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Abstract

Tourism has become a central pillar in the economic development strategies of many developing nations, offering opportunities for growth, job creation, and cultural exchange. However, it also poses significant risks to environmental sustainability, cultural authenticity, and social equity. This paper investigates the complex relationship between tourism and sustainability in the Third World, focusing on the environmental and socio-economic impacts of tourism within the context of globalization. The study critically examines the effects of tourism on climate change, natural resources, and local cultures, highlighting the challenges posed by over-tourism, carbon emissions, and cultural commodification. It also explores the potential for sustainable tourism practices to mitigate these negative effects, emphasizing case studies from countries like Costa Rica, Kenya, and Bhutan that have successfully implemented community-based and eco-tourism models. The primary objectives of this research are to evaluate the economic contributions of tourism to developing nations, assess the environmental costs and socio-cultural impacts, and investigate strategies for achieving sustainable tourism that benefits both the economy and local communities. The expected outcome is to offer actionable insights for policymakers, industry leaders, and local communities, emphasizing the need for innovative, inclusive, and adaptive approaches to tourism development. Ultimately, the research seeks to balance the economic benefits of tourism with its social and environmental responsibilities, contributing to a more equitable and sustainable future for the Third World.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, Environmental Sustainability, Climate Change Adaptation, Third World Development, Tourism Economics, Cultural Preservation

Debut

Tourism has emerged as one of the most dynamic and resilient sectors of the global economy, contributing significantly to economic development, cultural exchange, and environmental conservation (Bianchi 2014). In developing nations, often referred to as the Third World, tourism has become a vital tool for achieving economic growth, generating employment, and improving infrastructure.

For instance, countries such as Thailand, Kenya, and Costa Rica have leveraged tourism to diversify their economies and reduce dependence on traditional industries like agriculture (Stroebe 2015). However, the dual nature of tourism – its ability to enable development while simultaneously exacerbating socio-economic and environmental challenges – raises critical questions about its long-term sustainability.

In recent decades, the perception of the Third World has shifted from a region of poverty, conflict, and underdevelopment to one of adventure, exoticism, and unique cultural experiences (Frago & Graziano, 2021). This transformation has been fuelled by globalization, which has connected these regions to global travel networks, making their pristine ecosystems and rich cultural heritage accessible to a growing number of international tourists. Tourism now contributes significantly to GDP in many developing nations, accounting for as much as 30% in destinations like the Maldives. Yet, the rapid expansion of tourism has brought with it a host of challenges, including environmental degradation, cultural commodification, and unequal distribution of benefits (Lenzen et al., 2018).

A major concern is tourism's environmental impact, particularly its contribution to global carbon emissions, habitat destruction, and water resource exploitation. For example, air travel—a cornerstone of international tourism—accounts for nearly 40% of tourism-related carbon emissions. Similarly, over-tourism has placed immense pressure on biodiversity hotspots like the Galápagos Islands and coral reefs in the Seychelles, threatening their ecological integrity.

At the same time, the socio-cultural impacts of tourism cannot be ignored. The commodification of indigenous traditions to cater to tourist preferences often dilutes their authenticity, while ethical concerns surrounding labour exploitation and land displacement remain pervasive.

Despite its challenges, tourism holds immense potential as a driver of sustainable development when implemented responsibly. Community-based tourism initiatives in Bhutan and Namibia demonstrate that it is possible to align economic growth with cultural preservation and environmental conservation. However, achieving this balance requires addressing critical gaps in governance, policy, and stakeholder engagement. Existing research has largely focused on the economic benefits and environmental costs of tourism, leaving the intersection of these dimensions with socio-cultural factors underexplored.

This paper seeks to fill this gap by examining the dual role of tourism as an enabler and disruptor in developing nations. It critically analyses tourism's economic, environmental, and ethical dimensions, with a particular

focus on the impacts of climate change and the potential of sustainable practices. Through an interdisciplinary approach that integrates case studies from diverse regions, the study aims to provide actionable insights for policymakers, industry leaders, and local communities. By addressing the complexities of tourism in the Third World, this research contributes to the broader discourse on sustainable development, emphasizing the need for innovative, inclusive, and adaptive strategies.

