Building bridges between residents and tourism: Attitudinal support, emotional solidarity, and intentions for pro-tourism behaviours

Construindo pontes entre os residentes e o turismo: Atitudes, solidariedade emocional e comportamentos pró-turismo

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Abstract

This study explores the relationships between residents' attitudes in support of tourism, emotional solidarity with tourists and willingness to engage in pro-tourism behaviours. Residents' support for tourism hinges on their perceived benefits and costs, as influenced by theories such as the Social Exchange Theory and the Theory of Reasoned Action. Despite extensive research on residents' attitudes and tourism support, pro-tourism behaviours remain underexplored. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating how residents' attitudes and emotional solidarity, including newly added indicators of interpersonal connection, impact their intentions for pro-tourism behaviours. Empirical data from a sample of 4,026 residents in the Algarve region, Portugal, were analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results of this study not only offer theoretical insights but also have practical implications for destination management. These findings underscore the importance of implementing internal marketing strategies that foster a welcoming and empathetic attitude among residents towards tourists. The study's results become directly relevant and beneficial to tourism by fostering a sense of connection and appreciation for tourists among residents.

Keywords: Residents; Attitudes in Support of Tourism; Emotional Solidarity; Pro-Turism Behaviours; Algarve.

Resumo

Este estudo explora as atitudes dos residentes em relação ao turismo, a solidariedade emocional para com os turistas e a disponibilidade para adotar comportamentos pró-turismo. O apoio dos residentes ao turismo depende da perceção de benefícios e custos, influenciado por teorias como a Teoria das Trocas Sociais e a Teoria da Ação Racional. Apesar da extensa investigação sobre as atitudes e o apoio dos residentes, os comportamentos pró-turismo continuam a ser pouco explorados. Este estudo visa colmatar esta lacuna, investigando a forma como as atitudes e a solidariedade emocional dos residentes, incluindo indicadores recentemente adicionados chamados de Ligações Interpessoais, afetam as suas intenções para adotarem comportamentos pró-turismo. Uma amostra de 4.026 residentes na região do Algarve, Portugal, é analisada utilizando a Modelação de Equações Estruturais (PLS-SEM). Os resultados sugerem que o reforço da solidariedade emocional para com os turistas pode fomentar os comportamentos pró-turismo dos residentes, oferecendo perspetivas teóricas e práticas para a gestão do destino. Ao promover relações positivas entre residentes e turistas, esta investigação contribui para o avanço das práticas e das políticas de turismo sustentável na região.

Palavras-chave: Residentes; Atitudes de Apoio ao Turismo; Solidariedade Emocional; Comportamentos Pró-Turismo; Algarve.

1. Introduction

Residents' attitudes towards tourism highly depend on their perceptions of its benefits and costs (Vargas-Sánchez et al., 2011). Understanding this support is essential to foster residents' pro-tourism behaviours and sustainable tourism development (Erul & Woosnam, 2022; Gautam, 2023; Joo et al., 2021). Various theories explain residents' attitudes towards tourism. Social Exchange Theory (SET) suggests that perceived benefits and costs influence residents' attitudes and behaviours towards tourism (Lança et al., 2024; Vodeb et al., 2021). The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) posits that residents make decisions based on rational evaluations of their actions' implications (Martín et al., 2018). These theories help explore how tourism support affects residents' behaviours (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012). Although research has addressed residents' support for tourism, the concept of pro-tourism behaviours remains underexplored (Homsud, 2017; Hu et al., 2019; Lança et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2022; Ribeiro et al., 2017). This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the drivers of residents' willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours from a new perspective based on perceptions of a significant and representative sample of residents.

Furthermore, the Emotional Solidarity Scale (ESS) was brought to the tourism literature to explore the relationships between residents and tourists (Woosnam et al., 2009). The original ESS included 10 indicators, later expanded by Joo and Woosnam (2020) to 14 indicators to understand cross-cultural exchanges better. Using the full concept of emotional solidarity can better predict residents' pro-tourism behaviours (Erul et al., 2020). Despite the importance of the "new addition" by Joo and Woosnam (2020), no research has utilised the 14-item scale to measure residents' emotional solidarity with tourists. This study also aims to fill this gap by incorporating the four additional indicators, which the authors termed Interpersonal Connection, that measure interaction between residents and tourists.

