

Chapter 11

Tourism Entrepreneurship in Innovation Sustainability: Challenges and Opportunities

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ABSTRACT

The increasing wealth and economic development have dramatically driven rapid growth in the tourism industry, making it one of the fastest growing and developing industries worldwide. Tourism entrepreneurship should involve adopting a green business model innovation that is more efficient and leads to low carbon production to balance the needs of the tourists with those of their desired destinations. Despite sustainability being a core concept in current policies and trends in the last decade, most company managers in the tourism industry are yet to incorporate it into the agenda. Based on this research gap, a systematic review of the bibliometric literature was conducted, and data was synthesized from 80 documents identified through the Scopus indexation using. This chapter aims to evaluate the challenges and opportunities of innovation sustainability in tourism entrepreneurship, thus building a clear image of what should be done to overcome the obstacles and increase awareness of the need for sustainable tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Innovation is vital for sustainable development in the tourism sector. It is a multifaceted concept involving generating new ideas, research and development, and successfully utilizing and commercializing them. In tourism entrepreneurship, innovation helps improve efficiency and productivity and increases customer loyalty (Alkier et al., 2017). However, recent years have seen a shift of focus from mere innovation to sustainable innovation, which involves generating and implementing ideas and technologies that foster sustainable performance and growth. Tourism entrepreneurship should be evaluated from the three primary sustainability dimensions; economic, environmental, and social. Tourism sustainability

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innovation aims to lessen the adverse effects of tourist activities on the natural, historical, cultural, or social environment while maintaining economic and social advantages (Moscardo, 2008). In addition, sustainable innovation involves developing innovative technologies, services and products for people and organizations while respecting the environment, including natural resources and the earth's regenerative capacity (Elkhwesky et al., 2022). Therefore, sustainability innovation in tourism can help entrepreneurs and businesses deliver products and services characterized by improved economic, environmental, and social performance. As a result, adopting sustainable business models can help achieve higher innovation and value creation. This approach can ensure that organizations engage in business practices that improve their financial performance while protecting the environment and the communities they serve.

However, the tourism industry lags in adopting and implementing sustainable innovations. For instance, Garay et al. (2019) indicated that tourism firms do not prioritize sustainability in their innovation strategies and dedicate limited resources to sustainability learning. Similarly, Peeters et al. (2006) argue that tourism primarily focuses on three goals, satisfying customer needs, increasing competitiveness and gaining a more significant market share. As a result, the industry neglects its environmental impacts. Examples of the ecological effects of tourism include increased pressure on local land use, overconsumption of resources in areas where they are already scarce, increased pollution, loss of natural habitat, pressure on endangered species, and soil erosion (Elkhwesky et al., 2022). The diversity of these issues indicates the need for prioritizing sustainable innovation in the tourism sector to help create a balance between engaging in sustainable business practices that ensure environmental protection and promote social-cultural wellbeing while achieving the desired financial goals. Therefore, this systematic review of the bibliometric literature synthesizes data from 79 sources to identify opportunities that can be leveraged for sustainable tourism innovation and challenges that may hinder success. These insights help promote innovative, sustainable tourism entrepreneurship that cares about the business and respects people and the environment.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The methodology used was a systematic review of the bibliometric literature to identify and select relevant sources and synthesized data to create an evidence-based report implementable in tourism business practice. This methodology was selected based on Xiao and Watson's (2019) recognition of systematic reviews as a critical feature of knowledge advancement and academic research. The scholars explain that understanding the breadth and depth of existing literature helps identify gaps to explore, inconsistencies, and contradictions. In this regard, summarizing, analyzing, and synthesizing literature will help understand the sustainability innovations in the tourism sector, opportunities for growth, and challenges anticipated and hindering progress. Such insights can improve the planning and integration of sustainability goals and efforts into the overall tourism organizational processes and practices. Consequently, the methodology can be used to decipher and map cumulative scientific knowledge and emerging variations of a well-established topic (Rosário, 2021; Rosário & Dias, 2022; Rosário, et al., 2021)

Thus, the use of bibliometric analysis can help understand its development and adoption in businesses to identify potential challenges. The use of SRB review process is divided into 3 phases and 6 steps (Table 1), as proposed by Rosário (2021), Rosário and Dias (2022) and Rosário, et al. (2021).

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