Literature Review

The literature on tourism in developing nations reveals its multifaceted nature as both a catalyst for economic development and a source of socio-environmental challenges. This section explores key dimensions of the topic, including economic contributions, environmental and cultural impacts, climate change vulnerabilities, ethical concerns, and sustainable tourism practices.

Economic Contributions of Tourism

Tourism is a cornerstone of economic development in many developing nations, contributing to GDP growth, employment creation, and infrastructure improvement. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2025), tourism accounted for 10.3% of global GDP pre-pandemic, with developing nations deriving significant benefits. The Maldives, for example, relies on tourism for nearly 30% of its GDP, primarily through luxury travel (Nicholls, 2014). Similarly, Kenya's wildlife tourism sector generates millions of dollars annually, supporting conservation efforts and providing income for local communities (Christie et al., 2014). However, these benefits are often unevenly distributed. (Hall et al. 2014) argues that multinational corporations and urban elites capture a disproportionate share of tourism revenue, leaving rural and marginalized communities with limited economic gain. This inequality is evident in Cambodia, where Angkor Wat tourism generates substantial profits, yet the surrounding rural populations see minimal benefit. Additionally, tourism's reliance on foreign direct investment can perpetuate dependency on external actors, limiting local control over economic resources (Gascón, 2014).

Beyond direct contributions, tourism fosters spillover benefits such as improved infrastructure and enhanced global connectivity. In Costa Rica, investments in airports, roads, and renewable energy have facilitated not only tourism but also access to education and healthcare for local populations. These examples illustrate the dual role of tourism in promoting economic development and exposing systemic inequalities.

Environmental and Cultural Impacts

The environmental costs of tourism are significant, with its carbon footprint, habitat destruction, and resource overuse presenting major challenges. Tourism contributes approximately 8% of global carbon emissions, with air

travel and luxury accommodations as major contributors. Coastal and biodiversity hotspots such as the Seychelles, the Galápagos Islands, and coral reefs in the Caribbean are particularly vulnerable to over-tourism and climate change.

In addition to environmental degradation, tourism poses risks to cultural integrity. The commodification of indigenous traditions for tourist consumption often leads to their dilution. For example, Bali's traditional dances have been transformed into performances tailored to tourists, losing their cultural and spiritual significance. Similarly, the Maasai culture in Kenya is frequently marketed as a tourist attraction, raising ethical concerns about the representation and exploitation of indigenous communities.

Despite these challenges, tourism can drive positive environmental and cultural outcomes when implemented responsibly. Community-based tourism initiatives in Namibia, for instance, have successfully combined wildlife conservation with economic development, empowering local populations and preserving cultural heritage. These models highlight the potential for tourism to contribute to both conservation and cultural preservation.

Climate Change and Tourism Vulnerability

Tourism is both a contributor to and a victim of climate change. Rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and changing ecosystems threaten key tourism destinations, particularly in small island developing states (SIDS) like the Maldives and Fiji (Field and Barros 2014). Coral bleaching, driven by warming ocean temperatures, has significantly impacted dive tourism in the Caribbean and the Great Barrier Reef.

The tourism sector itself exacerbates climate change through its reliance on carbon-intensive activities. (Gössling and Hall, 2019) emphasize the need for systemic changes in tourism operations, such as transitioning to renewable energy, promoting low-carbon transportation, and adopting carbon offset programs. However, these measures often require substantial financial and technical resources, which are beyond the reach of many developing nations.

Adaptation strategies, such as the construction of climate-resilient infrastructure and the restoration of natural barriers like mangroves, offer hope but remain underutilized due to high implementation costs. Without international financial support and technical assistance, many tourism-dependent economies risk long-term vulnerabilities.

