3.51–5.00        | Perceived positive effects    | Good and no need for improvement              |
| 2.51–3.50        | Perceived neutral effects     | Average and acceptable                        |
| 1.00–2.50        | Perceived negative effects    | Poor and needs improvement                   |

Source: adapted from Robinson and Leonard (2016) [52] and Robinson (2020) [53].

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Socio-Economic Characteristics of the HHs

The participants are a representation of the Cha-am coastal communities with almost equal gender distribution: 47% males and 53% females, as shown in Table 4. The HHs constitute those that have existed for a long period in the communities; most of its members belong to those in the working-age of 36–55 years (48%) with a high proportion of secondary education level (41%). The levels of education between genders are slightly different. The female population is 6.9% of the bachelor or higher degree, higher than the male population (2.6%). The female is 6.9% of the literate population, higher than the male (3.4%). Higher female promotion resulted from the increased ratio of Thai tertiary education (college/university) to 1.35 female per 1 male in Thailand in 2014 [54]. Such increase revealed the effective Thai education system that provides fifteen-year free and equal access regardless of gender and socio-economic class [55]. The average income of the samples is 9006 THB/month, which is inadequate when compared to the national average of 14,392.15 THB/month [56].

The socio-economic profiles of the households (HHs) disclosed the factors affecting the local perceptions. Tourism development diversified job opportunities. This caused a decline in agricultural activities (11% fisheries and 3% farming) whereas there was an increase in service jobs, especially as small entrepreneurs (46%) and casual labours (33%). The profiles indicated a change in the community social structure; transformation of rural-to-urban culture identified the cultural values and learning environment of communities developed from the social guidance of collectivism to independence of individualism due to diversified individual self-interests [57]. Various studies addressed the fact that this social transition has brought internal differentiation into the interaction of the difficult community cooperation because of the varied motivations and freedom of individual decisions regarding income activities [58]. Another study suggested that it may raise conflicts within a community and lead to hatred between the households who benefit from tourism businesses and those who do not [59]. A document review noticed that the rapid tourism development has transformed the social structure since 1985 by changing the income activities from fishery to tourism-related businesses for higher incomes [60]. Fifty-nine per cent of HH landownership showed the issue of the minimum HH tenure,
indicating the HH livelihood transition from fishery to tourism in the coastal communities due to the limited coastal land source in the fishing livelihood [61].

4.2. Local Perceptions on the Tourism Development Impacts on Coastal Communities

4.2.1. Local Perceptions on the Economic Impact

The communities perceived the acceptability of economic impact with the average standard deviation score (SD) of 2.85 ± 1.03, and the communities assessed it to be on the lower side of the average, Mdn = 2.38. The communities had low to high satisfaction with the economic impacts. On the one hand, they perceived tourism development to have improved the HH living standard (3.60 ± 0.99) and supported HH income opportunity (3.06 ± 1.12). On the other hand, they perceived it to have increased the pressure of HH incomes on the distribution of tourism benefits to local entrepreneurship (2.48 ± 1.04) and the cost of living (2.26 ± 0.95). Difficulty in the distribution of tourism benefits to local entrepreneurship was also found. While tourism had enhanced the community economies (3.07 ± 1.24), community entrepreneurship (2.13 ± 0.91) was owned by outsiders and lacked collaborative tourism management among the local stakeholders and communities (2.32 ± 1.06). The HH income activities depended on the mass tourist accommodation and services owned by the outside investors (2.39 ± 0.97). The increased cost of living was due to the land price (2.18 ± 0.95), property tax (2.29 ± 0.95), and expenses on goods and services (2.32± 0.97), as shown in Table 5. The results show that perceived economic impact positively affects communities’ sense of wellbeing. These positive impacts were defined as job creation that improves HH incomes and standard of living, as confirmed by previous studies [13,30].

The contradictory findings in literature reviews addressed the influence of tourism monoculture on tourist destinations in the local economies. The international retirement migration of the Cha-am tourism campaign has promoted the positive image perception to the influx of foreign expats affecting the area very positively and noticeably increased the number of overnight stays and coastal land development [62]. The demand for tourism accommodation development replaced the small hotels owned by local families with the medium-to-large hotels operated by Thai and international owners during the years 2008–2010. The local tourism accommodation was reduced from 135 to 114 [63]. The increased informal tourism service entrepreneurship on the public and coastal spaces revealed that the locals tried to benefit from tourist accommodation by providing missing tourism services such as beach sports equipment, chair rental, and seafood sale [64]. The evidence suggested that the consolidation of tourism development created the fragility of tourism monoculture by mass tourism destination development, indicating that the onset of decline has far more dramatic implications to local economies when compared with generation resorts [65].

