IntechOpen

IntechOpen Series
Sustainable Development, Volume 28

New Trends in Tourism

Edited by Konstantinos Tomazos

New Trends in Tourism

Edited by Konstantinos Tomazos

Published in London, United Kingdom

New Trends in Tourism
http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.1003374
Edited by Konstantinos Tomazos

Contributors
Alberto Camarero Orive, Alberto Lanzavecchia, Aravinth Thevarajan Swampillai, Beyza Hatırnaz, Boyu Lin, Delson Chikobvu, Elena Riboldi, Erkan Taşkıran, Gülşah Gençer Çelik, Ignacio Revilla Alonso, Javier Vaca-Cabrero, Kanagasabai Thiruthanigesan, Kieran Edmond James, Margaret Camilleri Fenech, Martín Gamboa, Musara Chipumuro, Nagalingam Nagendrakumar, Nicoletta González-Cancelas, Sheikh Ali Tanzil, Tendai Makoni

First published in London, United Kingdom, 2025 by IntechOpen
IntechOpen is the global imprint of INTECHOPEN LIMITED, registered in England and Wales, registration number: 11086078, 167-169 Great Portland Street, London, W1W 5PF, United Kingdom

For EU product safety concerns: IN TECH d.o.o., Prolaz Marije Krucifikse Kozulić 3, 51000 Rijeka, Croatia, info@intechopen.com or visit our website at intechopen.com.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

New Trends in Tourism
Edited by Konstantinos Tomazos
p. cm.

This title is part of the Sustainable Development Book Series, Volume 28
Topic: Sustainable Economy and Fair Society
Series Editor: Usha Iyer-Raniga
Topic Editor: Antonella Petrillo

Print ISBN 978-1-83769-808-0
Online ISBN 978-1-83769-807-3
eBook (PDF) ISBN 978-1-83769-809-7
ISSN 2753-6580

If disposing of this product, please recycle the paper responsibly.

IntechOpen Book Series

Sustainable Development

Volume 28

Aims and Scope of the Series

Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development endorsed by United Nations and 193 Member States, came into effect on Jan 1, 2016, to guide decision making and actions to the year 2030 and beyond. Central to this Agenda are 17 Goals, 169 associated targets and over 230 indicators that are reviewed annually. The vision envisaged in the implementation of the SDGs is centered on the five Ps: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership. This call for renewed focused efforts ensure we have a safe and healthy planet for current and future generations.

This Series focuses on covering research and applied research involving the five Ps through the following topics:

1. Sustainable Economy and Fair Society that relates to SDG 1 on No Poverty, SDG 2 on Zero Hunger, SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 10 on Reduced Inequalities, SDG 12 on Responsible Consumption and Production, and SDG 17 Partnership for the Goals

2. Health and Wellbeing focusing on SDG 3 on Good Health and Wellbeing and SDG 6 on Clean Water and Sanitation

3. Inclusivity and Social Equality involving SDG 4 on Quality Education, SDG 5 on Gender Equality, and SDG 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

4. Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability comprising SDG 13 on Climate Action, SDG 14 on Life Below Water, and SDG 15 on Life on Land

5. Urban Planning and Environmental Management embracing SDG 7 on Affordable Clean Energy, SDG 9 on Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, and SDG 11 on Sustainable Cities and Communities.

The series also seeks to support the use of cross cutting SDGs, as many of the goals listed above, targets and indicators are all interconnected to impact our lives and the decisions we make on a daily basis, making them impossible to tie to a single topic.

Meet the Series Editor

Usha Iyer-Raniga is a professor in the School of Property and Construction Management at RMIT University. Usha co-leads the One Planet Network's Sustainable Buildings and Construction Programme (SBC), a United Nations 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (UN 10FYP SCP) aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 12. The work also directly impacts SDG 11 on Sustainable Cities and Communities. She completed her undergraduate degree as an architect before obtaining her Masters degree from Canada and her Doctorate in Australia. Usha has been a keynote speaker as well as an invited speaker at national and international conferences, seminars and workshops. Her teaching experience includes teaching in Asian countries. She has advised Austrade, APEC, national, state and local governments. She serves as a reviewer and a member of the scientific committee for national and international refereed journals and refereed conferences. She is on the editorial board for refereed journals and has worked on Special Issues. Usha has served and continues to serve on the Boards of several not-for-profit organisations and she has also served as panel judge for a number of awards including the Premiers Sustainability Award in Victoria and the International Green Gown Awards. Usha has published over 100 publications, including research and consulting reports. Her publications cover a wide range of scientific and technical research publications that include edited books, book chapters, refereed journals, refereed conference papers and reports for local, state and federal government clients. She has also produced podcasts for various organisations and participated in media interviews. She has received state, national and international funding worth over USD $25 million. Usha has been awarded the Quarterly Franklin Membership by London Journals Press (UK). Her biography has been included in the Marquis Who's Who in the World® 2018, 2016 (33rd Edition), along with approximately 55,000 of the most accomplished men and women from around the world, including luminaries as U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. In 2017, Usha was awarded the Marquis Who's Who Lifetime Achiever Award.

Meet the Volume Editor

Konstantinos Tomazos is a Senior Lecturer in International Tourism at the University of Strathclyde in the UK. His work emphasizes new trends and niches in tourism and their effect on the tourism industry, local recipients, and other stakeholders. He has presented and published on different forms of tourism and the process that takes new tourism niches from the margins to the mainstream. His work focuses on alternative tourists, tourism micro-niches and "next-gen" travellers.

Contents

Preface

Tourism in the 21st century is no longer as heavily dominated by mass tourism as it once was. Modern tourists increasingly seek distinction and a sense of superiority and uniqueness. As discussed in this book, this quest for meaning and status is a key factor driving the emergence of new trends in the tourism industry, encompassing a diverse array of activities, services, and industries that together create a "multifaceted phenomenon". This complex field intertwines various key sectors, brought to life by a broad spectrum of travel that mirrors the intricate layers of modern society, serving as a prominent avenue for a rapidly expanding group of discerning tourists who seek specialised and sophisticated experiences.

This shift has spurred the rise of new trends, seen as a counterpoint to the homogeneous and undifferentiated nature of mass tourism products, especially within an increasingly competitive and saturated tourism market. Such trends diminish the role of mass-tourism-focused travel agencies by offering an alternative form of travel that distances itself from the commercial emphasis on high spending and profit-driven tourism. These alternative tourism forms aim to move away from the traditional "sun-sea-sand" offerings, instead promoting consistency by integrating natural, social, and community values.

In a world where travellers increasingly familiarise themselves with vastly different cultures, the pursuit of 'authenticity' has become a central focus for tourists. Contemporary tourism trends and the evolving "sociological discourse" of today's tourists have shifted the paradigm from modernist to postmodernist thought. This shift is closely linked to a wide array of 'specialty travel' experiences now available in the industry, such as ecotourism, heritage tourism, volunteer tourism, and adventure tourism.

In this sphere of 'alternativeness,' where increasing mobility and the ongoing blurring of identities prevail, individuals are no longer tightly woven into interconnected circles but instead find themselves standing apart. As consumption shifts toward a focus on the individual, tourists are now searching for personalised experiences that resonate with them on a deeper, existential level. Tourism experiences gain immense value through their symbolic significance, further amplified by the perceived worth assigned by tourists. Tourists are growing weary of generic accommodations and the repetitive reproduction of culture. This monotony drives them to seek 'reality' and authenticity elsewhere, prompting new interpretations of what is true and real. As people become detached from things that once held meaning, they increasingly develop a fascination with the genuine lives of others. Modern society, often characterised by inauthenticity, fosters a sense of alienation, leaving individuals yearning for authentic experiences. The effects of modernity—such as alienation, conformity, and anxiety—hinder the pursuit of authenticity in daily life, thus fueling the quest for genuine experiences through tourism pursuits that focus on the self and are spiritual in nature.

Beyond escapism, spirituality promotes self-discovery, framing the 'self' as distinct from identity. Rooted in intrinsic factors, the concept of self helps cultivate a

heightened awareness of one's state of being and personal beliefs. This understanding of the 'self' is more prominent in some cultures than others. However, in recent years, the concept has gained traction within Western societies, where the secular elevation of the 'self' has led many to believe that they possess a unique eccentricity waiting to be revealed. The widespread notion that no one is ordinary is bolstered by confirmation bias and amplified by globalisation, prompting many to embark on personal journeys through spiritual tourism, often with mixed outcomes.

The driving force behind this wanderlust is the growing insecurity and self-doubt prevalent in our highly interconnected world, where virtual communication often replaces face-to-face interactions. Technology has opened up new avenues for meeting people and exploring different personas while simultaneously reflecting a harsh mirror on oneself. As a result, our understanding of the self has become increasingly ambiguous in a society that is both interactive and hypercritical, where every belief about ourselves is met with skepticism and even ridicule. Consequently, individuals might be becoming more sensitive about their true selves. In their quest for self-development, many turn to spiritual journeys to address these insecurities, but often, these efforts fail to achieve the desired transformation. Although individuals may experience a shift in their identity due to new cultural "challenges" that clash with the "normality of their home environment", the concept of identity remains "relational and situational". This implies that the notion of a 'true self' may never fully materialise. This ambiguity suggests that those seeking spirituality—whether through backpacking, visiting wellness retreats, or exploring sacred sites—will likely encounter a path of 'deception', as there is no "true inner self" to actualise, discover, or transform. As this realisation sets in, people may embark on increasingly unconventional journeys in their quest for what they perceive as or what is sold as authentic.

Despite the perceived lack of authenticity, tourism retains its central role in human culture and will likely remain so. It offers tourists a way to confront the emptiness and alienation of modern life within a space separate from mainstream institutions. In contrast to the mundane routines of daily existence, tourism appears "simpler, freer, more spontaneous, and more authentic", providing a temporary escape from the norms and constraints of everyday life. Additionally, tourism allows individuals to see their lives from a new perspective and explore or express their authentic selves. In this way, tourism serves as a means of relief from alienation. However, this depends on the belief that one's authentic self is not fully realised at home, prompting the tourist to embark on a journey to discover it, thus giving rise to the various tourism trends and phenomena discussed in this book.

The first section explores sustainable tourism practices' core values, principles, and evolution. It investigates the driving forces behind its rise and delves into future trends and innovations that will continue to shape the tourism industry's future. In the process, it further examines the challenges that key stakeholders, particularly hotels, have to overcome, including economic pressures, lack of awareness and capacity, and conflicting interests and priorities.

Section two turns its attention to trends involving tourists and the locals. It starts by questioning whether the zoo syndrome and othering normally discussed within the discourse of north-to-south tourism is not bounded by time and space, but it has become a concept that can be applied to locals as domestic zoo syndrome. The study uses the case

of the Brazilian favelas and how local next-gen visitors consume them. This opens up a discussion on the proximal other, which leads to the conceptualisation of the domestic zoo syndrome. We examine different approaches to exoticism before discussing next-generation travellers and the geography of exoticism that extends beyond push and pull factors. The section also draws on the theme of local empowerment and discusses how the othering of a street hustling culture becomes part of the tourism ecosystem and empowers the locals. To showcase this trend, the section draws from ethnographic fieldwork with Noah's Gang in Nadi, Fiji, to provide an interesting context for discussing cross-cultural power relations and tourism. Finally, this section bridges informal tourism development and creativity to discuss key trends in creative tourism.

Section three explores the impact of COVID-19 on tourism trends and looks ahead at the implications of climate change for tourism. To illustrate this point, this section looks at the effects of dramatic change on the tourism sector, specifically the effects of COVID-19 on the South African tourism sector. In the process, a theoretical backdrop is also presented, drawing on existing work on the effect of the pandemic on the tourism sector. This section then continues on the theme of the future of tourism by drawing on lessons from managing cruise tourism in Ibiza. The challenges the pandemic posed and how the industry survived and flourished after the pandemic. Finally, this section looks ahead to the future of tourism by delving into the transformative role of technological innovations in the tourism industry. A timeline of key technological milestones is presented before the focus is shifted to online booking systems, major platforms, their impact, and their benefits and shortcomings. This paves the way for a discussion on mobile travel apps and their key features and unique selling points before identifying key challenges and future trends. This raises ethical and practical considerations that this chapter further explores, particularly emphasising transparency and accountability. What follows is a discussion on Virtual Reality (VR) in tourism and its many applications and benefits for tourists and the industry. Can the integration of these new technologies change tourism for the better? Before examining the influence of big data and analytics on travel personalisation, this opens the door for a discussion on the advent of new technological advancements, including the role of artificial intelligence, virtual reality and mobile apps.

The leitmotif of this book is that it is important to understand that trends in tourism are fluid, and the tourist will keep marching on, armed with a smartphone, an insatiable curiosity, and just enough skepticism to question whether their "authentic" experience is, in fact, a carefully curated illusion. Whether chasing enlightenment in a jungle retreat or seeking the perfect Instagrammable moment in an urban labyrinth, one thing remains certain: tourism will continue to reinvent itself, adapting to our ever-evolving desires. After all, if the journey is more important than the destination, then perhaps the greatest adventure is simply figuring out what we were looking for in the first place.

Konstantinos Tomazos
University of Strathclyde Business School,
Glasgow, UK

Section 1

Sustainability Trends

Chapter 1

Sustainable Values of National Parks in Post-Pandemic for Life Satisfaction

Boyu Lin

Abstract

Cultural ecosystem services (CES) played significant roles in affecting human well-being in the COVID-19 era. Taking Saguaro National Park, this chapter expresses the values of cultural ecosystem services. This chapter enhances the understanding of the complicated relationships among different types of well-being and emphasizes the mediating role of spiritual well-being between the values of CES and life satisfaction. This chapter also emphasizes the mediating role of personal and communal spiritual well-being between the values of cultural ecosystem services and life satisfaction. Visiting national parks can identify the values that stimulate spiritual transformation and increase satisfaction in one's personal life. The managerial implications significantly impacted existing knowledge of sustainability after COVID-19. Destination marketers can design and stress spiritual well-being as an essential spotlight to promote natural places.

Keywords: cultural ecosystem services, spiritual well-being, sustainable tourism, post-pandemic, nature-based tourism, life satisfaction

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered an unprecedented global health crisis, severely impacting health, society, and the economy. Due to the various restrictions, people have been confined to their homes, with limited travel allowed for essential activities and recreation [1]. The pandemic has intensified the crucial role of the outdoor environment (public spaces, green spaces, nature, and parks) for the physical and mental health of urban populations and their positive societal effects [1]. Global evidence indicates that there has been an increase in the number of people visiting and using local parks for recreational activities and a novel appreciation for nature [2]. Besides, parks offer abundant space for physical activity [3]; help with restoration and stress relief [4]; enhance life satisfaction [5]; facilitate recovery from hazard-related, stressful life events [6]; and promote social cohesion [7]. In the United States, a recent national survey conducted by PSB Research revealed that approximately 70% of urban residents agreed that parks played a critical role in preserving physical and mental health in COVID-19 challenges [8].

2. Cultural ecosystem services (CES)

CES refers to individuals' nonmaterial benefits from ecosystems [9, 10]. MEA [10] identifies 10 types of CES, including spiritual and religious values, esthetic values, recreation and ecotourism, cultural diversity, knowledge systems, educational values, inspiration, social relations, sense of place, and cultural heritage values. Additional proposals for CES types have been made, such as artistic, bequest, existence, identity, ingenuity, life teaching, mental health, and perspective [11, 12]. Among these, recreation, esthetics, and cultural heritage are the most frequently mentioned ones in existing literature [13]. Assigning a monetary value to CES is challenging. It is characterized as subjective, intangible, and difficult to quantify [14], causing various intangible and nonmarket benefits (i.e., social cohesion), which in turn can embrace or provide it diverse values (i.e., morality, religion, and esthetics) [15].

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a positive relationship with individuals' physical and mental health when engaging with outdoor environments [3]. Particularly in urbanized settings, the significance of recreational services in promoting well-being may outweigh other ecosystem services. The value of CES has become progressively imperative in contemporary human life [16–18]. Ferretti-Gallon et al. [19] suggested that national parks are broadly recognized as valuable opportunities to support tourism while preserving ecosystem integrity. These national parks have prompted strategic shifts and new approaches to destination development, stimulating previous strategies [20]. In terms of tourism destinations, digital and mobile marketing, infrastructure, branding, quality, accessibility, and informational factors play significant roles in promoting tourism [21]. For instance, Templeton et al. [22] examined the management challenges and market opportunities these parks faced during COVID-19, highlighting the vital role of new internet technologies, including social media, in park management and marketing. Florido-Benítez [21] also emphasized that international mobile marketing emerged as a critical tool for identifying, predicting, and meeting customer needs during COVID-19. Social-cultural evaluation methods are often employed to measure CES using (focus group) interviews, surveys, focus groups, photo-questionnaires, and participatory geographic information system (GIS). A current trend involves utilizing geolocated social media data to quantitatively evaluate CES by analyzing the number of photos capturing CES occurrences in geographic units [23].

3. Saguaro National Park

Saguaro National Park is situated in southern Arizona and encompasses two districts located outside of Tucson, a desert city with a population of over half a million people (2016). The park was initially established as a National Monument in 1933 and later designated as Saguaro National Park in 1994. It spans 91,327 acres across its 2 districts, consisting of the Rincon Mountain District to the east of Tucson and the Tucson Mountain District to the west.

The diverse terrains of the park provide optimal habitats for a wide range of flora and fauna. The park is famous for its distinctive and iconic features, including water, pine, coniferous forests, protected desert vegetation to the west, and mountains to the east [24]. This unique combination of landscapes makes it the most biodiverse desert in northern America, with more than 200 bird species, 50 reptile species, and 70 wildlife species in the park [25]. In the lower elevations, one can find wildlife such as javelina, coyote, quail, and desert tortoise, while the upper elevations are home

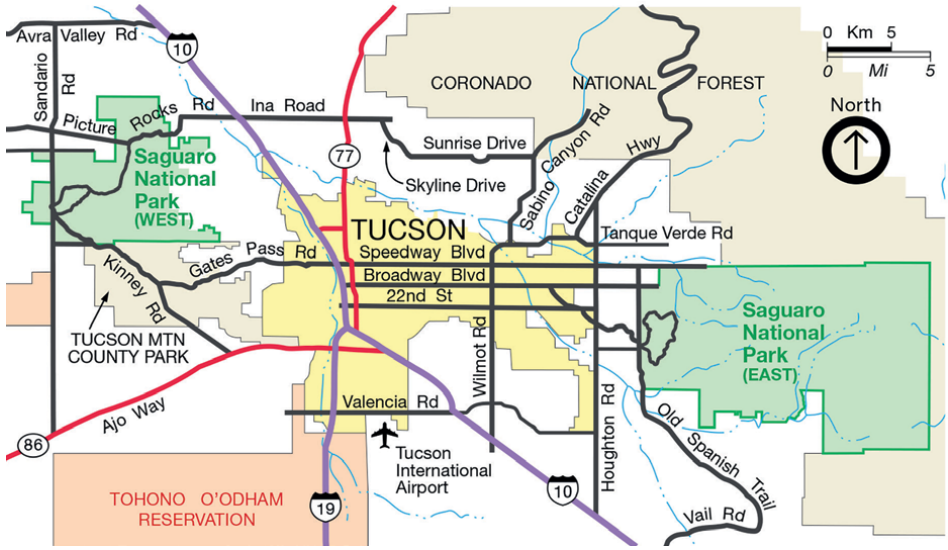

Figure 1.
Map of Saguaro National Park [24].

to black bears, deer, and Mexican spotted owls [25]. Each side of the park is designated as its own Important Bird Area, supporting a diverse ecosystem that sustains roadrunners, woodpeckers, and quails. The giant saguaro cactus, an iconic symbol of the American West, is specifically protected within Saguaro National Park [24]. Moreover, Saguaro National Park holds cultural significance as the ancestral homeland of the Tohono O'odham people, who connect with the park's culture by visiting annually in early summer to harvest saguaro fruit [25].

Saguaro National Park offers a diverse natural environment where tourists can encounter various cultural ecosystem services (CES). Saguaro National Park was selected for three reasons: (1) this park is close to a significant city, regarding as an alternative for a 1-day trip, (2) the park is relatively smaller in size and less crowded, and (3) this park has attracted more visitors during the pandemic, over 1 million visitors in 2021 [26]. Saguaro National Park offers a diverse natural environment where tourists can encounter various CES (**Figure 1**).

4. Values

The elements that people appreciate in parks highlight essential characteristics and ecosystem services, reflecting the cultural significance of parks within society [27]. Zhang et al. [13] note that an increasing amount of research in tourism and recreation is exploring the intertwined relationship between tourism, recreational activities, ecosystem conservation, and human well-being from the perspective of ecosystem services [23, 28, 29]. Ecosystem services can be divided into supporting, provisioning, regulating, and cultural services [30]. Among these, cultural services refer to the intangible benefits that ecosystems provide, such as spiritual enrichment, cognitive growth, contemplation, recreation, and esthetic enjoyment [10, 30].

Nature-based tourism, recreation, and the appreciation of natural beauty are integral components of cultural ecosystem services (CES) [31]. Despite their importance,

CES has not been thoroughly explored, and its link to human well-being remains under-researched [12, 23]. The definition provided by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA) for CES can sometimes blur the distinction between CES and well-being by treating services as synonymous with benefits. For example, Gladkikh et al. [11] identified 16 categories of CES, including aspects like mental health and social relationships, which the MEA also associates with human well-being. Similarly, Bryce et al. [32] specifically identified CES as indicators of subjective well-being. Consequently, this definitional approach has attracted criticism, leading to an alternative perspective that defines CES as the interaction between ecosystems and humans [33]. This new definition has prompted a significant body of research, which conceptualizes CES as access to or exposure to natural environments [34, 35].

However, simply being exposed to natural environments does not guarantee benefits; it merely creates an opportunity to experience them [13]. The cultural benefits derived from ecosystem services are complex and subjective, influenced by various individual, contextual, and cultural factors [30]. Understanding the impact of CES on well-being is challenging. Studies on CES and well-being often use horizontal comparisons (e.g., nature versus urban environments) or vertical comparisons (e.g., pre- and postexposure assessments) to evaluate the benefits. These studies commonly rely on two theoretical frameworks: the attention restoration theory (ART) [36] and the stress reduction theory (SRT) [37, 38]. ART focuses on recovery from attention fatigue, while SRT explains the relief from psychophysiological stress through different mechanisms.

These two theoretical frameworks have limitations in fully capturing the intricate and subjective nature of CES benefits [13, 15]. They primarily focus on the characteristics of natural environments, often overlooking individual and social factors that shape personal perceptions and emotions toward nature [15]. It is generally posited that ecosystem services have a significant impact on the well-being of Indigenous communities living within these ecosystems [30]. However, for tourists who visit these environments, it is crucial to consider the extent to which they can experience the benefits of ecosystem services and how the value placed on recreational services influences their well-being [15]. In the context of tourism development, there is a reciprocal relationship between ecosystem services and tourism-driven urbanization. Ecosystem services provide a tangible and measurable way to assess well-being, and understanding the flow of recreational services and the capacity of ecosystems to produce these services is vital for evaluating the sustainability of recreational use and enhancing visitor well-being [15].

5. Spiritual well-being

Drawing upon previous research, there are four types of well-being within the framework of essential domains: spiritual well-being, social well-being, psychological well-being, and subjective well-being [39, 40]. Among them, spiritual well-being encompasses a transcendent and existential aspect related to an individual's affirmation of their relationship with themselves (personal), others (communal), God (or transcendental other), and nature (environmental) [40, 41]. While spiritual well-being stems from religious beliefs, psychologists emphasize that it can also arise from personal transcendental experiences and cognition involving oneself, others, society, and nature [42]. In addition, Fisher [43] claims that spiritual health is a fundamental aspect of overall well-being, interconnected with other dimensions such as physical,

mental, emotional, and social health. It encompasses various domains of spiritual well-being, such as: (1) personal domain focuses on an individual's relationship with oneself, including the search for meaning, purposes, and personal values. (2) The communal domain refers to the quality and depth of interpersonal relationships, particularly in terms of morality, culture, and religion. Love, forgiveness, trust, hope, and faith in humanity are key expressions within this domain. (3) The environmental domain extends beyond caring for the physical and biological aspects of the environment. It involves a sense of awe and wonder and a feeling of unity with the environment. (4) The transcendental domain refers to the relationship between oneself and something or someone beyond the human level. It includes concepts like ultimate concern, cosmic force, transcendent reality, or God. The experience of spiritual well-being involves a pleasurable spiritual experience of inner peace and meaningfulness attained through deep self-awareness and moments of revelation, often accompanied by temporary detachment from oneself and the external world [40].

Building upon the spiritual well-being model proposed by Fisher et al. [44], our chapter focuses on three dimensions of spiritual well-being, followed by Heintzman [45], which covers the personal, environmental, and communal dimensions. The personal dimension explores how individuals relate to themselves regarding life meaning, purpose, values, and direction [43]. The environmental dimension incorporates a positive link with nature, depicted by awe, wonder, and unity [40]. The communal dimension underscores the quality and depth of interpersonal relationships, including love, trust, hope, and faith in others [40].

Over the past two decades, a significant increase in empirical research has expanded the relationship between leisure activities and spirituality [46, 47]. Spiritual experiences encompass affective aspects (such as feelings of awe and peace), cognitive processes (such as contemplation), transcendence of self and the environment, and intense emotional states [48]. While most of the existing research has been conducted on leisure and spiritual experience, they have generally explored leisure in a broad sense; however, several concentrated on certain activities: mountaineering [49], bird-watching [50], wilderness canoeing [51, 52], park visitation [53], and yoga [54]. A review of these studies determined their conceptual understanding of spiritual well-being, the method used (qualitative or quantitative), the instruments employed to measure spiritual well-being, the sample size, and the research findings [45].

6. Life satisfaction

Life satisfaction is an important component of subjective well-being, referring to one's overall evaluation of his/her quality of life, which reflects an individual's life outcomes, such as emotion, mental health, and well-being [55]. Diener et al. [56] proposed two dimensions: affective and cognitive evaluations of life. The affective dimension refers to moods and emotions, which are easily changed and unstable. This dimension was further divided into positive and negative effects. On the other hand, the cognitive dimension is primarily a cognitive judgment of one's satisfaction with life experience. As visitors may evaluate the change in their well-being and quality of life after visiting national parks, the cognitive assessment of their life satisfaction is measured in this chapter.

Tourism and leisure literature has regarded nature experience (e.g., urban parks and green spaces) as a critical way to affect well-being and general life satisfaction [5, 57, 58]. During the pandemic, mental health issues, such as fear of disease and anxiety

about job security, among individuals become severe, which negatively affects the quality of life [59]. However, natural environments can positively influence emotional well-being and mental health, further affecting life satisfaction in state parks [60]. Chen et al. [61] found that a leisure trip can influence psychological recovery, and even a short trip or a weekend gateway can help people recover from life stress. Therefore, visitors can gain values from visiting national parks, such as therapeutic, intrinsic, and recreational [62]. These values may initiate different degrees of transformation in their lives.

Mainly, CES is introduced to spiritual well-being [63] by combining it with life satisfaction through a research model. The research focuses on exploring the domain of spiritual well-being as more related to the meaning, connection to something greater than oneself, and in some cases, faith in a higher power [64], as well as life satisfaction, referring to how closely an individual perceives their life to resemble their ideal [65]. The values of CES can affect spiritual well-being, which, in turn, enhances life satisfaction.

7. Discussion

During the pandemic, because of the various restrictions on social distancing, people are likely to visit natural places and identify the values of CES. Thus, this chapter confirms the values of CES in specific contexts of national parks. Furthermore, this chapter explained that the values of CES can significantly affect three dimensions of spiritual well-being (i.e., personal, environmental, and communal spiritual well-being). Previous studies have confirmed that the values of natural settings can improve humans' well-being [13, 15]. Visiting national parks can positively drive visitors' reflections on their relationships with themselves, the environment, and others. This chapter emphasizes the influence of the values of CES in improving the visitors' spiritual well-being. Therefore, this chapter extends the understanding of the relationships between the values of CES and spiritual well-being with empirical evidence.

Moreover, the different impacts of spiritual well-being on life satisfaction were confirmed. The chapter supports the previous studies and confirms spiritual well-being as the fundamental aspect of overall well-being [58]. Beyond the current research on subjective well-being [39, 45, 66], this chapter centers on the cognitive dimension of subjective well-being and uncovers that personal and communal spiritual well-being can facilitate life satisfaction. Indeed, thoughtful reflections about themselves and others can affect personal values and worldviews, initiating behavioral changes in their lives and increasing satisfaction with life. Compared with communal spiritual well-being, personal spiritual well-being has a higher impact on life satisfaction. Personal reflection is indeed more important than other well-being in that it affects self-awareness and changes in individual behaviors. However, environmental considerations cannot significantly impact their life satisfaction because environmental reflections cannot directly change their personal life. In fact, the results presented that environmental spiritual well-being influences both personal and communal spiritual well-being. It is reasonable that reflection on nature can transform our minds and help us make better decisions related to ourselves and other important people. Simply, personal well-being and communal spiritual well-being are the main drivers to facilitating and increasing life satisfaction.

This chapter uncovers the mediation effect of spiritual well-being. Most results were aligned with previous research [57]. The results demonstrated the intervening

nature of spiritual well-being by illustrating how the values of CES affect life satisfaction through the role of spiritual well-being. The results demonstrated that the values of CES cannot directly affect life satisfaction. Despite the fact that recognition of the values of CES cannot bring changes to our lives, spiritual well-being can facilitate reflection on our cognition, which leads to changes in life and increased satisfaction. Besides, the impact of communal spiritual well-being is significant, which is different from the study of Li et al. [57]. The reason is that the limitations of gathering between humans during the pandemic enabled people to realize the importance of human interactions. Reflections on relationships with others can change their ways of being harmonious and getting along with essential and new people. Lastly, the mediation of environmental spiritual well-being is insignificant because environmental reflections affect other dimensions of spiritual well-being that lead to life satisfaction. In other words, the values of CES can stimulate the cognitive evaluation of themselves and others, which drives satisfied lives. Therefore, this chapter enhances the understanding of the complicated relationships among different types of well-being and emphasizes the mediating role of spiritual well-being from personal and communal dimensions between the values of CES and life satisfaction. Visiting national parks can identify the values that stimulate spiritual transformation and increase satisfaction in one's personal life.

8. Conclusions

The current chapter provides insights into national park services. First, this chapter illustrates that visitors can identify various values of national parks. The pandemic increases individual willingness to visit national parks. Thus, the values of national parks are evident to visitors and are vital as their primary objectives for visiting national parks. Thus, CES (e.g., infrastructure and scenery) should be developed and renovated to meet visitors' distinctive demands. These values can be crucial marketing strategies in the promotion stage. Second, this chapter confirms the values of CES in the context of medium or smaller size national parks, like Saguaro National Park. As the pandemic drives people to identify the values from less popular natural places, these places can receive more attention and provide values similar to those of other natural settings. Thus, it is a significant period to promote and enhance awareness of these less popular natural environments. Last, given that this chapter reveals that spiritual well-being plays a critical mediating role, destination marketers can design and stress spiritual well-being as an essential spotlight to promote natural places. As a result, future research can expand across the culture, demographics, and contexts of various types of CES in distinctive natural settings. In addition, future studies can extend the research on the impact of CES on other types of well-being, such as psychological, eudemonic, emotional, and physical well-being. Future studies can validate the results between different groups of humans and contexts of CES.