This study uses empirical data from a sample of 4,026 residents in the Algarve region (south Portugal). It employs the PLS-SEM technique to assess how residents' attitudes in support of tourism and their full emotional solidarity with tourists influence their willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours. The findings provide valuable theoretical and practical insights into fostering positive relationships between residents and tourists. These insights can also assist destination management entities in promoting an environment favourable to residents-tourists' interactions.

2. Literature Review

Previous studies have indicated that residents' support for tourism depends on their perceptions of its potential economic, sociocultural, and environmental benefits and costs (Gursoy et al., 2019; Sharpley, 2014; Wassler et al., 2019). Scholars have shown that residents are more likely to support tourism when they perceive its benefits, whereas they tend to oppose further development when perceiving its costs (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Gautam, 2023; Vargas-Sánchez et al., 2011). Thus, a rich body of literature on residents' support for tourism has been produced, proving that understanding residents' support is crucial for successful sustainable tourism development (Erul & Woosnam, 2022; Joo et al., 2021; Papastathopoulos et al., 2019).

Different theories have examined residents' attitudes in support of tourism. For instance, the SET suggests that the benefits derived from the exchange of resources will affect residents' attitudes towards tourism, thus influencing their behaviours (Lança et al., 2024; Ribeiro et al., 2017; Vodeb et al., 2021). The TRA proposes that residents rationally evaluate their actions' implications before making decisions (Bestard & Nadal, 2007; Martín et al., 2018). In line with these theoretical foundations, many studies have explored how residents' support for tourism positively affects their behaviours (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; Gursoy et al., 2009). Specifically, Homsud (2017) shows that residents' pro-tourism behaviours are influenced mainly by their attitudes towards tourism and addresses that the combined theories improved the understanding of residents' complex attitudes. According to SET, residents are likely to behave pro-tourism if they consider that the benefits of tourism development outweigh its costs. Based on this theory, Sanchéz-Cañizares et al. (2014) concluded that residents' attitudes towards tourism development depend on the type of impacts generated by tourism (positive and negative). Rodrigues et al. (2014) also found that perceived benefits directly affect support for sustainable tourism development. Similarly, according to TRA, residents tend to adopt pro-tourism behaviours based on the thought that they could continue obtaining benefits from tourism development. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that residents' supportive attitudes towards tourism development will influence their pro-tourism behaviours (Liu et al., 2022). Extensive research has addressed residents' attitudes and support for tourism, highlighting the significance of positive attitudinal and behavioural responses to tourism (Gursoy et al., 2002; Joo et al., 2021; Çelik & Rasoolimanesh, 2023). However, the concept of pro-tourism behaviours remains underexplored in the literature (Homsud, 2017; Hu et al., 2019; Lança et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2022; Ribeiro et al., 2017). This study aims to fill this research gap by thoroughly investigating drivers of residents' willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Residents' attitudes in support of tourism positively influence their willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours.

The Emotional Solidarity Scale (ESS) was also developed to explore the dynamics between locals and visitors in tourism research (Woosnam et al., 2009). As Wallace and Wolf (2006) described, emotional solidarity is the sense of identification one person feels with another, strengthening their bonds. The original ESS included ten indicators divided into three constructs: (1) Welcoming Nature, (2) Emotional Closeness, and (3) Sympathetic Understanding (Woosnam et al., 2009). Later, Joo and Woosnam (2020) introduced a "new addition" to the ESS, comprising four indicators to enhance the understanding of cross-cultural exchanges between residents and tourists. This expansion aimed to deepen the insights into how residents and tourists learn about each other's cultures, fostering greater mutual respect and understanding (Wang et al., 2023). This amendment leads to a 14-item scale to measure ESS (Joo & Woosnam, 2019).

