

Chapter 10

Exploring Stakeholder Engagement in Tourism Waste Management: Self-Help Groups' Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the motivations driving stakeholder engagement and the challenges faced in waste management initiatives within the tourism sector, focusing on the perspectives of self-help groups (SHGs). Through qualitative research methods, including in-depth interviews, this study examines the diverse motivations that prompt SHGs to participate in waste management projects, ranging from environmental concerns to socioeconomic empowerment. Moreover, it identifies and analyses the multifaceted challenges SHGs encounter, such as limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and bureaucratic hurdles. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of stakeholder dynamics in tourism waste management by elucidating these motivations and challenges. The findings suggest that while SHGs play a crucial role in fostering sustainable practices, effective collaboration and support mechanisms are essential to address the challenges encountered and maximize the potential benefits of stakeholder engagement in waste management projects within the tourism sector.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Self-help groups (SHGs) are grassroots-level institutions formed by individuals who voluntarily come together to address common issues often related to economic, social, and environmental concerns (Mishra & Mishra, 2023). These groups are characterised by mutual aid, support, and shared responsibility, and they typically operate on principles of collective action and empowerment (Levy, 2000; Pritiprada et al., 2023). The mechanism of SHGs involves regular meetings in which members contribute savings, discuss issues, plan activities, and provide loans or support to members in need (Ravindran & Vinodan, 2009; Vukovic et al., 2021). This structure fosters financial independence and encourages social cohesion and community development (Rinaldi & Salerno, 2020).

In tourism, SHGs have emerged as significant players, contributing to the sustainable development of tourism destinations (Vinodan & Meera, 2022). Their roles in tourism are multifaceted; they often promote local culture, provide authentic experiences to tourists, and participate in community-based tourism initiatives (Vukovic et al., 2021). Moreover, SHGs can act as custodians of their local environments, ensuring that tourism development does not come at the cost of ecological degradation (Bwala et al., 2016). By leveraging their local knowledge and organisational capacity, SHGs can create a sustainable tourism model that benefits the community and the environment. (Vinodan & Meera, 2022).

One critical area where SHGs have demonstrated considerable impact is waste management in the tourism sector (Djaelani, 2021; Vinodan & Meera, 2022). The concept of collective initiative is exemplified by SHGs, which operate on the principles of cooperation to achieve specific goals, shared responsibility, and active community participation in decision-making processes. Several factors drive the intervention of SHGs in waste management. Environmental concerns are a primary motivator, as unmanaged waste can lead to severe pollution and degradation of natural resources, which are often attractions that attract tourists. Additionally, socioeconomic empowerment through waste management activities, such as recycling and composting, provides SHGs with opportunities for income generation and skill development (Vankar et al., 2013). By engaging in these activities, SHGs contribute to cleaner and more appealing tourist destinations, attracting more visitors and enhancing local livelihoods.

However, SHGs' involvement in waste management in tourism is challenging. This study identifies several obstacles SHGs face, including limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and bureaucratic hurdles. Despite these challenges, the potential benefits of SHG participation in waste management remain significant. Effective stakeholder engagement is crucial to overcoming these barriers. Collaboration with local governments, tourism operators, and other stakeholders can

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