Author details

Boyu Lin
City University of Macau, China

*Address all correspondence to: bylin@cityu.edu.mo

IntechOpen

References

[1] Levinger P, Cerin E, Milner C, Hill KD. Older people and nature: The benefits of outdoors, parks and nature in light of COVID-19 and beyond–where to from here? International Journal of Environmental Health Research. 2022;**32**(6):1329-1336

[2] Choe Y, Lee J, Lee G. Exploring values via the innovative application of social media with parks amid COVID-19: A qualitative content analysis of text and images Using ATLAS.ti. Sustainability. 2022;**14**(20):13026

[3] Slater SJ, Christiana RW, Gustat J. Peer reviewed: Recommendations for keeping parks and green space accessible for mental and physical health during COVID-19 and other pandemics. Preventing Chronic Disease. 2020;**17**:200204

[4] Hansmann R, Hug SM, Seeland K. Restoration and stress relief through physical activities in forests and parks. Urban Forestry & Urban Greening. 2007;**6**(4):213-225

[5] Yuen HK, Jenkins GR. Factors associated with changes in subjective well-being immediately after urban park visit. International Journal of Environmental Health Research. 2020;**30**(2):134-145

[6] Lin B, Lee W, Wang Q. Residents' perceptions of tourism gentrification in traditional industrial areas using Q methodology. Sustainability. 2023;**15**(22):15694

[7] Holland C, Clark AN, Katz J, Peace S. Social Interactions in Urban Public Places. Bristol, United Kingdom: Policy Press; 2007

[8] PSB Research. A National Survey in America. 2020. Available from: https://10minutewalk.org/#Our-research

[9] Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA). Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: A Framework for Assessment. Washington, DC: Island Press; 2003

[10] Ament JM, Moore CA, Herbst M, Cumming GS. Cultural ecosystem services in protected areas: Understanding bundles, trade-offs, and synergies. Conservation Letters. 2017;**10**(4):440-450

[11] Gladkikh TM, Gould RK, Coleman KJ. Cultural ecosystem services and the well-being of refugee communities. Ecosystem Services. 2019;**40**:101036

[12] Kosanic A, Petzold J. A systematic review of cultural ecosystem services and human well-being. Ecosystem Services. 2020;**45**:101168

[13] Zhang H, Zhang J, Cai L. Effects of cultural ecosystem services on visitors' subjective well-being: Evidences from China's national park and flower expo. Journal of Travel Research. 2023;**62**(4):768-781

[14] Chan KM, Satterfield T, Goldstein J. Rethinking ecosystem services to better address and navigate cultural values. Ecological Economics. 2012;**74**:8-18

[15] Zhou W, Cai J, Chen K. Connecting recreational service to visitor's well-being: A case study in Qianjiangyuan National Park. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. 2022;**19**(18):11366

[16] Canedoli C, Bullock C, Collier MJ, Joyce D, Padoa-Schioppa E. Public participatory mapping of cultural ecosystem services: Citizen perception and park management in the Parco Nord of Milan (Italy). Sustainability. 2017;**9**(6):891

[17] Fischer LK, Honold J, Botzat A, Brinkmeyer D, Cvejić R, Delshammar T, et al. Recreational ecosystem services in European cities: Sociocultural and geographical contexts matter for park use. Ecosystem Services. 2018;**31**:455-467

[18] Kremer P, Hamstead ZA, McPhearson T. The value of urban ecosystem services in New York City: A spatially explicit multicriteria analysis of landscape scale valuation scenarios. Environmental Science and Policy. 2016;**62**:57-68

[19] Ferretti-Gallon K, Griggs E, Shrestha A, Wang G. National parks best practices: Lessons from a century's worth of national parks management. International Journal of Geoheritage and Parks. 2021;**9**(3):335-346

[20] Hidle K. How national parks change a rural municipality's development strategies—The Skjåk case, Norway. Journal of Rural Studies. 2019;**72**:174-185

[21] Florido-Benítez L. International mobile marketing: A satisfactory concept for companies and users in times of pandemic. Benchmarking: An International Journal. 2022;**29**(6):1826-1856

[22] Templeton AJ, Goonan K, Fyall A. COVID-19 and its impact on visitation and management at US national parks. International Hospitality Review. 2021;**35**(2):240-259

[23] Zhang Q, Xu H. Understanding aesthetic experiences in nature-based tourism: The important role of tourists' literary associations. Journal of Destination Marketing & Management. 2020;**16**:100429

[24] NPS. Icon of the Southwest. 2023. Available from: https://www.nps.gov/sagu/index.htm

[25] Visit Arizona. Saguaro National Park. 2023. Available from: https://www.visitarizona.com/places/parks-monuments/saguaro-national-park/

[26] Brean H. Visitation at Saguaro National Park Topped 1 Million Last Year—A New Record. 2023. Available from: https://thisistucson.com/tucsonlife/visitation-at-saguaro-national-park-topped-1-million-last-year-a-new-record/article_598c6cba-a550-11ec-a68b-f3276e9d1a04.html

[27] Dickinson DC, Hobbs RJ. Cultural ecosystem services: Characteristics, challenges and lessons for urban green space research. Ecosystem Services. 2017;**25**:179-194

[28] Chen H. Complementing conventional environmental impact assessments of tourism with ecosystem service valuation: A case study of the Wulingyuan Scenic Area, China. Ecosystem Services. 2020;**43**:101100

[29] Drius M, Bongiorni L, Depellegrin D, Menegon S, Pugnetti A, Stifter S. Tackling challenges for Mediterranean sustainable coastal tourism: An ecosystem service perspective. Science of the Total Environment. 2019;**652**:1302-1317

[30] Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA). Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Synthesis. Washington, DC: Island Press; 2005

[31] Willis C. The contribution of cultural ecosystem services to understanding the tourism–nature–well-being nexus. Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism. 2015;**10**:38-43

[32] Bryce R, Irvine KN, Church A, Fish R, Ranger S, Kenter JO. Subjective

well-being indicators for large-scale assessment of cultural ecosystem services. Ecosystem Services. 2016;**21**:258-269

[33] Fish R, Church A, Winter M. Conceptualising cultural ecosystem services: A novel framework for research and critical engagement. Ecosystem Services. 2016;**21**:208-217

[34] Lee J, Park BJ, Tsunetsugu Y, Ohira T, Kagawa T, Miyazaki Y. Effect of forest bathing on physiological and psychological responses in young Japanese male subjects. Public Health. 2011;**125**(2):93-100

[35] Martinez-Juarez P, Chiabai A, Taylor T, Gómez SQ. The impact of ecosystems on human health and well-being: A critical review. Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism. 2015;**10**:63-69

[36] Kaplan R. The Experience of Nature: A Psychological Perspective. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press; 1989

[37] Ulrich RS. Aesthetic and affective response to natural environment. In: Behavior and the Natural Environment. Boston, MA: Springer US; 1983. pp. 85-125

[38] Ulrich RS, Simons RF, Losito BD, Fiorito E, Miles MA, Zelson M. Stress recovery during exposure to natural and urban environments. Journal of Environmental Psychology. 1991;**11**(3):201-230

[39] Dolnicar S, Yanamandram V, Cliff K. The contribution of vacations to quality of life. Annals of Tourism Research. 2012;**39**(1):59-83

[40] Gomez R, Fisher JW. Domains of spiritual well-being and development and validation of the spiritual well-being questionnaire. Personality and Individual Differences. 2003;**35**(8):1975-1991

[41] Morris LE. A spiritual well-being model: Use with older women who experience depression. Issues in Mental Health Nursing. 1996;**17**(5):439-455

[42] Gomez R, Fisher JW. The spiritual well-being questionnaire: Testing for model applicability, measurement and structural equivalencies, and latent mean differences across gender. Personality and Individual Differences. 2005;**39**(8):1383-1393

[43] Fisher JW. Comparing levels of spiritual well-being in state, catholic and independent schools in Victoria, Australia. Journal of Beliefs & Values. 2001;**22**(1):113-119

[44] Fisher JW, Francis LJ, Johnson P. Assessing spiritual health via four domains of spiritual well-being: The SH4DI. Pastoral Psychology. 2000;**49**(2):133-145

[45] Heintzman P. Empirical research on leisure and spiritual well-being: Conceptualisation, measurement and findings. Leisure Studies. 2020;**39**(1):146-155

[46] Heintzman P. Outdoor studies and spirituality. In: Humberstone B, Prince H, Henderson K, editors. Routledge International Handbook of Outdoor Studies. New York, NY: Routledge; 2016a. pp. 388-397

[47] Heintzman P. Religion, spirituality and leisure. In: Walker G, Scott D, Stodolska M, editors. Leisure Matters: The State and Future of Leisure Studies. State College, PA: Venture; 2016b. pp. 67-75

[48] Stringer LA, McAvoy LH. The need for something different: Spirituality

and the wilderness adventure. The Journal of Experiential Education. 1992;**15**(1):13-21

[49] Esfahani M, Musa G, Khoo S. The influence of spirituality and physical activity level on responsible behaviour and mountaineering satisfaction on Mount Kinabalu, Borneo. Current Issues in Tourism. 2014;**20**(11):1162-1185

[50] Gu J. The pre-factors of birdwatchers' spiritual health: The relationship among leisure involvement, spiritual functions of leisure and satisfaction [unpublished master's thesis]. Pingtung, Taiwan: National Pingtung Institute of Commerce; 2011

[51] Heintzman P. Men's wilderness experience and spirituality: A qualitative study. In: Burns R, Robinson K, editors. (Comps.), Proceedings of the 2006 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium (Gen. Tech. Rep. NRS-P-14). Newton Square, PA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Services, Northern Research Station; 2007. pp. 216-225

[52] Heintzman P. Men's wilderness experience and spirituality: Further explorations. In: LeBlanc C, Vogt C, editors. Proceedings of the 2007 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium (Gen. Tech. Rep. NRSP-23). Newton Square, PA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Services, Northern Research Station; 2008. pp. 55-59

[53] Lemieux CJ, Eagles PFJ, Slocombe DS, Doherty ST, Elliot SJ, Mock SE. Human health and well-being motivations and benefits associated with protected area experiences: An opportunity for transforming policy and management in Canada. Parks. The International Journal of Protected Areas and Conservation. 2012;**18**(1):71-85

[54] Pham KH. Outcomes of a recreation therapy yoga meditation intervention on prison inmates' spiritual well-being [unpublished master's thesis]. San Jose, California: San Jose State University; 2013

[55] Hu SXX, Lei WI, Chao KK, Hall BJ, Chung SF. Common chronic health problems and life satisfaction among Macau elderly people. International Journal of Nursing Sciences. 2016;**3**(4):367-370

[56] Diener E, Oishi S, Lucas RE. Personality, culture, and subjective well-being: Emotional and cognitive evaluations of life. Annual Review of Psychology. 2003;**54**(1):403-425

[57] Li D, Newman G, Zhang T, Zhu R, Horney J. Coping with post-hurricane mental distress: The role of neighborhood green space. Social Science and Medicine. 2021;**281**:114084

[58] Pan L, Xu XA, Lu L, Gursoy D. How cultural confidence affects local residents' well-being. The Service Industries Journal. 2021;**41**(9-10):581-605

[59] Karatepe OM, Saydam MB, Okumus F. COVID-19, mental health problems, and their detrimental effects on hotel employees' propensity to be late for work, absenteeism, and life satisfaction. Current Issues in Tourism. 2021;**24**(7):934-951

[60] Singh N, Yu J, Ramkissoon H, Amponsah M, Han H. Nature-based solution for state park travelers' self-rated mental health, emotional well-being, and life satisfaction: Impact of national culture. Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing. 2023;**40**(1):55-74

[61] Chen CC, Petrick JF, Shahvali M. Tourism experiences as a stress reliever: Examining the effects of tourism

recovery experiences on life satisfaction. Journal of Travel Research. 2016;**55**(2):150-160

[62] Clement JM, Cheng AS. Using analyses of public value orientations, attitudes and preferences to inform national forest planning in Colorado and Wyoming. Applied Geography. 2011;**31**(2):393-400

[63] Fisher JW. Validation and utilisation of the spiritual well-being questionnaire: SHALOM. Journal of Religion and Health. 2021;**60**(5):3694-3715

[64] Linton MJ, Dieppe P, Medina-Lara A. Review of 99 self-report measures for assessing well-being in adults: Exploring dimensions of well-being and developments over time. BMJ Open. 2016;**6**(7):e010641

[65] Diener ED, Emmons RA, Larsen RJ, Griffin S. The satisfaction with life scale. Journal of Personality Assessment. 1985;**49**(1):71-75

[66] Sirgy MJ, Kruger PS, Lee DJ, Yu GB. How does a travel trip affect tourists' life satisfaction? Journal of Travel Research. 2011;**50**(3):261-275

Chapter 2

National Parks and Conservation Areas: Impacts on the Maasai and Opportunities for Sustainable Cultural Heritage Tourism

Elena Riboldi and Alberto Lanzavecchia

Abstract

This chapter explores the significant impact of national parks and conservation areas on the Maasai people of Kenya and Tanzania, focusing on key reserves like the Maasai Mara and Amboseli. It examines how these protected areas have disrupted the Maasai's traditional pastoralism and transhumant lifestyle through land displacement, restricted grazing, and cultural commodification. The chapter also highlights opportunities for empowering the Maasai through sustainable, culturally respectful tourism initiatives, guided by frameworks such as the Larrakia Declaration. Success stories of indigenous-led ecotourism demonstrate models that support economic benefits, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation.

Keywords: Maasai, national parks, conservation, indigenous rights, sustainable tourism, cultural heritage

1. Introduction

The Maasai people, known for their distinctive pastoralist lifestyle and rich cultural heritage, have lived for generations in the vast savannas and rangelands of Tanzania and Kenya. Today, they number over one and a half million, residing in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania [1]. They inhabit semi-arid plains along the Great Rift Valley, a region known as Maasailand, which covers an area of 160,000 square kilometres [1].

Ancestral land is fundamental to the identity of indigenous peoples, and for the Maasai, this connection is deeply spiritual [2]. They view land as a communal resource that should be used sustainably and equitably, though managed with care [1]. Land is also crucial because cattle herding has been the backbone of Maasai society for millennia, shaping their semi-nomadic economy and culture in the East African landscape [2].

Over time, various factors have contributed to the Maasai's loss of a significant portion of their ancestral lands. Colonialism, in particular, greatly restricted the Maasai's access to their traditional territories in Kenya and Tanzania. During the initial phases of colonisation, British and German authorities, driven by territorial control and economic gain, deprived the Maasai of 50–70% of their land [3]. Thousands of Maasai were forcibly confined to marginal lands, often used only as crisis pastures, and they lost access to prime areas such as the two-million-acre Laikipia plateau and the fertile White Highlands—lands vital to their pastoral and transhumance practices [4].

Since then, other factors, including forced relocations and colonial interventions, have led to soil degradation, a decline in pastoralist activities, and increased vulnerability to drought [4]. Additionally, during decolonisation, African leaders who assumed power often prioritised British interests, as agreed during constitutional talks. When the Maasai sought guarantees from the departing British government that their lands would be protected and their lost territories restored, they were met with indifference [5]. Despite claiming 70% of the White Highlands, the Maasai were ultimately excluded from agreements regarding this fertile land. Only a select few Africans were permitted to purchase portions of the land, with loans provided by the British government [6].

Independence for Kenya and Tanzania was intended to be a gradual process of Africanising the colonial governments. However, for the Maasai, this transition did little to address the marginalisation they had experienced. While the end of colonial rule initially seemed to promise progress and self-determination, in reality, the new national governments continued to impose land laws that prioritised economic interests over indigenous rights. This often perpetuated the same colonial structures that had previously exploited the Maasai. The restrictions placed on their access to land and resources, as well as the continued violation of their rights, are often cited as reasons for the extreme pressures facing Maasai land and livelihoods today [7].

Despite the significant impacts of colonialism and decolonisation on the Maasai, the greatest loss of land has been to national parks and reserves, established by colonial powers and later expanded by newly independent states [8]. Land grabbing, often justified by conservation and tourism initiatives, has become one of the most devastating causes of population displacement for the Maasai. Eco Ruralis defines land grabbing as "the control of larger-than-locally-typical amounts of land by any entity (public or private, foreign or domestic) via any means (legal or illegal) for purposes of speculation, extraction, or commodification, often at the expense of local communities and human rights" [9]. While some land grabs may be motivated by environmental objectives, such as biodiversity preservation, they undermine the Maasai's pastoralist practices, threaten their long-term financial security, and endanger the survival of their culture [10].

Across Africa, approximately 14.4% of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems and 16.6% of marine ecosystems are currently under protection. These figures are encouraging but fall short of the ambitious global target set by the Global Biodiversity Framework, which aims to protect 30% of all terrestrial and marine ecosystems by 2030 [11]. When managed effectively, protected areas can conserve wildlife and benefit local communities. African governments increasingly delegate the management of these areas to private entities, believing they possess the resources and expertise to enhance the economic and environmental sustainability of protected zones.

A recent study [12] highlights improvements in protected areas following the transition from state to NGO management. Wildlife populations, particularly elephants

and birds, have increased significantly, and poaching has decreased by 35%. These changes, combined with a rise in tourist numbers, have made protected areas more attractive for ecotourism, largely due to enhanced financial resources and international marketing [12].

However, the expansion of tourism in these areas has often led to conflicts over land rights and the marginalisation of indigenous peoples. The privatisation of communal lands within protected areas can undermine human rights, threaten the physical security of local communities, and jeopardise their cultural heritage. Strengthening the involvement of local communities in the management of protected areas could help maximise the benefits for both wildlife and people [12].

In light of this, the chapter examines ongoing challenges and potential solutions for involving indigenous peoples in the management of national parks and reserves, with a focus on sustainable tourism, ecotourism, and cultural heritage tourism. These models offer a way to engage indigenous peoples actively, protect their rights, and preserve the environment and biodiversity simultaneously.

2. Past: Historical roots of Maasai marginalisation through Maasai national parks

The Maasai people have long played a vital role in protecting the ecology and wildlife of their ancestral lands. However, they have been excluded from conservation efforts for several decades. Starting in the 1950s, numerous national parks and reserves were established across Maasailand, marginalising the Maasai economically and politically. The creation of these parks, such as Maasai Mara (1961) and Amboseli (1974) in Kenya, displaced the Maasai from their ancestral lands [13]. Similarly, they were pushed out of Tanzania's national parks, including the Serengeti (1951) and Lake Manyara (1960), as well as the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, where forced evictions have occurred more recently. The Maasai, being one of the largest indigenous groups in East Africa, have been disproportionately affected by these developments [14].

Many of these parks are located in critical dry season grazing areas with high wildlife concentrations, disrupting the Maasai's traditional pastoralism and transhumance practices. As a semi-nomadic group, the Maasai depend heavily on their cattle herds for survival, and the loss of access to vital grazing lands has forced them to keep their cattle in drier, overcrowded savannahs year-round. These areas quickly become overgrazed, leading to environmental degradation [15]. This growing separation of humans and wildlife has had negative consequences for both.

Additionally, this tourism-driven conservation model displaces indigenous peoples from their own land so that wealthier foreigners can benefit. While proponents of conservation tourism claim it brings employment and land use opportunities to local communities, the Maasai receive a disproportionately small share of the revenue generated by these parks [16].

Tourism has also had an impact on Maasai culture. The commercialisation of their customs for tourists is only one aspect of broader cultural changes that have been happening for over a century, including the influence of evangelisation, education, Western consumerism, and mobile banking [17]. However, key sacred rituals have remained unchanged. What is visible to tourists is an ad hoc product of marketing, an assemblage of dances and handicrafts, in villages that, due to their transhumant lifestyle, would not normally exist [18]. The Maasai now wear 'traditional' blankets

introduced through bartering with English settlers, in exchange for spears and knives, rather than their earlier attire of animal skins. Over time, the Masasi have adapted to a Western consumer model, abandoning a sustainable way of life developed over millennia for an uncertain one overnight.

Researchers have determined that improper cultural borrowing results in four negative effects on indigenous people:

- Cultural deterioration and the resulting loss of cultural variety;
- Cultural items being removed from their original setting and therefore altering or losing their meaning;
- Giving economic advantages to foreigners;
- Not acknowledging sovereign claims [19].

The Maasai have experienced all of these consequences over the years, with their land and culture exploited for profit.

2.1 Maasai Mara national reserve

The Maasai Mara National Reserve (MMNR) is a federally protected area in southwest Kenya, bordering Tanzania's Serengeti National Park. The northern Serengeti-Mara ecosystem comprises the MMNR and surrounding group ranches, covering over 6000 km^2. Established in 1948, the MMNR is one of Kenya's earliest protected areas and now attracts approximately half of the country's visitors [20].

Like other areas of Maasailand, the Maasai in the Mara region lost access to their pastoral land due to policies promoting livestock development and privatisation. Following Kenya's independence in 1963, these policies continued to encourage the commercialisation of Maasailand, with group ranches particularly affecting the Maasai living near the Mara [21].

The Land Group Representatives and Land Adjudication Act of 1968 allowed the division of land into group ranches, governed by elected committees and owned privately by registered groups [19]. These ranches, which border the MMNR, engage in agriculture, agro-pastoralism, pastoralism, and wildlife tourism. The Maasai, along with their cattle, were excluded from the rangelands within the National Reserve, which had previously served as essential grazing areas. Cattle grazing is now prohibited, with land use in the MMNR limited to wildlife tourism, severely impacting the livelihoods of the Maasai [22].

The group ranches, however, failed to meet most of their government-mandated objectives. Public trust in ranch committees eroded due to poor management, neglect of infrastructure, and favouritism [23]. Frustration with these inefficiencies led members to demand land subdivision. The process of subdivision began in the 1970s, with individual title registration starting in the more commercially valuable and well-watered areas of Maasailand and gradually extending to more remote and arid regions [24]. By the mid-1980s to late 1990s, group ranches were divided into smaller plots [25].

As a result, much of the land was acquired by non-Maasai, leading to the permanent loss of Maasai access to their ancestral lands. In the Mara ecosystem, subdivision has increased farming on former pastoral land, reducing grazing areas and access

to water, pushing the Maasai into marginal areas with fewer resources. This has also restricted wildlife movement, exacerbating human-wildlife conflict [26].

In the 1980s, after the detrimental effects of group ranch subdivision, another shift occurred with the rapid expansion of tourism. The establishment of the MMNR and other conservancies ended the Maasai's traditional transhumant lifestyle. Unable to rely on cattle herding, the Maasai became dependent on tourism, leading to the commodification of their culture to meet tourist expectations [27]. Tourists, eager to see the traditional customs of the Maasai, began visiting their villages. While tourism introduced some money into the region, most profits were captured by large tourism operators, with the Maasai receiving little direct income [28].

A key issue in MMNR tourism is the expectation that the Maasai remain "authentic" for tourists, posing for photographs and retelling stories of their traditional way of life, despite their society's evolving dynamics [29]. A lack of strategies to integrate their culture into tourism has perpetuated false stereotypes. Maasai villages are deemed interesting to tourists only if they conform to traditional architecture (enkang); modern housing is viewed as inauthentic. Tourism marketing, alongside other media, shapes these perceptions of an "authentic" Maasai experience. As a result, the Maasai have adapted their culture to fit tourist expectations in order to earn even a small share of the tourism profits [30].

Having been displaced from their grazing lands in the MMNR due to the subdivision of group ranches, the Maasai now rely heavily on tourism for their livelihood. Unfortunately, the income generated from tourism is minimal, leaving the community economically vulnerable and struggling to preserve their cultural heritage amidst these challenges.

2.2 Amboseli ecosystem and Amboseli national park

The Amboseli Ecosystem in southern Kenya spans 5975 km^2 in Kajiado County, bordering Amboseli, Chyulu Hills, Tsavo, and Kilimanjaro National Parks. At its centre is Amboseli National Park (ANP), a UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Reserve, protecting 392 km^2 (around 5% of the wildlife dispersal area). The ecosystem also includes eight group ranches managed by Maasai pastoralists and agro-pastoralists, along with several animal sanctuaries. These ranches were created in the 1970s to prevent further loss of Maasai pastoral lands [31].

In the early 1900s, the British government established a game reserve in southern Kenya, covering the Amboseli Ecosystem, in an area of little interest to European settlers [32]. In 1948, Amboseli became a National Reserve, with provisions for Maasai pastoralists to graze cattle in its wetlands. However, the idea that Maasai livestock hindered conservation persisted. Over time, officials began separating the lands into distinct zones for humans and wildlife, a concept foreign to Maasai culture [33].

After Kenya's independence, the Maasai faced criticism for allegedly endangering Amboseli's wildlife through poor livestock management [34]. International conservation organisations accused the Maasai of turning Amboseli into a dustbowl, depriving wildlife of water and grazing land [35]. Pressure mounted for the government to turn Amboseli into a national park, while the Maasai lobbied for land rights to the entire region, including its swamps. Despite their efforts, the 400 km^2 area around the Amboseli wetlands was designated a National Park in 1974, excluding the Maasai and their cattle [36]. This move marked the rise of the "fortress conservation" approach, prioritising wildlife protection [37].

In 1977, the Maasai were forced to relocate to group ranches outside the park. This has been the source of many of the community's current struggles. Group ranches were quickly deemed unsuccessful, and from the 1980s onward, Maasai-owned ranches were subdivided and privatised, significantly altering their traditional transhumant lifestyle [38]. These changes continue to affect Maasai customs and cultural practices, with long-term consequences for both conservation and cultural preservation [39].

As in the Maasai Mara, the loss of rangelands and wetlands has forced the Maasai to turn to tourism and farming for survival [40]. The rapid growth of tourism in the 1980s, with over 150,000 annual visitors to Amboseli, has raised further conservation issues [41]. Game safaris and wildlife viewing dominate tourism in the area. As a result, the Maasai began to view wildlife as a resource for income. Communities near the park, exposed to tourism more than others, have shifted from traditional wildlife values to economic valuations [42].

Despite generating significant revenue for the government and tourism operators, the indigenous Maasai benefit the least from tourism [43]. In response, Maasai communities around Amboseli have turned to indigenous ecotourism to improve their livelihoods. However, while parks generate substantial foreign revenue, the Maasai bear the burden of wildlife-related damage to their lands, receiving little in return. Their role in tourism is often reduced to selling crafts and performing traditional dances for tourists visiting what was once their land [44].

The shift from transhumant pastoralism to a sedentary lifestyle has increased human-wildlife conflict, exacerbated by conservation programmes that undermine Maasai traditions and breed resentment towards conservation [45]. Over the past 40 years, nearly two-thirds of Kenya's wildlife populations have declined, largely due to scepticism from pastoralist communities, including the Maasai, about conservation initiatives [46]. The situation in Amboseli highlights the need for tourism projects and sustainable conservation plans that respect the Maasai's rights to their ancestral lands.

3. Present: Empowering the Maasai through sustainable and cultural heritage tourism

Following the World Indigenous Tourism Alliance's (WINTA) adoption of the Larrakia Declaration in Darwin, Australia, in 2012, the tourism industry became one of the first corporate sectors to recognise the significance of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Larrakia Declaration, which has since been referenced by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), advocates for the empowerment of indigenous peoples through tourism. It promotes more equitable collaborations between the tourism industry and indigenous communities to improve individual livelihoods and community well-being [47].

The Larrakia Declaration aligns with the core principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, endorsed by the United Nations in 2001 and adopted by the UNWTO General Assembly in 1999. This code serves as a guide for the sustainable and responsible development of tourism, emphasising the role of tourism stakeholders in protecting indigenous cultures, rights, and traditions [47].

In recent years, under these frameworks, the tourism industry has increasingly recognised the importance of including indigenous communities and respecting their rights. These declarations have prompted countries, non-governmental organisations

(NGOs), and other stakeholders to seek sustainable solutions that integrate indigenous peoples into tourism initiatives.

Ecotourism, for example, is promoted as an innovative means of funding local biodiversity conservation and economic development in tourist destinations [48]. Indigenous ecotourism, in particular, refers to tourism that is organised, managed, and experienced by native populations on their ancestral lands. Unlike wildlife ecotourism, indigenous ecotourism seeks to fairly compensate locals whose labour, land, knowledge, and culture are integral to the tourism process [49].

By prioritising cultural heritage preservation and ensuring fair economic benefits, ecotourism and similar initiatives aim to create a tourism industry that not only respects but also empowers indigenous populations. This inclusive approach is essential for fostering a more equitable and sustainable global tourism sector.

3.1 Indigenous-led ecotourism and sustainable tourism

Indigenous tourism includes all tourism-related businesses primarily owned, operated, and/or controlled by indigenous peoples that demonstrate a connection to and responsibility for the indigenous community and traditional area in which the business is located [50]. However, there are significant social and ethical concerns in indigenous tourism. Indigenous peoples have faced generations of prejudice, forced displacement, cultural appropriation, and the depletion of essential resources. As such, tourism strategies that overlook issues of inequality and human rights may cause more harm than good to indigenous communities.

As far as our reference territories are concerned, in Kenya and Tanzania, the Maasai community has experienced adverse effects due to the rise in tourism over recent decades. Despite these challenges, tourism remains a recognised means of promoting peace, cross-cultural communication, and mutual understanding among people of different backgrounds. When grounded in respect for indigenous rights and traditional values, tourism can foster genuine cultural exchanges, benefiting both communities and visitors [51].

Responsible travel is growing in popularity, with many tourists seeking authentic cultural experiences and interactions with indigenous communities. Indigenous tourism encompasses a wide range of activities, from cultural events to leisure pursuits, in which indigenous peoples are actively involved, either through full control or significant participation [52].

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people" [53]. Indigenous-led ecotourism can positively and sustainably impact communities. These initiatives, fully owned, managed, and operated by indigenous peoples on their ancestral lands, broaden public understanding of indigenous cultures while maximising community benefits. Indigenous groups decide which narratives, locations, events, and experiences to share with visitors.

Ecotourism programmes also promote environmental stewardship, minimising negative impacts on land, water, and surrounding areas. Indigenous-led ecotourism is generally non-consumptive, except for subsistence activities such as harvesting, fishing, and hunting, which are limited to community consumption and exclude recreational activities for tourists. Thus, indigenous-led ecotourism can address various economic, social, and environmental challenges by leveraging support from different sectors [54].

As a rapidly growing subcategory of responsible travel, ecotourism is expanding by 10–15% annually, particularly in countries like Kenya and Tanzania, where natural landscapes and wildlife drive tourism [55]. However, the sustainable management of tourism in protected areas presents challenges, as seen in Tanzanian and Kenyan national parks, where the Maasai have been displaced to create conservation zones. It is vital for governments to engage in open dialogue with indigenous communities to resolve conflicts over land ownership and use. Tourism models work best when all stakeholders in the management of protected areas—governments, NGOs, and indigenous peoples—collaborate to respect indigenous rights and values [51].

3.2 Cultural heritage tourism and UNESCO world heritage sites

Cultural tourism and indigenous tourism are closely related and often overlap. Indigenous tourism is a subset of cultural tourism, based on indigenous control and ownership of resources, as defined by the UNWTO [56]. In cultural indigenous tourism, indigenous people either control the tourism experience or their culture serves as the main attraction [57]. Unfortunately, many African nations have been slow to integrate indigenous tourism into broader tourism strategies, often resulting in more harm than good for indigenous communities [58].

Protected areas around the world are popular cultural heritage tourism destinations, yet their establishment has often led to the eviction of indigenous peoples from their lands. Many UNESCO World Heritage sites share this history of displacement, causing suffering for indigenous groups like the Maasai of Kenya and Tanzania [59]. Once a site is added to the World Heritage List, tourist numbers often increase by 6.7–10%, which can negatively impact local populations [60].

The designation of World Heritage sites without the free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) of indigenous peoples remains a major issue. The nomination documents adopted by the World Heritage Committee often ignore the rights, livelihoods, and cultural heritage of indigenous peoples [61]. This exclusion violates indigenous rights, as they are often left out of the nomination, management, and monitoring processes. In the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA), for instance, UNESCO has pushed for the "voluntary relocation" of Maasai communities, citing their farming practices as a threat to the site's "Outstanding Universal Value". These restrictions have led to food insecurity and malnutrition among the Maasai [62].

Such violations stem from a flawed understanding of "*heritage*" and "*outstanding universal value*" that disregards the holistic worldview of indigenous peoples. Although indigenous peoples' spiritual and cultural ties to their lands may be acknowledged by UNESCO, they are often required to prove these associations are "*unique*" or "*exceptional*", a standard that is difficult to meet [63]. UNESCO has faced criticism for its Western-centric concept of universal heritage, which often overlooks the collective heritage of indigenous peoples [64].

In recent decades, however, UNESCO has made efforts to recognise the global importance of indigenous cultural heritage. In 2003, it ratified the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage [65]. This convention defines cultural heritage as both tangible and intangible, including practices, expressions, knowledge, and skills passed down through generations [66, 67]. Intangible cultural heritage, such as music, dance, and oral traditions, plays a vital role in promoting tourism and preserving cultural identity, especially in regions where few physical remnants of the past exist [68].

Incorporating indigenous knowledge and traditional practices into tourism development is essential for preserving cultural heritage and achieving sustainable tourism

goals. Free, prior, and informed consent is crucial to ensure indigenous participation in decision-making processes and protect their heritage while promoting economic development through tourism [69].

Cultural heritage tourism, when supported by indigenous rights and grassroots leadership, has the potential to empower communities through participatory planning. In Kenya and Tanzania, strategies to promote environmentally sustainable cultural heritage tourism include the preservation of historical sites, collaboration among stakeholders, and the marketing of cultural assets [70]. These initiatives require strong partnerships between local communities, NGOs, governments, and development partners to create a sustainable tourism sector that benefits both indigenous peoples and tourists [71].

4. Future: Learning from good practices among the Maasai

This section employs a comparative analysis of conservation models to assess their socio-economic, cultural, and environmental impacts. The evaluation is based on three key criteria:

- Economic equity: examining how revenues and benefits are distributed within Maasai communities.
- Cultural preservation: assessing the support provided to protect and integrate Maasai traditions and knowledge.
- Environmental sustainability: measuring the effectiveness of initiatives in promoting biodiversity and mitigating human-wildlife conflict [72, 73].

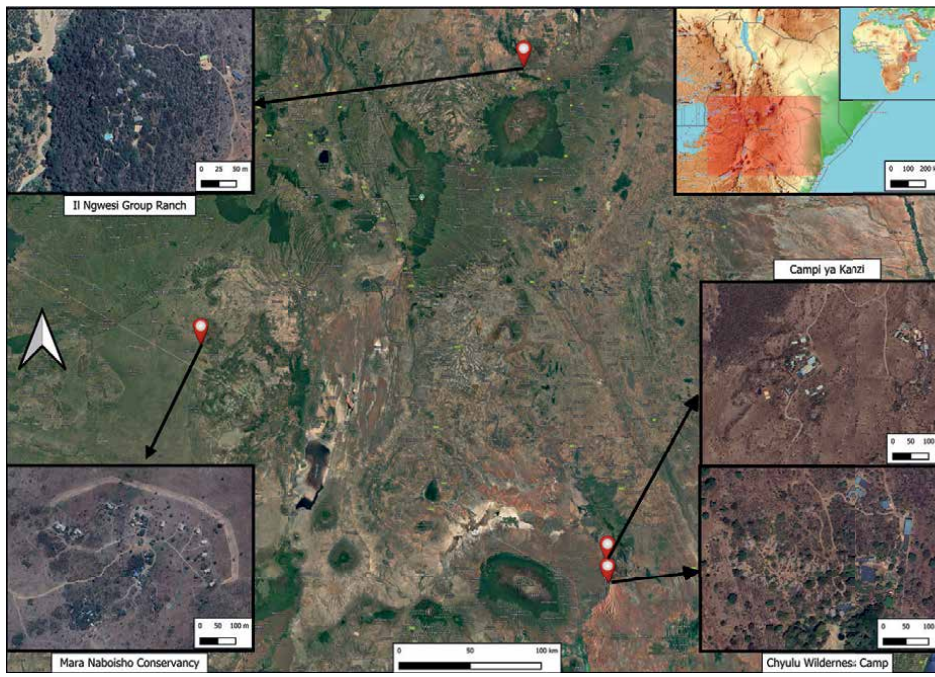

Figure 1.
Mapping the case study sites. Source: Google Earth.

To illustrate the transition from exclusionary conservation practices to community-led approaches, this study focuses on two pivotal case studies: Mara Naboisho Conservancy and the Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust (**Figure 1**). These initiatives were selected for their innovative frameworks, tangible impacts, and potential to serve as replicable models across Africa.

The Maasai people of Kenya and Tanzania have faced generations of marginalisation, including land displacement and exclusion from decision-making in conservation. Despite these challenges, the Maasai have established indigenous-led initiatives that exemplify sustainable solutions in conservation and tourism. These initiatives prioritise Maasai leadership, ensure equitable distribution of benefits, and integrate traditional knowledge into conservation strategies.

Unlike conventional top-down approaches that marginalise indigenous voices, these community-led models foster ownership, empowerment, and resilience. They successfully balance environmental preservation with cultural and economic needs, providing a more inclusive and effective alternative to traditional conservation practices. By safeguarding biodiversity and upholding Maasai rights, these initiatives highlight a path forward for integrating cultural values and livelihoods into sustainable conservation and tourism frameworks.

4.1 Maasai contribution to conservation frameworks

The first group of initiatives focuses on broader conservation efforts, where the Maasai make significant contributions to frameworks shaped by international organisations or national laws. While these projects require active Maasai engagement, the management style and strategic direction are influenced by larger organisational or governmental objectives.

The Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust (MWCT) exemplifies conservation efforts that directly impact Maasai communities by working to preserve East Africa's biodiversity and landscapes. The MWCT operates within Kenya's Amboseli-Tsavo Ecosystem, including the Maasai people and Chyulu Hills. Through funding and initiatives that provide long-term financial benefits, MWCT sets a pioneering example of effective community-based conservation [74].