The relationships between residents and tourists have been studied using different approaches and constructs. For example, Carneiro and Eusébio (2015), Çalişkan et al. (2022), and Roberts et al. (2022) concluded that there is a direct association between both frequency and satisfaction with tourist-host interactions and residents' perception of the positive impacts of tourism on their quality of life. Research consistently shows that residents' emotional solidarity with tourists positively influences their attitudes and behaviours towards tourism development (Hasani et al., 2016; Lai & Hitchcock, 2017; Li & Wan, 2017; Moghavvemi et al., 2017; Woosnam, 2012). However, to address the recommendations by Erul et al. (2020), it is crucial to use the full concept of emotional

solidarity to predict residents' pro-tourism behaviours. The "new addition" by Joo and Woosnam (2020) is critical for understanding residents' emotional solidarity with tourists. However, no research has yet used the 14-item scale to measure the effect of residents' emotional solidarity on their willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours. Thus, this study aims to fill this gap by testing the following hypotheses:

H2: Residents' welcoming nature with tourists positively influences their willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours.

H3: Residents' emotional closeness with tourists positively influences their willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours.

H4: Residents' sympathetic understanding of tourists positively influences their willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours.

H5: Residents' interpersonal connection with tourists positively influences their willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours.

The conceptual model depicted in Figure 1 portrays the five research hypotheses to be tested.

Figure 1 - Proposed model and research hypothesis
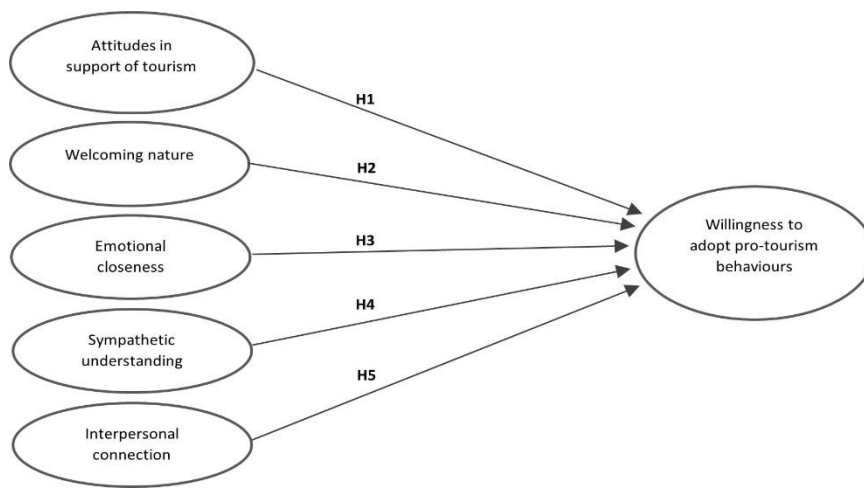
Source: own elaboration.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study setting

The Algarve is the most well-known Portuguese tourism destination, located in the country's south. It is recognised for the quality of its beaches and resorts (World Travel Awards, 2023a; 2023b), with an area of approximately 5,000 km2, where around 470,000 residents live (INE, 2023a). The Algarve is subdivided into 16 municipalities, limited to the north by the Alentejo region and the east by Spain. The Algarve region has tourism as its main economic activity, representing 66.0% of the regional GDP and creating jobs for around 60.0% of the workforce (RTA, 2023). In 2023, the Algarve registered 20.4 million overnights, representing 26.4% of the total overnight stays in Portugal, continuing to be the leading tourism destination in the country (INE, 2023b).

3.2 Instrument

A questionnaire composed of 46 questions, including sociodemographic characteristics, was conducted among residents in the Algarve. The questionnaire was designed to understand their attitudes and behaviours towards sustainable regional tourism development. In this study, the authors focused the analysis on two main groups of questions: residents' "emotions and feelings towards tourists" and "intentional behaviours and level of support for tourism". This study employs validated scales previously used in tourism research to measure the constructs. The initial set of indicators assesses the three original dimensions of the ESS (Chua et al., 2022; Lai & Hitchcock, 2017; Woosnam et al., 2009; Woosnam & Norman, 2009) along with the "new addition" introduced by Joo and Woosnam (2020). The dimensions include Welcoming Nature, measured by four indicators: "*I am proud to have tourists in my municipality", "I feel my municipality benefits from having tourists", "I appreciate tourists for their contribution to the local economy", and "I treat all tourists in a fair way".* Two indicators measure Emotional Closeness: *"I feel close to some tourists I have met"* and *"I have made friends with some tourists".* Four indicators measure Sympathetic Understanding: *"I identify with tourists", "I have a lot in common with tourists", "I feel affection towards tourists",* and *"I understand tourists".* The authors have addressed the "new addition", which they designated as "Interpersonal Connection", using four specific indicators: *"I get along with tourists", "I can trust tourists", "I have respect for tourists",* and *"I share ideas with tourists".*