4.2.2. Local Perceptions on the Environmental Impact

Tourism development impact on the communities in terms of environmental impact was perceived on the lower side of the average score (SD: 2.50 ± 1.05, Mdn = 2.37), indicating that impact is unacceptable to the local communities. The communities had low to moderate satisfaction with the environmental impact. While the communities perceived tourism development impacts to have moderately maintained the coastal environmental management (2.71 ± 1.08) and the coastal physical modification (2.53 ± 0.99), tourism activities were perceived to have over-consumed their natural resources (2.24 ± 1.08). The perceptions of the coastal environment indicated low satisfaction with the quality of clean water supply (2.22 ± 0.93) and wastewater treatment (2.26 ± 1.01). The perceptions on the coastal physical modification showed low satisfaction due to the highly modified coastal land characteristics (2.16 ± 0.98). The perceptions on the natural resource consumption addressed low satisfaction due to limited public green space conservation (2.11 ± 1.06) and the rapid growth of the tourism population (2.11 ± 0.94). The perceptions on the environmental impact addressed the poor preservation of coastal land use functions that
affect coastal attractiveness and authenticity due to the physical aspect of tourism infrastructure development. They also addressed the poor tourism over-crowding management involving the reduction of coastal public space and green space provision, as shown in Table 6.

Table 4. Socio-economic profiles of the HHs, 2018.

| Demographic Variable | Category | Number of Surveys (116) | Percentage |
|----------------------|----------|-------------------------|------------|
| Gender               | Male     | 55                      | 47         |
|                      | Female   | 61                      | 53         |
|                      | Total    | 116                     | 100        |
| Age                  | 18–35 years | 13                     | 11         |
|                      | 36–55 years | 56                     | 48         |
|                      | Over 55 years | 47                     | 41         |
| Marital status       | Single   | 29                      | 25         |
|                      | Married  | 68                      | 59         |
|                      | Others   | 24                      | 21         |
| HH size              | 1–3      | 39                      | 34         |
|                      | 4–6      | 60                      | 52         |
|                      | 7–9      | 14                      | 12         |
|                      | Above 10 | 3                       | 3          |
| Income rate (THB)    | <9000    | 50                      | 43         |
|                      | 9000–26,999 | 54                    | 47         |
|                      | >27,000  | 12                      | 10         |
| Level of education   | Bachelor’s and higher | 11                     | 9          |
|                      | Secondary school | 48                   | 41         |
|                      | Primary school   | 45                     | 39         |
|                      | Literate        | 12                     | 10         |
| Length of residency (years) | Less than 10 | 7                   | 6          |
|                      | 11–30     | 43                      | 37         |
|                      | Over 31    | 73                      | 63         |
| Career               | Small enterprises | 53                     | 46         |
|                      | Casual labours | 38                     | 33         |
|                      | Fisheries   | 13                      | 11         |
|                      | Official works | 7                      | 6          |
|                      | Private firm works | 3                  | 3          |
|                      | Farmers    | 2                       | 2          |
|                      | Yes        | 68                      | 59         |
|                      | No         | 48                      | 41         |

HH = household.

Table 5. Perceived impacts by the indicators for the economic criterion.

| Economic Impact Indicators | Sub-Indicators (in Table 1c) | X | Mdn | SD | Strongly Disagree % | Disagree % | Neutral % | Agree % | Strongly Agree % |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|-----|----|----------------------|------------|-----------|---------|------------------|
| 1 HH living standard       |                               |   |     |    |                      |            |           |         |                  |
| 1.1 I am satisfied with my house’s condition | 1.1.1 | 4.03 | 4.00 | 0.98 | 3.4 | 5.2 | 9.5 | 48.3 | 33.6 |
| 1.2 I am satisfied with my HHs’ fixed assets quality, such as the internet, telephone, and cable. | 1.1.2 | 3.84 | 4.00 | 0.90 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 19.0 | 54.3 | 19.8 |
### Table 5. Cont.

| Economic Impact Indicators | Sub-Indicators (in Table 1c) | X   | Mdn | SD  | Strongly Disagree % | Disagree % | Neutral % | Agree % | Strongly Agree % |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|----------------------|------------|-----------|---------|------------------|
| 1.3 I am satisfied with my durable assets, such as a car, A/C, and TV. | 1.3.1 3.54 4.00 0.96 2.6 13.8 22.4 49.1 12.1 |
| 1.4 I am satisfied with the conditions of roads and other public facilities | 1.4.1 3.00 3.00 1.10 12.9 15.5 36.2 29.3 6.0 |
| Total                      | 3.60 3.75 0.99 5.6 9.5 21.8 45.3 17.9 |