Two lodges, Camp Ya Kanzi and Chyulu Wilderness Camp, are owned by the MWCT, and all proceeds go to supporting the Trust's work. Visitors can engage in regenerative tourism and cultural heritage experiences, benefiting the local population. A conservation fee also funds the *Wildlife Pays* programme, which compensates the Maasai for livestock lost to predators, thereby promoting harmony with wildlife and reducing human-wildlife conflict. Notably, over 95% of the Trust's employees, including senior staff, are local Maasai. The conservation initiatives include indigenous territory conservancies, ecotourism collaboration with Camp Ya Kanzi, predator protection through the *Wildlife Pays* programme, lion monitoring led by Maasai *Simba Scouts*, and anti-poaching efforts managed by over 100 rangers [74].

4.2 Maasai-led initiatives

Another group of initiatives involves partnerships led by the Maasai or managed collaboratively between Maasai communities and external groups such as NGOs, tour operators, or foundations.

The Mara Naboisho Conservancy, established in 2010 by the Basecamp Explorer Group and Basecamp Explorer Foundation, protects 20,000 hectares of unspoiled

wildlife in the Maasai Mara region. The word *Naboisho*, meaning "coming together" in the face of existential threats, reflects the Conservancy's collaborative model, which grants Maasai landowners equal decision-making rights and revenue sharing with ecotourism operators. Naboisho is a leading example of private conservation in Kenya and won the Responsible Tourism Africa Award in 2016 [75].

Naboisho's governance framework ensures a fair and lasting partnership between Maasai landowners, tourism operators, and conservation stakeholders. The Maasai lease land to Basecamp in exchange for monthly rent, and the local community is provided with jobs and training, including a new generation of Maasai guides. Naboisho's strategy, centred around tourism as the main economic driver, generates income for local residents while protecting biodiversity and preserving Maasai cultural heritage. The Mara Naboisho Conservancy exemplifies a transformative model of private conservation, setting it apart from traditional "fortress conservation" strategies that excluded indigenous peoples. Unlike earlier approaches, Naboisho grants Maasai landowners equal decision-making rights and ensures fair revenue-sharing with tourism operators.

This initiative empowers the community economically and culturally. By allowing controlled grazing during dry seasons, Naboisho integrates traditional Maasai practices into conservation efforts, demonstrating how indigenous knowledge can enhance environmental sustainability. These innovations have led to one of the highest lion densities in Africa and have provided direct financial benefits to over 10,000 residents, highlighting its replicability as a future-forward model [76].

The true success of Naboisho lies in the active involvement and commitment of the local Maasai community, marking a transformative departure from colonial-style parks and safaris that historically excluded them [77].

The second successful example of partnership-based conservation is the Il Ngwesi Group Ranch, established in 1996 as the first Maasai Group Ranch in Laikipia to partner with Ian Craig of the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy. Elders in the Maasai community allocated 8675 hectares of grazing land for conservation, and Il Ngwesi Eco-Lodge was built. Ten men were trained to manage the lodge, while a group of rangers, now numbering sixteen, were trained at Lewa to ensure the security of both humans and wildlife [77].

The earnings from the lodge, donations, and partnerships with local and international NGOs support community development projects and responsible environmental management. The initiative has fostered communities that respect wildlife and value their role as land stewards. Il Ngwesi is one of 33 conservancies supported by the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT), covering 440,000 square kilometres, providing a safe space for wildlife while enabling communities to benefit from tourism. The preservation of endangered species like the African lion, African wild dog, and Grevy's zebra depends on this regulated land [77].

Il Ngwesi Group Ranch is home to six Maasai settlements with a pastoralist history. Since the mid-1990s, donations and profits from the lodge have enabled the community to purchase more land, easing grazing pressures. Funds have also been used for school fees, building schools, and providing healthcare. The community continues to benefit from sustainable tourism and conservation, preserving both their environment and culture [78].

5. Concluding remarks

This chapter is grounded in a comprehensive methodological approach, drawing on historical documents, legal frameworks, conservation reports, and case studies of

indigenous-led initiatives[1]. Through this analysis, we have argued that actively involving indigenous peoples in the tourism industry and ensuring they gain economic and social benefits are pivotal to empowering Maasai communities. Ecotourism and cultural heritage tourism offer sustainable alternatives to conventional tourism models, which often marginalise or exploit indigenous groups, while simultaneously preserving their rich cultural heritage. However, broader implementation of these initiatives across diverse regions, coupled with stronger support from international organisations, such as UNESCO, remains an urgent necessity to recognise and protect indigenous heritage effectively.

It is essential to acknowledge, strengthen, and promote the critical role that indigenous peoples and local communities play in biodiversity conservation and environmental stewardship. Sustainable conservation and tourism development, particularly in Africa, can be achieved if the focus shifts from economic exploitation to the common good protection. Protecting indigenous land rights and respecting their values, knowledge, and aspirations is key to ensuring conservation efforts are both just and sustainable.

The initiatives in Kenya and Tanzania, where the Maasai act as stewards of their land and environment, illustrate a strong commitment to creating sustainable tourism models that not only protect biodiversity but also uphold indigenous rights. These efforts highlight the resilience and determination of the Maasai to integrate their cultural heritage and livelihoods into broader sustainable development goals.

In conclusion, tourism and conservation can coexist harmoniously with the rights and livelihoods of indigenous peoples. The resilience, accomplishments, and cultural heritage of the Maasai provide a model of hope, demonstrating that inclusive, equitable, and sustainable tourism and conservation practices can safeguard both the natural environment and the fundamental rights of indigenous communities.

However, to achieve this vision, several critical mistakes must be avoided. Excluding indigenous peoples from decision-making processes marginalises their voices and erodes the sense of ownership necessary for the success of conservation and tourism initiatives. Equally harmful is the unequal distribution of tourism revenues, which often leaves indigenous communities without meaningful economic benefits. Displacement of indigenous peoples from their ancestral lands for conservation or tourism purposes not only violates their rights but also disrupts traditional livelihoods, fostering resentment and conflict.

Cultural commodification is another issue requiring attention. Indigenous cultures should not be reduced to mere attractions for tourists but must be respected

[1] Data Sources:

- Historical documents: Archival materials and records were analysed to trace the impacts of colonisation on the Maasai, focusing on land dispossession and its socio-cultural repercussions [3, 4].
- Legal documents: International and national legal frameworks, including treaties and policies on indigenous rights and land protection, were reviewed to contextualise the Maasai's legal status and rights within conservation zones [79].
- Conservation reports: Reports from African conservation efforts provided insights into the ecological and socio-economic outcomes of protected areas, highlighting both challenges and opportunities for integrating indigenous communities [11, 41, 47, 51, 63].
- Websites and literature: Websites and publications detailing Maasai-led initiatives, such as Mara Naboisho Conservancy and the Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust, were examined to identify successful models of sustainable tourism and conservation [74–76, 78].

and integrated thoughtfully into tourism initiatives. Similarly, neglecting traditional ecological knowledge undermines conservation efforts, as this expertise is invaluable for managing biodiversity sustainably. Top-down approaches, which disregard the needs and aspirations of local communities, have also proven ineffective and must be replaced with inclusive models that prioritise indigenous leadership.

The findings of this chapter underscore important policy implications. Governments, NGOs, and international organisations should prioritise indigenous-led initiatives, ensuring that policies support equitable revenue distribution and actively protect indigenous land rights. Preventing land grabs for conservation or tourism is critical, as is fostering long-term solutions that respect the values and knowledge systems of indigenous communities.

International bodies must also strengthen their role in recognising and safeguarding indigenous cultural heritage. Policies governing heritage sites should reflect the rights and traditions of the communities residing there, promoting both environmental sustainability and cultural preservation.

Ultimately, these policy directions are essential to fostering a tourism sector that balances economic growth with social justice and environmental stewardship. By addressing these challenges and learning from the resilience of communities like the Maasai, the global tourism and conservation industries can create inclusive and sustainable models that benefit both people and the planet.

Acknowledgements

This chapter derives from a broader master thesis, authored by Elena Riboldi and supervised by Alberto Lanzavecchia, that employed a qualitative approach to examine the historical, legal, and social dynamics influencing the Maasai people of Kenya and Tanzania. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Father Giuseppe Caramazza for his invaluable insights into Maasai culture, which greatly enriched the perspectives presented in this chapter. We are also deeply thankful to Carlo Zanetti for his meticulous work in editing satellite images, which significantly enhanced the mapping of campsites used in the case studies.

Author details

Elena Riboldi* and Alberto Lanzavecchia*
University of Padova, Padova, Italy

*Address all correspondence to: ely.riboldi@gmail.com and
alberto.lanzavecchia@unipd.it

References

[1] Maasai Association. The Maasai People. Available from: https://maasai-association.org/maasai.html

[2] Minority Rights Group International. State of the World's Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2016- Case Study: Tanzania's Maasai and their Loss of Land, Culture and Heritage. London, United Kingdom: Minority Rights Group International; 2016

[3] Hughes L. Moving the Maasai: A Colonial Misadventure. London: Palgrave Macmillan; 2006

[4] Hughes L. Malice in Maasailand: The historical roots of current political struggles. African Affairs. 2005;**104**(415):207-224

[5] Kantai P. In the grip of the vampire state: Maasai land struggles in Kenyan politics. Journal of Eastern African Studies. 2007;**1**(1):107-122

[6] Gutto SBO. Law, rangelands, the peasantry, and social classes in Kenya. Review of African Political Economy. 1981;**20**:41-56

[7] Ndaskoi NO. The Roots Causes of Maasai Predicament. Ontario, Canada: Western University, Aboriginal Policy Research Consortium International (APRCi); 2005

[8] Barume AK. Land Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Africa, with Special Focus on Central, Eastern and Southern Africa, IWGIA Document Series no. 115. Copenhagen, Denmark: IWGIA; 2010

[9] Eco Ruralis. What Is Land Grabbing? A Critical Review of Existing Definitions. Romania: Eco Ruralis; 2016. Available from: https://www.farmlandgrab.org/uploads/attachment/EcoRuralis_WhatIsLandGrabbing_2016.pdf

[10] Munei Kimpei Ole JG, Maasai Land, Law and Dispossession. 2010. Available from: https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/maasai-land-law-and-dispossession

[11] UNEP-WCMC. Protected Area Profile for Africa from the World Database on Protected Areas, October 2024. Cambridge, United Kingdom: UNEP-WCMC; 2024. Available from: www.protectedplanet.net

[12] Denny S, Englander G, Hunnicutt P. Private management of African protected areas improves wildlife and tourism outcomes but with security concerns in conflict regions. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). 2024;**121**:e2401814121. Available from: https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2401814121

[13] Tanzania National Parks. Available from: https://www.tanzaniaparks.go.tz/pages/history

[14] Colin D. Wildlife and the Maasai, in 9-1 Parks and People. 2010. Available from: https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/wildlife-and-maasai

[15] Koissaba BO. Legitimization Crisis: Laws, Policies and Decrees as Tools for Maasai land Appropriation. 2014. Available from: https://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/24274-legitimization-crisis-laws-policies-and-decrees-as-tools-for-maasai-land-appropriation

[16] Theys M. African Safari Guide Salary – South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya & more, Available from: https://africafreak.com/safari-guide-salary/

[17] Veit PG, Benson C. When Parks and People Collide. New York, USA: Carnegie Council; 2004

[18] Leleto NL. Maasai resistance to cultural appropriation, tourism. The Indigenous Peoples' Journal of Law Culture, & Resistance. 2019;**5**:21-34

[19] Ziff B, Rao PV. Borrowed Power: Essays on Cultural Appropriation. New Brunswick, USA: Rutgers University Press; 1997

[20] Bhandari M. Is tourism always beneficial? A case study from the Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok, Kenya. The Pacific Journal of Science and Technology. 2014;**15**:458-483

[21] Galaty JG. This land is yours: Social and economic factors in the privatization, subdivision and sale of Maasai ranches. Nomadica Peoples. 1992;**30**:26-40

[22] Butt B. Coping with uncertainty and variability: The influence of protected areas on pastoral herding strategies in East Africa. Human Ecology. 2011;**39**:289-307

[23] Thompson M, Homewood K. Elites, entrepreneurs and exclusion in Maasailand. Human Ecology. 2002;**30**(1):107-138

[24] Rutten M. Selling Wealth to Buy Poverty – The Process of the Individualization of Landownership among the Maasai Pastoralists of Kajiado District Kenya, 1890-1990. Vol. 10. Nijmegen, Netherlands: Nijmegen Studies in Development and Cultural Change; 1992

[25] Thompson M, Serneels S, Kaelo D, Trench PC, Mara M. Land privatization and wildlife decline: Can conservation pay its way? In: Staying Maasai? Livelihood, Conservation and Development in East African Rangelands. New York: Springer; 2009. pp. 77-114

[26] Kimani K, Pickard J. Recent trends and implications of group ranch sub-division and fragmentation in Kajiado District. Geographical Journal. 1998;**164**(2):202-213

[27] Honey M. Community conservation and early ecotourism experiments in Kenya. Environment. 2009;**51**(1):46-56

[28] Akama JS. Marginalization of the Maasai in Kenya. Annals of Tourism Research. 1999;**26**(3):716-771

[29] Bruner EM. Maasai on the lawn: Tourist realism in the East Africa. Cultural Anthropology. 1994;**9**(2):435-470

[30] Williams S. Tourism Geography a New Synthesis. London: Routledge; 2009

[31] Hazzah L, Dolrenry S, Kaplan D, Frank L. The influence of park access during drought on attitudes toward wildlife and lion killing behaviour in Maasailand, Kenya. Environmental Conservation. 2013;**40**(3):266-276

[32] Steinhart EI. Black Poachers, White Hunters: A Social History of Hunting in Colonial Kenya. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press; 2006

[33] Lewis AE. Amboseli Landscapes: Maasai Pastoralism, Wildlife Conservation and Natural Resource Management in Kenya, 1944-Present. East Lansing: Michigan State University; 2015

[34] Lovatt Smith D, Amboseli. A Miracle Too Far? Herstmonceux, United Kingdom: Mawenzi Books; 2008

[35] Galaty JG. The collapsing platform for pastoralism: Land sales and land loss in Kajiado County, Kenya. Nomadic Peoples. 2013;**17**(2):20-39

[36] Mwangi E. The puzzle of group ranch subdivision in Kenya's Maasailand. Development and Change. 2007;**38**(5):889-910

[37] Holmes G. Protection, politics and protest: Understanding resistance to conservation. Conservation and Society. 2007;**5**(2):184-201

[38] Tyrell P, Russell S, Western DD. Seasonal movements of wildlife and livestock in a heterogeneous pastoral landscape: Implications for coexistence and community-based conservation. Global Ecology and Conservation. 2017;**12**:59-72

[39] Ahmed Z, Booth L, Njagi L, Stephanou E. The warrior's dilemma: Can Maasai culture persist in a changing world? In Consilience. 2015;**13**:300-310

[40] Ondicho TG. Indigenous ecotourism as a poverty eradication strategy: A case study of the Maasai people in the Amboseli region of Kenya. African Study Monographsm Supplementary Issue. 2018;**56**:87-109

[41] Kenya Wildlife Service. Amboseli National Park – Management Plan 2020-2030. Nairobi, Kenya: Kenya Wildlife Service; 2020. p. 8, 7. Available from: https://www.kws.go.ke/sites/default/files/2023-10/ANP%20MANAGEMENT%20PLAN%202020-2030_0.pdf

[42] Western D, Manzolillo Nightingale DL, Mose VN, Ole Sipitiek J, Kimiti KS. Variability and change in Maasai views of wildlife and the implications for conservation. Human Ecology. 2019;**47**:205-216

[43] Ondicho TG. Tourism, Power and Politics: The Challenges of Maasai Involvement in Tourism Development. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Massey University; 2010

[44] Okello MM, Ole Seno SK, Nthiga RW. Reconciling people's livelihoods and environmental conservation in the rural landscapes in Kenya: Opportunities and challenges in the Amboseli landscapes. Natural Resources Forum. 2009;**33**:123-133

[45] Dowie M. Conservation Refugees: The Hundred-Year Conflict between Global Conservation and Native Peoples. Cambridge, UK: The MIT Press; 2009

[46] Ogutu JO, Piepho HP, Said MY, Ojwang GO, Njino LW, et al. Extreme wildlife declines and concurrent increase in livestock numbers in Kenya: What are the causes? PLoS One. 2016;**11**(9):e0163249

[47] UNWTO. Recommendations on Sustainable Development of Indigenous Tourism, World Committee on Tourism Ethics, Adopted by the Resolution a/RES/723(XXIII) of the General Assembly of UNWTO. Madrid, Spain: UNWTO; 2019

[48] Samal R, Dash M. Ecotourism, biodiversity conservation and livelihoods: Understanding the convergence and divergence. International Journal of Geoheritage and Parks. 2023;**11**(1):1-20

[49] Ondicho TG. Local communities and ecotourism development in Kimana, Kenya. Journal of Tourism. 2012;**13**(1):41-60

[50] Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada. Indigenous Cultural Experiences National Guidelines. Vancouver, Canada: Indigenous Tourism Association of

Canada; 2017. Available from: https://indigenoustourism.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/ITAC-Indigenous-Cultural-Experiences-Guide-web.pdf

[51] UNWTO & WINTA. Compendium of Good Practices in Indigenous Tourism, Regional Focus on the Americas. Madrid, Spain: UNWTO; 2023

[52] Butler R, Hinch T. Tourism and Indigenous Peoples: Issues and Implications. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann; 2007

[53] The International Ecotourism Society, What is Ecotourism? Available from: https://ecotourism.org/what-is-ecotourism/

[54] Tides Canada, Indigenous-Led Ecotourism. A Source for Positive Community Impacts a Summative Report of the Indigenous Ecotourism Summit. Vancouver, Canada: Tides Canada, Indigenous-Led Ecotourism; 2018. Available from: https://coastfunds.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Indigenous-Led-Ecotourism_Summit_Report.pdf

[55] Rights and Resources. East Africa: Ecotourism "Suicide or Development?". Washington D.C., USA: Rights and Resources Initiative; 2007

[56] Saarinen J. Cultural tourism in southern African: The role of local cultures and ethnicity in tourism development. In: Cultural Tourism in Southern Africa. Bristol: Channel View Publications; 2016. pp. 145-164

[57] Akama J. The Creation of the Maasai Image and Tourism Development in Kenya, in Cultural Tourism in Africa: Strategies for the New Millennium. Netherlands: Association for Tourism and Leisure Education; 2002. pp. 43-54

[58] Melubo K. Chapter 3: Indigenous tourism in Africa. In: Cultural Heritage and Tourism in Africa. New York: Routledge; 2023

[59] Disko S, Tugendhat H, García-Alix L. World Heritage Sites and Indigenous Peoples Rights - An Introduction. Darwin, Australia: IWGIA, Forest Peoples Programme and Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation; 2014. pp. 3-37

[60] Gao Y. Big Data – The Impact of World Heritage Sites on Tourism. The Academic; 2023. Available from: https://theacademic.com/impact-of-world-heritage-sites-on-tourism/

[61] Disko S, Ooft M. The World Heritage and Sustainable Development Policy - a Turning Point for Indigenous Peoples? Milton Park: Routlege; 2018. pp. 101-119

[62] Ndaskoi NJ. Report of the Fact Finding Mission Conducted in Ngorongoro Conservation Area. Arusha: PINGOS Forum; 2021

[63] IWGIA, IIPFWH, IPACC. Indigenous Peoples' Rights and UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Submission to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for his Report to the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly. Copenhagen, Denmark: IWGIA; 2022

[64] Tucker H, Carnegie E. World heritage and the contradictions of 'universal value'. Annals of Tourism Research. 2014;**47**:63-76

[65] Timothy DJ. Chapter 18 heritage tourism in Africa, where do we go from here? In: Cultural Heritage and Tourism in Africa. New York: Routledge; 2023

[66] UNESCO. Report of the Sub-Regional Meeting in the Pacific on the Convention for the Safeguarding of the

Intangible Cultural Heritage from 12-14 December, Nadi, Fiji. Paris, France: UNESCO; 2007

[67] UNESCO. Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Paris: UNESCO; 2003

[68] Ololo NG, Dicke PUC. Change and continuity in event tourism development in Nigeria: Examples from Ekpe cultural festival in Abia state. Tourism Review International. 2022;**26**(1):57-71

[69] Timothy DJ. Heritage and tourism: Alternative perspectives from South Asia. South Asian Journal of Tourism and Hospitality. 2021;**1**(1):35-57

[70] Chauma EC, Ngwira C. Managing a world heritage site in Malawi: Do residents' sentiments matter? Journal of Heritage Tourism. 2022;**17**(2):142-157

[71] Irandu E, Shah P. Development of cultural heritage tourism in Kenya: A strategy for diversification of tourism products. In: Conservation of Natural and Cultural Heritage in Kenya: A Cross-Disciplinary Approach. London, United Kingdom: UCL Press; 2016. pp. 154-171

[72] Xing W. Sustainable Tourism: Pathways to Environmental Preservation, Economic Growth, and Social Equity. 2024. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/380997126_Sustainable_tourism_Pathways_to_environmental_preservation_economic_growth_and_social_equity

[73] Nocca F. The role of cultural heritage in sustainable development: Multidimensional indicators as decision-making tool. Sustainability. 2017;**9**(10):1882. DOI: 10.3390/su9101882

[74] Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust. Available from: http://maasaiwilderness.org

[75] Basecamp Explorer, Mara Naboisho Conservancy. Available from: https://basecampexplorer.com/foundation/project/mara-naboisho/

[76] Mara Naboisho Conservancy. Available from: https://naboisho.com

[77] Rushby K. Bright New Start: How the Maasai are Finally Profiting From Tourism. 2011. Available from: https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2011/jan/29/kenya-masai-mara-safari-conservation

[78] Ngwesi IL. People of Wildlife. Available from: http://ilngwesi.com/content/visit/

[79] ACHPR. Report of the African Commission's Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities. Banjul, Gambia, Copenhagen, Denmark: ACHPR and IWGIA; 2005

Chapter 3

The Management of Waste in Large Chain Hotels: A Review of Corporate Sustainability Reporting

Margaret Camilleri Fenech

Abstract

Corporate sustainability reports have become a mainstream activity, particularly for large business organisations. This review sets out to explore the commitments made by three of the largest hospitality chains in Europe with regarding waste management between 2018 and 2023. It notes that hotel chains are becoming more assertive in the targets set and in monitoring their achievements, with single-use plastic and food waste being the main streams targeted. Literature confirms that these waste streams are those that are most commonly produced by the industry. The increased commitment augurs well for the implementation of the European Sustainability Reporting Standards Directive, which sets a number of ambitious requirements but promises to reduce costs over the medium to long term.

Keywords: hospitality industry, corporate reporting, materiality reporting, waste reduction targets, European Sustainability Reporting Standards

1. Introduction: Waste and the hospitality industry

The tourism industry makes a significant contribution to the daily metric tonnes of solid waste sent to landfills [1]. Hotels, a central entity to the industry particularly as tourists travel to more diverse and distant locations, impose numerous environmental impacts which include greenhouse gas emissions, air and noise pollution, biodiversity loss and waste generation [2] with the quantities of waste generated increasing with the star rating [1]. In the case of the latter, organic waste tends to be the higher fraction [3, 4]; however, fractions like plastics, cartons, electronic material, etc., are equally preoccupying [3]. An example of this can be drawn from the toiletries distributed in every resident's room daily where figures can reach staggering proportions [5]. On a macro basis, tourism-related waste was estimated to increase local generation figures by as much as 25 percent [3], while on a micro basis, waste originating from a 5-star buffet dinner service was noted to amount to three times as much as that generated during an a-la-carte dinner. Hotel waste also features the pervasive problem of single-use plastic and linear systems where the waste generated has little chance of being recovered [5].

Hotels, and in particular hotel chains, are located across various geographical boundaries giving rise to different cultural contexts and varying development needs, stakeholder expectations and legislative requirements [6]. These differences exert their influence also on sustainability obligations with expectations shaped by cultures but also economic and regulatory status.

Such variations are also manifested in the management of waste with numerous differences across regions. Companies operating within the European Union (EU) and are regulated by specific waste legislation based on the waste hierarchy and polluters pay principle, amongst others, and more recent policy developments focused on the circular economy. On the other hand, in Middle Eastern and North African countries, waste management, has, until recently, been viewed as garbage that needs to be disposed of [6]. Furthermore, the concept of sustainability still has a level of fluidity [6], which for the hospitality industry may proof to be confusing particularly in view that this industry is both a culprit and a victim of issues related to sustainability since it is a contributor to the environmental challenges, we face today but is also directly affected by changes in the environment and is a direct victim when particular destinations become unattractive. This presents various challenges particularly when hotel infrastructure is located across a number of regions with different requirements and expectations.

These differences are also manifested in Corporate Sustainability Reporting (CSR), which although has been an established practice for quite some time, differing standards exist from country to country. Within the EU, the introduction of the Corporate Social Reporting Directive (CSRD) in January 2023, sets its requirements for the 2024 financial year for reports published in 2025 [7]. This Directive aims to ensure that investors and other stakeholders have access to information necessary to assess the impact of companies on society and the environment and therefore allow interested parties to assess financial risks and opportunities arising from climate change and other issues related to sustainability. The process also aims to reduce reporting costs for companies over the medium to long term by harmonising the information to be provided. This is in view that companies subject to CSRD must report according to the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) [7].

In preamble 17 of Directive 2022/2464 on CSR, it is noted that the ESRS reporting standards apply mainly to large enterprises that employ more than 500 employees and to public-interest entities that are parent undertakings of a large group with an average number of employees exceeds 500 on a consolidated basis. Furthermore, small and medium-sized undertakings whose securities are admitted to trading on a regulated market that are public-interest entities are also allowed to report. Parent undertakings of large groups should prepare sustainability reporting at the group level [8].

The requirements, amongst others, set out by this Directive, entail that in the consolidated management report information that seeks to understand a group's impact on sustainability includes a description of time-bound targets related to sustainability matters, a description of the role of administrative, management and supervisory bodies with regards to sustainability matters together with a description of the group's policies together with information about the existence of incentive schemes. Indicators that are relevant to the sustainability objectives and achievements are also required [Article 20 (7)] [8].

Sustainability reporting standards are sector-agnostic, that is, they apply to all undertakings regardless of which sector they operate in. While part of these standards focuses on social and human rights, environmental reporting is divided into six sections

which are listed here (a) climate change mitigation (b) climate change adaptation (c) water and marine resources (iv) resource use and the circular economy (v) pollution (vi) biodiversity. The focus of this chapter is on resource use and circular economy which, as noted in Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2772 as regards sustainability reporting standards, "is a major driver for other environmental impacts like climate change, pollution, water and marine resources and biodiversity" [9].

The requirements set in the sustainability reporting standards relate to the resource inflows where products including packaging and materials (specifying critical raw materials and rare earth), water and property, plant and equipment are used in the operations of the organisation and along its upstream value chain. The next step is resource outflows, where the business organisation must provide a description of the key products and materials that result from the production process. The account of the outflows shall expose the durability of the products, the repairability, where possible including an established rating system, and the rates of recyclable content including their packaging. This brings in the issue of waste which would result from the necessary processes to generate the key products of the organisations including its destination, that is, incineration, landfill and other disposal operations [9].

While the ESRS regulation sets the requirements for the upcoming year, CSR reporting within the hotel sector has abounded for a long time. Madanaguli et al. [10] carried out a systematic literature review of the subject and noted that the literature highlights three reasons why CSR practices have gained so much interest—(1) the provision of intangible services which include goodwill, brand awareness and loyalty to customers, (2) the provision of reputational benefits which in turn can result in a number of positive outcomes including customer loyalty and the willingness of customers to pay a higher prices and (3) CSR activities have been associated with increased financial performance [10].

2. Corporate reporting in the hotel industry: Data collection approach

CSR represents various pro-social behavioural activities that organisations engage in towards the betterment of society. The reporting of CSR activities is considered a powerful communication tool that can help reduce communication gaps, however, several kinds of the literature point out that this reporting is a mere tool that manages the corporate image of hotels whereby the actual performance data is absent therefore requiring stakeholders to accept the stated good image at face value [10].

This chapter seeks to examine in-depth CSR reporting of major hotel chains in Europe with regard to waste generation and its management taking the period between 2018 and 2023 into consideration. During these six years, the expectations with regard to CSR reporting have become more demanding both from a regulatory and stakeholder perspective. Therefore, the period under review makes it possible to examine the progress made during a time when requirements are experiencing a steadfast increase including in the level of ambition of the objectives set. The approach adopted here can be considered as a cross-sectional comparative study where the commitment and performance in waste-related activities in their CSR reports of selected global hotel chains. The review document then compares these reports to the requirements of the CSRD Directive focusing on the resource use and circular economy section. The main material used is grey literature which in this case takes the form of CSR and annual reports from the selected hotel chains in Europe as listed by Global Data. The selection of the six-year period also allows for an analysis

of trends during a time space when CSR reporting has gained in its importance, both from a regulatory and ethical perspective [11].

As noted earlier, the selection of the hotel chains is based on the list provided by Global Data. The website lists Accor SA, Best Western International Inc., Louvre Hotels, Whitbread Plc. and Intercontinental Hotel Group (IHG) Plc as the top hotel chains in Europe in 2021 according to the number of properties owned [12]. In this review, the annual reports of Accor SA, Whitbread Plc and IHG, between 2018 and 2023 were examined to identify the waste related targets set by these hotels, the actual practices undertaken to achieve the set targets and the progress registered in the objectives set. Reports for Best Western and Louvre Hotels were not immediately available.

3. Adapting to reporting requirements of global hospitality chains

Sustainability reporting is evolving rapidly [13]. A challenge for companies that are based in multiple jurisdictions is that they will be required to account to multiple frameworks particularly in view that stakeholder interest is becoming more evident. In addition to this, the introduction of CSRD will require a more transparent, quantified and coherent data. This will make reporting more uniform thus easing comparison. In this regard, the international sustainability standards board (ISSB) has developed a global baseline reporting which can be used as a guide for multinational organisations. These guidelines were developed in parallel with the ESRS to ensure alignment where the two standards overlap. While this avoids the risk of duplicating efforts, compliance with one standard does not necessarily guarantee compliance with the other. Therefore, multinational companies must ensure that they comprehend the frameworks of these standards including their similarities and differences to be able to define their reporting framework [13].

ESRS legislation introduced the concept of double materiality which is reflected in financial and impact materiality and acknowledges risks and opportunities from both a financial and non-financial perspective. The concept requires that organisations disclose not only how sustainability affects their organisation but also how their operations affect the environment and society at large [14]. Double materiality is considered a basis for sustainability disclosures and is a complex and uncertain requirement, in that, organisations need to account for risks and opportunities that influence the company (inside-out) and the impact that the company has on the environment, economy and society (outside-in) [15]. Furthermore, the legislation requires value chain estimation where metrics include upstream and/or downstream data. In the case of ESRS 5, reference is made to resource inflows and outflows and waste which would depict the situation of the company with regards to circularity. An assessment of the material impacts, risks and opportunities is also required. This will help the organisation understand its resource use. Resource inflows require a description of the products and materials including packaging and critical raw and rare earths materials. Resource outflows, on the other hand, organisations are expected to report information related to its products and waste. This will assess how the organisation contributes to the circular economy in both as design and disposal stage and the waste reduction and management strategy including the extent to which the organisation knows how its pre-consumer waste is managed in its own activities.

4. CSR reporting in three hotel chains

4.1 Accor hotel

Accor SA is present in 110 countries and has over 5500 hotels, 10,000 food and beverage venues, wellness facilities and coworking spaces. The company has divided its organisation into two distinct divisions (1) premium, midscale and economy and (2) luxury and lifestyle. Their actions with regard to waste are focused on food and single-use plastic. In the tools and reporting section, the hotel chain highlights the importance of "robust data to steer lasting sustainable transformation, as we cannot improve what we don't measure" [16] and together with carbon emissions and energy consumption, immediately put into focus food waste and the elimination of single-use plastics.

The Integrated Report, published yearly by the Accor group, notes several changes since 2018. In the first report reviewed [17], Accor focuses on food waste as part of the CSR materiality matrix. This is also connected to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specifically under SDG 12 [17] which aims "to halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses" [18]. The target set by the SDGs focuses on the macro environment, however, no additional information is provided as to what actions were planned and how the group connects its actions to this SDG. The 2019 report expands on this concept by seeking to reduce the environmental footprint, with waste as one of its main challenges. Here, the promotion of sustainable food is listed distinctly from the reduction of the environmental footprint. Emphasis is made on the fact that Accor derives one-third of its business volume from food thus requiring a holistic view of food provision which not only accounts for food waste but also high-quality food, environmentally friendly farming practices and protection of biodiversity. In connection with SDG 12, the hotel embarked on a project that involved guests to act alongside the responsible hotel actions [19].

The targets set in 2020 take a similar approach to those of 2019. However, in the 2020 report, a carbon trajectory was added to divide greenhouse gas emissions under scope 1, 2 and 3 and separates its impacts between direct and indirect. This classification falls under the Greenhouse Gas Corporate Standard which classifies emissions under 3 scopes – scope 1, is direct emissions from owned or controlled sources, scope 2, refers to indirect emissions from purchased energy, while scope 3 emissions refer to all indirect emissions that occur in the value chain reporting to the company. This refers to both upstream and downstream emissions [20]. In this case, the emissions generated from the transport of waste (56 million tonnes or 1%) are included as part of scope 3 emissions.

The 2020 report also highlights the continuation of the 'Heartist project' which involves employees, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the revision of a supplier approval policy. This together with reducing costs, also focuses on issues related to food waste. A commendable action in this report is the roll out of the 'Planet 1 – Acting here', which amongst others, has the ambition to eliminate single-use plastics generated from the guest experience by the end of 2022 [20].

In the 2021 report, the hotel group became more assertive with regard to its waste reduction commitments. In fact, it sets a food waste reduction target of 30% for 2021 and, once again, asserts its commitment to eliminate single-use plastic from the guest experience by the end of 2022 [21].

Establishing a quantitative baseline and targets is evidenced more strongly in the 2022 report. This is evidenced by the commitment to a net zero carbon footprint by 2050 and the use of the 'Too Good To Go' app which saved a total of 833,000 meals from being discarded [22]. Quantitative figures were also used in the 2023 report, whereby it was noted that during 2023, 57 single-use plastic products were eliminated from 79% of hotels including water bottles. Food waste efforts were focused on traceability within the supply chain and the championing of responsible consumption by encouraging guests to discover local, in-season, organic and plant-based food. Another initiative included the use of a tool to measure and inform guests about the carbon footprint of 45 meals found on the menu. This initiative was initiated in the United Arab Emirates. Finally, it is commendable to note that the hotel chain worked on the definition of a food waste to establish a baseline from more than 800 hotels [23].