The second group of questions include four indicators to measure the construct of Attitudes in Support of Tourism Development (Erul et al., 2020; Erul & Woosnam, 2022; Papastathopoulos et al., 2019; Woosnam et al., 2018): "*I think my municipality should remain a tourism destination*", "*I think my municipality should support the promotion of tourism*", "*I believe the overall impacts of tourism in my municipality are positive*", and "*I support tourism having a vital role in my municipality*"; and six indicators to measure the construct of Willingness to Adopt Pro-Tourism Behaviours (Hu et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2022; Ribeiro et al., 2017): "*I am willing to protect the natural and environmental resources on which tourism depends*", "*I am willing to receive tourists as an affable host and be more hospitable*", "*I am willing to provide information to tourists and contribute to enhance their experience*", "*I am willing to do more to promote my municipality as a tourism destination*", "*I am willing to accept some inconveniences to receive benefits from tourism*", and "*I am willing to pay higher taxes to contribute to the tourism development in my municipality*". All the indicators were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (Table 1). In addition, questions related to sociodemographic characteristics were also analysed.

3.3 Sample and data collection

The target population included all residents in the Algarve aged 18 and older who had lived in the region for at least one year. To ensure the desired level of precision in results for the region and specific subpopulations of interest (e.g., municipality), the authors employed a stratified random sampling method to select a representative sample. They allocated the global sample size proportionally to each municipality, facilitating a more straightforward statistical analysis at that level. Using the formulae for stratified sampling with proportional allocation, the authors initially planned a global sample size of 2,400 residents per season (high and low), with a desired confidence level of 95% and a maximum sampling error of 2%. However, the COVID-19 pandemic hindered surveying the planned number of residents in certain strata, such as those aged 65 or over. Consequently, the adjusted sample size comprised 2,004 residents during the low tourism season (February/March and October/November 2020) and 2,022 residents during the high season (June/September 2021). This research is thus based on an overall representative sample size of 4,026 residents.

The face-to-face interview method using a pen-and-paper approach was used to implement the survey in all 16 municipalities of the Algarve. The questionnaires were self-administered, i.e., filled out individually by residents whenever possible. Before the fieldwork, all interviewers received a 2-hour course, including questionnaire-related issues, survey procedures and sampling, eligibility criteria, logistic issues, and work behaviour and ethics.

3.4 Data analysis

Data analysis started with a descriptive statistical analysis of residents' sociodemographic variables and items of the constructs using IBM SPSS v.29. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was then used to estimate the model and test the research hypotheses. For PLS-SEM, the software SmartPLS v.4 was used (Ringle et al., 2015).

4. Results

4.1 Sample profile

The 4,026 respondents were residents of the 16 municipalities in the Algarve, and approximately half (52.3%) were female. The majority were aged between 25 and 64 years (77.6%), followed by seniors aged 65 or over (11.9%) and young adults aged 18 to 24 (10.5%). The average age of the respondents was 43.7 years, with ages ranging from 18 to 90 years and a standard deviation of 14.8 years. Regarding marital status, most respondents were married or cohabiting (52.6%), with singles making up 34.6%. Concerning educational level, the largest group had completed secondary education (47.4%), followed by those with a bachelor's degree (24.4%). Employment status revealed that the majority were employed (88.3%), with retirees (5.9%) and students (3.3%) comprising the remainder. Additionally, most respondents had lived in the Algarve for over 16 years (72.9%), classified as long-term residents.