| 2 HH income opportunity |
|-------------------------|
| 2.1 I am satisfied with my income | 1.2.1 3.16 3.0 0.92 6.9 13.8 37.1 41.4 0.9 |
| 2.2 My income is related to tourism | 1.2.2 3.30 2.5 1.25 19.0 31.0 22.4 17.2 10.3 |
| 2.3 My savings are enough to take good care of my family | 1.2.3 2.81 3.1 1.18 19.8 16.4 31.0 28.4 4.3 |
| 2.4 My employment opportunity is good | 1.2.4 2.98 3.1 1.13 6.9 34.5 20.7 29.3 8.6 |
| Total                     | 3.06 2.88 1.12 13.1 23.9 27.8 29.1 6.0 |

| 3 Cost of living |
|------------------|
| 3.1 I can hold land in my community | 1.3.1 2.18 2.00 0.95 25.0 42.2 24.1 6.9 1.7 |
| 3.2 The land and property taxes I must pay are reasonable | 1.3.2 2.29 2.00 0.95 22.4 37.1 30.2 9.5 0.9 |
| 3.3 In my community, price of goods and services are reasonable | 1.3.3 2.32 2.00 0.97 21.6 37.9 28.4 11.2 0.9 |
| Total             | 2.26 2.00 0.95 23.0 39.1 27.6 9.2 1.1 |

| 4 Distribution of tourism benefit to HH entrepreneurship |
|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.1 My community maintains a good relationship with hotels to manage tourism activities | 1.4.1 2.32 2.00 1.06 23.3 39.7 22.4 11.2 3.4 |
| 4.2 Hotels, resorts, and restaurants in my community are mostly owned by the locals | 1.4.2 2.13 2.00 0.91 27.6 39.7 25.0 7.8 0.0 |
| 4.3 Small business activities in my community are independent of coastal hotels and restaurant activities | 1.4.3 2.39 2.00 0.97 18.1 38.8 31.9 8.6 2.6 |
| 4.4 Tourism generates my community economies | 1.4.4 3.07 3.00 1.24 12.1 21.6 28.4 23.3 14.7 |
| Total                     | 2.48 2.25 1.04 20.3 34.9 26.9 12.7 5.2 |
| Overall                   | 2.85 2.38 1.03 15.5 26.9 26.0 24.1 7.6 |

X = mean; Mdn = median; SD = standard deviation; HH = household.
The findings show that the environmental impact of tourism development negatively affects residents’ sense of wellbeing. The local perceptions of environmental impact in Cha-am are similar to the negative images of Thailand discussed in previous studies regarding environmental deterioration [13,30]. The core environmental concerns are shared resources and infrastructure developed primarily for the local community with tourists and tourism development [66]. The literature reviews showed how Cha-am had increased the coastal natural resource capacity to meet the rising demands of basic services. The region was declared as an environmental and activities control zone in the year 2018, resulting in the rise of coastal tourism development [67]. The pressure of carrying capacity was addressed in 20% of the increased water supply for HHs and tourism services, rising from 13,958 in 2015 to 16,720 in 2018, and 20% of the increased litters from 75.78 tons/day in the year 2018 when compared with 62.93 tons/day in the year 2014 [68,69]. However, the wastewater maintenance reported in 2018 indicated a good condition, that is, 17,000 m³/Day [70].

4.2.3. Local Perceptions on the Social Impact

The communities perceived acceptable social impact and assessed it to be on the higher side of the average (SD: 3.13 ± 1.02; Mdn = 3.22). The communities had moderate to high satisfaction with the social impact. They were most satisfied with the community attachment (3.51 ± 1.04), second most satisfied with a healthy social life (3.12 ± 1.02), and third most satisfied with the community autonomy (2.75 ± 1.00). Nonetheless, as the community perceived tourism development to support their social status and identity, they were dissatisfied with the following factors: tourist population and its interference with a healthy social life (2.02 ± 0.90), followed by the limited financial support of the local government in promoting community autonomy (1.92 ± 0.83), as shown in Table 7.

The findings indicate that the social impact of tourism development positively affects the community wellbeing. The initially negative perception addressed in tourism development inspired the locals to improve their skills and experiences for better employment; however, it poorly influenced the enhancement of the HH lifestyle adaptation to balance changes of tourism development.

As the similarity of the OTOP (One Tambon (Village) One Product) village of Baan Tawai, the case of the involvement stage of tourism development revealed that the residents who live within the tourism zone perceive positively social impact than those who do not [71]. The tourism development has maintained a healthy community social involvement and status via the tourism-economic activities. However, the Chiang Mai case indicated that the nature of Thais is a little unorganised. As seen on streets or even some parts of the roads, the HH may not attribute social issues to the lack of sense of difficulty in their lives, such as recognising city expansion and over-crowding interference during peak seasons [13]. The cases of four tourism destinations in the southern coastal region unveiled concerns of safety and security related to increased drugs and crime rates, change in the way of living, and increases in prostitution [30]. Consequently, Cha-am tourism still needs to strengthen the tourism population control and community capability to deal with the social structure changes.