4.2 Whitbread Plc

Whitbread Plc is a vertically integrated business that combines property, hotel operations, brand and inventory distribution. The origin of the company dates to 1742 with the opening of a mass-producing brewery which then was expanded into various restaurant chains and hotels. Like other major companies, Whitbread places its commitment to the environment in a prominent position and promotes a strategy with the title 'Force for good' which focuses on opportunity (focused on giving employees the opportunities to thrive), community (active support to charitable activities) and responsibility (sustainability reporting focused mainly on water and climate) [24].

In the 2018 report, the company focused on plastic waste and coffee cup recycling. During this period, the recycling of takeaway cups sold at Costa Coffee was emphasised. The aim in this case was to equalise recycling figures with the same number of cups placed on the market. This also necessitates that infrastructure is made attractive for waste collectors. The 2018 report also aims for a 100% diversion from landfills for waste originating from restaurants and Premier Inn that forms part of the chain. Initiatives for coffee grounds were also introduced [25].

The 2019 report points out that one of the main impacts of the business chain is the generation of residual waste. The report boasts that while in 2009, 48% of waste was diverted from landfill, the figure reached 99% in 2019. The company also adopts the circular economy principles with regards to recyclable waste streams and food waste which is treated through anaerobic digestion. However, the company also focuses on the supply chain, particularly by reducing packaging. The elimination of plastic straws from hotels and restaurants is also emphasised while the cup recycling scheme with Costa is continued. The latter saw the recycling of 41 million cups in the first six months of 2019. The scheme has been joined by other major companies like Caffe Nero, McDonalds, etc. [26].

The reduction of food waste and the elimination of single-use plastics is a priority also for 2020 with the company establishing a collaborative approach with waste contractors. In the 2020 report, it is noted that single-use plastics do not form part only of the food and beverage service but also in other streams like laundry packaging. Whitbread sets out the ambitious target to remove all unnecessary single-use plastic products by 2025 and, to avoid any misconceptions, it defines "Unnecessary single-use plastic as that which is used instantaneously as a one-off application and whose removal would not lead to unintended negative consequences, such as increased waste and carbon emissions or safety issues". In this report, it is stressed that miniature shower products were never utilised as part of the company's services. Similarly to Accor Hotel,

the target established for food waste is tied to SDG 12 which aims to reduce wastage by 50% by 2030. The company acknowledges that this necessitates changes both at the production and consumption stages and gives details of the initiatives it is undertaking which include (1) ingredient pack sizing for portion control and flexibility, (2) waste reduction across the supply chain, (3) definition of exact quality standards to reduce rejections, (4) collaboration with FareShare and The Real Junk Food Project to donate excess food and (5) planning of portion sizes. In the kitchen, the company included schemes like reducing the cupboard of ingredients and stock rotation [27].

The 2021 report builds on the 2020 report in that it uses the same SDG target. In this case, it also states that they have achieved a 32.3 percent reduction from our 2018 baseline year. This report that 99.9 percent of operational waste has been diverted from the landfill with the aim of reaching 100 percent. An additional clarification is made with regards to the definition of unnecessary plastic waste in that it is specified that it is not required for (1) food safety purposes, (2) extended shelf life of food and (3) when removed does not result in unintended consequences (e.g., increases in food waste or increases in carbon emissions) [28].

The 2022/23 report breaks down what was achieved per waste stream to divert 99.9% of operational waste from landfilling. According to their report, waste generated reached 164,706 tonnes, the majority of which is recycled (58 percent) while the remaining 41 percent is sent for energy recovery, and the final quantities are landfilled. This year's report also points to moving up the waste hierarchy with the diversion of thousands of pillows and duvets to charities for people who are experiencing furniture poverty. The report also notes that, post-Covid-19, food waste increased since the sites went to normal capacity, and therefore the targets to reduce food waste needed to reflect this. The company continued to distribute to charity networks to combat food insecurity.

However, this report also notes the difficulty of eliminating this type of waste. In view of this, it was decided to focus on problematic plastics that are still in the supply chain. These include (1) household polystyrene packaging (2) polyvinyl chloride (PVC) packaging (3) PVC cling film (4) non-compostable fruit/veg stickers (5) non-compostable tea and coffee bags (6) single-use, single-serving plastic sachets/jiggers in restaurant settings and (7) plastic packaging for uncut fresh fruit and vegetables [28].

Finally, in a 2023 report, Whitbread Plc continued its commitment to reduce food waste by 50 percent by 2030. The company also established a cross-functional team to reduce food waste generated at each step with initiatives including menu management and the introduction of a range of trials and innovations that target this issue. The company also forms part of the Zero Carbon Forum whereby hospitality companies share the challenges that they face in this regard [29].

4.3 International Hotel Group (IHG)

The International Hotel Group (IHG) started its journey with the opening of a brewery in 1777 with the trademark registered in 1875. The growth into the hospitality sector was launched in 1900 with the founding of the InterContinental brand in 1946 whose aim was to provide luxury accommodation at the end of every flight. Additional investments were made in the 1950s with the introduction of the Holiday Inn for family travel, while in the 1990s boutique hotels were introduced. Presently the chain has over 6000 hotels [30].

In the 2018 report, the company highlights that more people are requesting information about the environmental footprint of the hotels. Requests for this information

arose particularly from business accounts (60%) using the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) corporate responsibility module. The report notes a top-down approach where the management of the chain provides various green solutions to the hotels forming part of the group with initiatives focusing on soap, drinking straws and food waste originating from the kitchen with a smart metre technology used to measure the quantity of food waste generated [31].

The 2019 report builds on the 2018 initiatives and notes progress in the removal of straws and switching all brands to bulk-size bathroom products while diverting surplus food to local charities. Similar to the companies explored above, the company uses as its guiding indicator SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production. It is commendable to note that this was the first hotel group to commit to switching all brands from miniature bathroom amenities to bulk solutions. The hotel also launched a green supplier scorecard and uses AI technology in 24 hotels to reduce food waste together with joining the Ellen MacArthur Foundation 'Circular Economy 100 network[1]'. With regard to plastic bottles. European hotels started to trial alternatives. The chain also saw the introduction of the 'Too good to go' app. Efforts to upcycle hotel linen into aprons, bags and hand towels meant that 1.1 tonnes of waste were recycled. Recycling of soap was also continued [32].

The 2020 report talks about a materiality assessment that was undertaken to identify and prioritise the key responsible business issues based on ESG requirements. Materiality assessment is a key starting point for sustainability reporting whereby the organization identifies impacts, risks and opportunities. Reference ESRS emphasizes the concept of double materiality, that is, the impact and financial materiality. In 2020, material issues were mainly related to the Covid-19 pandemic with the report highlighting the issue of single-use items and personal protective gear. However, the chain also points to the introduction of digital versions of newspapers, the opportunity to request reduced housekeeping and switching to paperless billing. In this report, the chain harbours the ambition to pioneer the transformation of the hospitality industry to a minimal-waste generation industry by 2030, particularly by eliminating single-use items or moving to reusable or recycled items, minimise food waste and establishing collaborations to achieve circular solutions [33].

Building on the commitment established in the materiality report conducted in the previous year, issues of single-use plastic, food waste minimisation and collaborations to achieve circular solutions are brought to the fore. The chain established the Hotel Waste Management Measurement Methodology to help streamline guidance for waste reporting. Furthermore, it encourages conscious consumption by incorporating local and seasonal foods and cutting ingredients to minimise wastage.

In 2022, the chain continued with its aim to pioneer the transformation to a minimal-waste hospitality industry. During this year, the company launched the global food waste training e-learning module in 13 languages which was made part of the general managers training. Suppliers were also requested to fill in a questionnaire that helps determine their environmental credentials. Work with the Too Good To Go app was continued while the pursuit to eliminate single-use items and collaborations to achieve a circular economy were sustained [34].

Targets in the 2023 report built upon those of 2022. The materiality report serve as a basis for shaping the 2030 targets and identifying the ESG factors. It also notes the success of the food waste e-training manual with the course completed reaching 37,000

[1] This refers to a pre-competitive innovation programme established to enable organisations to develop new opportunities and realise their circular economy ambitions.

Hotel chain	Type of waste targeted	Measurability and time bound objectives between 2018 and 2023	Stakeholders involved	Integrated with its overall business strategy
Accor Hotel	Food & single-use plastic	The 2019 report sets out the broad objective of eliminating food waste and promoting healthy and sustainable food. In 2020, Accor includes the elimination of single-use plastic. However, objectives are vague and non-measurable. The same trend continues until 2022. The real leap forward comes in 2023, when the company sets the aim to reduce 60% of food waste by 2030 and eliminate single-use plastic from the guest experience.	Employees, guests, suppliers and partners	Yes. (mainly connected to the food and beverage sector)
Whitbread Plc	Coffee cup recycling, food waste & single-use plastics	A nationwide in-store recycling scheme for Costa Coffee cups was launched in 2018. In 2019, the company sought to recycle the same number of cups distributed. The focus is shifted to the elimination of unnecessary single-use plastics in 2020, together with cutting food waste by half by 2030. Several sector-specific, measurable and time-bound targets are set. The food waste target is set against the FY18/19 baseline in the 2023 report. A commitment to switch all brands from miniature to bulk bathroom amenities until 2021 was made in 2019.	Employees, suppliers, customers, humanitarian charities, service providers like waste contractors	Yes. (Mainly in the interaction with the customer)
Intercontinental Hotel Group	Plastic and food waste, linen	Introduced AI technology to reduce food waste. The hotel reports achievements but not targets. Non-measurability of the objectives set features also in the 2023 report which claims to transition to the ESG requirements. However, measurable and time-bound objectives are set for training of the general managers in hotels and going down to other employees.	Suppliers, charity organisations, employees, authorities,	Yes (mainly in its operations)

Table 1.
Overview of main points covered in the CSR reports between 2018 and 2023. Source: Author.

employees. Together with this, every IHG hotel is given access to an online management platform that helps hotel teams make greener choices [35]. A summary of the main points covered in the annual reports by the three hotel chains is provided in **Table 1**.

5. Discussion

Documentation about the impact of the hospitality industry on the environment is widely available [36–38]. Tourism is an ever-growing industry, with the demand

for sustainable tourism gaining in influence [39]. The reports explored in the previous section indicate that hotels are becoming more dedicated to sustainability and, in particular waste issues. Companies are not just paying lip service to commit to better managing their waste but, as in the case of IHG Plc, also conduct materiality reports that identify where and what priorities need to be addressed. While the examination of the reports notes progress in reporting between 2018 and 2023, it is important that companies set a strategy to (1) understand the requirements of the Directive, (2) evaluate the present practices, (3) benchmark the gaps, (4) plan the corrective actions and (5) monitor the changes continuously [15]. While additional detail would be necessary, the reports surveyed note that these companies have calculated the quantities of waste generated and, in some cases, these can serve as an opportunity to divert waste from landfills, which, as noted by Whitbread Plc, can result in reducing costs particularly when this disposal method is becoming more and more expensive. However, the elimination of plastic waste has proven to be less straightforward since it can also result in increased food waste.

When large hotels, that boast of an intercontinental presence, engage in quantified actions to reduce waste, a self-reinforcing spiral is likely to ensue, particularly when the new business imperatives move through the supply chain. The size of the companies examined here makes it possible to create a 'pull' factor particularly when the managing organisation is willing to innovate and raise the bar across their chain. This is an essential factor in reaching tipping points where a snowball effect creates an exponential positive change. Additionally, it exerts significant influence on the governments and NGOs [40]. The progress noted in the sustainability reporting between 2018 and 2023 can be a catalyst that creates these spiral changes. These companies commit to these shifts both upstream and downstream of the value chain—this corresponds to the requirements of the sustainability statement found in ESRS 2 which states that companies need to explain to what extent the statement covers the upstream and downstream value chain including the (1) time frame, that is, whether medium or long term time horizons and (2) value chain estimation which includes upstream and downstream value chains including the identification of the metrics, their basis for preparation and accuracy [9].

Although the depth of the materiality report conducted by IHG is not specified here, the fact that the company is using it to prioritise its actions justifies that this reporting is effective in concentrating efforts and resources. IHG also mentions the use of this report in a number of successive reports further justifying its essentiality. Although the materiality report prepared in this case, does not necessarily reflect the requirements of the ESRS Directive, it does correspond with the idea that reporting costs for companies are reduced over the medium to long term. As noted, in Section 3, double materiality is a sector-agnostic requirement that requires organisations to report how sustainability affects their operations and vice-versa. However, requirements about its requirements are still uncertain and complex and additional guidance is needed from the European Authorities as to the methodological approach required including the depth to conduct this analysis [41].

A common aspect noted in the reports of the companies explored here is the use of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a basis for the setting of targets. While all three companies' main focus is food waste and single-use plastic, which previous literature notes as the most common waste streams in the hospitality industry [3, 5], the SDGs served to assist these companies in setting and quantifying their targets accordingly. This approach helps to eliminate the fluidity which is often associated with the sustainability concept [6]. SDG 12 was used by both IHG and Accor to

quantify by how much food waste is to be reduced and time-bound it. While sometimes SDGs are criticised for being contradictory and over-ambitious, in this case, they assisted in focusing the efforts of these companies into measurable targets. The latter is essential in amassing the motivation of employees as they see their efforts paying off. Furthermore, efforts related to CSR are known to lead to positive behavioural and psychological consequences in terms of organisational identification and employee retention. This results in strengthening bonds between the organisation and its employees. Positive effects are also noted in customer relations [10].

While Senge et al. [40] state that 'sustainability is rarely incorporated into the heart of the most companies' business strategies [p. 143] [9] these reports show that this trend is no longer viable. In fact, these companies pinpoint their environmental commitments in the introductory section of their annual reports. Another promising factor is that they establish respective steering committees to oversee the implementation of the set targets. Governance, falling under ESRS 2, is a requirement that is referred to as 'sector agnostic', that is, it applies to all industries and represents a significant step towards improved responsibilities and transparency. ESRS 2 clarifies the expected structures for the processes and practices associated with business practices and will contribute to building the reputation of companies thus promoting the trust of stakeholders and ultimately leaving a positive impact on the environment in which the companies operate. Overall, ESRS require that a report is made about the (1) composition of the administrative, management and supervisory bodies including their roles and responsibilities in exercising oversight to manage material impacts, risks and opportunities and their expertise in these matters; and (2) how the targets are established and their achievement is monitored [9].

A point in which all three companies examined here will need to invest resources is the identification and measurement of inflows and outflows which require also a measurement of packaging and critical and raw materials and which would also provide a deeper assessment of waste generated along the supply chains and circularity.

This essentially demands that organisations set a material flow analysis (MFA) which Brunner and Rechberger define as "a systematic assessment of the flows and stocks of materials or substances in a defined system, often used to evaluate the sustainability and efficiency of material use". The tool involves tracking the quantities and pathways of materials as they enter, pass through and exit a given system. The application of this methodology helps in understanding the dynamics of material use, identifying inefficiencies and assessing environmental impacts [42]. The tool is applicable at different levels and can be used to assess the circularity of organisations thus helping introduce new forms of consumption and product design [43]. However, in the context of ESG, it still needs to make a debut. A point of concern is the data requirement – while, as noted earlier, costs for data collection and reporting are likely to go down in the medium and long term, MFA requires substantial effort and resources, particularly in the initial stages which are likely to result in increased costs.

6. Conclusions

The reports examined here note that, together with climate and water, waste reduction and management have become a priority in establishing and reducing the environmental footprint of hotels. It is positive that the reports of the hotel chains examined here aim to provide a good image which does *not* go beyond face value. Additionally, stakeholders can obtain sufficiently detailed information, while

requirements for the introduction of ESG metrics are initially set for large organisations, this is likely to result in a snowball effect within the same sector. Innovations, like the use of AI with regard to food waste and the trial use of alternatives to replace plastic bottles, tend to create a pull factor that will result in a much-needed snowball effect that would tip the industry towards improved sustainability. Other initiatives, like upcycling linen, soap recycling and the use of bulk toilet amenities instead of miniature ones are also likely to be replicated elsewhere.

While adjustments are necessary, this review noted that sustainability issues have gained in relevance in the overall business strategy. The requirements set by ESRS necessitate that companies provide quantified, time bound targets, which include the upstream and downstream value chain and whether the report is being prepared on a consolidated or individual manner [9]. Additionally, it addresses the issue of packaging in the supply chain, a point that is already part of the efforts of Whitbread Plc. An aspect that is likely to result in considerable difficulties is the identification of inflows and outflows including waste. The detail required by the Directive places extensive demands on organisations even when they have access to a wide range of resources. The MFA tool can also assist in clarifying the concept of double materiality, particularly the quantification required for the 'inside-out' impact on the environment and the 'outside-in' financial impact. However, further attestations are necessary.

Finally, the management of waste and the establishment of waste recycling and reduction targets provide an effective method to involve the employees and ensure their participation particularly when the targets and the ensuing activities to achieve them are quantified. Another positive point noted in these reports is the increased ambition of the set targets, which proves that employees are committed to achieving these targets. ESRS requirements are ambitious and require both effective governance and the support of employees to be achieved. While additional clarifications are likely to be necessary to ensure a smooth implementation, this review notes that companies are comprehending and committing to sustainability efforts and no longer view it as a box that needs to be ticked but to reduce costs, achieve stakeholder collaboration, satisfy customer demand and ultimately ensure the survival of the company.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Acronyms and abbreviations

EU	European Union
CSR	corporate social responsibility
CSRD	corporate social responsibility directive
ESRS	European sustainability reporting standards
IHG	intercontinental hotel group
MFA	material flow analysis
SDGs	sustainable development goals
AI	artificial intelligence
PVC	polyvinyl chloride
GBTA	global business travel association
ISSB	international sustainability standards board

Author details

Margaret Camilleri Fenech
University of Malta, Msida, Malta

*Address all correspondence to: margaret.camilleri-fenech@um.edu.mt

References

[1] Sobti R, Ravikiran K, Kareem H, Jisha PK, Dhamija K, Rao ALN. Analyzing solid waste management practices for the hotel industry. E3S Web of Conferences. 2024;**507**:0-7

[2] De Grosbois D. Corporate social responsibility reporting by the global hotel industry: Commitment, initiatives and performance. International Journal of Hospitality Management. 2012;**31**(3):896-905. DOI: 10.1016/j.ijhm.2011.10.008

[3] Santamarta JC, Miklin L, Gomes-nadal CO, Rodr JS, Rodr J, Cruz-p N. Waste management and territorial impact in the Canary islands. Land. 2023;**12**:1-12

[4] Chaabane W, Abdallah N. Solid Waste Management in Tourist Destinations in Tunisia: Reality and Perspectives. Rostock: Rostock University; 2019

[5] Camilleri-Fenech M, Sola JOI, Farreny R, Durany XG. A snapshot of solid waste generation in the hospitality industry. The case of a five-star hotel on the island of Malta. Sustainable Production and Consumption. 2020;**21**:104-119

[6] Legrand W, Matthew-Bolofinde A. ESG, SDGs, and hospitality: challenges and opportunities in activating sustainability. In: Business in the 21st Century [Internet]. Leeds: Emerald Publishing Limited; 2022. pp. 25-39. Available from: https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/978-1-80382-787-220221003/full/html

[7] European Commission. Corporate sustainability reporting [Internet]. Corporate sustainability reporting. [cited 2024 Jun 5]. Available from: https://finance.ec.europa.eu/capital-markets-union-and-financial-markets/company-reporting-and-auditing/company-reporting/corporate-sustainability-reporting_en

[8] Official Journal of the European Union. Directive 2022/2464 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 as regards corporate sustainability reporting [Internet]. Brussels; 2022. L322/15 to L322/80. Available from: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022L2464

[9] Official Journal of the European Union. Commission delegated regulation (EU) 2023/2772 of 31 July 03 supplementing Directive 2013/34/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards sustainability reporting standards [Internet]. Brussles; 2024 [cited 2024 Jun 6]. 1-284. Available from: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202302772

[10] Thirumalesh Madanaguli A, Dhir A, Kaur P, Mishra S, Srivastava S. A systematic literature review on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and hotels: Past achievements and future promises in the hospitality sector. Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism. 2023;**23**(2-3):141-175. DOI: 10.1080/15022250.2023.2221214

[11] Creswell JW. Research Design. 4th ed. California, USA: SAGE Publications; 2014. 4 p

[12] GlobalData. Top 10 hotel chains in Europe in 2021 by number of properties [Internet]. 2021 [cited 2024 Jul 11]. Available from: https://www.globaldata.

com/companies/top-companies-by-sector/travel-and-tourism/europe-hotel-chains-by-no-of-properties/

[13] Donadeo R, Cicioni M. Gli standard di rendicontazione ISSB (The reporting ISSB standards). Sostenibilita Aziendale (Organisational Sustainability). 2023; 19-23

[14] Kerner SM. What is double materiality? [Internet]. ESG strategy and management: A guide for business. 2024 [cited 2024 Sep 4]. Available from: https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/double-materiality#:~:text=Doublematerialityacknowledgesrisksandenvironmentandsocietyatlarge

[15] Sanges M, Utili D. GAP Analysis e pre-readiness review. Sostenibilita Aziendale (Organisational Sustainability) [Internet]. Nov 2023. pp. 76-80. Available from: https://book24ore.ilsole24ore.com/reader/40862459

[16] Accor SA. Sustainability strategy [Internet]. Tools and reporting. 2024 [cited 2024 Jul 28]. Available from: https://group.accor.com/en/commitment/approach/milestones

[17] Accor SA. Rapport financier annuel rapport intégré [Internet]. 2018. Available from: https://group.accor.com/-/media/Corporate/Investors/Documents-de-reference/ACCOR_RI_2018_UK_29042019_CREDIT-PHOTOS-2.pdf

[18] United Nations. Global indicator framework for the sustainable development goals and targets of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development [Internet]. 2017. (Seventy-first session). Report No.: A/RES/71/313. Available from: https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N17/207/63/PDF/N1720763.pdf?OpenElement

[19] Accor SA. Integrated report 2019 [Internet]. City Lodge Hotel Group, Integrated Report. 2019. Available from: https://group.accor.com/-/media/Corporate/Investors/Documents-de-reference/2019-integrated-report.pdf

[20] World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBSCD), World Resources Institute (WRI). The greenhouse gas protocol [Internet]. World Resources Institute and World Business .... 2004 [cited 2024 Jul 28]. Available from: https://ghgprotocol.org/corporate-standard

[21] Accor. 2021 integrated report [Internet]. 2021. Available from: https://group.accor.com/-/media/Corporate/Investors/Documents-de-reference/ACCO_RI_2021_MEL_EN_300322.pdf

[22] Accor. 2022 integrated report [Internet]. 2022. Available from: www.deq.idaho.gov

[23] Accor. Integrated report 2023 [Internet]. 2023. Available from: https://group.accor.com/-/media/Corporate/Investors/Documents-de-reference/ACCOR_RI_2023_MEL_UK.pdf

[24] Whitbread Plc. History of whitbread [Internet]. 2024 [cited 2024 Jul 30]. Available from: https://www.whitbread.co.uk/about-us/our-history/

[25] Whitbread PLC. Enabling people to live and work well [Internet]. 2018. Available from: https://www.whitbread.co.uk/content/dam/whitbread/pdfs/corporate-responsibility/reports-presentations/Sustainability_Report_2017.pdf

[26] Whitbread PLC. Whitbread PLC annual report & accounts 2018/2019. 2019

[27] Whitbread Plc. Making a positive difference. Environmental, soical and

governannce report 2020/21. Social inclusion in schools. 2020

[28] Whitbread Plc. Being a force for good. Environmental, social and governannce report 2021/2 [Internet]. 2021. Available from: https://www.facebook.com/reel/1711551122921502

[29] Whitbread Plc. Environmental, social and governancne report 2023/24 [Internet]. 2021. Available from: https://cdn.whitbread.co.uk/media/2024/05/Whitbread-PLC-ESG-Report-2023.pdf

[30] Intercontinental Hotels Group. IHG hotels and resorts [Internet]. 2024 [cited 2024 Aug 2]. Available from: https://www.ihgplc.com/en/about-us/our-history

[31] IHG Hotels & Resorts. Responsible business report 2018 [Internet]. 2018. Available from: https://www.ihgplc.com/en/investors/shareholder-centre/annual-reports-and-responsible-business-reports

[32] IHG Hotels & Resorts. Responsible business report [Internet]. InterContinental Hotels Group PLC. 2021. Available from: https://www.ihgplc.com/en/investors/shareholder-centre/annual-reports-and-responsible-business-reports

[33] InterContinental Hotels Group. Responsible business report 2020. 2022

[34] IHG Hotels & Resorts. Responsible business report 2021 [Internet]. 2022. Available from: https://www.ihgplc.com/en/investors/shareholder-centre/annual-reports-and-responsible-business-reports

[35] IHG Hotels & Resorts. Responsible business report 2023 [Internet]. 2023. Available from: https://www.ihgplc.com/en/investors/shareholder-centre/annual-reports-and-responsible-business-reports

[36] Martins M, Cr S. The impact of tourism on solid waste generation and management cost in Madeira Island for the period 1996-2018. Sustainability. 2021;**13**:1-16

[37] Saito O. Resource use and waste generation by the tourism industry on the big island of Hawaii. Journal of Industrial Ecology. 2013;**17**(4):578-589

[38] Manera C, Garau J, Serrano E. The evolution and impact of tourism in the mediterranean. Cuadernos de Turismo. 2016;**37**:269-303

[39] Research Nester Inc. Research Nester. Connect, Lead, Accomplish. Global market size, forecast, and trend highlights over 2024-2036 [Internet]. 2024 [cited 2024 Aug 4]. Available from: https://www.researchnester.com/reports/tourism-industry-market/109

[40] Senge P, Smith B, Kruschwitz, Laur J, Schley S. The Necessary Revolution: How Individuals and Organisations Are Working Together to Create a Sustainable World. New York: Doubleday; 2008

[41] Rota P, Caristia S. La doppia materialita e il processo di materiality assessment. Sostenibilita Aziendale (Organisational Sustainability). 2023. 24-29

[42] Brunner PH, Rechberger H. Handbook of Material Flow Analysis for Environmental, Resource, and Waste Engineers. 2nd ed. Boca Raton (Florida): CRC Press; 2016

[43] Merli R, Preziosi M, Acampora A. How do scholars approach the circular economy? A systematic literature review. Journal of Cleaner Production. 2018;**178**:703-722. DOI: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2017.12.112

Section 2

Tourists and the Locals

Chapter 4

Tourism and Exoticism: The 'Zoo Syndrome' Effect in Next-Gen Travelers

Martín Gamboa

Abstract

Tourism as a human activity not only constructs its Others but also wants to strongly know this otherness. This implies that both in large cities and in the most remote cultures, exoticism signifies at the same time a push factor and a pull factor for next-gen travelers. Considering that Generation Z began planning their trips online (e.g., brand websites, online travel agencies, blogs, and video platforms), the search for the experience of the exotic plays an important role. As a result, the 'zoo syndrome' is not a phenomenon that is only found in non-Western cultures and third world countries. It also appears in contemporary Western societies. Thus, exoticism will be considered as an *operative function* and not as a concept bound to a particular time and space. In the same way, the philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1993) considered the Baroque as "an operative function" and not as a particular historical period. Nevertheless, the domestic 'zoo syndrome' has certain differences with the original concept designed by Jost Krippendorf (1987). This chapter develops an original proposal of how to rethink this notion associated with next-gen travelers.

Keywords: tourism anthropology, exoticism, zoo syndrome, next-gen travelers, otherness

1. Introduction

One of the characteristics of tourism as a human activity is the construction of its 'Others' [1, 2]. Nonetheless, tourism not only constructs its 'Others' but also produces the search and desire for the knowledge of that 'otherness' [3]. This is basically due to the fact that "tourism is a special form of 'gaze' constructing the other" [4]. Thus, it is not possible to separate, the construction of the 'Other' and, the tourist's gaze. This remark has been demonstrated by Urry [5]. In the first pages of *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies*, Urry [5] asserts that "we gaze at what we encounter." This implies that the tourist's gaze ends up constructing an 'otherness' in tourist activity. As Lynda Johnston [1] concluded, tourism "constructs 'Others'." Notwithstanding, "there is no single tourist gaze as such," due to the fact that "it varies by society, by social group and by historical period" [5]. Beyond the particularity of each society and historical period, tourism from its origins has constructed its 'others'.

This is made up of a wide range of aspects that include motivations, behaviors, culture, the tourist destination, among other components. Therefore, it is critical to study "how the process of 'Othering' takes place" [6]. Specifically, "the tourist gaze is a concept that attempts to articulate the travel motivations and behaviors of tourists" [7]. Therefore, the 'exotic Other' can be geographically and culturally distant as well as close to us. This premise constitutes the main thesis of the chapter.

Similarly, the gaze of the local also plays a role, shaping a kind of dialectic of the gaze. This particular topic has been analyzed by Maoz [2]. As explained by Maoz [2], "the tourist and local gazes exist, affecting and feeding each other, resulting in what is termed 'the mutual gaze." Despite this, research on the different perspectives of the tourist has prevailed in tourism studies over the local's point of view [8]. Likewise, in the field of anthropology, the gaze of travelers, tourists, and explorers in relation to other cultures was also dominant. This attitude was criticized by Claude Lévi-Strauss, in his famous opening sentence to *Tristes Tropiques*: "I hate travelling and explorers" [9]. Undoubtedly, the ironic phrase with which Lévi-Strauss begins his memoir was aimed at thwarting the "exotic tourist sights" [10]. Indeed, the process of exoticizing a geographically and culturally distant 'Other' immediately became a tourist phenomenon. This desire to know and experience the exotic ended up installing an asymmetrical relationship between tourists and locals [11]. Following Brendan Canavan's [7] reading of Maoz approach, "where the tourist gaze may be directed towards the locals, another gaze, that of the local, is directed towards the guest simultaneously." The dialectic of the gaze between tourists and locals shapes what Jost Krippendorf called the 'zoo syndrome' or the exoticism of the visited [3]. Thus, the unequal relationship between tourists and locals—cultural, linguistic, economic—is basically due to the notion that "absolutely nothing is shared and where roles are so totally different, no meaningful dialogue can take place" [3]. Nevertheless, this syndrome not only persists in relation to non-Western cultures (geographically and culturally distanced) but also exists within contemporary Western societies.

1.1 The proximal 'other'

One of the first researchers to point out the importance of doing ethnography in one's own country was the anthropologist Augé [12]. Thus, the French anthropologist proposes to relativize the classical difference between the *same* and the *Other* in the anthropological field. Having simply a relational and methodological value, the study of 'otherness' refers to a double anthropology: one linked directly to the immediate environment of the researcher, and the other mediated by the cultural, social, and geographical distance of the observer. This new methodological perspective within contemporary anthropology has allowed him to note the existence of "the proximal Other, or the Other next door" [12]. In the same way, Clifford [13] in the early 1990s indicated "the recent return of anthropology to the metropolis." Beyond this paradigm shift, the traditional ethnography of non-Western cultures continues.

In the field of tourism studies, beginning the 1990s, reflect on the pursuit for the exotic also began to emerge in the main capitals of the Western world. This trend has its explanation—to a great extent—in the growth of urban tourism. Considering that urban tourism is "referred to as tourism in towns and cities" [14], internal exoticism is part of one of the attractions. One example can be the growing interest in exotic food and adventurous meals by next-gen travelers. In other words, millennials and Generation Z tourists are flocking to restaurants where they can enjoy exotic dishes as stated by De la Barre and Brouder [15], the "worldwide desire for exposure to foreign

(exotic) foods even in familiar locations." Another example could be the curiosity aroused in next-gen travelers by hip-hop street shows in some US cities. Following the analysis carried out by Xie et al. [4], "hip-hop tourism begins with the initial gaze by tourists attracted through the curiosity about the other."

To sum up, not only in the anthropological field and in the tourist studies the existence of a proximate Other has been noted but also in the literary field. An example of this is the literary analysis developed by the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas about the work of Marcel Proust [16]. Focusing on a passage of a French writer's novel, Levinas unveils the strange desire for the knowledge of the Other. In the character of Albertine, Proust embodies a set of desires, curiosities, and exoticisms. Through the meetings and misunderstandings of this literary character, the French writer represents the riddle of 'otherness' and his desire for knowledge. Based on a literary and philosophical analysis, Levinas [16] concludes the "insatiable curiosity about the alterity of the Other" throughout the work of Marcel Proust.

2. From foreign to domestic 'zoo syndrome'

The attraction for the exotic traits of non-Western cultures has existed since before the twentieth century [17]. However, it is with the emergence of mass tourism—linked to the technological possibilities of reaching remote places—this search intensifies. As McCabe [18] points out, "mass tourism was driven by a romantic interest for the distant, exotic, pristine nature and a desire to escape a suffocating and confining modern social reality." For this reason, a number of authors in the early 1990s began to study this phenomenon. As a result, an extensive literature has been accumulating within tourism studies that focuses on the analysis of the *pull factors* of the exotic. This long-standing phenomenon was coined by Krippendorf [3] as the 'zoo syndrome'. According to Krippendorf [3]:

> *"Conditions for an inter-cultural dialogue are even less favourable when the rich travel to the countries of the poor... Visitors to the Third World and natives belong not only to different cultures but to different social classes...What should have been a meeting becomes a 'zoo syndrome', in which both sides gape at each other. The native becomes an exhibit to be photographed. There is also the language barrier."*

In other words, the asymmetrical nature of encounters between tourists and locals in peripheral countries ends up shaping a kind of fetishism or curiosity for the way of life of the Others, a kind of exoticism of the local. This eagerness for the knowledge of non-traditional lifestyles by tourists has been described by various authors. For instance, in the Tonga Islands, traditional Polynesia, most of the natives do not tolerate being seen as part of a "cultural zoo" [11]. Another example is the case of the bushmen of the Kalahari Desert. They have sometimes told researchers that they do not like to be treated as "animals in a circus" [19]. They have not only felt part of a 'human zoo' but have also been treated as wild animals.

Similarly, Hunter [20] demonstrated that encounters between tourists and local people are marked by mistrust. Basically, this is due to the transitory and superficial nature of encounters between tourists and locals [21]. As Hunter [20] described, tourists walk around in their glass case observing the Other as an exotic unknown. This ends up generating depersonalization of the individual. In fact, they seek to find in the 'exotic Other' the image they saw in magazines. In the same way, Said [22]

demonstrated how Western culture constructed an exotic image of the middle East. Although he does not use the concept designed by Krippendorf [3], conceptually he is proposing the same phenomenon. Following Said's [22] conclusion, the West created "the Orient as an essentially exotic, distant, and antique place."

