


## Chapter 12

# Ecological Sightseeing: The SOR–Based Perspective


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### **ABSTRACT**

*This chapter delves into the ecotourism landscape of Pakistan, offering a fresh perspective through the lens of the S-O-R framework. The current state of ecotourism in Pakistan is explored in detail, emphasizing the importance of adopting a new approach to gain a comprehensive understanding. The stimulus-organism-response model, a widely recognized model in environmental psychology, holds significant implications for diverse research domains. Through this chapter, the authors investigate the potential applications of the S-O-R model in the field of ecotourism.*

### **ECO TOURISM CURRENT SITUATION**

Eco-tourism plays a vital role in the sustainable development of a country. It not only emphasizes the conservation of natural resources and the protection of the

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-1030-4.ch012

environment but it also promotes the long-term economic growth of local and national communities (Zainol & Rahman, 2023). The sustainable tourism concept has obtained significant attention, hence it will motivating travelers to seek out destinations that preserved natural resources and the protected the wildlife (Chan et al., 2021). Therefore, current circumstances of eco-tourism and its context, tourists will more awareness and interest regarding the protection of the environment (Paul & Roy, 2023). Moreover, ecotourism encourages governments and policymakers to prioritize the protection of natural areas and biodiversity, leading to the implementation of stricter regulations and conservation efforts (Brandt et al., 2019).

Indistinguishably, Eco-tourists who acquire a greater level of environmental knowledge will probably to participate in sustainable or green behaviors and support natural conservation efforts. This could be attributed to their knowledge of the worth of maintaining biodiversity and natural resources (Ardoin et al., 2015; Shasha et al., 2020; Sayfullayeva, 2022). Personal beliefs and values play a major role in shaping ecotourist intentions and behavior. Individuals who value naturalness and environmentalism have a positive attitude towards ecological protection activities and will be more prospective to participate in sustainable practices during their tours (Ren et al., 2021). Additionally, social effects also play a vital role in shaping ecotourist behavior. Societal norms, Peer pressure, and opinions of significant others can all influence and person's decision to participate in ecotourism activities and adopt sustainable behavior (Sirakaya, 1997). Conclusively, the accessibility and availability of environmentally friendly means or activites also influence eco-tourist behavior. If sustainable activities are more accessible and available, ecotourists are more likely to adopt them, supporting sustainable tourism practices (Mkono & Hughes, 2020).

In ecotourism, the cognitive stimuli will be most interesting and novel variables like information and knowledge about the natural environment, as well as its potential benefits on the ecosystem. The ability to understand and interpret information provided and spread by tour operators and guides, as well as the awareness of the potential environmental impacts of their actions on the ecosystem, is part of this assessment (Syed Othman Thani et al., 2023). The environmental stimuli impact on individuals' emotions and feelings in ecotourism in form of positive experiences are often associated with feelings of serenity, wonder, and happiness (Wang et al., 2021). Physiological stimuli in eco-tourism will denote to the physical feelings (the forest smell, the texture of the soil, or sound of the waves) that individuals experience in the natural environment which can further enhance their overall experience in tourism natural destinations (Curtin, 2013).

Factors such as environmental concern, future time perspective, and eco-destination image play significant roles in determining travellers' intention to visit ecotourism locations. Ecotourism can be an effective tool for preserving natural resources while also promoting local development. Therefore, policymakers should employ efficient

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