4.2.4. Local Perception of Cultural Impact

The communities perceived the poor cultural impact and assessed it to be on the lower side of the average (SD: 2.41 ± 0.97; Mdn = 2.33). The communities had low to moderate satisfaction with cultural impact. They perceived moderate satisfaction with HH knowledge improvement (2.51 ± 0.99), but they had lower satisfaction with tourism impact awareness (2.39 ± 0.92) and the lowest satisfaction with cultural conservation (2.32 ± 0.99). Those who were moderately satisfied with household knowledge improvement indicated that there was HH dissatisfaction with the opportunities to improve their skills (1.87 ± 0.94) and access to skill and knowledge training programmes (2.13 ± 1.00). Cultural conservation addressed HH dissatisfaction with the continuity of the community living in farming and fishing (2.03 ± 0.92), incomes (2.06 ± 1.09), and conservation of ceremonial activities
The tourism impact awareness showed HH dissatisfaction with the opportunity to access tourism knowledge programmes (1.72 ± 0.64), awareness improvement of tourism cost (2.16 ± 1.00), and opportunity of coastal environmental impact participation (2.38 ± 1.00), as shown in Table 8.

Table 6. Perceived impacts by indicators for the environmental criterion.

| Environmental Impact Indicators | Sub-Indicators (in Table 1c) | X     | Mdn | SD    | Strongly Disagree % | Disagree % | Neutral % | Agree % | Strongly Agree % |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|-----|-------|---------------------|------------|-----------|---------|-----------------|
| 5 Coastal environment           |                               |       |     |       |                     |            |           |         |                 |
| 5.1 I am satisfied with the quality of water supply | 2.1.1 | 2.22 | 2.00 | 0.93  | 21.6               | 45.7       | 23.3      | 7.8     | 1.7             |
| 5.2 Garbage along the community coast is good management | 2.1.2 | 2.75 | 2.00 | 1.30  | 17.2               | 34.5       | 18.1      | 16.4    | 13.8            |
| 5.3 Wastewater treatment is effective | 2.1.3 | 2.26 | 2.00 | 1.01  | 24.1               | 41.4       | 19.8      | 13.8    | 0.9             |
| 5.4 Traffic congestion occurs mildly | 2.1.4 | 2.94 | 3.00 | 1.19  | 10.3               | 33.6       | 16.4      | 31.0    | 8.6             |
| 5.5 Tourism activities in the community are concerned with sea-water pollution | 2.1.5 | 3.40 | 4.00 | 0.96  | 6.0                | 7.8        | 34.5      | 44.0    | 7.8             |
| Total                           |                               | 2.71  | 2.60 | 1.08  | 15.9               | 32.6       | 22.4      | 22.6    | 6.6             |
| 6 Coastal physical modification |                               |       |     |       |                     |            |           |         |                 |
| 6.1 The beach landscape in my community is well-preserved | 2.2.1 | 2.52 | 2.00 | 0.93  | 12.9               | 38.8       | 32.8      | 14.7    | 0.9             |
| 6.2 The coastal scenery in my community coast is attractive | 2.2.2 | 2.65 | 3.00 | 0.96  | 12.9               | 28.4       | 42.2      | 13.8    | 2.6             |
| 6.3 The coastal land characteristics are less modified | 2.2.3 | 2.16 | 2.00 | 0.98  | 28.4               | 39.7       | 20.7      | 10.3    | 0.9             |
| 6.4 The beach access in my community is easy to identify | 2.2.4 | 2.81 | 3.00 | 1.09  | 13.8               | 26.7       | 26.7      | 30.2    | 2.6             |
| Total                           |                               | 2.53  | 2.50 | 0.99  | 17.0               | 33.4       | 30.6      | 17.2    | 1.7             |
| 7 Natural resource consumption  |                               |       |     |       |                     |            |           |         |                 |
| 7.1 Beach space in my community is protected and preserved | 2.3.1 | 2.51 | 2.00 | 1.23  | 25.9               | 29.3       | 18.1      | 21.6    | 5.2             |
| 7.2 Public green space in my community is well preserved | 2.3.2 | 2.11 | 2.00 | 1.06  | 32.8               | 37.9       | 18.1      | 7.8     | 3.4             |
| 7.3 The population in my community grew slowly | 2.3.3 | 2.11 | 2.00 | 0.94  | 25.9               | 48.3       | 16.4      | 7.8     | 1.7             |
| Total                           |                               | 2.24  | 2.00 | 1.08  | 28.2               | 38.5       | 17.5      | 12.4    | 3.4             |
| Overall                         |                               | 2.50  | 2.37 | 1.05  | 20.3               | 34.8       | 23.5      | 17.4    | 3.9             |

