

Chapter 11

A Theory–Based Approach to Understanding Social Sustainability in Tourism

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ABSTRACT

The current study aims to determine how social sustainability and tourism are related, and how social sustainability can benefit all parties involved in the tourism industry. The qualitative study employed a theory-based methodology to ascertain the solutions to the question: How can we establish and preserve an economically sustainable tourism system that contributes favourably to social sustainability? How can we use social resources in the tourism industry without increasing them but instead by fostering their development? How do we ensure that the tourism-related mechanisms that promote social sustainability continue to work? The study came to the conclusion that social sustainability through tourism focuses on the core elements of social sustainability, namely improving infrastructure and working conditions, ensuring that men and women have equal access to job opportunities and security, and establishing more secure supply chains.

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INTRODUCTION

The highly competitive character of the tourism sector prompted the stakeholders to look for strategies that would lead to the development of sustainable new products, which would open up a wealth of potential for the country's economic growth and pave the way for comprehensive social improvement. When it comes to tourism, sustainability is preserving the diversity of the industry's resources so that their use doesn't deplete them but instead gives future generations an equal chance to profit from them. We talk about sustainability in the context of social systems in this study. In order to address sustainability in a social system, all of its constituent parts must be taken into consideration. Concurrent development of the economic, environmental, cultural, and social resources used in the tourism industry is necessary for sustainability. A social system that is sustainable can function in its surroundings and accomplish its objectives. Through skill/work-based learning, growth, and well-being, host communities' capacity to meet the demands of the visitors increases in a sustainable social system. Through fair and open dialogue between the many tourist stakeholders, which improves mutual understanding and increases the capacity for collaboration, the rise of social sustainability is ensured. This research focused on determining the answers to the following questions: How can we develop and sustain an economically viable tourist system that benefits social sustainability? How can we make use of social resources in the tourism industry without increasing them but instead by fostering their development? How do we make sure that the tourism-related mechanisms that promote social sustainability continue to work?

We view the diversity and abundance of tourism resources as a significant contributor to and a significant outcome of social sustainability. Diverse communities, as well as real and intangible resources, make up a tourist system. We are able to respond to societal possibilities and difficulties in a flexible, innovative way because of the diverse tourist system. A tourist system is therefore not in a static or steady state; rather, during its life cycle, it changes continuously. The tourism industry works to reach new heights of development and undergoes a radical change. With its focus on resource regeneration rather than resource consumption for future processes, social sustainability means that the existence of a tourist system has established a foundation for the existence of tourism systems and processes in the future.

To sum up, the following are some guidelines for a sustainable tourist system:

- A tourist system's functioning attempts to replenish its social, cultural, and environmental resources.
- In addition, developing one kind of resource does not use up resources of other kinds.
- A sustainable tourism system "gives back" to society as opposed to merely utilizing the resources that the natural and social environment has to offer.
- We require more complex tools to comprehend what a tourism system is and how it works since it must be able to renew resources of all types and take into account the legitimate needs of many stakeholders.

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