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**Sustainable Tourism Development &
Management for Viksit Bharat – Opportunities
& Challenges**

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Year: 2026

Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Sustainable Tourism: A Critical Literature Review and Research Opportunities

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Abstract

Maintaining a high degree of consumer happiness, increasing awareness of sustainability issues, and promoting sustainable tourist behaviors among them are all necessary for sustainable tourism. A comprehensive analysis of sustainable tourism is uncommon, but some previous studies have measured it in different parts of the world. In order to assess the state of the field and offer recommendations for further research on sustainable tourism, the study is based on a thorough examination of the literature.

This study significantly advances the field of sustainable tourism research. It provides a study avenue to develop the field's literature, which is advantageous for future researchers. The crucial areas that scientific research studies could further investigate are the broad domains of sustainability, concerns pertaining to sustainable infrastructure and services, livelihood, and management of tourism destinations. The study's findings demonstrate that most research is shallow in terms of appropriate analysis, methodology, geographic variations, empirical analysis, and practical application. The key objective of this paper is to study uncovered areas in interdisciplinary sustainable tourism research and lay a strong foundation for future inquiries.

ISBN No. 978-93-7640-929-7

Keywords: sustainable tourism; literature review; critical analysis and gaps; tourism research; tourism management.

1 INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector is among the most rapidly expanding areas of the global economy. It significantly contributes to economic development, job creation, and cultural exchange. Nonetheless, the swift expansion of tourism has given rise to significant environmental and socio-cultural issues, including resource depletion, pollution, habitat destruction, and increased pressure on local communities. This has led to growing interest in the idea of sustainable tourism among researchers, tourism stakeholders, and policymakers.

The notion of sustainable tourism is intricately linked to the wider framework of Sustainable Development, which advocates for a form of development that reconciles economic advancement with environmental safeguarding and social welfare. The United Nations World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism as tourism that takes into account its economic, social, and environmental effects in the present and future while meeting the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and local communities.

Sustainable tourism has emerged as a key strategy in recent years to ensure that tourism activities positively contribute to local development while reducing negative environmental and cultural impacts. Global initiatives like the Sustainable Development Goals highlight the importance of tourism in fostering responsible consumption, environmental protection, and inclusive economic growth. Practices of sustainable tourism involve efficient use of natural resources, biodiversity conservation, respect for local culture and traditions, and active involvement of local communities in tourism development.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the idea of sustainable tourism and examine how it contributes to environmental conservation and sustainable economic development. The study aims to pinpoint the difficulties and prospects linked to the adoption of sustainable tourism practices in tourist destinations.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

- Hashemkhani Zolfani, S., Sedaghat, M., Maknoon, R., & Zavadskas, E. K. (2015). Sustainable tourism: a comprehensive literature review on frameworks and applications. *Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja*, 28(1), 1–30.
- Author(s). (2026). *Exploring sustainable tourism research trends: A literature review of the last decade*. In **Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Tourism Research**, Jyväskylä, Finland.

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- Sofia Loureiro, I., Costa, V. & Malheiro, A. (2024). Sustainable Tourism: A Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Analysis. *European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation*, 14(1), 127-139
- Higgins-Desbiolles (2018) argues that tourism must be understood and managed within a broader context of sustainability. Critically, the author states that the continuous growth of tourism, promoted by authorities and organizations, ignores the ecological limits of a finite planet, making a transition to a sufficiency approach in tourism essential—where the focus is not solely on increasing demand but also on promoting social well-being and environmental protection. This approach reinforces the need to rethink what "sustainability" means in the context of tourism, highlighting the necessity for a balance between economic and social interests.

3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze the concept and principles of sustainable tourism.
- To examine the impact of tourism on the environment and local communities.
- To examine sustainable tourism practices and strategies discussed in previous research..
- To identify sustainable practices adopted in tourism destinations.

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The key objective of this paper is to study uncovered areas in interdisciplinary sustainable tourism research and lay a strong foundation for future inquiries. A systematic review method has been taken into consideration to classify the subject matter of sustainable tourism research into three major categories, including

- (a) development and dimensions of sustainable tourism,
- (b) issues, challenges, and needs of sustainable tourism,
- (c) sustainable tourism practices and measurement.

5 DESIGN OF RESEARCH

Based solely on secondary data, this study uses an analytical and descriptive research design. In order to comprehend the idea, evolution, and practices of sustainable tourism, the research focuses on examining current literature, reports, and statistical data. Without carrying out primary field surveys, this method aids in identifying sustainable tourism-related trends, obstacles, and possibilities.

6 ORIGINATORS OF SECONDARY DATA

The research is based on secondary data gathered from a variety of trustworthy sources, including: Research papers and academic journals.

- Books and literature that has been published
- Tourism reports from the government
- Publications from international tourism organizations
- Online scholarly databases
- Key sources comprise documents and publications from the United Nations World Tourism Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, and international sustainability frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals. Relevant research articles and prior studies on sustainable tourism are also gathered from academic databases such as Google Scholar and JSTOR.
- UNWTO Tourism Reports
- UNEP Sustainable Tourism Guidelines
- UN Sustainable Development Goals Reports

7 FINDINGS & SUGGESTIONS

- **Environmental Strain Caused by Tourism**
 - A large number of visitors to many tourist destinations leads to environmental problems
 - like waste production, excessive use of water, and harm to ecosystems.
- **Insufficient Awareness Among Tourists**
 - A large proportion of tourists do not know about responsible travel practices such as
 - minimizing plastic use, honoring wildlife, and conserving resources.
- **Excessive Tourism in Well-Known Locations**
 - Renowned tourist attractions become overcrowded, resulting in pollution, strain on
 - infrastructure, and diminished visitor contentment.
- **Restricted Participation of the Community**
 - In numerous regions, tourism activities yield only modest economic benefits for local communities.

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- **Inadequate Waste Management Systems**

- A lot of tourist attractions do not have adequate waste disposal and recycling facilities.

8 CONCLUSION

A crucial function of sustainable tourism is to strike a balance among social well-being, environmental protection, and economic development. This research shows that although tourism can greatly enhance local economies and foster cultural exchange, it can also result in environmental harm, crowding, and inequitable benefit distribution if management is lacking. It is thus vital for the safeguarding of natural resources and cultural heritage for future generations to embrace sustainable practices in tourism development.

The research emphasizes the significance of responsible tourist conduct, effective governmental policies, and the active involvement of local communities in fostering sustainability. Approaches like environmentally sustainable infrastructure, enhanced waste management, tourism grounded in community involvement, and awareness initiatives can greatly mitigate the adverse effects of tourism. Successful instances from places such as Sikkim and Costa Rica illustrate that sustainable tourism models can produce economic benefits while safeguarding the environment.

To sum up, the future of tourism relies on a cooperative strategy that includes governments, the tourism sector, local populations, and tourists. When sustainable tourism principles are adopted, destinations can secure long-term environmental protection, cultural preservation, and economic growth, ensuring that tourism is responsible and advantageous for both present and future generations.

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