X = mean; SD = standard deviation of the mean; Mdn = median; HH = household.
The findings demonstrate the negative impacts of tourism development on local culture, which eventually negatively affected the community wellbeing in the coastal areas. The results indicate that tourism development inspired the locals to improve their skills and experiences for better employment; however, it poorly influenced the enhancement of local culture and lifestyle adaptation to balance the changes due to tourism development. Tourism does not give back the local confidence in their culture; it neither strengthens cultural values nor builds a sense of self-worth and awareness to protect their resources [72]. The perceptions of cultural impact revealed that tourism development did not enhance the community’s confidence to live their fishery and agricultural lifestyle. The study of local attitudes of tourism development discovered that the perceived socio-cultural costs and benefits are the most influential tourism development, and that local people tend to sacrifice their socio-cultural values and environmental concerns in exchange for economic benefits [73].

However, our study showed a contradiction to the previous studies. The tourism development in the cases of the southern destinations strengthened the local pride when cultural values were under protection by conserving local culture and encouraging locals to love their culture [30]. Tourism contributed to the community’s pride and confidence in cultural values and knowledge when tourists showed appreciation for their local way of life [13].

4.2.5. Impacts of Tourism Development on Coastal Communities

Overall, the community had low satisfaction with tourism development and perceived it as needing improvement. The total average score of four criteria was below the average (SD: 2.72 ± 1.02; Mdn = 2.57), with a 46.4% negative response. Tourism development had produced adverse environmental and cultural effects, as shown in Table 9. In general, the results do not show a significant difference in the perceived tourism impact between males (SD: 2.73 ± 0.48; Mdn = 2.75) and females (SD: 2.70 ± 0.36; Mdn = 2.73). However, the results reveal that the HHs perceived that costs and benefits of tourism development impacts are associated with the HH level of knowledge [50]. The perceived negative impact of tourism was addressed in the primary school group with the lowest scores (SD: 2.63 ± 0.43; Mdn = 2.69). This group perceived the adverse effects on three criteria: economic (SD: 2.44 ± 0.59; Mdn = 2.45), environmental (SD: 2.45 ± 0.60; Mdn = 2.58), and cultural (SD: 2.31 ± 0.44; Mdn = 2.29).

Differences of the local perception levels were identified among the 13 indicators under the four criteria. The coastal communities identified three critical problems regarding tourism development: economic issues from the cost of living and local entrepreneurship benefit-sharing, environmental problems concerning natural resource consumption, and cultural problems related to cultural conservation and tourism impact awareness. The community perceived the most negative impacts of tourism development on natural resource consumption, followed by cost of living and cultural conservation, as shown in Figure 5.

The findings confirm that Cha-am tourism development is the community economic development focus that did not find tourism sustainable. Tourism encourages the commodification of community values, especially its cultures and natural resources [74]. Consequently, Cha-am tourism urgently needs to enhance cooperative sustainable tourism development to strengthen the tourism for community development approach. The communication channel (interpersonal and mass media) and key actor involvement are important to diffuse tourism sustainability to local environment and culture protection [75].

The positive image of the destination can maximise tourist numbers and determine the relationship between the positive perception of local communities and potential visitors to reduce suffering from negative effects of uncontrolled tourism [76]. Moreover, the consolidation stage of tourism development did not negatively affect the communities, as it should be. It addressed the decline of HHs’ sustainable attitudes towards tourism development [77].
Table 7. Perceived impacts by indicators for the social criterion.