Nevertheless, tourist attraction to exoticism not only takes place itself with regard to non-Western cultures (geographically and culturally distant) but also develops within modern societies. Certainly, there is an inner or domestic exoticism in contemporary societies. One of the authors who has noted the need for the construction of an 'exotic Other' in modern societies has been Clifford [13]. To him, this 'otherness' is not constructed in relation to an external Other but arises within a culture. As Clifford ([13], p. 272) asserted, "a modern culture continuously constitutes itself through its ideological constructs of the exotic." In the same way, Augé [12] pointed out the existence of an internal exoticism in contemporary European societies. Augé [12] called this new phenomenon "intimate exoticism."

2.1 The domestic 'zoo syndrome'

This kind of exoticism (typical of modern societies) manifests itself in different realms of culture. For this reason, contemporary societies have gone from experiencing an asymmetric and vertical exoticism *to* a transversal and multicultural exoticism. This passage is due to various socio-cultural factors. Notwithstanding, the so-called traditional 'zoo syndrome' has not disappeared. The desire to experience the exotic faraway continues in the field of international tourism. That is, travel by traditional tourists and millennials to culturally and geographically distant (exotic) countries continues to take place. On the other hand, the search for the exotic in today's Western societies is beginning to acquire more and more followers every day due to the diversity of the tourist offer.

This new experience of the exotic ends up shaping a domestic 'zoo syndrome'. Nonetheless, this new notion has some traits different from the original. First, it is an *internal* and not an external exoticism. Secondly, it is characterized by being transversal and multicultural. Thirdly, it transcends the tourist activity, developing also in everyday life. Finally, it has had its genesis in Western societies since the 1980s. This does not signify that there are not some previous cases, but it is from this period when the first tourist offers related to this subject begin to emerge [23]. Clearly, this means that the focus of tourist attraction is placed on the different types of urban tourism. It is no longer about the Western millennials who travels to remote places to encounter the exotic.

Of course, being characterized as transversal and multicultural, the domestic 'zoo syndrome' is to a large extent the result of migration processes. This was recognized by Bhabha [24]. To Bhabha [24], today's migration flows produce "the exoticism of the 'diversity' of cultures." Therefore, since some decades ago, populations of different ethnic groups have begun to coexist in the large cities of the West. The cultural diversity triggers internal exoticization processes due to the multicultural nature of societies. As explained by Rojek and Urry [25], "migration has brought many 'exotic', 'foreign' cultures into the cities of Europe, the Americas and Australia."

Nonetheless, the phenomenon of domestic 'zoo syndrome' is not only the result of migratory flows into Western countries. Exoticization processes are also due to endogenous factors. This signifies that cultural change can be the result of internal causes [26]. An example of this is the case of the Norwegian fishermen interviewed by Puijk [27]. In several interviews conducted by Puijk [27], the fishermen relayed that

they felt "an exotic animal" when being photographed by tourists. In this example, it is demonstrated the existence of certain internal mechanisms that activate the desire for the search of the exotic (see Section 3.2).

Another example of exoticization processes corresponding to endogenous factors can be found in next-gen travelers. According to Ramgade and Kalgi [28], "when they travel to different places either in their country or out of their country they try to find their dreams, goals and passion while meeting new people, visiting new regions and experiencing new culture." Nonetheless, in many occasions, the visit to exotic places is due to a previous search within social networks. Clearly, it should not be forgotten that next-gen travelers grew up under the context of digitalization through the adoption of new technologies [29].

3. Different approaches to exoticism in the social and human sciences

3.1 The anthropological approach

According to Augé [12], exoticism from the time of romanticism onward was conceived as the simultaneous evidence of a relative similarity and a radical difference. For instance, he considers that an exotic religion is a belief system that has certain traits in common so that a Judeo-Christian believer can recognize it. However, any Western believer would not consider it 'a religion', viewing in it a degeneration of the true religion [30]. Equally important was the role played by the audiovisual format in the consolidation of ethnographic fieldwork [31]. As revealed by Piault [32], there is a relationship between the emergence of ethnographic cinema and the consolidation of fieldwork-based anthropology. To him, there are a number of features that link the emergence of ethnographic cinema with the emergence of empirical fieldwork. These features are contradictory, as they concurrently represent a certain familiarity and a marked cultural difference.

Alternatively, the anthropologist Viveiros de Castro [33] developed an innovative approach to the exotic gaze of members of Western civilization toward other cultures. In an article not widely known in the anthropological literature, the Brazilian anthropologist explains an interesting perspective of analysis on the processes of exoticization among different cultures. Taking some elements from psychoanalytic theory and applying them to the field of culture, Viveiros de Castro [33] concludes that exoticism represents *a form of narcissism*. According to him, the illusion of exoticism consists in imagining that one can clearly define the boundaries of oneself and the Other. To show that, he describes the gaze that Amazonian Indians have on Western man, and the image that the latter *projects* on extraterrestrials. As a result, he points out that Indians see white men as very technologically advanced people, sophisticated, and capable of building complex artifacts.

Nevertheless, at the same time, Indians see us as fearful and incapable of controlling our emotions [9]. By contrast, the white-western man *projects* the image of extraterrestrials as technologically highly developed people, but esthetically ugly and asexual. Beyond the examples of the projections of the Amazonian Indian on the white man, and of the latter on the extraterrestrials, "exoticism says much more about the person making a judgment" [33]. As explained by the Brazilian anthropologist, the exoticism "is a form of egocentrism, of narcissism, in which the Other remains linked to the self" [33]. Despite the innovative nature of his approach, he did not consider a key aspect of this phenomenon: the immanent desire for the experience of the exotic.

Likewise, Clifford [34] explained the role played by exotic objects as well as other types of non-Western ornaments in the creation of anthropological research institutes. To him, "the creation of anthropological research institutions required a fashionable enthusiasm for things exotic" [34]. This was because until the middle of the twentieth century, "anthropological museums sent men traveling in one direction to obtain objects" [35]. In this way, the exotic objects that made up part of the collections in Western museums played a key role in the consolidation of the discipline. Moreover, even today, objects from other cultures continue to exert a certain fascination to both specialists in material culture and private collectors [36].

3.2 The Freudian perspective

Freud [37] in his book *Civilization and Its Discontents* introduces for the first time in his theory the concept of "narcissism of minor differences." This term arises on the basis of observations made by Freud on the aggressive instinct of individuals in ethnic conflicts. According to him, the narcissism of minor differences was the main motive that triggered conflicts between different ethnic groups. Freud [37] concluded that it was the difference that provoked aggression. However, several decades later, some scholars revisited this thesis [38–40]. For instance, following the approach developed by Devereux [39], the narcissism of minor differences does not arise as a consequence of difference, but in the *creation* of difference.

On a conscious level, we exclude 'Others' who are different, but unconsciously, we hate the sameness [38]. Therefore, the projection of hatred says much more about oneself than about the Other. According to Devereux [39], the narcissism of minor differences "induces one to construe unfamiliar beliefs and practices as criticisms of one's own, and makes one react to them negatively." Evidently, this notion is linked to another concept proposed by Freud [41]: the 'uncanny' (*das unheimliche*). Following Derrida's [42] approach, the 'uncanny' is "a stranger who is already found within." The feeling of a strangeness of the ordinary haunts individuals at certain moments in their lives.

Originally published in 1919 under the title 'The Uncanny' (*Das Unheimliche* in German), Freud [41] developed the thesis of the existence of a strangeness of the ordinary by which the known becomes strange or the strange becomes known. Thus, in his etymological analysis of the term 'uncanny', Freud [41] revealed that "the German word *unheimlich* is obviously, the opposite of *heimlich* ['homely'], *heimisch* ['native']- the opposite of what is familiar." Of course, "we are tempted to conclude that what is 'uncanny' is frightening precisely because it is not known and familiar" [41]. An event which is encountered is an unsettling, eerie context. For this reason, the 'uncanny' represents one of the first critiques to Western rationality [43]. By proposing the existence of an unfamiliar realm in human beings, the exotic questions the idea of an individual fully conscious of its acts. As James Clifford [34] concluded, "the exotic was a prime court of appeal against the rational, the beautiful, the normal of the West."

3.3 Esthetic analysis

The first research to develop an esthetic analysis of 'exoticism' was conducted by the French writer and archeologist Victor Segalen. Written between 1904 and 1918, the *Essay on Exoticism: An Esthetics of Diversity* attempts to thwart the different conceptions of exoticism that prevailed at the time. According to Segalen [44], the exotic implied a starting point for the discussions of alterity, diversity, and ethnicity.

For this reason, Segalen designs a new conception of the 'exotic'. The new concept deconstructs the nineteenth-century notions of exoticism (considered weird and enigmatic), and the predisposition to reduce the exotic to the colonial [45]. Taking into account that theories of alterity and cultural diversity abound in the current academic field, one of Segalen's main contributions consisted in giving an esthetic and ontological *status* to the phenomenon of exoticism.

Therefore, exoticism was conceived as an *operative function* and not as a concept linked to a particular time and space. In the same way, the philosopher Deleuze [46] considered the Baroque as "an operative function" or "a trait," and not as a particular historical period. Therefore, this new esthetic perspective of exoticism was summed up by Segalen [44] in the following sentence, "exoticism's power is nothing other than the ability to conceive otherwise." Prior to Segalen's theoretical contribution, the French adjective 'exotique' was used to refer to the objects of another country, but the notion rapidly became a synonym of colonialism by the nineteenth century [34]. Clearly, Segalen's perception of the exotic was radically different from that of his colonial contemporaries.

Traditionally in Western culture, the Other has been a source of fear and fascination. This conception has been marked by its current Eurocentrism. Nonetheless, at present, exoticism is a concept of critical currency, specially within the field of postcolonialism studies and literary criticism. Thus, Segalen's approach of 'Otherness' anticipates much of the current postcolonial critique of colonial discourse. One of his major contributions consisted in removing the 'pejorative sense' that the term exoticism had in that moment [45]. His *esthetics of diversity* implied a new representation of the Other. Several decades later, Clifford [34] will use "the term surrealism in an obviously expanded sense," with the aim to "provoke the manifestation of extraordinary realities drawn from the domains of the erotic, the exotic, and the unconscious."

4. Next-gen travelers and the geography of exoticism

According to many researchers [28, 29, 47], there are a number of traits that characterize the tourism preferences of Generation Z, Millennials, or Next-Gen Travelers. These range from the type of housing to the search for certain experiences. Unlike past generations, they consider travel to be a vital part of their lives. They are almost always adventurous. They are characterized by a sense of adventure and desire for authenticity and in other words, new and meaningful experiences. Certainly, 43% of next-gen travelers seek out experiences that are 'new' [48]. Within this search, there is a desire to know and experience the exotic. For next-gen travelers, every trip (business, leisure, and tourism) is a chance to experience something unique.

Therefore, these new generation travelers like to experience activities different from those preferred by the older generation. Moreover, Generation Z's desire to know the exotic is not only limited to *gaze* (in John Urry's perspective) but also to *capture* the event. This capturing is mainly done through photos and reels. These are then uploaded to various social networks and applications. According to Pricope Vancia et al. [49], "specific to Generation Z in terms of tourist behavior is that they post photos and videos of their vacations on social media platforms." The selection of these photos and reels is not innocent. The aim of the posting is to generate an "affection-image" or an impact on the people who are around them [50].

For this reason, "people's expectations, requirements, or preferences regarding the purpose, place, and time of their holiday vary depending on their age" [49].

Regarding this topic, the context of digitalization and the adoption of new technologies plays a fundamental role. The search on different blogs or digital platforms allows the next-gen travelers to choose for an authentic and experiential travel experience. Evidently, curiosity for the exotic is, in general, one of the most sought-after preferences. By considering exoticism as an *operative function* and disconnecting it from a specific historical period, the desire for the fascination of the exotic has crossed the different generations of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century.

Nevertheless, Baby Boomers (born between 1940 and 1959), Generation X (born between 1960 and 1979), Generation Y (born between 1980 and 1994), and Generation Z (born after 1995), have specific cultural patterns [47]. Undoubtedly, "members of those generations exhibit specific behaviors and consumption patterns due to the context in which they were born and lived most of their lives" [49]. This directly impacts the travel behaviors. For example, during the post-World War II era, Baby Boomers emerged as a generation deeply influenced by the ideology of consumption. Beyond the cultural differences between generations, the desire to experience the exotic is a common trait. In the case of the Baby Boomers, the push factors (reasons why someone goes to the destination) were driven by photos and advertisements in the traditional media: magazines, radio, and TV.

As for the type of accommodation, the Generation Z or Next-Gen Travelers prefer hostels and Airbnbs rather than hotels. Based on the research carried out by ***Setiawan et al., Pricope Vancia et al. [49] explained that "Generation Z members use online media rather than conventional travel agencies to search for information and make reservations." In general, they book hostels with certain features, for example, hostels with living rooms, game tables, a library with a USB facility, gymnasium, and disco dance floor, among others amenities. Regarding food, they prefer exotic meals and beverages as compared to conventional and formal meals [29].

4.1 The exotic function in next-gen travelers: beyond push and pull factors

In tourism studies, the classical motivation theory of tourism could be explained by the notions of *push-factor* and *pull-factor*. According to Dann's [51] model, push-factors are the internal needs and desires of tourists (which generates the demand of travel), while pull-factors are something that destinations have to attract tourists to come. In other words, push-factors could be defined as reasons why you should go to the destination, whereas pull-factors are the forces and hopes that tourists hold about a destination. Nonetheless, in the case of next-gen travelers or millennials, the exotic function transcends the division between the two categories. This makes it impossible to clearly define which aspects fall into each category.

Considering that Generation Z was born and grew up in a context of digitalization and new technologies, the sense of adventure and desire for the exotic come from the social media and video platforms. Additionally, they prefer authentic and experiential travels. In fact, almost 80% plan their trips online [48]. As digital natives, they rely on blogs, social media, and video platforms to plan their trips. A few decades ago, it was difficult to distinguish between push-factors and pull-factors, and with the new information technologies within homes, it is impossible to make this division. Consequently, the categories of push-factors and pull-factors currently have no empirical value for understanding the tourism mobility of next-gen travelers.

For this reason, it is essential to design a new tourism profile of the next-gen travelers. This aims not only to achieve an understanding of the traveler *ethos* but also to provide tools for better applicability in the tourism industry. While some tourism

profiles of next-gen travelers exist, they have not considered the relevance of the exotic function. In other words, they have not considered the "exotic realm" as a unit of analysis. This encompasses everything from the pre-trip planning decision to dissemination of travel experiences across social media. However, the *exotic function* transcends the push and pull factors, as it becomes the primary motivation to travel. For this reason, we present below a new tourism profile of the next-gen travelers. **Table 1** is made up of six research variables.

4.2 Methodology and techniques

First of all, to obtain primary data from some members of next-gen travelers, we considered the most appropriates qualitative research techniques to achieve the goal [52]. As a result, for the design of **Table 1**, three types of data were collected: (1) focus group discussion, (2) in-depth interviewing, and (3) secondary data. Accordingly, to determine the "exotic realm" as a unit of analysis, six research variables were established: push factors and pull factors (pre-trip planning decision), booking, type of accommodation, type of vacation, type of transport, and dissemination of travel experiences across social media.

Regarding the dynamics of focus groups, certain criteria were stated to select the participants. Hence, to collect the different opinions on the study subject, four criteria were established: (1) being between 18 and 25 years old, (2) being born in Uruguayan soil, (3) having taken at least one exotic/adventurous trip in the last 2 years, and (4) be an undergraduate student in a degree program offered by the Universidad de la República or the Universidad Católica del Uruguay. Likewise, from the research conducted by Vancia et al. [49], "the recruitment of participants was carried out in a location with a potentially high concentration of Generation Z members, such as a university environment."

Apart from that, 32 in-depth interviews were conducted, applying the methodological criterion of non-representative random samples [53]. This was due to random sampling from strata within Generation Z members excludes some unrepresentative combinations. Indeed, the main objective of the in-depth interviews was to know about the exotic function in relation to pre-trip planning decision, booking, type of accommodation, type of vacation, type of transport, and the dissemination of travel experiences across social media. Finally, secondary data were collected through books, journals, and millennials blogs.

4.3 Slum tourism: the zoologization of 'favela' dwellers in Brazil

Slum tourism in Brazil is one of the most well-known tourist attractions in the world. Alongside India, South Africa, and other countries, a large number of tourists visit the country every year with the purpose of getting to know one of the poorest places in the world. Since the year 1990, going to 'favelas' (shanty houses) has become one of the most popular attractions in Rio de Janeiro's city. Especially for next-gen travelers [54]. One of the main attraction factors of the 'favelas' is the view of the city. For instance, in the case of the Rocinha and Vidigal favelas in Rio de Janeiro, the panoramic view is one of the most demanded tourist attractions by Generation Z tourists [55].

Although the phenomenon of 'favela tourism' exists in some Brazilian cities, it is in Rio de Janeiro where it has its origin and greatest tourist development. Nonetheless, this type of tourism has been the target of much criticism from the academic world.

Research variables	Indicator	Exotic realm
Push factors and pull factors (pre-trip planning decision)	Exploring cities	X
	Know local communities	
	Discovering new (exotic) cultures	X
	Relaxing	
Booking	Brand websites	
	Online travel agencies	
	Blogs	X
	Video platforms	
Type of accommodation	Hostel	
	Airbnb	
	Glamping	X
	Camping	
	Motorhome	
	Camper	
Type of vacation	Seaside vacations	
	Exotic trips	X
	City Breaks	
Type of transport	Plane	
	Car	
	Motorhome	
	Bicycle	
	Cycle rickshaw	X
	Auto rickshaw	X
	Ferry	X
	Coracle	X
Dissemination of travel experiences across social media	Instagram	X
	TikTok	
	Reels	X
	YouTube	

Source: Author research.

Table 1.
Tourism profile of next-gen travelers (unit of analysis: exotic realm).

One of the criticisms that this form of tourism has received points out that "slum tourism treats poverty as an immoral entertainment that insults the dignity of the disadvantaged" [56]. Evidently, 'favela tourism' exists because of the desire of tourists to know how the poor live. Of course, curiosity about this world of deprivation and precarious conditions is driven by a certain search for the exotic. Such is the curiosity aroused by these illegal settlements on some of Rio's "morros" (rock formations) that in 1996, the pop singer Michael Jackson recorded the video clip "They Don't Really Care About Us" [54].

According to Freire-Medeiros [54], the main reason for the visit of the pop artist and director Spike Lee was "to expose the indifference of public power and elites toward poverty." In relation to the link between the domestic 'zoo syndrome' and the 'favela tourism', this can be seen in the interpersonal relationship generated between next-gen travelers and the local population. In general, the firsts "treats dwellers as zoological specimens" [56]. The zoologization of favela dwellers by tourists produces "a sign associated with ambivalent signifiers which place it as the extreme Other" [54]. That is, a feeling of a strangeness of the ordinary (uncanny), whose combination is "capable of both seduction (for its authenticity and solidarity) and threat (for its violence and non-rationality)" [54].

4.4 Slum tourism as a type of urban tourism

Given the transcultural character of this phenomenon, exoticism has been conceived throughout this chapter as a function, and not as a term linked to a particular time and space. This leads us to rethink the notion of exoticism in contemporary Western societies. For this reason, both the traditional 'zoo syndrome' and the domestic 'zoo syndrome' share the same symbolic matrix. Considering that "much tourism happens within domestic (national) environments" [18], there is a direct connection between exoticism, urban tourism, and next-gen travelers. This link is due to the fact that "the polycentric, multifunctional, and culturally diversified nature of urban areas…attracts significant numbers of tourists for varied purposes other than vacationing" [14].

From 'ruin tourism' [23], passing through 'hip-hop tourism' [4], continuing with the different forms of 'slum tourism' [57], until reaching the sinister sites of 'dark tourism' [58], all these types of tourism have a common trait: urban character. Additionally, within urban tourism, we also find cases linked to the immaterial. This can be seen in 'ghost tourism'. An example of this is the research carried out by David Inglis and Mary Holmes [59], on the emergence of 'haunted hotels' in some Scottish cities. This type of tourism (linked to the *non-human*) has urban centers as its main area of development. As explained by Inglis and Holmes [59], 'Ghost walks' have sprung up in many Scottish urban centers in recent years.

5. Conclusion

Throughout the article, it was demonstrated that the so-called 'zoo syndrome' is not a phenomenon that manifests itself only in relation to non-Western cultures and developing countries. This means that, in large cities as well as in more remote cultures, exoticism constitutes *at the same time* a push-factor and a pull-factor for next-gen travelers and millennials. As Augé [12] concluded, "exoticism is not, in fact, linked to geographical distance, nor even to belonging to a given ethnic group." Due to the transcultural nature of the phenomenon, exoticism has been conceived throughout the chapter as an *operative function*, and not as a concept linked to a particular time and space. Nonetheless, the domestic 'zoo syndrome' has some different traits designed by Krippendorf [3].

First of all, it is an *internal* and not an external exoticism. Secondly, it is characterized by being transversal and multicultural, crossing the different social classes and ethnic groups. Thirdly, it transcends the tourist activity *per se*, developing also in everyday life. Despite the differences with the original term, the domestic 'zoo

syndrome' retains some common traits. One of these traits consists of the desire for the experimentation of the exotic. Another characteristic is the asymmetry of power that always results between the exoticizer and the exoticized. Therefore, it is important to rethink this notion not only in the field of tourism anthropology but also in the field of tourism studies in general.

In summary, from our point of view, the concept continues to have theoretical and epistemological relevance for the understanding of certain phenomena. Furthermore, it is fundamental to deepen this notion in the field of tourism studies in order to avoid falling into some forms of racism and discrimination. For example, giving voice to 'others' or 'subalterns' does not mean establishing a symmetrical relationship with the Other. As stated by Hall [6], "the process of giving voice to others is never neutral and works itself through power structures." Consequently, rethinking notions like those help us to promote a more inclusive tourism, free of prejudice and discrimination. In fact, "tourism is only possible where there is a welcome at the level of human interaction" [18].

Author details

Martín Gamboa
Department of Tourism, History, and Communication, Universidad de la República, Uruguay

*Address all correspondence to: martingamboa100@gmail.com

IntechOpen

References

[1] Johnston L. (Other) Bodies and tourism studies. Annals of Tourism Research. 2001;**28**(1):180-201

[2] Maoz D. The mutual gaze. Annals of Tourism Research. 2006;**33**(1):221-239

[3] Krippendorf J. The Holiday Makers: Understanding the Impact of Leisure and Travel. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann; 1987

[4] Xie P, Osumare H, Ibrahim A. Gazing the hood: Hip-hop as tourism attraction. Tourism Management. 2007;**28**(2):452-460

[5] Urry J. The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies. London: Sage Publications; 1990

[6] Hall M. Reflexivity and tourism research: Situating myself and/with others. In: Phillimore J, Goodson L, editors. Qualitative Research in Tourism: Ontologies, Epistemologies and Methodologies. London: Routledge; 2004. pp. 137-155

[7] Canavan B. Let's get this show on the road. Introducing the tourist celebrity gaze. Annals of Tourism Research. 2020;**82**:102898

[8] Perkins HC, Thorns DC. Gazing or performing? Reflections on Urry's tourist gaze in the context of contemporary experience in the antipodes. International Sociology. 2001;**16**(2):185-204

[9] Lévi-Strauss C. Tristes Tropiques. New York: Criterion Books; 1961

[10] Kubica G. Lévi-Strauss as a protagonist in his ethnographic prose: A cosmopolitan view of *Tristes tropiques* and its contemporary interpretations. Etnográfica. 2014;**18**(3):599-624

[11] Urbanowicz CF. Tourism in Tonga revisited: Continued troubles times? In: Smith VL, editor. Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press; 1989. pp. 105-118

[12] Augé M. A Sense for the Other. The Timeliness and Relevance of Anthropology. Stanford: Stanford University Press; 1998

[13] Clifford J. The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; 1992

[14] Li M, Wu B. Urban tourism. In: Jafari J, Xiao H, editors. Encyclopedia of Tourism. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing; 2016. pp. 993-995

[15] De la Barre S, Brouder P. Culinary tourism. In: Jafari J, Xiao H, editors. Encyclopedia of Tourism. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing; 2016. pp. 209-211

[16] Levinas E. The Levinas Reader. USA: Basil Blackwell; 1989

[17] Said E. Orientalism. New York: Vintage Books; 1979

[18] McCabe S. Theory in tourism. Annals of Tourism Research. 2024;**104**:103721

[19] Hitchcock R. Cultural, economic and environmental impacts of tourism among Kalahari Bushmen. In: Chambers E, editor. Tourism and Culture. An Applied Perspective. Albany: State University of New York Press; 1997. pp. 93-128

[20] Hunter WC. Trust between culture: The tourist. Current Issues in Tourism. 2001;**4**(1):42-67

[21] Meethan K. Mobile cultures? Hybridity, tourism and cultural change. Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change. 2003;**1**(1):11-28

[22] Said E. Culture and Imperialism. New York: Vintage Books; 1994

[23] MacCannell D. The tourist and the local. Tourist Studies. 2015;**16**(4):1-8

[24] Bhabha H. The Location of Culture. New York: Routledge; 1994

[25] Rojek C, Urry J. Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory. London & New York: Routledge; 1997

[26] Bascom WR, Herskovits M, editors. Continuity and Change in African Culture. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 1959

[27] Puijk R. Dealing with fish and tourism: A case study from northern Norway. In: Boissevain J, editor. Coping with Tourists. European Reactions to Mass Tourism. Oxford: Berghahn Books; 1996. pp. 204-226

[28] Ramgade A, Kalgi D. A study on the rise of millennial travelers and how their travel trends are shaping the present and future of the tourism industry. Shodhsamhita. 2021-2022;**8**(2):219-222

[29] Cavagnaro E, Staffieri S, Postma A. Understanding millennials' tourism experience: Values and meaning to travel as a key for identifying target clusters for youth (sustainable) tourism. Journal of Tourism Futures. 2018;**4**(1):31-42

[30] Eliade M. The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion. New York: Harper Torchbooks; 1961

[31] Stocking GW. The Ethnographer's magic: Fieldwork in British anthropology from Tylor to Malinowski. In: Stocking G, editor. Observers Observed: Essays on Ethnographic Fieldwork. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press; 1984. pp. 70-120

[32] Piault M-H. L'exotisme et le cinéma ethnographique: la rupture d'une croisière colonial. Horizontes Antropológicos. 1995;**1**(2):11-22

[33] Viveiros, de Castro E. L'éxotisme est une forme de narcissisme. Entretien avec l'anthropologue Eduardo Viveiros de Castro par Michel Daubert. In: *Télérama* (Hors série, "Trésors d'Amazonie"). 2005

[34] Clifford J. On ethnographic surrealism. Comparative Studies in Society and History. 1981;**23**(4):539-564

[35] Lévi-Strauss C. Structural Anthropology. New York: Basic Books; 1963

[36] Baudrillard J. For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign. New York: Verso; 2019

[37] Freud S. Civilization and Its Discontents. New York: W. W. Norton & Company; 2010

[38] Blok A. The narcissism of minor differences. European Journal of Social Theory. 1998;**1**(1):33-56

[39] Devereux G. From Anxiety to Method in the Behavioral Sciences. The Netherlands: Mouton & Co. and École Pratique des Hautes Études; 1967

[40] Girard R. Violence and the Sacred. London: The Athlone Press; 1995

[41] Freud S. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. Volume XVII

*(*1917-1919*):* An Infantile Neurosis and Other Works. London: The Hogarth Press; 1955

[42] Derrida J. Specters of Marx. New York and London: Routledge Classics; 2006

[43] Mannoni O. Freud: The Theory of the Unconscious. London: Verso; 2015

[44] Segalen V. Essay on Exoticism. An Aesthetics of Diversity. NC: Duke University Press Books; 2002

[45] Forsdick C. Victor Segalen and the Aesthetics of Diversity: Journeys Between Cultures. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2000

[46] Deleuze G. The Fold. Leibniz and the Baroque. London: The Athlone Press; 1993

[47] Francis T, Hoefel F. True Gen': Generation Z and Its Implications for Companies. Vol. 12. New York: McKinsey & Company; 2018

[48] Haddouche H, Salomone C. Generation Z and the tourist experience: Tourist stories and use of social networks. Journal of Tourism Futures. 2018;**4**(1):69-79

[49] Pricope, Vancia AP, Băltescu CA, Brătucu G, Tecău AS, Chițu IB, Duguleană L. Examining the disruptive potential of generation Z tourists on the travel industry in the digital age. Sustainability. 2023;**15**:8756

[50] Deleuze G. Cinema 1: The Movement Image. London & New York: The Athlone Press; 2002

[51] Dann G. Tourist motivation: An appraisal. Annals of Tourism Research. 1981;**8**(2):187-219

[52] Brunt P, Horner S, Semley N, editors. Research Methods in Tourism, Hospitality and Events Management. London: SAGE Publishing; 2017

[53] Creswell JW, Creswell JD. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. Los Angeles: Sage Publications; 2017

[54] Freire-Medeiros B. The favela and its touristic transits. Geoforum. 2009;**40**:580-588

[55] Menezes P. A forgotten place to remember: Reflections on the attempt to turn a favela into a museum. In: Frenzel F, Koens K, Steinbrink M, editors. Slum Tourism: Poverty, Power and Ethics. London: Routledge; 2012. pp. 103-124

[56] Mekawy M. Slum tourism. In: Jafari J, Xiao H, editors. Encyclopedia of Tourism. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing; 2016. pp. 861-862

[57] Frenzel F, Koens K, Steinbrink M, editors. Slum Tourism: Poverty, Power and Ethics. London: Routledge; 2012

[58] Stone P, Sharpley R. Consuming dark tourism: A thanatological perspective. Annals of Tourism Research. 2008;**35**(2):574-595

[59] Inglis D, Holmes M. Highland and other haunts: Ghosts in Scottish tourism. Annals of Tourism Research. 2003;**30**(1):50-63

Chapter 5

Noah's Gang as an Example of Contemporary Street Hustling in Nadi, Fiji: The Implications for Cross-Cultural Power Relations

Kieran Edmond James and Sheikh Ali Tanzil

Abstract

Noah's Gang is or was a group of older Indigenous Fijian 'street boys' who interacted with tourists in Nadi Town, Fiji Islands, from around 2013 to the present. This chapter will describe their relations with mostly white tourists in Nadi and how power relations are constructed, changed and subverted via these interactions. The 'hustler' lifestyle provides opportunities and challenges, but a set of malleable and consistent values are observed rooted in Indigenous and Christian village culture mixed with reggae culture as imported into Fiji from Jamaica and adjusted to the local setting. People like Noah's Gang have become unofficial Indigenous public faces, compared to the official public faces presented at tourist resorts. Hence, they provide almost a dark tourism experience for those they interact with, as well as a sense of danger and opportunity. In this chapter, we describe how they helped a white English tourist who had his luggage stolen and their interaction with a Polish woman who inquired about their black magic. If we view sustainability and experiential as going beyond the sanitized corporate experiences provided by the tourist resorts, we might see Noah's Gang as rising to the occasion and providing us with some answers to these debates.

Keywords: Nadi, Fiji Islands, historical materialism, sustainable tourism, experiential tourism, power relations, Foucault, dark tourism

1. Introduction

Noah's Gang was, and perhaps still is, a group of Indigenous Fijian Nadi 'street boys' who frequented Nadi Town Centre and neighboring Martintar from 2013 to the present. They were called 'street boys' although each one had a home in a Nadi area Indigenous village to which he could go back in the evenings or the early morning hours. The group was a collection of older 'street boys' then aged about 30–60 years old who coalesced around a guy called Noah. It was the first author who christened the gang Noah's Gang. They were experts in talking to tourists in Nadi and getting the tourists to accompany them to the handicrafts store (where they earned commissions on sales) and to local pubs and their drinking spot, a hidden location on the Nadi River

foreshore. Prominent members of the group in 2013–2015 include the ex-Nadi soccer legend, Harry Cartwright (name changed); a former Nadi businessowner, Boscoe; Ben from Nakavu Village; the members of Reggae Man Band (Francis, Jake, and a second Ben); and the 'two Ronnies', the first of whom was something of a 'minibus king' (involved in the public minibus industry) while the second was a hotel manager. If you, as a foreigner, had been walking around Nadi Town Centre in those years, it would be very likely that you would encounter members of the gang who would approach you and initiate conversation. The benefits that they were hoping to receive were free liquor, handicraft sales on commission, and enjoyable camaraderie. Their regular meeting spot was the Nadi River foreshore, a quiet spot hidden by trees that could not be viewed from the riverbanks on either side or from the bridge about 50 yards away. On the afternoon of New Year's Eve 2014, about 20 to 30 people were drinking there, including three local young Indigenous women, and the first author. It was the culture that if you had money on that particular day, you were expected to chip in financially and buy some beer cartons or wine bottles for the group. When it got colder around 6 or 7 p.m. that night, people drifted away quietly to the local pubs in small groups.

During those years, another significant element was that the Reggae Man Band had a nightly residence at Sitar's Indian Restaurant in Martintar, and this was an obvious aspect, creating subcultural capital [1] that spread beyond them to Noah's Gang. In typical style, they were fired by the restaurant for allegedly selling drugs to tourists through the chain wire fence, but they secured another gig at a nearby Chinese restaurant. By July/August 2019, the first author was informed that Francis, the dreadlocked vocalist, had left Nadi and returned to his home village in the southeast of the main island, Viti Levu. This could be regarded as the end of an era or possibly even the end of the Gang as it had existed up till that point.

We argue here that a group such as Nadi's Gang, even though they were not literally tourists, is worthy of study within tourism studies because their practices and lifestyles were very much a product and creation of the tourist trade of Nadi ([2], p. 290). This lifestyle, whether it be called hustling or something else, was a direct response, although not without considerable agency, to the presence of mostly white Australian and New Zealand tourists on the streets of Nadi Town. By creating relations, albeit temporary, with a certain subcategory of tourists, the Gang was serving international relations in a committed yet carefree way that was clearly not void of self-interest. This could be seen as an aspect of sustainable and experiential tourism by providing a tourist-related service outside the mainstream corporate channels of resorts, hotels, and guided tours. It produced an informal economy of beer, marijiuana, reggae, and handicrafts that met the subcultural desires and needs of a certain subcategory of younger tourists. The author observed a link between the Gang's efforts and more highbrow connections when the foreign minister of the Marshall Islands saw Reggae Man Band play, featuring three Noah's Gang members. He then invited the band to tour his country. Even this tour received little press attention in Fiji. Perhaps it indicates the ability of reggae and charisma, in talented hands, to bridge a cultural gap between subaltern groups and the elite world of government. As Sitar's Restaurant fired Reggae Man Band, it shows that links between the subaltern world and the corporate/government realm are always tenuous. The Gang's lifestyle, and especially their involvement with marijuana, is seen as something that official channels struggle to deal with and ultimately reject.