Ethical Concerns in Tourism

Ethical concerns surrounding tourism in the Third World include labor exploitation, land dispossession, and the commodification of poverty. Frenzel et al. (2017) highlight the phenomenon of slum tourism, where wealthy tourists visit impoverished areas, raising questions about the ethics of profiting from poverty. Similarly, in Tanzania, the

displacement of Maasai communities to create wildlife reserves for tourism has sparked global criticism (Smith, 2015).

Exclusion of local voices in tourism planning exacerbates these issues. (Hall and Page 2014) observes that tourism policies often prioritize investor interests over community needs, leading to socio-economic inequalities and cultural disenfranchisement. However, community-based tourism models in Peru and Nepal have demonstrated the potential for inclusive and ethical tourism practices. These initiatives prioritize local ownership and decision-making, ensuring equitable distribution of benefits and preserving cultural authenticity.

Sustainable Tourism Practices

Sustainable tourism has gained traction as a critical framework for addressing tourism's socio-environmental challenges. Prieto-Sandoval et al. (2016) identify eco-certifications, carbon offset programs, and renewable energy adoption as effective tools for promoting sustainability. Costa Rica's Certification for Sustainable Tourism (CST) program, for example, incentivizes businesses to adopt eco-friendly practices, reducing their environmental impact while maintaining competitiveness (Budeanu et al. 2015).

The concept of "degrowth" in tourism has also gained attention as a strategy to limit the industry's expansion and mitigate its ecological footprint. (Scott, Hall, and Stefan 2012) advocates for steady-state tourism, which emphasizes qualitative improvements over quantitative growth, aligning with broader sustainable development goals.

Achieving sustainable tourism practices requires multi-stakeholder collaboration. Governments, private sector actors, and local communities must work together to implement and scale sustainable practices. The UNWTO's "Tourism for SDGs" initiative provides a framework for aligning tourism development with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNWTO, 2017). The existing literature underscores the dual role of tourism as both an enabler of economic growth and a driver of socio-environmental challenges. While tourism offers opportunities for sustainable development, its benefits are often undermined by systemic disparities, environmental degradation, and ethical concerns. Addressing these issues requires innovative approaches that prioritize inclusivity, sustainability, and cultural preservation. This study builds on these insights, exploring how tourism can balance its economic, environmental, and ethical dimensions to serve as a force for holistic development.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, mixed-methods approach to explore the dual role of tourism as both an enabler of economic growth and a source of socio-environmental challenges in the Third World. By integrating secondary

data analysis with case study evaluations, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of tourism's impacts and its potential for sustainability.

Research Design

The study is structured around three primary research objectives:

1. To assess the economic contributions of tourism to GDP growth, employment creation, and infrastructure development in developing countries.
2. To evaluate the environmental and cultural consequences of tourism, with a focus on carbon emissions, habitat degradation, and cultural commodification.
3. To analyse sustainable tourism practices and their effectiveness in mitigating the challenges posed by traditional tourism models.

The research employs an interdisciplinary framework, incorporating perspectives from economics, environmental science, and socio-cultural studies to address these objectives holistically (Saarinen and Rogerson 2013).

Data Sources

Secondary Data Analysis

The study relies on publicly available secondary data from reputable sources, including:

- **World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC):** For quantitative data on tourism's contribution to GDP and employment.
- **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC):** For climate change impacts on tourism and adaptation strategies.
- **United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO):** For trends in sustainable tourism practices and policy recommendations.
- **Peer-Reviewed Journals and Industry Reports:** To incorporate scholarly perspectives and empirical findings on tourism's economic, environmental, and social dimensions.

Case Studies

A comparative case study approach is used to analyse tourism practices in key destinations:

1. **Costa Rica:** A leader in eco-tourism and sustainable development practices.
2. **Maldives:** A highly climate-vulnerable destination heavily reliant on luxury tourism.
3. **Cambodia:** A case of cultural tourism and socio-economic disparities surrounding Angkor Wat.
4. **Kenya:** A model for wildlife tourism and community-based initiatives.

