


Chapter 13

Sustainable Tourism and Its Impact: Concerns, Strategies, and Initiatives

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ABSTRACT

Tourism should minimize the economic impacts, socio-cultural changes, environmental and health impacts and sustain the longevity of a tourist destination. The study attempts to conduct a conceptual analysis of the impacts – both positive and negative, created by tourism. The different effects of tourism – economic, sociocultural, environmental, and health are highlighted and discussed. The study focuses on modified environments, the need for industry and community cooperation, and carbon-neutral vacations to create and to maintain a sustainable environment. Regulatory authorities may be sensitized about the various laws and regulations which should be implemented to maintain the triple bottom line – people, planet, and profit. All these will allow tourism companies to do business, sustain the environment, and to achieve business excellence in the long run.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has a number of impacts on a destination (Gong & Tung, 2017). The major impacts which tourism may have on a destination include economic impact, sociocultural impact, environmental impact, and health impact (Sanchez del Rio-Vazquez, Rodríguez-Rad, & Revilla-Camacho, 2019). Consequently, destinations

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should consider the triple bottom line – economic, social or cultural, and environmental (profit, people, and planet). Such considerations should be incorporated in product development, competitiveness, and marketing (Unhasuta, Sasaki, & Kim, 2021). Overall, sustainable tourism needs to be practiced maintaining a balance among profit, people, and planet. Sustainable tourism refers to tourism that minimizes the environmental impacts and sociocultural changes, and sustains the longevity of a destination, and creates economic opportunity for local communities (Hassan, 2000). The triple bottom line indicates that any destination should operate in such a way that its economic, sociocultural, and environmental interests intersect (Csikósová, Janošková, & Čulková, 2020). A destination will be sustainable when it will create interest of travellers while protecting the interests of residents and protecting the resources. From a marketing standpoint, sustainable tourism can mean giving up current revenues from tourism by limiting capacity so that there will be demand for tourism in the future (Tyrrell & Johnston, 2012).

Sustainable tourism is a concept which covers entire tourism experience of individuals. It includes concerns for economic, social, environmental, and health issues in addition to improvement of experiences for tourists. It also addresses the needs of host communities (Zeng et al., 2022). Sustainable tourism embraces concerns for environmental protection, social equity, quality of life, cultural diversity, a dynamic and viable economy delivering jobs, and prosperity for all (Zeng et al., 2022). Environmentalists emphasize that tourism should be sustainable. They are of the opinion that all forms of tourism can be sustainable if planned, developed, and managed properly (Fennell & Cooper, 2020). Tourist development organizations promote sustainable tourism practices. Such practices mitigate the negative effects caused by the growing impact of tourism viz. economic, social, environmental, and health impacts (Kumar & Kushwaha, 2025).

The discussions done above indicate that tourism should not operate only with the selfish motives of generating revenues and profits. Tourism should strive to protect the interests of the society in the present and also in the future. Although the issue is important, studies focusing on sustainable tourism are scarce. An analysis of sustainable tourism from the perspective of profit, people, and planet is essential. The study aims to address this research gap.

The objective of the study is to conduct a conceptual analysis of the various aspects of sustainable tourism and to understand the linkages of sustainable tourism with economic, sociocultural, environmental, and health impacts.

The methodology adopted is a conceptual analysis of the literature on sustainable tourism to understand its importance and its connections with profit, people, and planet. Primary data is not collected, and empirical analysis is not done.

The novelty and the contributions of the study lie in the fact that an in-depth analysis of the various aspects of tourism and the impacts – both positive and negative

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