4.2 Measurement model assessment

Before testing the research hypotheses, the measurement model was evaluated regarding reliability (individual and composite) and validity (convergent and discriminant). Three items (PTB5, PTB6, and IC2) were eliminated to ensure sufficient individual reliability, as their loadings were lower than 0.7 (Table 1). Once these items were deleted, the model showed adequate individual reliability, with all factor loadings higher than 0.726 (Henseler et al., 2009; Kline, 2005). This ensures that the variance shared between each indicator and the corresponding construct (the squared value of the loading) surpasses 0.5 (50%), exceeding the residual variance. Construct reliability was demonstrated by composite reliability indexes (CR) and Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.7 (Kline, 2005). Table 1 shows that CRs ranged from 0.739 to 0.887 and Cronbach's alpha from 0.734 to 0.883. Hair et al. (2019) state that average variance extracted (AVE) values greater than 0.5 confirm convergent validity. In this study, all constructs meet this requirement. All factor loadings exhibit a significant statistical relationship with their corresponding constructs.

Table 1 also shows that residents are inclined to adopt pro-tourism behaviours and express positive attitudes supporting tourism development since the mean scores for most items belonging to these constructs are around 4 (indicating agreement). Similar

results were obtained for the items of the welcoming nature and the interpersonal connection constructs. However, the other dimensions of the ESS show slightly lower levels of agreement, which is particularly relevant to the sympathetic understanding construct.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and assessment of the measurement model

Constructs and indicators	Mean (SD)	CR.	AVE	Loading
Willingness to adopt Pro-Tourism Behaviours (PTB) (α =0.881)		0.887	0.739	
PTB1. I am willing to protect the natural and environmental resources on which tourism depends	4.06 (0.73)			0.791***
PTB2. I am willing to receive tourists as an affable host and be more hospitable	4.07 (0.71)			0.897***
PTB3. I am willing to provide information to tourists and contribute to enhance their experience	4.15 (0.69)			0.902***
PTB4. I am willing to do more to promote my municipality as a tourism destination	3.92 (0.81)			0.843***
PTB5. I am willing to accept some inconveniences to receive benefits from tourism	3.29 (1.00)			a)
PTB6. I am willing to pay higher taxes to contribute to the tourism development in my municipality	2.18 (1.09)			a)
Attitudes in Support of Tourism Development (ASTD) (α =0.883)		0.886	0.740	
ASTD1. I think my municipality should remain a tourism destination	4.15 (0.70)			0.878***
ASTD2. I think my municipality should support the promotion of tourism	4.10 (0.75)			0.883***
ASTD3. I believe the overall impacts of tourism in my municipality are positive	3.95 (0.75)			0.822***
ASTD4. I support tourism having a vital role in my municipality	4.00 (0.74)			0.856***
Welcoming Nature (WN) (α =0.838)		0.841	0.677	
WN1. I am proud to have tourists in my municipality	3.88 (0.77)			0.825***
WN2. I feel my municipality benefits from having tourists	4.10 (0.67)			0.863***
WN3. I appreciate tourists for the contribution they make to the local economy	4.00 (0.73)			0.869***
WN4. I treat all tourists in a fair way	4.23 (0.66)			0.726***
Emotional Closeness (EC) (α =0.874)		0.883	0.888	
EC1. I feel close to some tourists I have met	3.77 (0.90)			0.949***
EC2. I have made friends with some tourists	3.82 (0.93)			0.935***
Sympathetic Understanding (SU) (α =0.845)		0.851	0.681	
SU1. I identify with tourists	3.36 (0.92)			0.832***
SU2. I have a lot in common with tourists	3.18 (0.93)			0.830***
SU3. I feel affection towards tourists	3.50 (0.83)			0.848***
SU4. I understand tourists	3.73 (0.74)			0.792***
Interpersonal Connection (IC) (α =0.734)		0.739	0.654	
IC1. I get along with tourists	3.93 (0.68)			0.858***
IC2. I can trust tourists	3.26 (0.77)			a)
IC3. I have respect for tourists	4.07 (0.67)			0.807***
IC4. I share ideas with tourists	3.64 (0.90)			0.758***

Notes: * *p*<0.05; ** *p*<0.01; *** *p*<0.001; a) These indicators were excluded from the a posteriori model due to their loadings being below 0.7.