These cases were selected for their diversity and relevance to the study's objectives, providing insights into both the successes and challenges of tourism in different contexts.

Research Techniques

Qualitative Content Analysis

Thematic analysis was conducted on academic literature, policy documents, and industry reports to identify recurring themes such as economic disparities, environmental degradation, and ethical concerns in tourism. These themes were categorized based on the research objectives, ensuring a systematic approach to data interpretation.

Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis of case studies provided insights into how different destinations manage the dual pressures of tourism growth and sustainability. This technique allowed for the identification of best practices and strategies that can be adapted to other contexts.

Trend Analysis

Longitudinal data on tourism growth, carbon emissions, and eco-tourism trends were analysed to identify patterns over the past two decades. This analysis highlights the increasing importance of sustainable tourism practices and the challenges posed by unchecked growth.

Analytical Framework

The study employs the Pressure-State-Response (PSR) Model, a widely used framework in environmental and tourism research, to structure the analysis:

- **Pressure:** The impacts of tourism activities on ecosystems, economies, and cultures.
- **State:** The current conditions of tourism destinations, including environmental degradation, cultural commodification, and socio-economic inequalities.
- **Response:** Adaptation and mitigation strategies implemented by governments, communities, and international organizations.

The PSR model facilitates a structured evaluation of tourism's challenges and the responses required to address them.

Scope and Limitations

Scope

The study focuses on developing nations in regions such as Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Caribbean, which are prominent tourism hubs facing significant sustainability challenges. The key aspects explored include:

- Economic contributions and disparities.
- Environmental impacts and adaptation strategies.
- Cultural preservation and commodification.

Limitations

- **Data Availability:** The study relies on secondary data, which may limit the granularity of findings for under-researched regions.
- **Regional Focus:** While the study provides global insights, its primary focus on the Third World may limit applicability to developed nations (Gössling 2015).
- **Temporal Scope:** The data primarily covers the past two decades, potentially overlooking longer-term historical trends.

Ethical Consideration

The research adheres to strict ethical guidelines to ensure accuracy and fairness:

1. **Selection of Sources:** Care was taken to select unbiased and credible sources, ensuring objectivity in data interpretation.
2. **Representation of Vulnerable Communities:** The analysis avoids exploitation or stereotyping, presenting vulnerable populations and ecosystems with sensitivity and respect.
3. **Focus on Inclusive Solutions:** The study prioritizes recommendations that align with the rights and livelihoods of local communities, promoting equity and sustainability.

Data Visualisation

To enhance clarity and accessibility, the study incorporates visual tools such as:

- **Bar Graphs:** Illustrating tourism's contribution to GDP in selected nations.
- **Pie Charts:** Depicting the carbon emissions breakdown by tourism activities.
- **Line Graphs:** Tracking the growth of eco-tourism revenue over time.

These visuals provide empirical support for qualitative insights and strengthen the study's impact. By integrating secondary data analysis, case studies, and an analytical framework, this methodology ensures a comprehensive exploration of the economic, environmental, and ethical dimensions of tourism. The interdisciplinary approach and reliance on comparative case studies provide actionable insights for stakeholders seeking to balance tourism growth with sustainability in developing nations.

Results and Discussion

Tourism in the Third World is characterized by a paradoxical relationship between economic opportunity and socio-environmental challenges. This section explores the diverse impacts of tourism across economic,

environmental, and social dimensions while highlighting adaptation strategies and sustainable practices.

Economic Growth and Disparities

Tourism significantly contributes to GDP growth and foreign exchange earnings, but economic benefits are often concentrated among elites. For example, the eco-tourism model in Costa Rica has been praised for its conservation outcomes while also fostering economic disparities (Christie et al., 2014). Similarly, the Angkor Wat tourism industry in Cambodia generates substantial revenues but marginalizes local communities.