| Social Impact Indicators                      | Sub-Indicators (in Table 1c) | X    | Mdn | SD    | Strongly Disagree % | Disagree % | Neutral % | Agree %  | Strongly Agree % |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------|-----|-------|---------------------|------------|----------|----------|------------------|
| 8 Community attachment                       |                              |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| 8.1 I have kin living in the same community  | 3.1.1                        | 3.44 | 4.00| 1.11  | 6.9                 | 12.9       | 24.1     | 41.4     | 14.7             |
| 8.2 The community members interact actively  | 3.1.2                        | 3.80 | 4.00| 0.88  | 0.0                 | 7.8        | 26.7     | 43.1     | 22.4             |
| while working on the duties of tourism       | events                       |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| 8.3 I participate and exchange my opinions   | 3.1.3                        | 3.28 | 3.00| 1.13  | 7.8                 | 17.2       | 26.7     | 35.3     | 12.9             |
| in the community meetings and events         |                              |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| Total                                        | 3.51                         | 3.67 | 1.04| 4.9   | 12.6                | 25.9       | 39.9     | 16.7     |                  |
| 9 Healthy social life                        |                              |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| 9.1 I agree that tourism increased leisure   | 3.2.1                        | 3.62 | 4.00| 1.04  | 3.4                 | 12.9       | 19.8     | 45.7     | 18.1             |
| facilities and entertainment which improved  |                              |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| my living                                     |                              |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| 9.2 My community has enough meeting space   | 3.2.2                        | 3.72 | 4.00| 1.13  | 6.9                 | 8.6        | 13.8     | 46.6     | 24.1             |
| for community gatherings                     |                              |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| 9.3 I recognise that tourists interfere with | 3.2.3                        | 2.02 | 2.00| 0.90  | 31.9                | 41.4       | 20.7     | 5.2      | 0.9              |
| my living                                     |                              |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| Total                                        | 3.12                         | 3.33 | 1.02| 14.1  | 21.0                | 18.1       | 32.5     | 14.4     |                  |
| 10 Community autonomy                        |                              |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| 10.1 My community usually operates tourism   | 3.3.1                        | 3.31 | 3.00| 0.95  | 4.3                 | 12.1       | 41.4     | 32.8     | 9.5              |
| activities and events                        |                              |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| 10.2 Local governments financially support  | 3.3.2                        | 1.92 | 2.00| 0.83  | 37.9                | 31.9       | 30.2     | 0.0      | 0.0              |
| my community organisation                    |                              |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| 10.3 Other organisations support my          | 3.3.3                        | 3.03 | 3.00| 1.22  | 12.1                | 25.0       | 22.4     | 29.3     | 11.2             |
| community through the tourism knowledge      |                              |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| programmes                                   |                              |      |     |       |                     |            |          |          |                  |
| Total                                        | 2.75                         | 2.67 | 1.00| 18.1  | 23.0                | 31.3       | 20.7     | 6.9      |                  |
| Overall                                      | 3.13                         | 3.22 | 1.02| 12.4  | 18.9                | 25.1       | 31.0     | 12.6     |                  |

X = mean; Mdn = median; SD = standard deviation; HH = household.

From a global perspective, the findings here are similar to the classic cases in the developing coast communities of Mexican coasts [78] and the developed community coasts in Hawaii [79] and South Carolina [80]. The cases indicate that with changes to the tourism-based economy came changes in the social structure as a host-guest relationship and loss of cultural tradition. The causes of transformations are strongly related to the eroding HH ownership of lands. The study of Sunshine Coast, Australia, contradicts Cha-am’s findings but similarly opposes Butler’s TALC hypothesis [81]. The well-developed coastal community of tourism positively impacts the economy and culture with less awareness of environmental benefits. Both cases implicate that, while going through the higher stage of the development cycle, local perceptions may not become more aware of the negative impacts.
### Table 8. Perceived impacts by indicators for cultural criterion.