In this chapter, we explore the discourses and practices of Noah's Gang and describe and interpret some key incidents involving their relations with individual tourists. We look at how power relations are constructed, contested, and subverted,

until a new equilibrium is reached. This chapter is part of the first author's larger project on Fiji soccer history where Harry Cartwright became the primary source of information for the project. He also introduced the first author to Noah's Gang. We conclude that, while the white tourists have more money and lifestyle opportunities, Noah's Gang have power/knowledge sources [3, 4] of their own, being vitally connected to broader currents of social life, including village life, employment, soccer, music, the hotel and handicraft industries, and so on. Their knowledge of local geography, customs, cultural norms, and complex sets of village-based relationships gives them a source of localized knowledge that the tourists lack. They use this knowledge to their own advantage, where possible, despite a significant lack of financial resources and business world or emigration prospects. Sometimes, the tables get turned and the tourists become somewhat dependent on Noah's Gang. The most obvious case was when a twenty-something white English tourist had his luggage lost or stolen, and the Noah's Gang members generously provided him with clothing. The tourist gaze ([5], p. 12) comes close to being reversed, and we use Althusser's ([6], pp. 115–124) theory on ideology as 'hailing' ([6], p. 118) or 'interpellation' ([6], p. 118) to explain the nature and power of the continued connections that Noah's Gang forge with tourists. They complement the more formalized hailing or interpellating of tourists *qua* 'tourists' at Nadi Airport (where they are serenaded by Indigenous men playing acoustic guitars) and at the tourist resorts where the assigning of a label or a role is gratefully received by tourists (it includes the permission to relax) but is also a source or practice of power/knowledge that is really created first and foremost by the locals. These locals lack wealth (which is undeniable) and appear to lack power, but there is also a certain amount of agency where people like Noah's Gang contribute to fashioning and constructing tourists' experience of the local. Hence, values and *l'ethos* are transferred in both directions. Smith and Smith ([7], p. 274) talk about certain tourists to the Maldives who choose the scuba diving liveaboard to escape both 'daily reality' and 'the local population'. Such tourists clearly exist in Fiji too, that is, those who choose to spend time only at the most exclusive resorts. By contrast, those who choose to interact with Noah's Gang for any extended length of time are communicating their intention to engage with and learn from the 'street boys' and their lifestyles and systems of beliefs. This can be seen as almost a *dark tourism* [8] experience due to the Gang's underground ways of interacting and meeting and the addition of beer and marijuana. They construct themselves as being unhindered by corporate agendas, job descriptions, or strict timelines; they are the dark or unofficial public face of the local Indigenous peoples and would be experienced as less sanitized than the controlled public face encountered at the tourist resorts.

The present chapter is structured as follows: Section 2 is a background section which introduces Fiji and its ethnic/racial dimension, with a focus on what Indigenous identity means in the philosophical and practical senses; Section 3 describes methodology; Section 4 introduces Althusser's theory of ideology and Foucault's theory of power/knowledge; Section 5 presents some minicases involving interaction between Noah's Gang and individual tourists; and Section 6 concludes the chapter. Implications for tourism studies are highlighted throughout the chapter.

2. Background

We use this section to introduce readers to key aspects of Fiji's society and history. Ethnic/racial aspects, in a society which is extremely race-conscious, will also

be considered. Then, lastly, we look at Indigenous identity and masculinity and the reverse gazers. (The idea of the 'reverse gaze', but not the term, is found in Urry, ([5], p. 151). Another term for this gaze in the literature is 'local gaze'.)

The two main ethnic groups in today's Fiji are the Indigenous Fijians (56.8% of the population as at the 2007 Census) and the Fiji Indians or Indo-Fijians (37.5% of the population). Since shortly after the British took over Fiji as a colonial possession in 1874, the two ethnic groups were put on paths of separate development. The Indigenous Fijians were largely permitted to live customary lifestyles, while the first Fiji Indians were brought across from the Subcontinent between 1879 and 1916 to work on the sugarcane plantations.

About 60,000 Indian *Girmitiyas* (indentured labourers) arrived in Fiji between 1879 and 1916 ([9], p. 14); ([10], p. 1); ([11], p. 189); ([12], pp. 360, 367), and most of the Fiji Indians resident in the Fiji Islands today are their descendants. The former indentured labourers were joined by Gujarati and Punjabi free settlers in the first half of the twentieth century ([9], p. 26); ([10], pp. 114–117). The Gujaratis, as in England ([13], p. 35), became the unofficial small shopkeeper class. As the twentieth century progressed, the Fiji Indians came to dominate the local Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) sector, which was and is largely town-based.

The Indigenous Fijians trace their arrival in the islands to the mythical Vuda Point landing at Vuda Point in Western Viti Levu. Nowadays, the Indigenous Fijians prize their history and see it as granting them the status of moral landowners of the Fiji Islands. The traditional villager sees all other Fiji residents, including the Fiji Indians and Chinese, as guests, sojourners or interlopers. Among themselves, many villagers refer to themselves as 'the Fijians' or, previously, 'the natives'. The Frank Bainimarama Fiji First government of 2006–2022 upset many Indigenous Fijians by declaring that all Fiji citizens and residents are now free to use the term 'Fijian' to describe themselves.

The Indigenous society is divided into *vanuas*, where each *vanua* is defined as an area having only one Paramount Chief, such as Nadi or Naitasiri. Within each *vanua* are a number of Indigenous villages, each with a headman, an assistant headman, and a board of elders. Only Indigenous people, with the occasional exception, are permitted to live in Indigenous villages. The villages are closely monitored and controlled by surveillance techniques that incorporate cultural legitimacy and authority. James, Tuidraki, Tuidraki, and Tabaiwalu [14] distinguish carefully between the two distinct realms of town-space and village-space. The town is where the members of the other (minority) ethnic groups live, where the government and criminal law are based, and where employment is located. The village is a semi-private/semi-public space that is characterized by customary authority and cultural control. There is a colloquial saying that the Indigenous Fijians are 'good in the village and bad in the town'.

Two of the most well-known villages in the Nadi area are Namotomoto Village and Nakavu Village, which are located together, just to the northeast of Nadi Town Centre. The Nadi River separates the town centre from these two village communities, and it is a common sight to see numerous villagers walking back and forth along the Nadi River bridge heading either into town or away from town. On sunny days, youngsters can often be seen diving into the river from the bridge. As mentioned, Noah's Gang's drinking spot is a hidden area on the town-side riverbank about 50 yards west of, or on the ocean side of, the bridge.

There is a common awareness that the broader world has come to gaze on the Indigenous Fijian man's body through tourism ([5], pp. 152–156) and the global sports of rugby and rugby league. The warrior image has been transformed into the

modern-day image of the rugby player. Younger lads see the ability to make money from rugby by playing in a professional league overseas, and the tourism industry also relies upon an essentialized version of the Indigenous man's body, and the woman's body to a lesser extent. The resurgent Indigenous masculinity of the rugby players is also evident in the consciousness of Noah's Gang, which is an exclusively Indigenous gang. Although some women may be present at the river drinking spot, they are not perceived as equal to the men, and their presence does not dilute the obvious masculine presence and style of the men. Nadi Town Centre, and the Nadi River foreshore even more so, is a masculine space characterized by ascendant notions of resurgent Indigenous masculinity, 'hypermasculinity' ([15], p. 239), or '(hyper)masculinity' ([16], p. 518).

The Indigenous Fijians prize the resilience of their customary traditions and moral values, but the spending power of the tourists tends to loom large [17]. Hence, the desire to secure benefits from the tourists is seen as a way of assuaging anxieties about their own place in the world, and the inimitable Fijian style and charm have an assertive subtext where their masculinity is asserted and reasserted constantly in every interaction, fuelled by their devotion to reggae and marijuana. By being in charge, both in the village and at the river foreshore, anxieties about relative status are assuaged, and the Indigenous men can function in a way that amounts to power/knowledge since it seeps into and defines and regulates every interaction. Dominance of the agenda by Noah's Gang is achieved by friendliness, charm ([5], p. 156), and the Indigenous body-as-seen ([5], p. 156), the Indigenous body that ventures out of the villages in the mornings and meets the tourists in town, first as equals, and then, quickly, smoothly, and invisibly, the equality morphs into a kind of Indigenous dominance because their power/knowledge system takes control over outside elements. As Cartwright said to the first author in interview for the soccer history project: 'the Indigenous Fijians are always intact'. This quotation comes from the following larger paragraph where Cartwright explains the basis of identity:

> *When the day is over the damage is done. This is to show that Fijians (Indigenous Fijians) are always intact. If there is a big game, such as Farebrother's Rugby Challenge from two vanuas (from different provinces, say Nadi and Naitasiri) (a vanua means that there is only one paramount chief in that area) the emotion gets intensified and they could kill each other in the nightclub after the game. However, after this has happened, because of the links of our ancestors (the first Fijians), we both declare that we were wrong and that the violence should not have happened. We accept our oneness and unity. This is what the Fiji military force is all about. All in all, the Fijians are very particular and sensitive and aware (source: Harry Cartwright, personal interview, Nadi Town, Ba Province, 9 April 2015, notes in possession of author).*

The tourist resorts assist in the maintenance of Indigenous power/knowledge because the tourist gaze seems to demand Indigenous workers in frontline jobs. By contrast, Fiji Indians are 'relegated' to the back-office professional roles of accountant, finance manager, human resource manager, marketing manager, and IT specialist. Therefore, the Fiji Indian body is seen principally to be the home of the Fiji Indian mind. The Indigenous body serves in the frontline and is highly visible, whereas the Fiji Indian body, other than in Hindu religious settings, education contexts, and the shopping strips of Lautoka and Ba, is hidden in the background. The Fiji Indian community's humility and pragmatic acceptance of these realities nonetheless creates

in them the awareness that they fail to be fully appreciated. Memories of the military coups on both sides of the ethnic divide create anxieties among Fiji Indians and a sense among the Indigenous villagers that their ability to overturn democratically-elected governments is simply another weapon in their armory. Even when unexercised, its power lives on because of collective memory. The Fiji First government was removed at the ballot box in 2022, not by a military coup, but because it was perceived that the Indigenous people had decided that the Bainimarama government was not sufficiently prioritizing their interests. They were allegedly not pursuing their activities with a sufficiently Indigenous style, nor were they allegedly putting sufficient emphasis upon Indigenous identity. The fact that the 1987 coup leader, Sitiveni Rabuka, came back to guide SODELPHA to electoral victory in 2022 was highly symbolic, causing the Indigenous Fijian opponents of the Fiji First ruling party to perceive that once again they had become the architects of their own destiny. Many Fiji Indians perceived that communal politics had raised its head again, thus throwing into question the idea of multiracialism that Bainimarama had promoted within the society. The concepts of moral landownership and Indigenous primacy remain vitally important, if not defining, features of Fiji society for the average villager who does not take kindly to the idea that 'everyone nowadays can be called a Fijian'. The mythical link to the Vuda Point landing also remains crucial, as does a point frequently made by Cartwright – the Nadi Paramount Chief did not consent to the Bau Chief's ceding of the Fiji Islands to the British. Therefore, a sense of injustice and grievance continues to prevail in Nadi Indigenous circles that those in Suva may continue to see as unreasonable or feudal. Nadi's exceptionalism and resulting self-confidence is very much fuelled by this history, and it provides important context for the unrepentant Indigenous masculinity of Noah's Gang, even for those members originally from elsewhere. What they are really doing might be described as putting a tax on tourists. But they do so with charm and style.

3. Methodology

The first author's first experience doing research in Fiji was his research project on Fiji soccer history, conducted in consultation with ex-Nadi, Lautoka, and Fiji icon, Harry Cartwright (name changed) and his mentor Mr. Bobby Tikaram, a former president of Airport Soccer Club (ASC) and Nadi Soccer Association. The research involved 20 sessions of personal interviews with Cartwright conducted in various Nadi Town Centre venues between May 2014 and April 2015. These meetings produced approximately 60 hours of interview data. The first author also conducted, with Cartwright's help, seven interviews with other ex-star soccer players between June and November 2015. He also conducted extended participant observation. During the 2014–2015 period, and on trips back to Fiji in July 2017 and July/August 2019, the first author had countless conversations with Cartwright, his family members, his friends, his fellow villagers, and other ex-players at venues in Nadi, Lautoka, Ba, Nakavu Village (Nadi), and Namoli Village (Lautoka). He was an active observer, as well as participant, at a number of social drinking sessions with Noah's Gang members throughout 2014–2015. At that stage, Cartwright was the assistant village headman at a Nadi area village, and he serves today as the elected village headman of the same village. Cartwright is the link between the soccer history project and the present work.

The first author then lived 30 kilometers up the coast from Nadi in Lautoka (population 71,573 as at the 2017 Census), a provincial city that serves as the administrative centre for the rural hinterland. He met Cartwright in Lautoka too. Through Cartwright, he got to know the main members of Noah's Gang and sometimes drank independently of Cartwright with Francis and other locals in Lautoka including at Renee's, the Lautoka Club, and the South Seas Club.

The first author was especially close with Cartwright and Francis, the then vocalist of Reggae Man Band. On one occasion, Francis and the first author drank at Renee's in Lautoka, and the first author gave Francis a leather jacket. Both men sat happily in that warm location, desperately hoping for a whiff of sea breeze to enter through the first-floor window of the pub on Naviti Street. To make matters worse, as far as the heat was concerned, both men were determined to keep wearing their black leather jackets. They talked about the unity of punks and Rastafarians in England in the 1970s and 1980s. 'I love the way you say "underground," man' said Francis. Francis was involved in songwriting and recording of reggae songs with his band, Reggae Man Band, and in other collaborative endeavors. As mentioned, by July/August 2019, he had left Nadi to move back to his village in the southeast of Viti Levu.

Although this chapter does not relate directly to the first author's soccer history research, Cartwright was a member of Noah's Gang so this mini-project can be seen as an extension of the other. At all times, the first author tried to apply what the American Marxist sociologist C. Wright Mills [18] called the sociological imagination, that is, observing social life and trying to make mental connections between one's personal situation and the broader economic, social, and political context of society. In this chapter, we observe aspects of feudal remnants in the form of village culture and the chiefly system; capitalism that largely centred on the importance of tourist dollars in Nadi Town; and the Singapore-style neoliberalism of the Fiji First government (2006–2022) which set the backdrop for our events. The notion of Indigenous Fijian villagers clinging on to the idea that only they should be allowed to call themselves 'the Fijians', in the context of a contrary edict by the Fiji First party, sets the context for the tension that the first author observed with Noah's Gang aiming to boldly assert and reassert, but with charm and style, a resurgent Indigenous masculinity.

But we also observe counterbalancing forces such as Indigenous anxieties and depression about their lack of spending power vis-à-vis white and East Asian tourist men [17]. The Bainimarama edict about the term 'Fijian' is another background contextual factor that was in play at the time. However, the authors argue that it was less important to Noah's Gang than the spending power of the tourists aspect. This was because lack of spending power hits and hurts people on a daily, if not minute-by-minute, basis, unlike the question of who has the right to call themselves a Fijian. Furthermore, Noah's Gang members (other than Ben from Nakavu Village) were mostly cynical towards the Fiji First party and the edicts of politicians were not viewed as creating any legitimacy beyond what ordinary villagers possessed. The first author accepts that his friendship and working relationship with Cartwright smoothed his semi-entry into Noah's Gang as well as how he was treated and the mood of interaction.

After a few years away from Fiji, and with several articles having been published from the soccer history project, the first author ventured into tourism research. At first, the research had no connection to Fiji and focused on dark tourism in Northern Ireland and Poland. Having become equipped with knowledge about theories and

themes, he decided to write about Noah's Gang for this book chapter. Although he had no formal interviews with Gang members other than Cartwright, he believed that the extent and quality of his interactions with the Gang primarily over the 2014–2015 period, backed up by interpretations of events from Cartwright at the time, gave him the necessary content. He read back over the memoir book coauthored with Cartwright and cast his memory back to the interactions that he had observed earlier. It may be better to call this project autoethnography as it relies upon memories and experiences from the author's own personal life, backed up by sociological observation that links the minicases presented here to broader social, economic, and political currents. The author, at the beginning of writing this chapter, wrote detailed notes and key events and themes emerged out of this process. Using the Marxist method of dialectic, the author aimed to observe the contradictions evident in every form of social interaction and, following similar important work by Presterudstuen [19], put particular emphasis on contradictions arising from globalization and modernity. He felt it important not to view either traditional culture or modern ways of life as either perfect or problematic but to look at how locals empower themselves in rapidly changing situations to reduce their own alienation and increase their own enjoyment of life. While there was a moneymaking purpose in Noah's Gang's hustling, clearly, they also enjoyed the camaraderie and excitement. After leaving Fiji, the first author joined various Facebook groups on Fiji topics so as to do what he could to reimmerse himself in Fiji discourses.

The second author worked as a high-school economics and accounting teacher before becoming a university lecturer. He is a Fiji Indian man from Ba, who now works in Suva. However, he remains a dedicated supporter of soccer in Fiji and, in particular, is a devoted fan of the Ba Football Association district team in the Fiji Premier League. This author helped the first author stay up-to-date on Fiji topics and gave him more details on Fiji Indian life in Western Fiji.

4. Theory issues: Althusser on ideology, Foucault on power/knowledge

A recent definition of sustainable tourism is: 'Tourism which is developed and maintained in an area in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an infinite period while safeguarding the Earth's life-support system on which the welfare of current and future generations depends' ([20], pp. 198, 234). A related concept is responsible tourism (RT), which stresses 'the importance of the fair and equitable distribution of benefits to local populations and to safeguard ecology' ([21], p. 4). A low minimum wage of F$4 an hour, in a medium-price rather than low-price country, and standard working terms at the resorts of 25 days on, 5 days off cannot be said to be free of exploitation. Gender should be integrated into sustainable tourism's theory and practice [22]. In terms of climate change awareness, Fiji has already sold land to the climate change-affected Kiribati nation in Fiji's second island Vanua Levu [23]. Meanwhile, New Zealand has begun to provide funding to relocate several Fiji villages to higher ground as part of a long-term project to combat climate change [24]. The Port Denarau luxury tourism precinct, Nadi Town Centre, and the nearby villages are all under threat from rising sea levels. There is also soil erosion on the Nadi River banks. If these villages were to be relocated to higher ground, much tradition and sense of identity would be lost as well as the villagers' easy access to town.

We now look at theoretical and practical problems and dilemmas that flow from cruder forms of Marxism, which sharply delineate economic base from cultural

superstructure. Such crude versions nearly always assert that changes in the economic base create changes in the superstructure rather than vice-versa. We aim to study the complex relationship between different aspects of society here and use the terms 'base' and 'superstructure' merely as simple tools to aid understanding rather than as literal descriptions. First of all, Laffey ([25], p. 460) points out that the forebears of poststructuralism, such as Foucault, are, in a certain sense, 'after Marx' (as we all are, if we are willing to see it). The historical materialism theory of Marx and Engels was taken as an implied 'intellectual reference point' ([25], p. 460), unavoidable because the contribution already existed both in theory and history. The theory determined how we all saw the world and from what vantage point or perspective. By contrast, Laffey argues that much poststructuralist work is *against* historical materialism, which is surely an undialectical position. The poststructuralist 'critique' of historical materialism is sarcastically explained by Laffey ([25], p. 462) as follows: 'a largely mythical [strawman] historical materialism is trumped by a new-and-improved poststructuralism that claims, as if by magic, to overcome all of Marxism's inherent and irredeemable flaws, economism not the least'. The distinction between the ideal (thought) and the real (material life) was a foundation stone for Marxist historical materialism, and was, to some extent, inherited from previous thinkers as well as allegedly inverting German Idealism by putting the real as foundational/primary. But the problem with a literal interpretation of the base-superstructure model of Marx's [26] *Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* was not only that cultural superstructure could impact upon economic base, but that both also included each other. For example, culture and law are integral parts of the relations of production (in the form of employment law or workplace relations, for example) (part of the economic base) as well as the superstructure. Laffey and Dean ([27], p. 100) conclude that '[t]he economy, all by itself, cannot determine anything and even to speak in this way is nonsense'.

While aiming to get around the dead-end of base-superstructure, the French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser in the 1960s wanted to transcend it by looking at how ideology operates through daily practices within those institutions which he termed ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) (schools, churches, workplaces, sporting organizations, etc.). This is halfway towards the position adopted by Foucault, who preferred to use neither the term ideology nor the term alienation. So, Althusser's ([6], pp. 115–124) theory is that ideology works in part by 'hailing' ([6], p. 118) or 'interpellation' ([6], p. 118) as when a police officer shouts 'Hey, you!' at a suspected thief. The police officer is hailing an already-existing subject, revalidating him, in a sense, as when a casual labourer turns up at the docks each morning and then is hailed as in chosen for daily work. Ideology works here by placing as subjects within a complex social reality, where each person has a designated role/position in society (not in the functionalist sense) determined by law, custom, economics, politics, culture, etc. This seems to be a step leading us towards the mid-period Foucault's [3, 4] idea of power/knowledge being an ever-present force located everywhere in space and time within institutions. The power/knowledge system forces confession and then aims at surveillance, normalization, standardization, marginalization, and the eradication of deviance. As is well-known, Foucault developed this theory in relation to the modern-era prison in France, post-1790, but he also saw it as being applicable to schools, factories, offices, religious institutions, and other organizations that adapted and refined the model of the prison for their own purposes. These features were then reincorporated back into prisons, as in Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon prison design.

5. Findings and discussion: Noah's gang

If we look first at the sustainable tourism definitions, there are three main aspects: fair and equitable employment, environmental impacts, and impacts on local communities. Although separate things, the first and last are interconnected since much employment, except perhaps at the top managerial level, is sourced from the local communities. As mentioned, there are low-paying jobs at the resorts, including bartenders, waiters, cleaners, and gardeners, and these are mainly filled by Indigenous Fijians. For resorts in locations far from town areas, the standard terms of work in 2014–2015 were 25 days on and 5 days off, which amounts to significantly more working hours than a 5-day working week. It creates stress and alienation from family members as 25 days on is a long period of time. There is pressure to act out essentialized forms of Fijianness in front of tourists, where everyone is always charming, courteous, and inoffensive. Struggling up these attributes over 25 days is clearly exhausting physical and emotional labour. Although the sun, sand, and sky appear as quintessentially Fijian, the sterile physical décor and ambience is often in a corporate style, either bland and European or *faux*-Fijian, meaning it can be hard for workers to generate 'Fijianness' out of thin air. The positive side of this lifestyle is seen when mixed-gender groups of six or eight workers socialize on their first night back on the mainland at places like Renee's in Lautoka. People like Noah's Gang escape the job descriptions and managerial gaze, and their 'performances' are less scripted and more subaltern and dangerous. They add to the sustainability of Fiji as a tourist destination, especially for younger, budget-conscious tourists looking for 'darker' or 'edgier' experiences. But their lifestyle is riskier as income is never guaranteed, and they risk losing ground to newer, younger generations of 'street boys' and 'street girls'. The masculine style and *l'ethos* of the Gang too largely makes invisible or delegitimizes local women, as well as Fiji Indians. However, the resorts also relegate 'Indians' to the back office. The authors have no specific data from conversations or observation that relate to environmental aspects.

Now, we shall return to Noah's Gang and provide three minicases. The first author first encountered them in December 2013 when he was drinking with an Indigenous woman at the old Indigenous Deep Sea nightclub, which used to be above the Deep Sea pub. Nowadays, the Deep Sea nightclub is directly across the Nadi main street from where the old pub/nightclub used to be. The first author was not well-known in the Nadi Town Centre at that time. The pub was closing up for the day and so some of us went upstairs when the related nightclub opened. After a while, a younger Indigenous man, probably aged in his early thirties, walked past the woman and the author and said something along the lines of 'She's my sister, look after her'. At this time, this man was often seen with Noah and his Gang. The woman laughed in acknowledgement, but there was no extended conversation. This was clearly a case of 'hailing' as the remark was directed at both of us, but especially to the first author. It was a way of saying that this was the town of the Nadi area Indigenous villagers, and he was trying to mystify their networks of relationships. It was a form of power/knowledge as the comment relied on the speaker knowing and the author not knowing what sort of relationship existed between the woman and the speaker. The woman's laughter acknowledged this fact, we could say, but adds to (or at least does not deflate) its power, since it reveals no new information and so maintains the information asymmetry between locals and foreigners. The assumption probably would have been that the author was a tourist who had somehow found himself off the beaten track in a part of the town occupied nearly exclusively by locals. The authors perceive that the hierarchical nature of

Indigenous village society was evident in the story as the woman's laughter and lack of further response suggests that she acknowledged the age and gender hierarchies of the culture. The man was older than she was, and so age and gender worked together to culturally justify the man's assertive behavior. His remark was delivered in a cunning way, appearing both serious and humorous at the same time.

Sometime later, the first author was in Nadi on a sunny weekday afternoon, either in 2014 or 2015 and Cartwright came across five or six members of Noah's Gang and one white tourist sitting in a semi-public space under a supermarket. The white English tourist, aged in his twenties, looked ashen-faced and nervous as if he had experienced some sort of recent trauma. It was explained to us that he had had his luggage stolen (or, alternatively, that he had lost his luggage). Noah's Gang members were fussing around him and had adopted him as their special friend or esteemed guest. They had generously provided him with clothing, thus demonstrating Indigenous and Christian village ethics. The tourist appeared to be grateful but was still shaken. We began to talk about soccer. On hearing that he was a Newcastle United fan, the author explained to him how Cartwright had played in the Fiji team, which had beaten Newcastle United 3–0 in a friendly match in May 1985. This news clearly took the tourist by surprise, and he seemed to be suitably impressed, but he was still struggling to believe it. Cartwright's soccer credentials clearly added some additional subcultural capital and prestige to Noah's Gang and it merged with the subcultural capital that accrued due to the other members' conversational skills and Reggae Man Band's nightly residency at Sitar's Indian Restaurant. The Gang, if the author remembers it correctly, were genuinely pleased to be able to assist the tourist. While they remained visibly humble, there was a partly suppressed cheerfulness that arose from the fact that the wealth differential between tourists and locals had been temporarily reversed (and wealth is of course associated with power). They were not at all unpleasant in their glee, but the author took the glee to be present nonetheless.

The second incident occurred at around the same time or possibly later, either in 2014 or 2015. The author heard this story second-hand from Cartwright a few days or week after it had taken place. One afternoon, said Cartwright, a white Polish woman tourist had become associated with Noah's Gang and they had brought her to the Nadi River drinking spot. At a certain point, she asked the Gang members about the Indigenous Fijians' alleged black magic secrets. As Cartwright told the story, the men were somewhat taken aback by the request, and became pensive and defensive. They replied that they were Christians, city-boys, and half-castes (these are their words, not the authors') and did not know about such things. Later, Cartwright says, the men became sexually assertive towards her, in some way that unnerved Cartwright, and he led her away to the relative safety of the Nadi main street.

Clearly, this is an interesting minicase that reveals many of the contradictions, possibilities, and limits of globalization in the age of modernity. The woman's brashness and directness in her question were not culturally appropriate, from the Indigenous Fijian viewpoint. This is probably why, under pressure, the men reverted to a more traditional position whereby they confessed their Christian faith and tried to explain that black magic was a part of their pre-Christian and premodern past rather than their present. They may have felt offended but also somewhat lacking in that modernity and Christianity had taken away some of their premodern warrior edge and danger. There is self-defense, hurt pride, but maybe also some feeling of regret. The loss of ancient powers is also inextricably bound up with the coming of colonialism, so it is also as if the villagers are being blamed for falling prey to modernity when actually they had little choice.

It is not at all clear or obvious how power/knowledge operates here in terms of which power/knowledge system dominates or wins out ([1], p. 161; [28], p. 76) in the clash of cultures. Probably neither wins out in any kind of conclusive sense. The Polish woman walks away with her question presumably unanswered and with no new information. The Indigenous men suffer a loss of pride. Another way in which the story is revealing is that it shows the European privilege of being able to freely go beyond or outside of Christianity, in a very direct and upfront way, whereas, for the Indigenous men, in a more communitarian culture ([28], p. 73), individual breaches of social and religious norms and etiquette are less easily imaginable. Therefore, the woman is operating from what is really a postmodern position while the men do not want to be classified as premodern. So, the incident reveals culture clash across a number of dimensions, most of which relate to globalization. The sexual assertiveness of the men towards the end of the interaction could be viewed as them, acting out of frustration, trying to reassert Indigenous power/knowledge in response to their loss of face.

Now we turn to Lautoka in order to make some comparisons between tourist and non-tourist towns. The first author first encountered James and Skull, if his memory serves him correctly, around June 2015 when they had been cheering on the Ba Football Association team at the 2015 Fiji FACT tournament held in Nadi. They were a mixed-ethnicity gang of two Indigenous Fijian men, James and Skull, and two Fiji Indian men, one of whom was Ben. Since the Ba team has a large and devoted following in Ba Town and in the Ba hinterland (Ba is another 30 kilometers up the coast from Lautoka but in the opposite direction to Nadi), it was not unusual for a mixed-ethnicity group to support Ba. They were making noise and singing in the public minibus that headed out of Nadi towards Lautoka after the tournament's games were over for the evening.

Another time, in Lautoka, Skull and a group of other Indigenous men, possibly also from Ba Town, met the first author one evening in Lautoka by chance. All of us wanted to continue drinking. The author and two of the men went into the MH supermarket on Naviti Street to buy a bottle of hard liquor and some beer or wine bottles. The MH supermarket had a liquor store on one side of the main store building, but to pay for the liquor, you used the main checkouts in the regular part of the store. It was twilight and the city centre was close to empty as it was a weeknight rather than a Friday.

Unbeknown to us, the cashier must have silently notified the police as on our way out we were met by police officers. We were able to get on our way, after fobbing them off, to a place near the ocean shoreline, which was near private apartments but which was relatively regularly used as a drinking spot by 'street boys' (note that that term in Fiji should not be associated with any sexual connotations). It was a laneway and the apartment block was built over the top of it. The author stayed quiet and kept talking with the people that he knew best, sitting on the kerb of the laneway while others mostly stood up. However, the city centre was quiet, and people's voices echoed up against the walls of the apartments and other buildings. Soon, a police van arrived, and the Indigenous men started talking to the police. The author, who was the only non-Indigenous person present, kept to the back and kept quiet – by this time, night had fallen.

It soon became clear that the street drinking had to be terminated. We all drifted away into the night and went our separate ways, the prospects for further drinking being over. There were no repercussions from the incident or at least none for the author. The authors think that one or more of Skull's Gang may have had criminal

records or a history of police encounters. Another explanation, and one that is not mutually exclusive from the first one, is that the police were concerned, as part of some overall general policy, about protecting overseas tourists from the allegedly predatory ([29], p. 54), or opportunistic behavior of the street boys. They may have been concerned, and the supermarket cashier may have been concerned, that the author was only buying liquor for the group under duress. This was most certainly not the case, as the author enjoyed their company and the city-centre's pubs were either dead or closed for the night. Here, we see the assumptions on the part of the police and cashier that led to the local unemployed or underemployed 'street boys' being cast in the role of what Stanley Cohen [30] once termed folk devils within the context of a moral panic. It is unlikely that police attention would have occurred in this case had events played out in Nadi Town Centre or neighboring Martintar. In those places, the tourist presence is far more ubiquitous and the local police are far more experienced and chilled in dealing with cases involving the street boys and their tourist friends or acquaintances. Because it was in Lautoka on a weeknight, and the city-centre was almost deserted, we brought attention to ourselves, and it might be argued that we were disturbing the peace for residents. As a white foreigner, the first author thought that he should stay quiet or hidden in the background, and let the Indigenous men sort the matter out with the police. The author really felt that it was not his business to get involved as he was no type of leader on the night itself or more generally.

Although both parties were Indigenous, we see here the clash of two rival (or at least temporarily rival) power/knowledge systems, that of the police and that of the street boys. The minicases show the different cultures and sets of assumptions between Nadi and Lautoka more generally, too. A policing of minor disturbances is a more common occurrence in Lautoka, which sees itself as a family city and a city for work and administration. By contrast, Nadi, being a tourist town, is more lax and liberal, and there is less of a concept of moral panic and folk devils created either by the street boy presence, the tourist presence or the combination of tourist and street boy that seems to have been the combination of people that provoked anxiety in Lautoka. The mix of the (known) local and the (unknown) foreigner produced a look and a social and economic dynamic that in Lautoka was seen as unusual and threatening, but in Nadi, it would have been seen as nothing out of the ordinary. The anxiety of the cashier and police was shifted around by them so that it came across as concern for the safety of the foreigner, making this the apparent basis for their actions. This mental reorientation act meant that they could avoid admitting their own social anxieties at a mix of people and cultures that came across to them as strange.

In Fiji tourism, reggae and marijuana both aim to assuage anxieties, comfort troubled souls, and become a bridge between people's understandings of self, others, and the world. For a reggae vocalist like Francis, reggae provides a language, worldview, and history that, if passionately adopted in Fiji, manages to simultaneously stand as a bulwark to Indigenous Fijian insularity; a linkage to cool 'black' folks in the Caribbean, who also have had to deal with the encroachment of the tourist trade upon their lifestyles; and a language to literally bond with or at least connect with those very same tourists. The punk leather jacket that the first author gave Francis had, among other sew-on patches, one on the shoulder with a swastika and a line through it, which means antifascism in the West. Cartwright commented perceptively about why the jacket and patch appealed to Francis: 'Because that is consistent with his prior beliefs' (paraphrased). Antifascism and reggae sit well together.

The comparison of our analysis and conclusion with Fennell's [21] case, where a sex tourist halfway through a trip talks with a sex worker and then makes an ethical

decision to reject this type of tourism, is not so simple as sex is not something that is a main feature of the interactions we describe. Second, we want to present Noah's Gang in a fairly sympathetic light and to do this, the opposite that creates them, the tourists, cannot be rejected out of hand either. The individualist Kierkegaardian existentialist ethic [21] is replaced here by a Marxist/Foucauldian ethics with Althusser as the mediator between the two. Noah's Gang's struggles against alienation, poverty, boredom and feelings of insignificance are seen in a positive light while the resorts represent exploitation and ideology-backed conformity more simply. The tourists create the world of Noah's Gang. Contrary to Fennell's [21] Kierkegaardian approach, a pious move to avoid something or to criticize does not affect the forces that brought the whole ecosystem into play. Noah's Gang choose what they see as the best of both worlds – a life in the village and a life in the town.