Economic Contributions

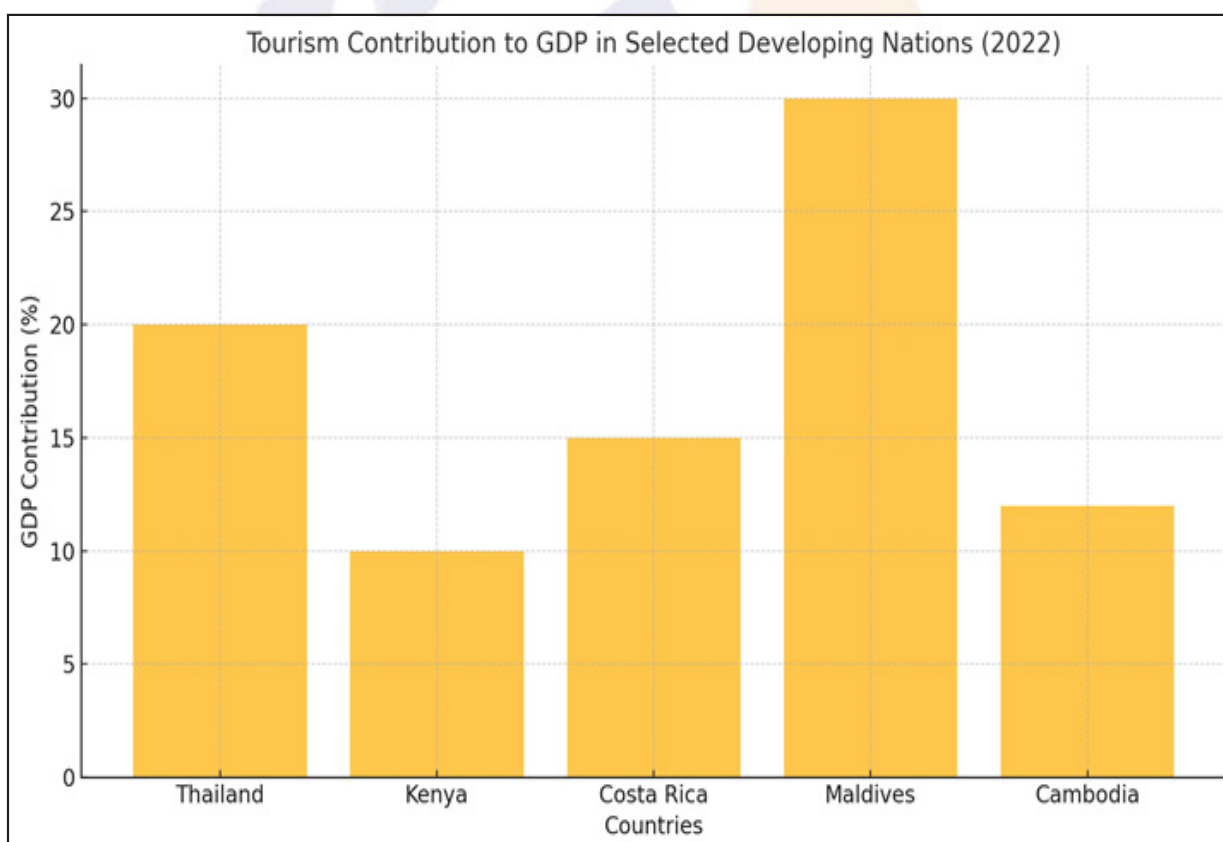
Tourism has transformed the economies of nations like the Maldives, Kenya, and Thailand, where it accounts for

a significant portion of GDP. For example, wildlife tourism in Kenya generates millions of dollars annually, directly funding conservation efforts and creating employment opportunities (Christie et al., 2014).

Similarly, Costa Rica's eco-tourism initiatives have led to investments in renewable energy and conservation, setting global standards for sustainable tourism.

Persistent Disparities

Despite these successes, the uneven distribution of tourism revenues remains a pressing issue. In regions like Southeast Asia, international hotel chains dominate the tourism industry, capturing a large share of the profits while leaving local workers with low wages and seasonal employment. Addressing these disparities requires policies that promote local entrepreneurship and equitable profit-sharing.