| Cultural Impact Indicators                                                                 | Sub-Indicators (in Table 1d) | X      | Mdn  | SD  | Strongly Disagree % | Disagree % | Neutral % | Agree % | Strongly Agree % |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|------|-----|---------------------|------------|-----------|---------|-----------------|
| 11 Community cultural conservation                                                       |                               | 4.1.1  | 2.03 | 2.00| 0.92               | 31.0       | 43.1      | 18.1    | 6.9             | 0.9           |
| 11.1 I am continuing the living in past traditions                                        |                               | 4.1.2  | 2.27 | 2.00| 0.92               | 19.0       | 46.6      | 25.0    | 7.8             | 1.7           |
| 11.2 My community’s ceremonial activities are enhanced                                    |                               | 4.1.3  | 2.06 | 2.00| 1.09               | 37.9       | 33.6      | 15.5    | 10.3            | 2.6           |
| 11.3 The traditional income activities (fishing and farming) are preserved for the local population |                               | 4.1.4  | 2.93 | 3.00| 1.04               | 12.1       | 19.0      | 35.3    | 31.0            | 2.6           |
| 11.4 Tourism events help to promote my community’s culture and image                       |                               |        |      |     |                    |            |           |         |                 |               |
| **Total**                                                                                 |                               | 4.21   | 3.03 | 3.00| 1.00               | 7.8        | 19.8      | 37.9    | 30.2            | 4.3           |
| 12 HH knowledge improvement                                                               |                               | 4.2.1  | 3.00 | 3.00| 1.02               | 10.3       | 17.2      | 37.9    | 31.0            | 3.4           |
| 12.1 I am confident that my skills and experiences can find a good job                    |                               | 4.2.2  | 3.00 | 3.00| 1.02               | 10.3       | 17.2      | 37.9    | 31.0            | 3.4           |
| 12.2 I gradually improve understanding of other cultures                                  |                               | 4.2.3  | 1.87 | 2.00| 0.94               | 42.2       | 36.2      | 14.7    | 6.0             | 0.9           |
| 12.3 I have opportunities to improve my occupational skills                               |                               | 4.2.4  | 2.13 | 2.00| 1.00               | 30.2       | 39.7      | 18.1    | 11.2            | 0.9           |
| 12.4 I experienced the local governments’ training programmes to improve my skills and knowledge |                               |        |      |     |                    |            |           |         |                 |               |
| **Total**                                                                                 |                               | 4.31   | 3.30 | 3.00| 1.02               | 3.4        | 18.1      | 36.2    | 29.3            | 12.9          |
| 13 HH awareness of tourism impacts                                                        |                               | 4.3.1  | 2.16 | 2.00| 1.00               | 30.2       | 34.5      | 25.0    | 9.5             | 0.9           |
| 13.1 I understand the benefits of tourism                                                 |                               | 4.3.2  | 2.16 | 2.00| 1.00               | 30.2       | 34.5      | 25.0    | 9.5             | 0.9           |
| 13.2 I am aware of the costs of tourism                                                   |                               | 4.3.3  | 2.38 | 2.00| 1.00               | 19.0       | 41.4      | 24.1    | 13.8            | 1.7           |
| 13.3 I have participated in the coastal environmental impact                              |                               | 4.3.4  | 1.72 | 2.00| 0.64               | 37.1       | 54.3      | 7.8     | 0.9             | 0.0           |
| 13.4 I have attended the local government programmes on tourism knowledge                 |                               |        |      |     |                    |            |           |         |                 |               |
| **Total**                                                                                 |                               | 4.31   | 3.30 | 3.00| 1.02               | 3.4        | 18.1      | 36.2    | 29.3            | 12.9          |
| **Overall**                                                                               |                               | 2.39   | 2.25 | 0.92| 22.4               | 37.1       | 23.3      | 13.4    | 3.9             |               |

X = mean; Mdn = median; SD = standard deviation; HH = household.

### 4.2.6. Sensitivity Analysis

Assessment and interpretation of the impacts of tourism development on Cha-am coastal communities could also be affected by the assessment range of the scores (Table 3) used in this study. If ranges of the Likert scale are adjusted as 3.00–5.00 as perceived positive effects, 2.00–2.99 as perceived neutral effects, and 1.00–1.99 as perceived negative effects, we obtain the overall impacts of tourism development on coastal communities.
highly positive as shown in Table 10 below. The total average score of four criteria changed to above the average (SD: 2.72 ± 1.02; Mdn = 2.57), with a 53.6% positive response.

Table 9. Impacts of tourism development on coastal communities.

| Category               | X    | Mdn  | SD   | Poor % | No Effect % | Good % |
|------------------------|------|------|------|--------|-------------|--------|
| 1 Economic impact      | 2.85 | 2.38 | 1.03 | 42.4   | 26.0        | 31.6   |
| 2 Environmental impact | 2.50 | 2.37 | 1.05 | 55.2   | 23.5        | 21.3   |
| 3 Social impact        | 3.13 | 3.22 | 1.02 | 31.2   | 25.1        | 43.7   |
| 4 Cultural impact      | 2.41 | 2.33 | 0.97 | 57.0   | 24.6        | 18.4   |
| Total average          | 2.72 | 2.57 | 1.02 | 46.4   | 24.8        | 28.8   |

X = mean; Mdn = median; SD = standard deviation.

Previous studies by Shaffril et al. (2015) [82] and Meimand et al. (2017) [73] also used different intervals of the assessment range. They suggested that the results could significantly affect how we assess the impacts of development on local communities.

![Figure 5](image-url)

**Figure 5.** The level of local perceptions on tourism development impacts on coastal communities by 13 indicators. HH = household.

Table 10. Overall impacts of tourism development on coastal communities under the new assessment ranges.

| Category               | X    | Mdn  | SD   | Poor % | No Effect % | Good % |
|------------------------|------|------|------|--------|-------------|--------|
| 1 Economic impacts     | 2.85 | 2.38 | 1.03 | 15.5   | 26.9        | 57.7   |
| 2 Environmental impact | 2.50 | 2.37 | 1.05 | 20.3   | 34.8        | 44.8   |
| 3 Social impact        | 3.13 | 3.22 | 1.02 | 12.4   | 18.9        | 68.8   |
| 4 Cultural impact      | 2.41 | 2.33 | 0.97 | 23.3   | 33.6        | 43.0   |
| Total average          | 2.72 | 2.57 | 1.02 | 17.9   | 28.5        | 53.6   |

X = mean; Mdn = median; SD = standard deviation.
5. Conclusions and Policy Implications

Coastal tourism development started in Thailand more than a hundred years ago. This study assessed the impacts of tourism development on coastal communities on the Cha-am coast using a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative analysis through the analysis of the communities’ perceptions towards a set of four criteria of tourism development, and these criteria were evaluated by 13 indicators according to the five-point Likert scale.