6. Conclusion

As we have seen, Noah's Gang in Nadi, Fiji, attempts to impose Indigenous power/knowledge upon the tourists that they interact with, but this is never totally successful. We have looked at how the power of the tourists differs in certain ways from the power of Noah's Gang. While Noah's Gang gains from local geographical and cultural knowledge and their integration into village and, to a lesser extent, town networks, they feel somewhat lessened by the constant reminder of the tourists' wealth in daily interaction ([17], p. 115). Resurgent Indigenous masculinity and their understanding that the Indigenous Fijians are the sole moral landowners of the Fiji Islands is a source of empowerment and subcultural capital. Their subcultural capital is augmented by Reggae Man Band's residency at Sitar's Indian Restaurant (now a thing of the past) and Cartwright's soccer icon status. The minicase with the English tourist who had his luggage stolen shows Indigenous village and Christian ethics, but their glee in turning the tables on the tourists is obvious. The minicase with the Polish woman shows her European postmodern rejection of the Christian tradition that puts Noah's Gang members on the back foot. They are unable to answer her request satisfactorily, and no one seems to 'win' from this encounter.

Sustainable tourism refers to the ability of an integrated resort or industry to operate consistently into the future with nonexploitative working conditions and minimal negative impacts on local communities and environment. Villagers remain worried that the villages close to town, Namotomoto and Nakavu, may eventually be forced into the more hilly interior, which would separate the residents from town and the ability to easily interact with tourists. The identity, history, and collective memory of villagers would all be adversely impacted. Ironically, this may be one solution to rising sea levels. Another key concept is *experiential tourism* and the desire of tourists to explore limit experiences such as extreme sport, alcohol and drug binges, cultural experiences, and stunts such as balconing. Noah's Gang may be able to offer assistance to them by providing interesting experiences, outside of resort space, where a communal and community atmosphere prevails that draws upon and is in constant interaction with village ethics, culture, and logic. Noah's Gang's lack of attention to timetables and job descriptions, their physicality, sensuousness, and casual lifestyles may well promote such feelings among tourists. Reggae and marijuana complement the alternative vibe of the 'south'. Despite this, but not running contrary to it or upsetting it, Noah's Gang members experience stability and social control through their village-based lives and, in some cases, involvement in the secular business world.

Sitar's represents the encroachment of that world, to a certain extent, as indicated by the firing of the Reggae Man Band by the restaurant owner. No one can expect Noah's Gang to become politically correct cultural ambassadors. Despite this, Reggae Man Band's tour of the Marshall Islands shows that these two worlds can, in certain circumstances, be bridged.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following people: Francis Joseph, Semi-Tabaiwalu, Anare Tuidraki, Henry Dyer Tuidraki, Bobby Tikaram, and Meli Vuilabasa.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author details

Kieran Edmond James[1*] and Sheikh Ali Tanzil[2]

1 University of the West of Scotland, Paisley, United Kingdom

2 University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji Islands

*Address all correspondence to: kieran.james99@yahoo.co.uk

References

[1] Kahn-Harris K. Extreme Metal: Music and Culture on the Edge. London, New York: Berg; 2007

[2] Budeanu A, Miller G, Moscardo G, Ooi C-S. Sustainable tourism, progress, challenges and opportunities: An introduction. Journal of Cleaner Production. 2016;**111**:285-294

[3] Foucault M. Discipline and Punish, Sheridan A, translator. New York: Vintage; 1979. (Original work published 1975)

[4] Foucault M. Michel Foucault - Power/ Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977. New York: Vintage; 1980

[5] Urry J. The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies. 2nd ed. London: Sage; 2002. p. 2002. (Original work published 1990)

[6] Althusser L. Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays, Brewster B, translator. New York: Modern Review Press; 2001. (Original work published 1970)

[7] Smith E, Smith O. The Maldives: Republic of Maldives, Indian Ocean. In: Lynes A, Kelly C, Treadwell J, editors. 50 Dark Destinations: Crime and Contemporary Tourism. Bristol: Policy Press; 2023. pp. 271-275

[8] Lennon J, Foley M. Dark Tourism. London: Continuum; 2000

[9] Ali A. Plantation to Politics: Studies on Fiji Indians. Suva: The University of the South Pacific/Fiji Times and Herald; 1980

[10] Gillion KL. The Fiji Indians: Challenge to European Dominance 1920-1946. Canberra: Australian National University Press; 1977

[11] Lal BV. 'Nonresistance' on Fiji plantations: The Fiji Indian experience, 1879-1920. In: Lal BV, Munro D, Beechert ED, editors. Plantation Workers: Resistance and Accommodation. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press; 1993. pp. 187-216

[12] Luker V. A tale of two mothers: Colonial constructions of Indian and Fijian maternity. Fijian Studies: A Journal of Contemporary Fiji. 2005;**3**(2):357-374

[13] Chandan A. Indians in Britain. New Delhi: Sterling; 1986

[14] James K, Tuidraki H, Tuidraki A, Tabaiwalu S. Sources of indigenous Fijian 'law': Village mores versus town-based criminal laws. Griffith Law Review. 2022;**31**(4):465-484. DOI: 10.1080/10383441.2022.2121462

[15] Tengan TK. (En)gendering colonialism: Masculinities in Hawai'i and Aotearoa. Cultural Values. 2002;**6**(3):239-256. DOI: 10.1080/1362517022000007194

[16] Uperesa FL. Entangled histories and transformative futures: Indigenous sport in the 21st century. In: Hokowhitu B, Moreton-Robinson A, Tuhiwai-Smith L, Andersen C, Larkin S, editors. Routledge Handbook of Critical Indigenous Studies. London, New York: Routledge; 2021. pp. 511-524

[17] Momsen JH. Tourism, gender and development in the Caribbean. In: Kinnaird V, Hall D, editors. Tourism: A Gender Analysis. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons; 1994. pp. 106-120

[18] Mills CW. The Sociological Imagination. Oxford: Oxford UP; 1959

[19] Presterudstuen GH. Performing Masculinity: Body, Self and Identity in Modern Fiji. Abingdon: Routledge; 2020

[20] Fennell DA, Cooper C. Sustainable Tourism: Principles, Contexts and Practices. Bristol, Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters; 2020

[21] Fennell D. Responsible tourism: A Kierkegaardian interpretation. Tourism Recreation Research. 2008;**33**(1):3-12. DOI: 10.1080/02508281.2008.11081285

[22] Ferguson L, Alarcón DM. Gender and sustainable tourism: Reflections on theory and practice. Journal On Tourism & Sustainability. 2015;**23**(3):401-416. DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2014.957208

[23] Keck M. This Land Was Meant for Kiribati's Climate Refugees. Now it Will Provide the Island Nation with Nutritious Food. New York City, USA: Global Citizen; 2021. Available from: https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/fiji-land-kiribati-farming/

[24] Keck M. New Zealand Pledges Millions to Help Relocate Fijian Communities Displaced by Climate Change. New York City, USA: Global Citizen; 2020. Available from: https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/new-zealand-fiji-communities-relocate/

[25] Laffey M. The red herring of economism: A reply to Marieke De Goede. Review of International Studies. 2004;**30**(3):459-468. Available from: https://www.jstor.org/stable/20097929

[26] Marx K. Preface to a contribution to the critique of political economy. In: Borodulina T, editor. On Historical Materialism. Moscow: Progress Publishers; 1972. pp. 136-140. (Original work published 1859)

[27] Laffey E, Dean K. A flexible Marxism for flexible times: Globalization and historical materialism. In: Rupert M, Smith H, editors. Historical Materialism and Globalization. London: Routledge; 2002. pp. 90-109

[28] Cohen E. Transnational marriage in Thailand: The dynamics of extreme heterogamy. In: Bauer TG, McKercher B, editors. Sex and Tourism: Journeys of Romance, Love, and Lust. New York, London, Oxford: Haworth Press; 2003. pp. 57-81

[29] Du Cros H, du Cros D. Romance, retsina, and reality in Crete. In: Bauer TG, McKercher B, editors. Sex and Tourism: Journeys of Romance, Love, and Lust. New York, London, Oxford: Haworth Press; 2003. pp. 43-55

[30] Cohen S. Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers. 2nd ed. London: Basil Blackwood; 1987. (Original work published 1972)

Chapter 6

Creative Tourism in Developing World: An Evaluation of Türkiye's Creative Tourism Potential

Gülşah Gençer Çelik, Beyza Hatırnaz and Erkan Taşkıran

> *"Creativity is like a new currency that is more sophisticated and powerful than finance capital, which is one-dimensional and narrow"*
>
> *C. Landry, 2008*

Abstract

As people's needs and expectations change, so do the types of tourism they prefer to engage in. One of the tourism types among the different alternatives offered is creative tourism. Creative tourism refers to revealing tourists' own creative potential through active participation in the opportunities offered for learning in the destinations they visit. Creative tourism, as a novel research field, is a subject of study that has been recently emphasized by scholars. However, as a result of the literature review on creative tourism, it has become apparent that the topic has not been addressed from the perspective of developing countries and therefore, there is a research gap in this field. Within this context, this book chapter deals with the issue of creative tourism in the developing world and presents an evaluation of the case of Türkiye.

Keywords: creative tourism, creative cities, developing world, tourism, Türkiye

1. Introduction

Although humanity has made many developments and advances in the historical process, today, it is chasing after a revolutionary concept. The effort to create individuals who internalize that concept and the race to maximize the benefits of the potential added value to their societies increase the concept's importance much more. This concept, called creativity, can affect countries, businesses, and individuals. In addition, it is possible to find the answer to how all systems and processes can be made more effective within creativity.

Creativity is an intense concept that encompasses the notions of innovating, remaking and pioneering [1]. For an idea or product to be considered "creative," it must fulfill two basic criteria: Being new and useful. The new criterion refers to what is originally unexpected, in other words, what has not been seen or done before,

while having an intrinsic value fulfills the criterion of usefulness [2]. In this context, creative industries, creative regions, creative individuals, and ultimately creative cities are rapidly attracting the attention of policymakers, media, civil society organizations, private enterprises, and the "creative class" in general. People try to develop their creative potential by improving their production or consumption skills, following different certification programs and courses, or experiencing creativity in the holiday destinations they visit. Creativity is an end and a means to achieve diversity, economic returns, and originality [3].

While creativity is used in product development, it is still at an early research stage regarding tourism [4]. Tourism and creativity can be closely linked to integrating creative content into the tourism experience. The value-added impact of creativity on tourism is increasing by developing new markets, offering diversity to target audiences, improving destination image and competitiveness, and supporting the growth of creative industries. In this context, creative tourism, as a new approach to tourism development and marketing, expands the concept of tourism as a whole and enables the transition from traditional heritage-based cultural tourism models to new creative tourism models [5].

Creative tourism is considered a new direction for the tourism industry [6]. In particular, the worldwide economic and noneconomic crises make it necessary for many cities, regions, and countries to consider creative alternatives. Creative tourism and cities are greatly interested among policymakers, private enterprises, and researchers [7]. According to Richards and Raymond [8], *creative tourism* is a type of tourism in which tourists seek to unlock their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning opportunities in their destinations. The stakeholders of creative tourism—tourists, visitors, employees working in the facilities and residents living in the area—are all simultaneously structure the creative tourism place and thus maximize the value that can be derived from the experience of this area [9].

Creative tourism should be considered outside the classical practice and scope of mass tourism as it includes the fact that tourists who want to actively learn and have a participatory experience are in pursuit of the best service [6]. While mass tourism focuses on meeting general needs and expectations, the focus in creative tourism can be stated as self-improvement with the instinct to exist [10]. The main key point of creative tourism lies in recognizing the opportunity for tourists to contribute their cultural capital, expertise, experiences, and emotions to create their products [11]. Therefore, tourists who want to experience creative tourism seek the opportunity to learn and participate creatively in that region rather than seeing a restored architectural structure [6].

There is a rapidly developing creative tourism potential in the world. For example, there are 350 countries worldwide included in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network [12]. In this context, there are creative tourism cities worldwide, from Mexico to Japan, Russia to Australia, China to Thailand, and America to Germany, and tourists who prefer these cities create tourism mobility. While there is such a potential for creative tourism, there needs to be more evaluation of the issue, especially in developing countries. Creative tourism is an alternative not only for developed countries but also for developing countries such as Türkiye; it is necessary to analyze the potential of creative tourism. The main purpose of this book chapter is to address the issue of creative tourism, which is a breath of fresh air for the tourism industry. In this context, an evaluation of the potential of creative tourism has been made by taking Türkiye, which is one of the developing countries, as a case study. In the first part of the book chapter, creative cities are discussed, and the creative tourism movement

and its impact on sustainable development are explained. The following part discusses Türkiye's potential within the scope of creative cities. In the last part, the issue of supporting creative tourism development in Türkiye's rural areas is evaluated.

2. Creative cities

Creativity is now a key strategic driver for destinations and regions seeking to become creative cities while at the same time enabling them to support creative industries as an attractive element. Therefore, adding creativity to tourism has become a common diversification strategy, especially in cultural tourism. Creativity, supported by culture, plays a central role in these discussions, and tourism is recognized as an important tool for implementing creative strategies [13]. Creativity is also attractive regarding networking to promote economic, cultural, and social outcomes, encouraging more creative activity through disseminating knowledge and providing a policy option [3]. Tourism is one of the most important industries for many reasons, such as the increase in people's income levels and their willingness to be in different environments to socialize, the increase in the number of individuals who have gained economic freedom and technological developments, and the increase in close relations between countries. According to United Nations estimates, 3 billion people are expected to participate in tourism mobility by 2050, and the objectives of all the countries that stand out in the field of tourism to increase their share are at the forefront. As one of the ways that can be used to increase the share of this pie, creative tourism is an important and remarkable tool in this context.

Within the scope of creative tourism, many cities and regions have positioned themselves as "creative" in recent years. As a result of this development, "creative city" has now become a definition of UNESCO [13]. According to UNESCO, a creative city is defined as a city that places creative industries and culture at the heart of local development planning and actively cooperates at the international level [12]. The original idea of a creative city encourages cities to explore the aspects and areas that make them unique and special by focusing on creative industries and culture [14].

The idea of the creative city, based on the philosophy that there is much more potential in any city than meets the eye at first glance, emerged in the late 1980s. According to Charles Landry [3], who argues that creativity should be looked at from a broader perspective to solve urban problems within the scope of the creative city approach, the creative city is a call to action, as the twenty-first century is the century of cities. Creative city, as a new strategy, includes an approach to how people can think, plan, and act more creatively in the city they live in. It advocates an idea based on imagination and skills and involves designing, exploring, and creating. Therefore, the creative city aims to create a pool of ideas and thoughts rather than the expectation of providing a definite answer to questions and requests [14].

The creative city approach involves developing creative production and new governance systems that allow creativity to flourish. The idea of the creative city is based on being "creative for the world" and the idea that creativity can be encouraged or channeled in the creative industries and among all citizens in general [14]. Creative cities may have the functional utilization of, for example, a village mansion rather than the large and widespread artistic spaces offered by metropolitan cities. In this sense, a natural and ordinary activity such as making and learning about local products is much more important for tourists who want to experience creative tourism [15].

UNESCO established the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) 2004 to promote cooperation between cities that recognize creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development. Within the scope of this network, 350 countries worldwide work together to place creative industries and culture at the center of development plans at the local level within the framework of seven creative areas and to cooperate actively at the international level. The areas considered within the scope of creative tourism are crafts and folk art, film, gastronomy, literature, design, media arts, and music. Creative cities endeavor to gain a place in these seven categories. In this context, policymakers in the field of tourism should be expected to support the process by creating opportunities for tourists visiting creative tourism cities to produce their quotes and experiences, such as making perfume or experiencing porcelain painting [16].

3. Creative tourism movement and sustainable development

First of all, the concept of creative tourism has emerged as a new method in the protection of regional uniqueness with the elements of creativity in tourism as a field that has developed with the introduction of alternative tourism types, cuisine, literature, cinema, local products, and so on, as the center of tourism. Creative tourism destinations have become one of the most important issues of sustainable tourism because of the need to feed on local authenticity and protect authenticity in order to ensure sustainability in the long term.

Today, when the past is evaluated, it is possible to trace the history of creative tourism back to the 90s in parallel with the concept and types of alternative tourism that emerged with sustainable tourism. Accordingly, in addition to developing new products and services, the ideas developed to attract tourists to destinations and ensure their permanence laid the foundations of the creative tourism approach [17].

In addition to the destructive effects of tourism that have started to cause destinations to lose their characteristics, the change in the tourist profile and the demand for experience-oriented tourism activities have brought about a deep transformation in tourism. In addition, people who want to learn about local cultures, lives, clothing, culture, cuisine, and art have started to travel and put learning and discovery at the center of their travels. The need to respond to changing demands is the basis for approaches such as creative tourism to find a place for themselves. The realization of how destructive the negative effects of tourism can be in a short period, and the difficulty of reversing the deterioration of destinations has led to the necessity of developing new and protective methods that will enable tourism stakeholders, especially local governments, to maintain their relations with tourists. At this point, the mission of tourism to preserve the character of destinations, including their culture, people and nature, has become more important. Beyond selling culture, tourism has been accepted as an important element that will protect destinations' character and regulate local culture's productization and consumption [10].

With the recognition of the critical role of tourism, many tourism-based studies have been conducted on sustainable development, especially sustainable rural development, and the characteristics of tourism that may be suitable for this quality have been identified. In the context of creative tourism, it has been mentioned that tourism has tangible benefits such as protection of cultural capital and cultural heritage, sustainability, market development, and promotion of destinations [18]. At this point, authenticity is interpreted as an important reason for traveling in destination choice.

Authenticity is supported by traditional values such as local cuisine, music, handicrafts, and clothing, as well as differentiated culinary experiences, cooking, presentation, and eating styles. The planning of destinations that will be subject to creative tourism within the framework of conservation policy will contribute to the continuity of culture by preserving authenticity and revealing and protecting the value of things that are not considered valuable in daily life [19]. At this point, as in other alternative tourism types, it is important that sustainability is accepted as a qualification template for creative tourism and that all decisions, including planning and implementation, are made based on sustainability. In other words, while creative tourism is a critical initiative that can support sustainability, it also has the potential to cause authenticity to disappear through excessive commercialization or to lose its original values under staged authenticity.

Creative tourism is generally implemented in two basic modes: (1) utilizing creativity as a tourist activity, (2) utilizing creativity as a backdrop for tourism [20]. The resulting creative products and services are developed as destination-based and creative tourism based on creative activities. Accordingly, Ohridska-Olson and Ivanov [18]:

- Creative tourism dependent on a specific destination refers to sustainable initiatives developed to build on and increase the awareness of a destination with cultural and creative potential and characteristics.

- Creative tourism, centered on creative activities, is about more than just what a destination already offers. It is about the potential for growth and improvement. It involves the development of products and services that not only increase the attractiveness of destinations but also extend the length of stay. These activities can be unique to a destination or can be new products and services designed to enhance the destination's appeal.

Creative tourism involves commercializing tangible and intangible cultural values by transforming them into products and experiences within the scope of tourism [21]. The developed destinations or products and services in destinations become the attractions of the areas and support their transformation into experience-based areas. In addition to the uniqueness of destinations and what they offer, the personalization of the experiences to be gained also stands out as an important factor that increases the value of authenticity and increases the value of destinations [22]. In this context, creative product-services or destination developments based on authenticity gain importance regarding the authenticity of experiences and affect their preferability. Protecting authentic values through tourism forms the basis of a sustainable approach.

Creative cities or destinations can build their tourism strategies on two pillars within the scope of sustainability: a culture-based approach and an economy-based approach [23]. In the culture-based approach, a creative city is seen as a place where art, culture, and creativity develop strongly, where creativity is associated with identity, rights, beliefs, and social development. In the economy-based approach, creative cities are interpreted as places led by artists and arts organizations with strong, innovative, creative, competitive industries, and economic sustainability. These two distinctions provide the basis for determining the priorities of cities and the products and services offered. In both cases, social sustainability can be found, and the main goal is to ensure the sustainability of local development. However, determining whether the planning priority will be based on culture or economy is presented as the

most important element that will reveal the character of the cities. When we qualitatively evaluate creative tourism in terms of sustainability, it can be said that it has several important advantages [20]:

- It can serve as a source for tourism activities and prepare the ground for general tourism activities,
- The creative development of tourism can make the existence and atmosphere of destinations sustainable,
- Creative tourism can become a business development tool for small businesses and local artists,
- It can support local people to express their creativity,
- It is a renewable tourism resource.

The validity of all these characteristics can be realized through the planning and management of destinations in the context of sustainability. **Figure 1** summarizes linking creative tourism objectives with sustainability objectives [19].

According to **Figure 1**, social equality, economic development, and environmentalism are the main goals of sustainability, and the goals of the people, tourism businesses, and tourists in creative destinations are completely interconnected. Thus, providing spaces and opportunities for the transfer of local symbols and experiences, facilitating the reproduction and consumption of the area, experiencing local traditions, and developing and offering areas suitable for the use of creative talents in destinations are elements that will contribute to the development of economic development, social justice and equality, and environmentalism if planned correctly. In other words, planning and creating creative products, services, and related experience opportunities is

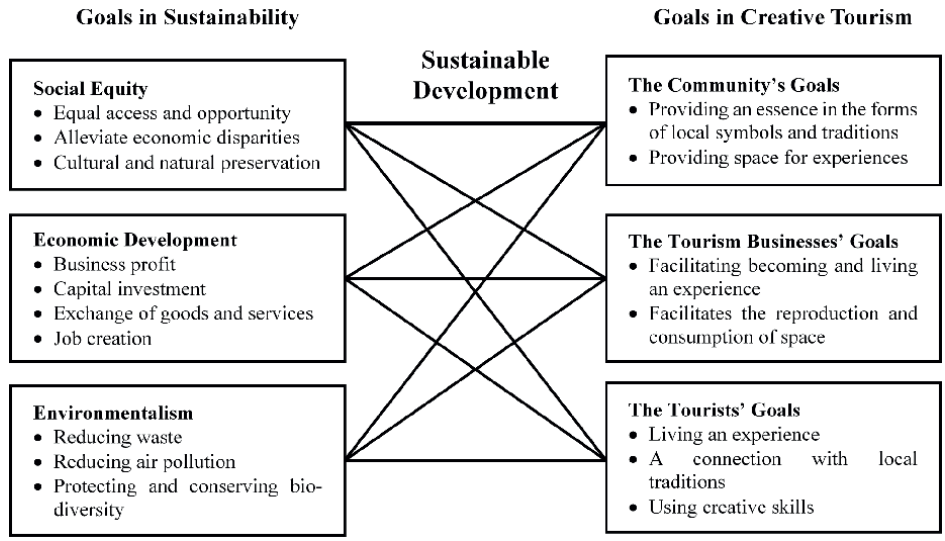

Figure 1.
The links between the theory on sustainability and creative tourism [19].

possible based on social, economic, and environmental development. If this is achieved, it is possible to discuss sustainable creative destinations.

As in every type of tourism, it would not be correct to claim that all creative tourism practices are directly sustainable, nor would it be correct to label all creative destinations as sustainable. On the other hand, within the scope of creative tourism resources, cultural and unique elements in the regions should be brought into tourism through productization. In this way, it emerges from areas that have a high potential to be sustainable and, at the same time, must be sustainable.

4. Creative tourism potential of Türkiye

Creative cities have the potential to be one of the important arguments supporting the preservation of cities' sociocultural values through tourism and recreation in developing countries such as Türkiye. As it is known, Türkiye is one of the countries with a rich cultural diversity that has hosted many civilizations throughout history. Since 2015, eight cities in Türkiye have joined the Creative Cities Network, and their values have been protected. Cities are presented in **Table 1**.

The explanations for the creative cities in Türkiye shown in **Table 1** are presented below.

4.1 Şanlıurfa

Considered the birthplace of church music, Şanlıurfa's musical heritage dates back to 10,000 BC (Neolithic period). The city has been included in the UNESCO list for its rich musical tradition, which makes it a historical melting pot that brings people from different cultures and languages together and makes music a way of life. This city considers the music industry a driving force in the tourism sector. The International Music Festival, organized in 2021, is a testament to international participation [24].

4.2 Bursa

As the first capital of the Ottoman Empire, Bursa, located on both silk and spice routes, has been an important trade center throughout its history. Bursa has also been the center of important art investments throughout history. Accordingly, the city has 55 cultural centers, 20 art galleries, and 28 museums. Koza (Koza) Han has a 530-year

City	Year of becoming a creative city	Creative field
Gaziantep	2015	Gastronomy
Hatay	2017	Gastronomy
İstanbul	2017	Design
Kütahya	2017	Crafts and folk art
Afyonkarahisar	2019	Gastronomy
Kırşehir	2019	Music
Bursa	2021	Crafts and folk art
Şanlıurfa	2023	Music

Table 1.
Creative cities of Türkiye (Created by authors).

history of silk trade and is an important stopping point. It is also possible to watch the Sword and Shield Dance, a rare folk dance performed without music, in Bursa [25].

4.3 Kırşehir

Abdals are one of the city's most important communities and one of the main components of the music culture. The different lifestyles, religious and life views, and spiritual values of the Abdals are the main sources of authenticity in the region. Music has become an important part of life in Kırşehir and has shaped urban life. Music is one of the special instruments used to bring people of different ages and lifestyles together. Many national and international events are organized in the province, and strategic plans are developed and executed to protect cultural heritage and encourage the experience of culture. In short, music has become one of the cornerstones of social and economic life in Kırşehir [26].

4.4 Afyonkarahisar

Although Afyon first comes to mind with its thermal resources, it is also a city that stands out with its culinary expertise, especially Turkish delight and clotted cream. The city has a food sector comprising more than 800 companies. Traditional gastronomy festivals include the Gastro Afyon Festival and the Local Flavors Festival. In addition, financial support is provided to newly established businesses to both protect local cuisine and provide employment. It is aimed to provide sustainable quality service by providing culinary training to migrant workers. Again, the established companies in Afyonkarahisar carry out studies for the international recognition of local cuisine [27].

4.5 Kütahya

Kütahya hosts many international cultural and academic events to promote and develop porcelain and çini, which constitute a large part of its economy. The local government carries out special studies on çini. In addition to the events, comprehensive studies are carried out to develop and sustain the art, increase its international recognition, and pass it on to future generations by ensuring the development and sustainability of the art, especially by allocating historical places to artisans, carrying out studies to consider artisans as living human treasures, and decorating important areas of the city by local artisans to increase visibility [28].

4.6 Istanbul

Istanbul is one of the largest cities in Türkiye and a city of international importance both culturally and historically. As a bridge between Asia and Europe, home to many civilizations and the capital of the Ottoman Empire, Istanbul has many important historical and cultural values from many different times. Istanbul also holds the presidency of the United Cities and Local Governments and was named the European Capital of Culture in 2010. Istanbul is also home to many design-related events, including the Istanbul Design Biennial, Design Week Türkiye, EcoDesign Conference and Fashion Week Istanbul. Istanbul has 41 congress centers, 225 art galleries, and 27 universities offering design-related education programs. Istanbul is a city of international importance in design, history, and art [29].

4.7 Hatay

Hatay is one of the important centers of the Silk Road due to its location. It is claimed that its cuisine has been influenced and shaped by 13 different civilizations, and its gastronomic richness is emphasized. In addition to the rich culinary culture, aromatic plant cultivation has gained importance and become a development factor. Gastronomy also acts as a social participation area in the city and is the most important sector supporting women's participation in socioeconomic life. Local governments support investments and initiatives in agriculture and gastronomy and train local entrepreneurs and producers to raise awareness and make the area sustainable [30].

4.8 Gaziantep

Gaziantep is one of Türkiye's most important gastronomy destinations as one of the best examples of reflecting cultural identity in cuisine. The uniqueness of its cultural fabric and the unique diversity of its cuisine have transformed gastronomy into an important local development force in Gaziantep. Food serves as the cornerstone of festivities and entertainment in Gaziantep and is instrumental in developing social relations in the destination, intensifying intercultural relations and social cohesion. The emergence of a gastronomy-based movement in the city, accompanied by an environment of tolerance, soon led local governments to embrace the issue and support development in cultural, gastronomic, and ecological terms [31].

In the context of these cities, Türkiye's creative tourism potential can be evaluated as follows:

As mentioned, Türkiye has a multicultural structure, has hosted many civilizations due to its location, and has received immigration from many different geographies. This has caused different languages to be spoken in its seven geographical regions and clothing cultures, rich music, and cuisine culture to be shaped completely differently. This multiculturalism has also enriched handicrafts and folk dances. Similarly, different literary movements have developed in various periods in Anatolia, which have gone through other forms of governance, and each period has created its unique representatives. These riches are important assets that can influence the diversification of Türkiye's creative cities.

Their cultural uniqueness and ability to reflect this in a diversity of products, services, and activities has led to eight cities being included in the list of creative cities. However, it is possible to diversify this, spread it across the country, and mobilize regions where tourism still needs to be developed or is unlikely to be created. This would both diversify regional economies and increase sociocultural interaction. When UNESCO lists are analyzed, it is seen that 27 values of Türkiye are included in the Intangible Cultural Heritage List, and three values are included in the Intangible Cultural Heritage List in Need of Urgent Protection. These values are defined as unique by UNESCO and included in the list because they need to be protected. In countries like Türkiye, where sociocultural and ecological development is put on the back burner due to economic priorities, the creative city movement provides an important alternative for regions to ensure their growth and preserve their sociocultural and ecological values by passing them on to future generations correctly. **Table 2** shows the values included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List and their possible creative city equivalents.

Creating creative cities based on the values in **Table 2** will ease local governments' burden in mediating the protection of cultural heritage and facilitate the transfer of

ICH Türkiye	Year of acceptance	Creative field	Possible creative city/region
Arts of the Meddah, Public Storytellers	2008	Literature	Türkiye overall
Mevlevi Sema Ceremony	2008	Music	City of Konya
Minstrelsy Tradition	2009	Literature	Central Anatolia region
Karagöz	2009	Literature	Türkiye overall
Semah, Alevi-Bektaşi Ritual	2010	Music	South Anatolia Region Southeastern Anatolia
Ebru: Turkish Art of Marbling	2014	Crafts and Folk Art	City of Istanbul
Dede Korkut-Korkut Ata Heritage: Culture, Legends and Music	2018	Literature Music	Türkiye overall
The Art of Miniature	2020	Crafts and Folk Art	Türkiye overall
Hüsn-ü Hat	2021	Crafts and Folk Art	Türkiye overall
The Telling Tradition of Nasreddin Hodja	2022	Literature	City of Eskişehir
Art of Illumination: Tezhip	2023	Crafts and Folk Art	Türkiye overall
Craftsmanship and Performing Art of Mey - Balaban	2023	Crafts and Folk Art	Cities of Kars, Erzurum, Bayburt, Erzincan, Artvin
The Craftsmanship of Mother of Pearl Inlay	2023	Crafts and Folk Art	Cities of Kahramanmaraş, Adıyaman ve Gaziantep

Table 2.
Elements of ICH that could make Türkiye as a creative city [32–43].

cultural and artistic values to future generations. Workshops, talks, academic and sectoral meetings, festivals, establishing themed businesses, and shaping the city image around this element will attract culture-oriented tourists to the region. In addition, investments made by local governments should be directed to ensure the safety of the areas, especially for foreign tourists from very different cultural backgrounds.

In addition, investing in cities in underdeveloped regions based on the qualities of being a creative city can be a way based on tourism and creativity in the development of cities. Accordingly, the unique characteristics of the cities can be used, as well as the realization of breakthroughs in the field of literature, which are the common values of Türkiye, the organization of national and international events, and the fact that business initiatives are in line with or supportive of the theme will facilitate the acquisition of qualities. The values most likely to be transformed into unique products and services in the short term are presented in **Table 3** with a possible variety of products and services.

The Eastern Black Sea Region has a unique cuisine and music culture geography. With its diversity of fish dishes and unique cuisine consisting of a combination of different flavors, it can also become a remarkable gastronomy destination in the international arena. This region is the only place in Anatolia where Tulum and Kemenche form the basis of music. The region has the potential to become a creative city in both fields.

City	Possible creative art	Creative field
Trabzon	Kemenche and folk dances Cuisine culture	Music gastronomy
Rize	Tulum and folk dances Cuisine culture	Music gastronomy
Artvin	Tulum and folk dances Cuisine culture	Music gastronomy
Mardin	Telkari (Filigree)	Crafts and folk art

Table 3.
Türkiye's creative city potential (Created by authors).

Mardin is a highly developed region in silver processing and filigree. To protect the handicrafts and artisans of the area, local administrations can announce the region's name with the theme of filigree. This will also contribute to the emergence of representatives of this art in future generations and the correct transmission of the art.

As mentioned, Türkiye is a rich country with many writers and poets from different periods and genres. Increasing the investments of the regions in literature by thematizing the places where important names of literature were born or lived with these people will pave the way for them to become creative cities in the field of literature and create an important alternative destination. In this context, literary museums, libraries, events, and meetings attributed to specific names, literature-themed businesses and festivals will help regions to gain a scholarly identity. At this point, especially in creating destinations based on international figures such as Nasreddin Hodja or Dede Korkut, collaborations will facilitate internationalization and naturally make its potential.

5. Development support of creative tourism in rural parts of Türkiye

Sustainable development simply involves a process of development and advocates the view that society interacts with the environment and does not harm any resources for the future [44]. The first significant effort to put forward sustainable development at the global level was made by the Brundtland Commission in 1987 [45]. According to the Brundtland Commission (World Commission on Environment and Development) definition, which is the most cited definition for sustainable development, it means meeting the needs of current generations while not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs [46]. This definition includes a process in which the citizens of any country improve their level of living and meet their necessary needs without wasting the resources of future generations to meet their immediate needs and demands [45].

According to Shi et al. [47], sustainable development is a fundamental strategy guiding the social and economic transformation of the world. In this sense, sustainable development theory emerged in the 1980s with a focus on the coordinated development of the economy, society, and the environment and entered the high-level political agenda. Sustainable development theory has evolved through practice and is not separated from the implementation of relevant policies for sustainable development. Today, sustainable development theory has become an integral part of the agenda of governments and companies [47]. For developed and developing countries aiming for social and economic change in the context of sustainable development theory, the tourism industry has a fundamental locomotive role. The tourism industry, which can be considered as a chimneyless industry, is of great importance

for a developing country like Türkiye. In this context, the main goal is to popularize alternative tourism types such as creative tourism, especially in rural areas, in order to provide diversity in tourism.

If we make an assessment of the situation from the perspective of Türkiye, creative tourism has become an important alternative whose economic, social, and ecological effects as well as cultural effects have started to be seen concretely. The diffusion of the effects shows that creative tourism practices through creative cities have started to turn into an important input of sustainable tourism development and especially sustainable rural tourism development process beyond creating alternative tourism destinations for Türkiye. When evaluated in the context of sustainable development theory, the impacts of creative tourism that will support Türkiye's rural development inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals [48] can be summarized as follows:

- *Ensuring the participation of disadvantaged groups in employment:* In the cities mentioned for Türkiye, it provides the legal inclusion of minorities and migrants in the economy. Accordingly, it becomes a practice that contributes to both the country and local entrepreneurs by transforming them into a qualified labor force. It can also be instrumental in preventing possible conflicts and violent incidents by transforming migrants into skilled workers. At this point, it should be noted that the support offered to local employment should be allowed.