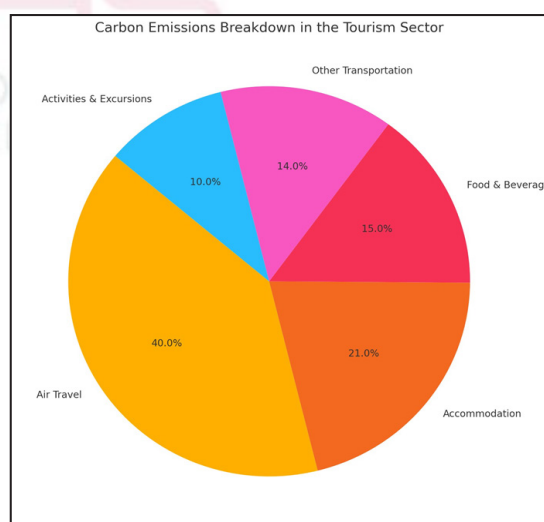


Environmental Sustainability and Challenges

The environmental costs of tourism are immense. Coastal destinations such as the Seychelles face coral bleaching and habitat loss due to rising sea temperatures (Nicholls, 2013). Furthermore, the increased carbon footprint from long-haul flights poses sustainability challenges for eco-tourism destinations.

Carbon Emissions and Resource Consumption

Tourism is responsible for approximately 8% of global carbon emissions, with air travel accounting for nearly 40% of these emissions. Additionally, tourism destinations often face water resource conflicts. For example, in Cancun and other coastal resorts, excessive water consumption by tourists has led to shortages for local communities (Nicholls & Cazenave, 2010).



Habitat Degradation

Biodiversity hotspots such as the Galápagos Islands and coral reefs in the Caribbean are under severe threat from over-tourism and climate change (Elnokaly & Elseragy, 2013).

Unchecked development of tourist infrastructure often leads to habitat destruction, undermining the ecological integrity of these regions.

Positive Conservation Outcomes

Despite these challenges, tourism can be a driver of conservation when implemented responsibly. In Namibia, community-based tourism initiatives have successfully protected wildlife habitats while creating economic opportunities for local populations.

These models demonstrate the potential of tourism to align economic and environmental objectives.

Climate Adaptation in Tourism

Adaptation strategies, such as mangrove restoration, seawalls, and climate-resilient infrastructure, offer hope for at-risk destinations.

However, these measures require substantial financial and technical resources, which are often beyond the reach of low-income nations.

Vulnerabilities

Rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and changing ecosystems are particularly devastating for low-lying coastal destinations such as the Maldives and Seychelles. Coral bleaching, driven by rising ocean temperatures, has significantly reduced the appeal of dive tourism in these regions, threatening local livelihoods.

Adaptation Strategies

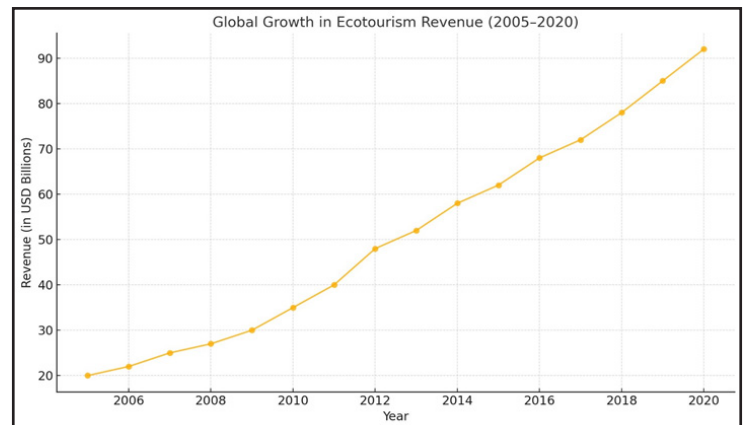
Many nations have adopted innovative adaptation strategies to mitigate these impacts. For instance:

- **Maldives:** Constructing sea walls and implementing land reclamation projects.
- **Seychelles:** Establishing marine protected areas and enforcing sustainable fishing practices.
- **Caribbean Nations:** Investing in climate-resilient infrastructure to withstand hurricanes and flooding.