Source: own elaboration.

Recently, the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations has emerged as a more effective criterion for assessing discriminant validity than traditional methods like the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Results from group-specific model estimation, presented in Table 2, confirmed discriminant validity, as all HTMT values were below the more conservative (0.85) critical threshold (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 2. Correlations among latent variables and assessment results of discriminant validity (HTMT criterion)

Constructs	Attitudes in support of tourism development	Emotional closeness	Interpersonal connection	Sympathetic understanding	Welcoming nature	Willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours
Attitudes in support of tourism development	**0.860**					
Emotional closeness	0.413	**0.942**				
Interpersonal connection	0.590	0.724	**0.809**			
Sympathetic understanding	0.505	0.715	0.840	**0.825**		
Welcoming nature	0.758	0.567	0.783	0.660	**0.823**	
Willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours	0.799	0.466	0.685	0.542	0.687	**0.860**

Note: Diagonal values in bold represent the square root of the shared variance (AVE) between the constructs and their corresponding measures. The off-diagonal values represent the correlation between the constructs. The diagonal values must exceed all corresponding entries within their respective rows or columns to confirm discriminant validity.

Source: own elaboration.

4.3 Structural model assessment

The most important results for the structural model are presented in Table 3, which reveals that all research hypotheses are supported. The R^2 for the dependent variable, willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours, is 0.567, meaning that the joint effect of attitudes in support of tourism development and the four dimensions of EES explain 56,7% of the variability on this construct. Attitudes in support of tourism development (β=0.524; bootstrap-t=29.382; p<0.001) and interpersonal connection (β=0.204; bootstrap-t=10.680; p<0.001) have the most substantial effect on willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours.

Table 3. Path estimates for the structural model

Hypotheses	Path coefficient	t Value	Conclusion
H1: Attitudes in support of tourism development → Willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours	0.524	29.382*	Support
H2: Welcoming nature → Willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours	0.085	4.540*	Support
H3: Emotional closeness → Willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours	0.040	2.599*	Support
H4: Sympathetic understanding → Willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours	0.035	2.086*	Support
H5: Interpersonal connection → Willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours	0.204	10.680*	Support

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001.

Source: own elaboration.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Main findings and discussion

The current study proposed a model to understand better how to foster residents' willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours as a function of their attitudes supporting tourism development and their emotional solidarity with tourists. Using survey data from a big and representative sample of residents in the Algarve region, the results of the tested model revealed that all proposed hypotheses were supported. From the academic point of view, the validation of the proposed model proves the relevance of the topic and the necessary attention to be given to the relationship between residents' attitudes in supporting tourism and their emotional solidarity, their relationship with tourists, and their behaviours towards tourism development. Indeed, the model explains 56.7% of residents' willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours. These findings align with other studies within the broader residents' attitudes literature (Gautam, 2023; Hasani et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2022; Moghavveni et al., 2017) and confirm the appropriateness of using a blend of the SET and TRA frameworks to explain the drivers of residents' attitudes towards pro-tourism behaviours. Other significant findings from the model indicate that residents' supportive attitudes towards tourism development and interpersonal connections with tourists are the strongest predictors of their willingness to engage in pro-tourism behaviours. This underscores the importance of the "new addition" to the ESS introduced by Joo and Woosnam (2020) and highlights its practical implications.

Results support Hypothesis 1, which proposed a direct relationship between residents' attitudes in support of tourism development and pro-tourism behaviours. This hypothesis has been tested in many settings but never with a big and representative sample of residents surveyed in high and low seasons. The results of this study corroborate the evidence published in the literature (e.g., Honsud, 2017; Ribeiro et al., 2017), which highlights the importance of residents continuing to perceive more the positive than the negative impacts of tourism to foster long-term sustainable development of a tourism destination (Çelik & Rasoolimanesh, 2023; Lança et al., 2024).