The socio-economic profiles of HHs indicated that the consolidation of tourism development had transformed the social structure of coastal communities from rural-urban life. Cha-am’s communities transitioned from tourism monoculture and over-tourism dependency, which is an important diversification for the local economy, offering additional livelihood opportunities for local communities. The HHs’ profiles revealed that the social transformation in the communities to urban lifestyle may change the local attitudes of tourism meaning as their economic position, and tourism benefits may far outweigh its costs.

The findings unveil that the impact of tourism development moderately affects the community wellbeing with the trade-off between socio-economic benefits and cultural and environmental costs. The average scores of economic, environmental, social, and cultural impacts were 2.85 ± 1.03, 2.50 ± 1.05, 3.13 ± 1.02, and 2.41 ± 0.97, respectively. On average, the score of tourism development impacts was 2.72 ± 1.02 (out of 5), indicating that the Cha-am communities generally accepted coastal tourism development, but their livelihoods were not improved as expected. Specifically, scores for HH living standard (3.60 ± 0.99), community attachment (3.51 ± 1.04), and healthy social life (3.12 ± 1.02) indicators were higher because the communities were satisfied with raised house condition and asset and improved community relation through tourism events and facilities. However, scores for natural resource consumption (2.24 ± 1.08), cost of living (2.26 ± 0.95), and community cultural conservation (2.32 ± 0.99) indicators were low because the communities were dissatisfied with the quality of their environment in limited public green space and rapid growth of tourists, increased land and property taxes and expenses, and difficulty to continue the community living in farming and fishing activities. The findings suggest that tourism policy did not bring the sustainable tourism model to Cha-am.

However, the pandemic of COVID-19 addresses the decline stage of tourism development in Cha-am, indicating multi-dimensional impacts on the communities (Appendix A). Backing to the involvement stage is an excellent opportunity to enhance community involvement and call for a sustainable tourism development policy providing the foundation of community-controlled tourism development instead of community economic development.

The findings suggest that the government should determine sustainable tourism development strategies for community development. The tourism policy should consider the coastal community’s ability and co-existence with sensitive natural and cultural aspects to cope with visitor numbers. A communication channel for community groups is required. The community social networks and opinion leader involvement are the critical success of communication. Maintaining HH land ownership is a significant factor for boosting cultural conservation and cultural knowledge cognition. The participation of three primary stakeholders—the local community, the tourist industrial sector, and the government—is necessary to achieve sustainable development in Cha-am tourism. The government should introduce alternatives to sustainable tourism development to community organisations such as natural-based tourism, ecotourism, and cultural tourism to lead responsible tourists and coastal environmental resources. They will help unify the HH interest in conserving their income, culture, and wisdom and building HH confidence and awareness to protect their lands and resources. Moreover, the policy design should consider the pressure of consolidated mass tourism development on local resources, which will shed light on the inverse relationship between tourism and the local people.

Nevertheless, this study provides the first look at the impacts of coastal tourism development in Cha-am Beach in Thailand. Our findings could be useful for the government to re-look at its policies and incentives for long-term development of the coastal areas in
Thailand. A comparative study on coastal tourism development impacts across Thailand would provide even better information about how local communities perceived the development of coastal tourism. Accordingly, a sound development plan and/or policies and incentives for coastal tourism could be introduced that would be beneficial to local communities and national economic development.

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Appendix A

The global pandemic of COVID-19 has forced Thailand’s tourism-dependent economy to shrink. This crisis’s negative impacts may continue to long-term struggle, putting jobs at risk in all types of enterprises [1]. The pandemic situation of lowering room rates demonstrated the impacts of the tourism over-dependence on community livelihoods. The loss of tourists visiting Cha-am has affected two kinds of local people: affiliated and unaffiliated with the tourism industry. HH incomes experienced adverse effects, for example, reducing the working days and salaries of hotel employees, falling prices in local seafood operators, poor selling in street vendors [2], and reduced catching in the artisanal fisheries during the period of the night curfew [3]. However, the agricultural and artisanal fishery and ecotourism’s traditional income activities showed more resilient adaption according to the uncontrollable situation. For example, the Cha-am riding horse group formation provided a new perspective of natural camping with a trail activity taking tourists on horseback riding in nature [4]. Governments considered spatial agriculture and artisanal fishery in Cha-am as the community role models to build strong community enterprises and essential environmentally friendly professions to strengthen socio-economic rejuvenation [5].

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