However, the high costs of these strategies pose significant barriers for low-income nations, necessitating international financial support and technical assistance.

Ethical and Social Dimensions

The exploitation of local cultures and resources undermines the potential for inclusive growth. Community-based tourism models, as seen in Namibia and Bhutan, provide equitable alternatives by empowering local populations and preserving cultural authenticity (Sharpley & Stone, 2017).



Exploitation of Local Communities

In many developing nations, tourism-related jobs are characterized by low wages, poor working conditions, and a lack of job security. Workers in the hospitality sector often face long hours with minimal benefits, particularly in countries like Cambodia and Thailand. This exploitation undermines the potential of tourism to serve as a tool for poverty alleviation.

Cultural Commodification

Tourism frequently commodifies indigenous cultures, reducing them to marketable attractions rather than living traditions. For example, in Bali, traditional dances and rituals are often performed for tourists in ways that dilute their spiritual significance. This cultural erosion threatens the identity and heritage of local communities.

Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

CBT initiatives offer an ethical alternative by prioritizing local ownership and cultural preservation. In Bhutan, for instance, CBT has been instrumental in empowering rural communities while maintaining the country's unique cultural identity. Such models demonstrate that tourism can be both economically viable and socially responsible.

Sustainable Tourism Practices

Sustainable tourism practices have gained traction as a means of addressing the environmental and social challenges posed by traditional tourism models (Weaver 2015).

Eco-Certifications and Carbon Offsets

Programs like Costa Rica's Certification for Sustainable Tourism (CST) encourage businesses to adopt eco-friendly practices, such as renewable energy use and waste reduction. Carbon offset programs, which allow travellers to compensate for their emissions by funding conservation projects, have also become increasingly popular (Becken & Hay, 2012).

Degrowth and Steady-State Tourism

The concept of degrowth in tourism emphasizes the need to limit the industry's expansion to reduce its environmental footprint. Hall (2014) advocates for steady-state tourism, which prioritizes qualitative improvements

over quantitative growth. This approach aligns with broader sustainable development goals by balancing economic, social, and environmental objectives.

Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

Achieving sustainable tourism requires collaboration among governments, private sector actors, and local communities. For example, the UNWTO's "Tourism for SDGs" initiative promotes partnerships to align tourism development with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNWTO, 2017).

These collaborations are essential for scaling up sustainable practices and ensuring their long-term viability.

Implications for Policy and Practice

The findings highlight several implications for policymakers and practitioners:

- a. Equitable Resource Distribution:** Governments must prioritize inclusive tourism models that empower local communities and ensure equitable profit-sharing.
- b. Environmental Regulation:** Strict environmental regulations and incentives for sustainable practices are essential to mitigate tourism's ecological impact.
- c. Climate Resilience:** Investments in climate-resilient infrastructure and adaptation strategies are critical for safeguarding tourism-dependent economies.
- d. Cultural Preservation:** Tourism policies must respect and preserve the cultural heritage of host communities, ensuring that their traditions are not exploited for profit.

Strategies for Sustainable Tourism Development

- a. Policy Innovation:** Governments must enforce policies that incentivize sustainable practices, such as carbon offsets and eco-certifications.
- b. Local Empowerment:** Inclusive tourism models that actively involve local communities in decision-making are essential.
- c. Global Cooperation:** International organizations must support developing nations in implementing climate adaptation measures.
- d. Educational Campaigns:** Raising awareness among tourists about responsible travel can significantly reduce tourism's environmental impact.