Moreover, this research supports all the hypotheses that proposed a direct relationship between the dimensions of residents' emotional solidarity and intentions for pro-tourism behaviours. Although the first three dimensions of emotional solidarity have been widely tested in different models (H2-H4), the new dimension called "interpersonal connection" was tested for the first time (H5). The study also found that residents' welcoming nature has a direct effect on residents' willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours. This outcome is in line with the findings of Woosnam (2012) and Hasani et al. (2016), who found that only the welcoming nature had a direct effect on support for tourism development and attitudes towards tourism development. In the present study, the sympathetic understanding also directly affects residents' willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours. This aligns with the study by Lai and Hitchcock (2017), who also found a positive relationship between welcoming nature and support for tourism development. Finally, the results align with the outcomes of Moghavvemi et al. (2017), who found a direct relationship between those three dimensions of residents' emotional solidarity and attitudes towards tourism development. In addition, this study adds new evidence to the literature showing that residents' interpersonal connection also directly affects their willingness to

adopt pro-tourism behaviours. In summary, these results mean that a high and complete level of residents' emotional solidarity encourages their willingness to engage in pro-tourism behaviours.

5.2 *Theoretical and managerial implications*

The main theoretical contribution of this study relies on the test of an extended version of the ESS. Results revealed that the "new addition" by Joo and Woosnam (2019), which the authors called "interpersonal connection", can be used as an autonomous construct in further studies using the ESS since it provides a more complete way to measure residents' emotional solidarity. Indeed, that construct can measure residents' emotional solidarity towards tourists, which has been an understudied topic. This study also directly affects scientific knowledge because it shows that the "interpersonal connection" construct directly affects residents' willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours. This empirical evidence adds to the well-known results showing the positive effect of the constructs "emotional closeness", "sympathetic understanding", and "welcoming nature" on pro-tourism behaviours.

The results of this research are important for local and regional decision-makers (e.g., destination management organisations, municipalities, and tourist associations) who are responsible for defining policies and measures to encourage positive relationships between residents and tourists. According to Woosnam et al. (2021), a peaceful coexistence between residents and tourists is crucial for the long-term sustainable development of a tourism destination. Since the results of this study reveal that residents' emotional solidarity has a positive and significant effect on their willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours, this information can be used by those decision-makers. Particularly in a conjuncture of growing residents' attitudes to anti-tourism (Olya et al., 2019), decision-makers have more information to support decisions related to the design of policies and measures to promote a higher level of emotional solidarity among residents since there is empirical evidence that it drives higher levels of pro-tourism behaviours. These measures may include, for example, communication and/or education campaigns highlighting the positive impacts of tourism in the region and what type of behaviours residents can adopt to help develop the region as a sustainable destination.

The findings of this study, which are also related to the new "interpersonal connection" construct of the ESS, show the importance of having strong affective bonds between residents and tourists since it seems to be an asset for the destination's long-term sustainable development. Relying on this result, DMOs should encourage opportunities for joining residents and tourists, thus stimulating residents' sympathetic understanding and intragroup relationships. At this level, DMOs can also promote actions that stimulate residents to share experiences regarding local traditions and cultural identity with tourists. These actions can integrate parties and festivals, for instance, including a cultural component (music, art, etc.) combined with gastronomy (information on local products and how to cook meals using traditional techniques), which will enhance the identity and authenticity of the place while increasing tourists' involvement.

5.3 *Limitations and lines for future research*

The current research has some limitations. For instance, the model could have included additional predictors of willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours, such as residents' perceptions of tourism impacts, environmental attitudes, or the effects of tourism on residents' quality of life. Including variables like community attachment and trust in local government could also enhance the model's predictive power. Moreover, the study focuses on residents' willingness to adopt pro-tourism behaviours rather than their actual behaviours, which is a significant limitation since intentions do not always translate into actions. Investigating potential moderators, such as residents' economic dependence on tourism, could open new avenues for research and provide a more nuanced understanding of the factors influencing pro-tourism behaviours. Additionally, it is important to note that the findings are specific to the Algarve region. While the authors encourage its replication in different geographical contexts, it is crucial to consider regional cultural, economic, and social differences that may affect the generalizability of the results. Future research could also benefit from longitudinal studies examining how residents' attitudes and behaviours evolve in response to changing tourism dynamics.

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Credit author statement

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