ABSTRACT

In this era of globalization and the need to market themselves as global cities, urban areas are adopting development strategies to economically reposition themselves, to revive their image and vitality. Urban waterfronts in this regard are unique cultural resources that have great potential to help achieve the goal. However, by being an interface between city and water, they are one of the most complex and challenging lands in cities. Researchers acknowledge and show concern that waterfront planning and development processes ignore aspirations and desires of residents. Research literature stops short of identifying residents’ perception regarding impacts of urban waterfront development, and how these influence their choice for supporting a type of development option.

Against the aforesaid background, the present study is an attempt to address this imbalance in the research domain. The study considers urban riverfront development and suggests that development initiatives will generate benefits (positive impacts), and impose certain costs (negative impacts) in the urban area considering them. Residents’ attitude and support towards riverfront development in an urban area will be influenced by their perception of economic, social, and environmental impacts of such development. This in turn will influence their perception of overall impact of such developments and their support and choice for considering certain riverfront development type. The research proposes to establish and examine the structural relationship that exists among the perceived impact dimensions and urban riverfront development options that residents would prefer.

The empirical analysis has been able to establish a structural relationship between residents’ perception of impacts of urban riverfront development and its development types. This methodology provides with an essential tool to identify residents’ perception regarding impacts of urban riverfront development. This can be used to ensure residents’ support and participation aimed at sustainable, continued and inclusive development process of riverfront areas.

**Key words:** urban riverfront development, residents’ impact perception, economic impact, social impact, environmental impact, urban imagibility, structural model