Conclusion

Tourism has demonstrated its transformative potential as a driver of economic growth, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation in developing nations. However, its dual nature as both an enabler

of development and a source of socio-environmental challenges underscores the complexity of leveraging tourism for sustainable development. This study has critically examined the interplay between the economic, environmental, and socio-cultural dimensions of tourism in the Third World, emphasizing the need for innovative and inclusive approaches to maximize its benefits while mitigating its adverse impacts (Mowforth and Munt 2016).

Economic Contributions and Disparities

The study highlights tourism's significant contributions to GDP, job creation, and infrastructure development in nations such as Kenya, Costa Rica, and the Maldives. Yet, it also exposes systemic inequalities in the distribution of tourism revenues, with rural and marginalized communities often excluded from the benefits. Addressing these disparities requires a shift towards community-based tourism models that empower local populations and ensure equitable profit-sharing.

Environmental Impacts and Adaptation

Tourism's environmental footprint, including its contribution to carbon emissions, habitat destruction, and resource exploitation, presents urgent challenges. Coastal and biodiversity hotspots such as the Seychelles and the Galápagos Islands face critical threats from over-tourism and climate change (Becken et al. 2020). While adaptation strategies, such as marine protected areas and climate-resilient infrastructure, offer viable solutions, their implementation is often constrained by financial and technical limitations. Collaborative efforts involving governments, international organizations, and private sector actors are essential to overcoming these barriers.

Ethical and Cultural Dimensions

The commodification of indigenous cultures for tourist consumption raises ethical concerns about the erosion of cultural authenticity and the exploitation of local communities. However, examples from Bhutan and Namibia demonstrate that ethical tourism practices, such as community-based tourism, can align cultural preservation with economic viability. These models underscore the importance of empowering local communities to lead tourism initiatives, ensuring that their traditions and livelihoods are respected and sustained.

Sustainable Tourism Practices

The study underscores the critical role of sustainable tourism practices in addressing tourism's socio-environmental challenges (Pearce and Butler 2014). Eco-certifications, carbon offset programs, and the adoption of renewable energy are identified as effective tools for reducing tourism's environmental impact. The concept of degrowth in tourism, which prioritizes qualitative improvements over quantitative expansion, offers a promising framework for achieving long-term sustainability.

Policy Implications

Based on the findings, the study highlights several policy implications (Bramwell and Lane 2014):

- 1. Inclusive Governance:** Governments must prioritize policies that empower local communities, ensure equitable resource distribution, and promote inclusive decision-making.
- 2. Environmental Regulations:** Enforcing strict environmental standards and incentivizing sustainable practices are crucial for reducing tourism's ecological footprint.
- 3. Climate Resilience Investments:** Developing climate-resilient infrastructure and securing international funding for adaptation measures are essential for safeguarding tourism-dependent economies.
- 4. Cultural Preservation:** Tourism policies must respect and preserve the cultural heritage of host communities, ensuring that their traditions are not commodified or exploited.

Future Directions

The complexities of tourism in the Third World reflect broader global challenges of development, equity, and sustainability. To build on the insights of this study, future research should:

1. Explore the role of technology in promoting sustainable tourism, such as digital platforms for community-based tourism and carbon tracking.
2. Conduct comparative analyses across underrepresented regions, such as Latin America and the Middle East, to expand the geographical scope of sustainable tourism research.
3. Investigate the long-term impacts of sustainable tourism initiatives, including their scalability and adaptability in different contexts.

Tourism in the Third World holds immense potential to serve as a catalyst for holistic development. However, realizing this potential requires a commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability.

By adopting policies and practices that align economic growth with environmental preservation and social equity, tourism can evolve into a tool that not only drives economic advancement but also safeguards the cultural and natural assets of the planet.

This study underscores the urgency of a paradigm shift in tourism development, calling on policymakers, industry leaders, and communities to collaborate in creating a more equitable and sustainable tourism industry (Goodwin 2016). With the right strategies, tourism can transition from being a source of challenges to a force for positive change in the Third World.

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