



## Research note

## Mobile technology &amp; resident attitude research

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## HIGHLIGHTS

- Mobile technology can help better understand resident attitudes toward tourism.
- Taking GPS locations during data collection allows for new research opportunities.
- New methodology for creating interval level distance variable presented.
- LBS technology provides the ability to graph resident attitudes towards tourism.
- LBS technology used to test distance effects on resident attitudes towards tourism.

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## ABSTRACT

This research note highlights the novelty of integrating location-based services (LBS) available on Smart Phones and Tablets into traditional resident attitude survey methodologies such as door-to-door data collection. It specifically reviews how the LBS technology available on mobile devices can be used to systematically capture GPS coordinates of one's residence and integrate this captured spatial information into software such as ArcGIS and SPSS for further analysis. By having GPS coordinates associated with respondents' answers, researchers have an additional layer of information available for conducting a multitude of tests previously not possible with subjective categorical spatial data. Two research applications using the spatial location of residences are provided as examples of how LBS available on mobile devices can be integrated within resident attitude projects. The use of LBS technology can help researchers better understand how the distance residents live from major tourist attractions influences their attitudes towards tourism.

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## 1. Introduction

While research on resident attitudes toward tourism is one of the most ubiquitous areas of research within the tourism literature (Nunkoo, Smith, & Ramkissoon, 2013), the portfolio of variables used to measure residents' attitudes towards tourism has seen little innovation over the past 30 years. One reason for this is the tendency for resident attitude research to depend largely on residents' own quantitative or qualitative assessments of tourism through

self-administered surveys or interviews. Even though this type of information has been the backbone of resident attitude research (and will continue to be), this internal and subjective information from residents only tells part of the story about why they perceive tourism in the manner that they do. It does not include external factors such as the spatial location of their residences that may heavily influence their attitudes toward tourism.

The purpose of this research note is to highlight the novelty of integrating location-based services (LBS) available on Smart Phones and Tablets into traditional survey methodologies such as door-to-door data collection. This research note specifically seeks to walk readers through how the LBS technology associated with mobile devices can be used to systematically capture GPS coordinates of one's residence and integrate the spatial location into software

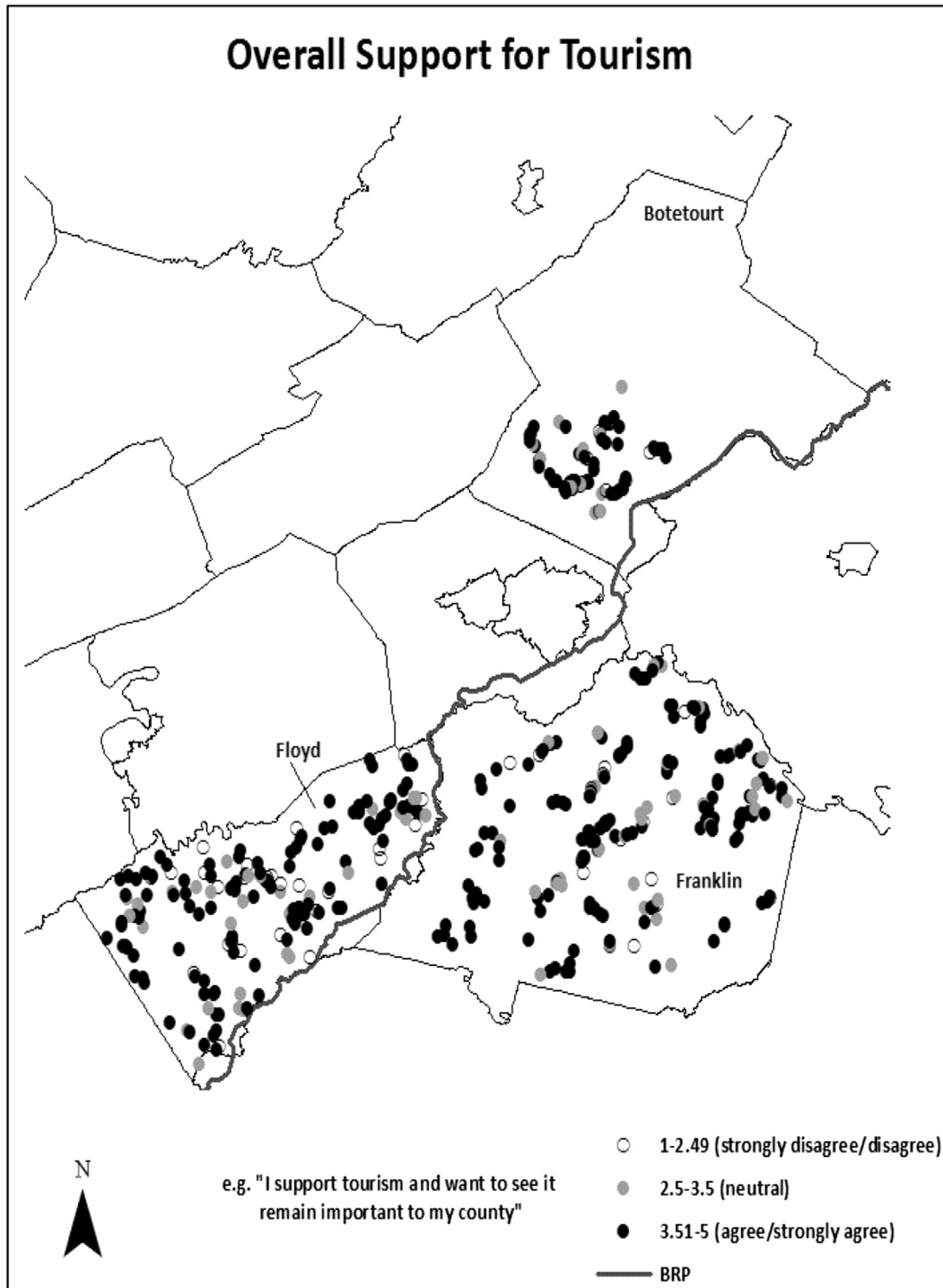
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**Table 1**  
Exploratory factor analysis of the items making up the *Support for Tourism* scale.

Scale and item description	N	Mean	$\sigma$	Factor loading	$\alpha$
<b>Support for Tourism</b>					<b>0.95</b>
In general, the positive benefits of tourism outweigh negative impacts in Floyd County	696	4.02	0.91	0.85	
I believe tourism should be actively encouraged in Floyd County	701	4.10	0.86	0.95	
I support tourism and want to see it remain important to Floyd County	699	4.09	0.84	0.94	
Floyd County should remain a tourist destination	697	4.12	0.85	0.93	
Floyd County should support the promotion of tourism	703	4.09	0.91	0.93	

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.



**Fig. 1.** Map of residents' Support for Tourism across Floyd, Franklin and Botetourt County, VA.

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