  In addition, it seems possible in the short term to include biologically and physiologically disadvantaged groups, such as disabled and Down syndrome personnel, in festivals, events, businesses, and museums in creative cities. Establishing and operating cafes in different parts of Türkiye to produce and serve local delicacies, especially for people with Down syndrome, is one example that will directly ensure their active participation in the process.

- *Ensuring women's participation in socioeconomic life:* Women's participation in socio-economic life, which is one of the important arguments of alternative tourism types, especially in undeveloped and developing countries where women's rights are lagging, is actively functioning, especially in creative cities, known as gastronomy cities. Organizing training and providing incentives to diversify women's services and ensure that they are involved in artistic fields with a cultural base will be an important step in guaranteeing social development in rural areas. Accordingly, women's economic freedom will be realized by preserving authentic cultural values, and one of the most important obstacles to achieving gender equality will be overcome.

- *Protecting ecological values and supporting ecological city initiatives:* Sustainable development combines economic, environmental, and sociocultural development. In some of the creative city examples in Türkiye, considering this relationship has led to protecting ecological values as the next step after ensuring economic mobility and preserving unique cultural values and cuisine. In this way, the last link of sustainable tourism development has been completed, and it is now possible to talk about a holistic development process. As the next step, transforming creative cities into green cities and, if possible, into smart-eco cities without losing their original values will support an important sustainable transformation in rural Türkiye.

- *Diversification of cultural activities*: Cultural values such as clothing style, food culture, handicrafts, music, and so on are transformed into products and services and subject to tourism. Culinary culture and music are the most effective ways of achieving this through businesses, festivals, concerts and events. If planned and implemented correctly, diversifying the types and sizes of events paves the way for the income from commercialized values to be spread to the base. It also facilitates the diversification of touristic products and, of course, the expansion of tourism to 12 months.

- *Increasing international communication and interaction:* Creative cities have the potential to create an atmosphere of tolerance and easy communication as they attract people who come together around cultural and artistic events. In Türkiye, national and international events pave the way for communication and interaction within Türkiye and between outsiders and locals, thus supporting the spread of a culture of tolerance. With their social and artistic character, creative cities are becoming one of the alternatives that support the revival of one of the oldest missions of tourism, which has become passive over time due to the emphasis on economic importance.

The type of creativity that cities have chosen to express themselves has also formed the basis for the development of destinations that have been mentioned within the scope of alternative tourism for many years by preserving their values. The mobilization and development of local economies, the protection of cultural and artistic values with touristic products and services, the introduction of cultural and artistic values to foreigners and their transfer to future generations by remaining faithful to their essence, as well as the effort to contribute to global warming, ecological costs, and the protection of the environmental values of the regions with new initiatives, show that an important step has been taken in the field of sustainable tourism development. The long-term success of Türkiye and developing countries like Türkiye in sustainable tourism development through creative tourism and the achievement of utopian sociocultural, ecological, and economic growth seems to depend on active stakeholder collaboration, openness to education and innovation, respect for and embrace of authentic and environmental values, and finally a commitment to social equity and justice. In other words, it depends on the sustainability of what has been done.

Einali et al. [49] presents a model proposal for sustainable rural development based on creative tourism. Accordingly, it is seen that creative rural tourism is created from the combination of all the economic inputs that will emerge, including creative industries, creative products, and art and cultural impacts, with the creative class as the tools to be used in the realization of ideas, consisting of innovation and social and human capital, which are necessary for the emergence of creative tourism. In other words, combining creative ideas and the initiatives that bring these ideas to life and turn them into economic returns into products and services forms the basis of creative rural tourism. Shaping this process with a sustainable perspective and perception will ensure that all creative tourism practices are sustainable. In addition, the success of leadership and management, local cooperation and active participation, risk-taking, innovation skills, and flexibility are interpreted as elements that support the sustainability of the process. In other words, the right blend of creative ideas and creative economies with promoters shapes the sustainable character of tourism. What is important at this point is the need for the process to be carried out successfully to reflect the sustainable perspective mentioned when discussing creative tourism in rural Türkiye.

6. Conclusion

The most important feature that distinguishes humanity from other creatures in nature is the ability to create abstract ideas in the intellectual sense and to gather around these ideas or concretize the abstract ideas created. This ability of human beings is at the basis of surviving at first, then surviving together and being able to act together by establishing societies. Creativity has shown itself at the most critical times throughout history and kept humanity alive. On the other hand, as a reflection of human and social diversity, it has also ensured that artistic and cultural diversity has been left to history.

Tourism has embodied creative ideas from the very beginning, and over time, creativity has been attributed to a vital role in tourism to find alternative ways due to the increase in competition, on the one hand, and the deepening of the negative effects of tourism, on the other. Creativity has been at the heart of survival throughout human history and has again assumed a vital role in developing ways to protect human and ecological values. Although, for many years, leisure has been associated with tourism, the idea of sustainability has emphasized and supported tourism's educational, interactional, and conservation aspects. Creative tourism and creative cities have given tourism a critical mission in preserving the artistic and cultural capacities of countries and regions and have been mediated in revitalizing local economies by transforming local values into economic inputs.

Considering the place of creative tourism in the developing world and especially its prominent role in the tourism sector, it is possible to make an assessment that Türkiye can be an important destination. As a result of our in-depth literature review, it has been observed that Türkiye has a rich creative tourism potential. In this context, Türkiye has been involved in the process with its deep-rooted history and rich cultural dynamics and is currently included in the creative cities network with eight cities. Türkiye is positioned as one of the important destinations in the fields of gastronomy, music, and traditional handicrafts among the seven different fields identified by UNESCO as creative tourism. In addition to experiencing gastronomic delicacies in Gaziantep, Hatay, and Afyonkarahisar, which offer the opportunity to announce Turkish cuisine to the world within the framework of creative tourism, testing and experiencing traditional handicrafts, which are the representatives of an endless journey, in Bursa and Kütahya, which are very different from other countries, can be evaluated in terms of Türkiye's advantageous aspects. On the other hand, experiencing the distinctive and inimitable musical genres and instruments, which reflect Turkish culture and are unique to this culture, in Kırşehir and Şanlıurfa offers very different opportunities to the subjects participating in creative tourism. Finally, the city of Istanbul, which was founded on two continents and was the capital of very different cultures, such as the Byzantine and the Ottoman, offers Türkiye a unique advantage over other developed and developing countries in terms of the opportunity to experience guests who prefer creative tourism under the discipline of Design. Türkiye is an important and remarkable destination within the scope of this diversity.

The development support perspective discussed in the relevant sections of this book chapter and the authority responsible for the cities concerned and for tourism in general should emphasize creative tourism and creative cities. Planning environmental policies with a focus on sustainable development and development will not only bring potential creative cities to the forefront but also support the branding process. Together with all other stakeholders, including public authority, private enterprise, nongovernmental organizations, and local people, it should be among the priority

targets to both protect and enrich the creative tourism potential and increase its promotion. In this way, Türkiye will be able to take a much larger share of the global creative tourism pie and become the leader it deserves.

The values of cities such as Trabzon, Rize, Artvin, and Mardin, which are not yet included in the scope of creative tourism potential, should be carefully monitored and supported to ensure that Türkiye can be the only destination in the world in the field of creative tourism in the future. Sustainable development theory is the primary goal of both countries and businesses. In this context, determining the creative tourism potential as a sustainable development goal is of vital importance for today's countries and businesses. Diversifying local economies; enabling disadvantaged groups, especially women, to gain economic freedom; and rediscovering the values of elements that face the threat of being forgotten due to the monotony in economies and ensuring that they can become one of the important inputs of production in the regions will bring about sustainable development in every aspect. When the examples of creative cities put forward in this context are examined, it is possible that the creative tourism trend can be an important sustainability prescription for the seven regions of Türkiye, and ensuring that it is diversified and spread to all regions paves the way for sustainable rural tourism development without experiencing the difficulties of creating a new prescription.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author details

Gülşah Gençer Çelik[1], Beyza Hatırnaz[2] and Erkan Taşkıran[2*]

1 Istanbul Beykent University, Istanbul, Turkey

2 Duzce University, Duzce, Turkey

*Address all correspondence to: erkantaskiran@duzce.edu.tr

IntechOpen

References

[1] Dellisanti R. Cultural and Creative Industries and Regional Development: Creativity, Where and Why. Switzerland: Springer Publications; 2023. p. 249. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-031-29624-6

[2] Mallia LK. Leadership in the Creative Industries: Principles and Practice. USA: John Wiley and Sons Inc.; 2019. p. 304. DOI: 978-1-119-33400-2

[3] Richards G. Creativity and tourism: The state of the art. Annals of Tourism Research. 2011;**38**(4):1225-1253. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2011.07.008

[4] Ratten V, Braga V, Alvarez-Garcia J, Rio-Rama MC. Future trends in tourism innovations. In: Ratten V, Alvarez-Garcia J, Rio-Rama MC, editors. Tourism Innovation. New York: Routledge; 2020. pp. 177-183. DOI: 978-0-367-07787-7

[5] OECD. Tourism and the Creative Economy, OECD Studies on Tourism. Paris: OECD Publishing; 2014. p. 180. DOI: 10.1787/9789264207875-en

[6] Zhang Y, Xie P. Creative cultural tourism development: A tourist perspective. In: Carson S, Pennings M, editors. Performing Cultural Tourism: Communities, Tourists and Creative Practices. New York: Routledge; 2017. pp. 99-115. DOI: 978-1-138-04142-4

[7] Rodrigues M, Franco M. Networks and performance of creative cities: A bibliometric analysis. City, Culture and Society. 2020;**20**:100326. DOI: 10.1016/j.ccs.2019.100326

[8] Richards G, Raymond C. Creative tourism. ATLAS News. 2000;**23**:16-20. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-01669-6_39-1

[9] Pappalepore I, Maitland R, Smith A. Prosuming creative urban areas. Evidence from East London. Annals of Tourism Research. 2014;**44**:227-240. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2013.11.001

[10] Richards G, Wilson J. Tourism, Creativity and Development. London: Routledge; 2007. p. 352. DOI: 10.4324/9780203933695

[11] Prentice R, Andersen V. Creative tourism supply. In: Richards R, Wilson J, editors. Tourism, Creativity and Development. New York: Routledge; 2007. pp. 37-48. DOI: 978-0-415-42756-2

[12] UNESCO, Creative Cities Network [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://www.unesco.org/en/creative-cities [Accessed: August 23, 2024]

[13] Richards G. Designing creative places: The role of creative tourism. Annals of Tourism Research. 2020;**85**:1-11. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2020.102922

[14] Landry C. The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators. 2nd ed. USA: Earthscan Publishing; 2008. p. 352. DOI: 10.4324/9781849772945

[15] Cloke P. Creativity and tourism in rural environments. In: Richards G, Wilson J, editors. Tourism, Creativity and Development. New York: Routledge; 2007. pp. 37-48. DOI: 978-0-415-42756-2

[16] Hannigan J. From fantasy city to creative city. In: Richards G, Wilson J, editors. Tourism, Creativity and Development. New York: Routledge; 2007. pp. 48-57. DOI: 978-0-415-42756-2

[17] Richards G. Textile tourists in the European periphery: New markets for disadvantaged areas? Tourism Review International. 2005;**8**(4):323-338. DOI: 10.3727/154427205774791519

[18] Ohridska-Olson RV, Ivanov SH. Creative tourism business model and its application in Bulgaria. In: Proceedings of the Black Sea Tourism Forum 'Cultural Tourism – The Future of Bulgaria; 24-26 September 2010. Bulgaria; 2010. pp. 1-17

[19] Prince S. Establishing the Connections between the Goals of Sustainable Development and Creative Tourism [Thesis]. Sweden: Uppsala University; 2011

[20] Richards G. Creative tourism and local development. In: Wurzburger R, Pattakos A, Pratt S, editors. Creative Tourism: A Global Conversation. Santa Fe: Sunstone Press; 2009. pp. 78-90. DOI: 978-0-86534-724-3

[21] Ek R, Larsen J, Hornskov SB, Mansfeldt OK. A dynamic framework of tourist experiences: Space-time and performances in the experience economy. Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism. 2008;**8**(2):122-140. DOI: 10.1080/15022250802110091

[22] Pine J, Gillmore J. The Experience Economy: Work Is Theatre and every Business a Stage. Boston: Harvard Business School; 1999. p. 253. DOI: 0-87584-819-2

[23] Smith R, Warfield K. The creative city: A matter of values. In: Cooke P, Lazzeretti L, editors. Creative Cities, Cultural Clusters and Local Economic Development. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited; 2008. pp. 287-312. DOI: 9781847202680

[24] UNESCO. Şanlıurfa [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://www.unesco.org/en/creative-cities/sanliurfa?hub=80094 [Accessed: August 19, 2024]

[25] UNESCO. Bursa [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://www.unesco.org/en/creative-cities/bursa?hub=80094 [Accessed: August 19, 2024]

[26] UNESCO. Kırsehir [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://www.unesco.org/en/creative-cities/kirsehir?hub=80094 [Accessed: August 19, 2024]

[27] UNESCO. Afyonkarahisar [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://www.unesco.org/en/creative-cities/afyonkarahisar?hub=80094 [Accessed: August 19, 2024]

[28] UNESCO. Kütahya [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://www.unesco.org/en/creative-cities/kutahya?hub=80094 [Accessed: August 19, 2024]

[29] UNESCO. İstanbul [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://www.unesco.org/en/creative-cities/istanbul?hub=80094 [Accessed: August 19, 2024]

[30] UNESCO. Hatay [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://www.unesco.org/en/creative-cities/hatay?hub=80094 [Accessed: August 19, 2024]

[31] UNESCO. Gaziantep [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://www.unesco.org/en/creative-cities/gaziantep?hub=80094 [Accessed: August 19, 2024]

[32] Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Arts of the Meddah, Public Storytellers [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://yakegm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-345097/arts-of-the-meddah-public-storytellers.html [Accessed: August 21, 2024]

[33] Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Mevlevi Sema Ceremony [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://yakegm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-345100/mevlevi-sema-ceremony.html [Accessed: August 21, 2024]

[34] Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Âşıklık (Minstrelsy) Tradition [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://yakegm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-345104/asiklik-gelenegi.html [Accessed: August 21, 2024]

[35] Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Karagöz [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://yakegm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-345106/karagoz-eng.html [Accessed: August 21, 2024]

[36] Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Semah, Alevi-Bektaşi Ritual [Internet]. 2024. Available from:https://yakegm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-345112/semah-alevi--bektasi-ritual.html [Accessed: August 21, 2024]

[37] Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Ebru: Turkish Art of Marbling [Internet]. 2024. Available from:https://yakegm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-345124/ebru-turkish-art-of-marbling.html [Accessed: August 21, 2024]

[38] Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Heritage of Dede Qorqud [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://yakegm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-345143/heritage-of-dede-qorqud-korkyt-ata-dede-korkut-epic-culture-folk-tales-and-music.htmlv [Accessed: August 21, 2024]

[39] Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The Art of Miniature [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://yakegm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-345152/the-art-of-miniature.html [Accessed: August 21, 2024]

[40] Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The Telling Tradition of Nasreddin Hodja [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://yakegm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-345167/the-telling-tradition-of-nasreddin-hodja--molla-nesreddin--molla-ependi--apendi--afendi-kozhanasyr--nasriddin-afandi-anecdotes.html [Accessed: August 21, 2024]

[41] Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Art of Illumination: Tezhip [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://yakegm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-359135/art-of-illumination-tzhib tazhibzarhalkoritezhipnaqqoshlik.html [Accessed: August 21, 2024]

[42] Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Craftsmanship and Performing Art of Mey - Balaban [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://yakegm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-359142/mey---balaban-zanaatkarligi-ve-icrasi-craftsmanship-and-performing-art-of-mey---balaban.html [Accessed: August 21, 2024]

[43] Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The Craftsmanship of Mother of Pearl Inlay [Internet]. 2024. Available from: https://yakegm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-359149/the-craftsmanship-of-mother-of-pearl-inlay.html [Accessed: August 21, 2024]

[44] Mensah J. Sustainable development: Meaning, history, principles, pillars, and implications for human action: Literature review. Cogent Social Sciences. 2019;**5**(1653531):1-21. DOI: 10.1080/23311886.2019.1653531

[45] Zahedi S. Sustainable development theory: A critical perspective and an integrative model. Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development. 2019;**10**(21):43-52. DOI: 10.7176/JESD/10-21-05

[46] Schaefer A, Crane A. Addressing sustainability and consumption. Journal of Macromarketing. 2005;**25**(1):76-92. DOI: 10.1177/0276146705274987

[47] Shi L, Han L, Yang F, Gao L. The evolution of sustainable development theory: Types, goals, and research prospects. Sustainability. 2019;**11**(7158):1-16. DOI: 10.3390/su11247158

[48] United Nations. Sustainable Development Goals [Internet]. Available from: https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/page/sustainable-development-goals [Accessed: August 28, 2024]

[49] Einali J, Mohammadi YB, Ghasemlou H. The role of creative tourism in sustainable development of rural areas. Journal of Research and Rural Planning. 2017;**8**(2):19-39. DOI: 10.22067/jrrp.v5i4.67441

Section 3

COVID-19 and Beyond

Chapter 7

A Time Series Approach to Assess the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the South African Tourism Sector

Musara Chipumuro, Delson Chikobvu and Tendai Makoni

Abstract

The chapter examines tourism flows all over the world with a special case of all foreign tourists to South Africa (SA) from January 2009 to December 2023. A time series approach is used, and the model obtained is used to forecast and evaluate the effects of COVID-19 on total tourist arrivals in SA. The model forecasts are used in comparison with actual tourist arrivals after February 2020 when COVID-19 restrictions were employed. Monthly data on arrivals of all tourists to SA was considered. The ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$ model was obtained considering its lowest value of the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) through the Box and Jenkins methodology. The forecasting power of the model is evidenced by its Mean Absolute Percentage Error (MAPE) of 1.934579. The effects of COVID-19 are realized form the difference in forecasts made and actual figures recorded from March 2020 when COVID-19 restrictions were effected. This study gives an overview of the contribution being realized from tourism receipts through an analysis of tourist arrivals before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. This helps inform various tourism stakeholders on how best the tourism sector may be revived through informative forecasts, good planning and policy formulation strategies.

Keywords: foreign tourist arrivals, South Africa (SA), box-Jenkins methodology, COVID-19, forecasting

1. Introduction

The tourism industry has developed to be a major driving force in any host country's economic, social, cultural, political, environmental and legal sectors due to its spillover effects. The tourism sector is immensely contributing towards foreign currency earnings, infrastructure, foreign direct investments (FDI) and technological development, as examples, in a manner that has gained the attention of many researchers globally. As travel facilitates a vibrant tourism sector, an analysis of the movement of tourist arrivals is of great importance for planning, informed decision making and forecasting for the implementation of necessary and sufficient strategies

and policies that help in informative forecasting. An analysis of tourist arrivals is vital as tourist arrivals are among the key indicators for measuring progress towards economic growth, considering the complex nature of the tourism industry and its interconnectivity with other sectors of the economy. The fragile nature of the tourism industry can be evidenced by the recent effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the global tourism industry, with far-reaching effects on tourist arrivals. This, therefore, necessitates the need to consider the modelling of tourist arrivals to a host country a necessity for ensuring sustainable development of the tourism sector.

Accurate and informative forecasts of international tourist arrivals are important for the detailed planning of different tourism products that enable utilisation of various decision-making strategies [1–5]. This is so since tourism flow forecasts facilitate effective description, planning and budgetary control for industries that provide tourism products and services such as accommodation, game reserves, food retail and airlines [6–8]. Therefore, tourism demand forecasting is critical in the description, planning and policy formulation of the tourism business in avoiding over or under utilisation of tourism resources, according to [9].

The tourism industry has demonstrated its importance over the past few years, and this is shown through the contribution tourism has made globally and to the host country in employment creation, infrastructure development, cultural preservation and foreign currency earnings as examples. Ref. [10] pointed out that, after petroleum, tourism is indeed a major export for developing countries and the most substantial source of foreign exchange earnings. The tourism industry contributed 5% of direct gross domestic product (GDP) globally and 235 million jobs as of 2018, as pointed out by Ref. [11]. In 2020, Ref. [12] pointed out that the Travel and Tourism sector contributed to the creation of 334 million jobs (direct, indirect and induced) and was responsible for 1 in every 4 of all new jobs generated from 2014 to 2019 and US$ 10.3 trillion of global GDP which translates to 10.4%. Ref. [13] highlighted that tourism supports the creation of jobs and encourages notable developments in a country's foreign currency earnings and technological and infrastructure development. With these statistics, tourism is therefore crucial to the host country and globally as it facilitates a sound legal system, stable political environment, good human security policies, good economic environment, good infrastructure and digitalisation, among others.

Ref. [14] highlighted the importance of tourism research, as tourism is considered a key determinant of business profitability. Modernisation and digitalisation have contributed to increased globalisation, which has led the tourism sector to be among the fastest-growing industries globally as its effects trickle down in tackling, political, legal, cultural, social, environmental and economic development. Ref. [15] highlighted that tourism development is an important tool in promoting economic growth, food security advancement and poverty alleviation. Ref. [16] pointed out that tourism development effectively alleviates poverty and not just a catalyst for economic growth. This, therefore, validates the importance of ensuring long-lasting employment creation and foreign currency earnings, as shown by examples from the tourism industry. Ref. [17] also highlighted on the importance of sustainable tourism as it ensures a reliable stream of income for economic development. With this, informative tourism forecasts ensure a strong foundation for community engagement strategies and optimal usage of tourism resources through collective support from all sectors of the economy, which will ultimately improve the skills development of locals as they try engaging in various income-generating projects.

Sustainability of the tourism sector during and after the COVID-19 era has caught the attention of many academics, researchers and policymakers among the general populace as the pandemic crippled many households' livelihoods. Ref. [1] pointed out that sustainability is a crucial element in every factor as it ensures continuity. The authors developed a tourism sustainability model for SA, as they try highlight the importance of every sector of a host country in promoting tourist arrivals and optimal utilisation of available resources. The tourism sustainable model by Ref. [1] highlighted the contribution of digitalisation, culture, ecosystem (natural/man-made), community engagement, social, economic, political, legal, infrastructural development and accessibility (air/roads/visas) contribution towards tourist arrivals to a host country. The ecosystem is another variable that promotes the tourism sector; hence, there is a need to consider the varying climatic conditions for a thriving ecosystem that draws more tourists. The model also pointed out the influence of the various components on tourism description, planning, budgetary control, and forecasting. Sustainable tourism guarantees a reliable stream of income for economic development as locals may end up gaining skills such as of weaving baskets and or painting various products for sale to the tourists. This, therefore, validates tourism's vital contribution towards the achievement of SDGs all around the globe. Ref. [18] pointed out that tourism is a significant economic activity that links with sectors like agriculture, animal husbandry, handicrafts, building, transportation and entertainment and thus ultimately shows the need for sustainable tourism initiatives in avoidance of harsh spillover effects.

Data on tourist arrivals was obtained for this study. The datasets were obtained from monthly reports published by the South African Tourism and Migration statistical release P0351 (http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0351). The data is collected by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) immigration officers at different ports of entry/exit. In this study, total arrivals data on tourists is used as this has an influence on infrastructure development, employment creation, community engagement, optimal utilisation of resources and sustainability of the tourism sector. This study also validates the need to use tourist arrivals for informative description, planning, budgetary control, forecasting and policy formulation in the presence or non-presence of rare events such as COVID-19.

This chapter is structured as follows: Section 2 provides the literature review, Section 3, the methodology, Section 4, the results and discussions and Section 5 concludes and recommends.

2. Literature review

The volatility of the tourism industry and its interconnectivity with other sectors have been more realised recently during the COVID-19 pandemic, which started in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. COVID-19 spread like wildfire all around the globe, and this saw the World Health Organisation (WHO) declaring it a pandemic and possible measures communicated in containing the virus. The different measures taken in curbing the virus saw movement restrictions being employed, thus negatively affecting tourist arrivals around the world from February 2020 to May 2022 when COVID-19 was declared a non-health emergency. According to Ref. [19], they outlined the massive drop in overnight foreign tourist arrivals from 1464 million to 407 million in 2020 compared to 2019, thus showing the negative effects of global

lockdowns and widespread travel restrictions on the tourism sector. Ref. [12] postulated that during the pre-COVID-19 era, the Travel and Tourism sector contributed to 10.5% of all jobs, as well as 10.4% of global GDP. The easing of the travel restrictions on tourist arrivals saw a slight increase in tourist arrivals but remained lower compared with 2019 levels by 69%, according to Ref. [19]. The report points out that global tourist arrivals doubled in 2022 due to strong demand for travel and the easing of travel restrictions, compared to 2021 statistics, but still below the 2019 levels by 34%. Ref. [20] highlighted the contribution made to global GDP of 9.1% from the Travel and Tourism sector, which is an increase of 23.2% from 2022 but below the 2019 level by 4.1%. International visitor spending also increased by 33.1% in 2023, but still below the 2019 figures by 14.4%. These statistics are an indication of how COVID-19 has negatively impacted the tourism sector and ultimately global development.

Tourist arrivals are prejudiced by numerous push/pull factors, and these factors may lead to the extinction of tourism resources when not properly managed. The push factors refer to the conditions that encourage people to travel, such as the desire for a change of scenery, relaxation, or cultural experiences, according to Ref. [21]. On the other hand, the pull factors refer to the characteristics of a destination that attract tourists, such as natural beauty, cultural attractions, or favourable weather conditions [22]. Therefore, tourist arrivals and the effect of COVID-19 on the tourism sector are considered for the South African case in this chapter. SA is a country found in Sub-Saharan Africa. The country occupies the southernmost part of the African continent, and it stretches from the Limpopo River in the north to Cape Agulhas in the south. Ref. [23] postulates that tourism accounts for around 55% of the export component of the services sector in Sub-Saharan Africa compared to the 29% it accounts for other non-Sub-Saharan countries. The report also points out that 36 million tourists were received in Sub-Saharan Africa, with SA receiving 26.4% (9.5 million) of the total tourists. SA prides itself on a vast number of natural resources such as gold, copper, platinum, coal, timber, sugar, wildlife, sea and marine resources, iron ore and fish. SA promotes tourism initiatives, as shown by the different strategies it has employed since its independence on 27 April 1994 from the apartheid era. According to Ref. [24], earnings from tourism were among the leading five sources of foreign currency earning export revenue for 69 developing countries, SA included for the 1995 to 1998 period. Ref. [25] points out that SA is recorded among the top ten countries that had more jobs created from tourism in 2017, thus validating the significance of tourism in human capital and the income status of locals.

Though SA do not substantially depend on tourism for its growth, the contribution of tourism to SA can never be underestimated due to the contribution tourism has made towards SA's overall economic growth. Ref. [26] highlights the contribution made by travel and tourism, citing that R189.402 billion (in nominal terms) was contributed towards the GDP of SA from tourism activities in 2009. SA recorded a growth in GDP, which outperformed other sectors due to massive direct travel in 2016 [27]. According to Ref. [28], tourist exports increased by 14% to 245,074 Overseas tourists in January 2017 in relation to January 2016. The SA's tourism is more popular among other developing countries due to its cultural diversity, infrastructure, competitive prices and natural beauty. Examples of intriguing areas of interest are the national parks, Table Mountain in Cape Town, Victoria, and Alfred waterfront. In 2002, an International Tourism growth strategy was organised based on intensive market segmentation. This strategy increased the visibility of the SA's tourism

industry, and this contributed to a sharp rise in tourist arrivals from the Overseas and African markets by 11.1% to 6.4 million. The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and South African Tourism initiated a competitiveness study in 2004 in their quest to develop products, infrastructure, services and strategies that attract and accommodate tourists for more acceptance and visibility.

SA prides itself on its tourism pull factors, which are rich cultural diversity, historical attractions, outdoor adventures, beach destinations, wildlife safaris, Winelands, urban centres, and ecotourism as well as its developed tourism infrastructure and favourable exchange rates have made SA a more interesting tourist destination. This Sub-Saharan country also boasts of hosting some notable events, including the 2010 soccer Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup, and this was the largest event of them all. These notable events promoted the growth of SA's economy and boosted the tourism sector's visibility. Hence, revamping tourism facilities increases adaptability, visibility and acceptability from the global community, which results in a subsequent increase in tourist arrivals. The economic contribution of SA's tourism sector was predicted to be R124.4 billion in the year 2020 compared to R91.2 billion in 2015 [29]. From this strategy, it was shown that a 15.4% increase in tourist arrivals was realised in the first half months of 2016, validating the thrust towards fulfilling the 2015 tourism contributions' projections. The sector also claimed to be massive enough to create more job vacancies and contribute towards SA's GDP, considering its high unemployment and poverty rates experienced during the apartheid era. According to Ref. [30], SA's GDP rose 1.3% in 2017 and 0.8% in 2018.

SA is one of the most affected countries in Sub-Saharan Africa affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, crippling tourism activities due to travel restrictions, thus affecting SA tourism's pull factors. Ref. [31] highlighted that COVID-19 travel restrictions and lockdowns created a significant push factor as this limited tourist travel as the emergence of new variants and the potential for future outbreaks created a sense of uncertainty and caution among travellers. According to Ref. [32], SA recorded 4,016,157 cases and 102,146 deaths from COVID-19 as of September 2022. Despite SA having high rates of COVID-19 cases, the SA government initiated ways of boosting the economy through the recovery of the tourism, hospitality, leisure and entertainment industries, according to Ref. [33]. According to Ref. [34], SA's 'Tourism Recovery Plan' initiated in 2021 aimed to sustain jobs and livelihoods, provide new jobs, match demand and supply as well as strengthen the transformation of the tourism industry.

Understanding the dynamics of COVID-19 or rare events and their impact on tourist arrivals is crucial for tourism stakeholders, policymakers and industry leaders to develop effective strategies for recovery and resilience in the post-pandemic era. Ref. [35] highlighted that tourism is indeed a driver for prosperity and a reducer of poverty when the author studied the contribution of tourism to SA. Key indicators used in monitoring the progress of the tourism sector were also considered in tracking the progress of the tourism sector recovery process, and these indicators are the number of tourist arrivals, revenue for key tourism industries as well as their contribution to GDP and employment according to 2020/21 State of Tourism Report (STR). Given that the number of tourist arrivals to SA is one of the key indicators of measuring tourism progress, this data is to be used in model development of a time series model for tourist arrivals from various places around the globe to SA.

Seasonality refers to the regular pattern that occurs on a yearly basis, and its effect plays a crucial role in tourism earnings. As tourist arrivals depend on various factors, [36] pointed out some drivers of seasonality that affect tourist arrivals as often driven by factors such as weather, school holidays and cultural events. Research has shown that tourist arrivals tend to peak during certain seasons, such as summer or holiday periods, and decline during other times of the year [37]. According to Ref. [38], seasonality can have significant impacts on tourism-dependent economies, as it can lead to fluctuations in revenue, employment and infrastructure utilisation. Therefore, seasonality, occurrence of rare events such as COVID-19 and the contribution of tourism to a host country's foreign currency earnings has attracted a lot of attention from academia and beyond. Qualitative and quantitative research have been carried out with the thrust of gaining a deeper understanding of the tourism sector, which has proven to be a critical contributor to economic development worldwide and mostly to countries that depend on tourism-related business. Models that have been used by various researchers for forecasting purposes are regression, econometric, time series, judgemental and artificial intelligence-based models [39–50]. The contribution towards forecasting tourist arrivals aims to ensure the development of methodologies that can best be adopted for improved tourism service delivery and, ultimately, growth.

Univariate time series approaches to modelling encompass deterministic and stochastic models, which have been widely used in forecasting tourist arrivals as they only require information on the past behaviour of a variable over time. Deterministic time series approaches consist of extrapolation techniques such as smoothing techniques, trend models and seasonally adjusted models as examples. Ref. [51] highlighted the four types of stochastic time series models, which are the Autoregressive (AR), Moving Average (MA), Autoregressive Moving Average (ARMA) and Autoregressive Integrated Moving Average (ARIMA). Seasonal deterministic models and stochastic seasonal models were also considered due to their applicability in addressing seasonally influenced variables. Forecasting tourism demand through tourist arrivals has seen the extensive application of Holt's additive and multiplicative smoothing models, ARIMA and Vector autoregressive (VAR) models. However, Refs. [46, 52] postulated on the seasonal ARIMA (SARIMA) models and their ability to perform better with some variables as compared to ARIMA models due to their ability to consider the seasonality component that tends to prevail in some tourism data sets.

Various research has been carried out investigating the association that exists among tourism development in relation to economic growth, especially for economies that depend largely on tourism [1, 2, 5, 46, 52–61]. Univariate time series have been used all around the globe in their quest for an in-depth analysis of tourism demand. SARIMA models have proved to be more popular and reliable using monthly or quarterly time series datasets [1, 57, 62–67].

In this chapter, a univariate time series approach to modelling total tourist arrivals to SA will be considered.

3. Materials and methods

A time series approach to modelling helps to give the behaviour of a variable over time together with an innovative term. These models have been popular for tourism demand analysis due to their efficacy in forecasting tourist arrivals. In this section, ARIMA and SARIMA models established by Box and Jenkins are explained.

3.1 ARIMA (p,d,q) model

ARIMA models have been adopted in modelling and forecasting of time series data. These ARIMA models are integrated with the Autoregressive Moving Average (ARMA) process. For non-stationary time series data, such as the distribution of tourist arrivals, the Box-Cox transformation is employed in determining the best data transformation for use until the data is made stationary in the mean. Popular data transformation methods are square root, inverse and logarithmic transformation. A time series H_t follow an ARIMA model if the d^{th} difference $\Delta^d H_t = W_t$ is a stationary ARMA process.

The ARIMA $(p,d,q)(P,D,Q)_S$ or SARIMA is of the form:

$$\varphi_p(B)\ \Phi_{\mathrm{P}}(\mathrm{B})\Delta^{\mathrm{d}}\Delta_{\mathrm{S}}^{\mathrm{D}}\mathrm{H_t} = \theta_{\mathrm{q}}(\mathrm{B})\Theta_{\mathrm{Q}}(\mathrm{B})\mathrm{e_t}, \tag{1}$$

where

p is the order of the non-seasonal autoregressive part,

d is the order of integration, which is a whole number for discrete time series,

P is the order of the seasonal autoregressive seasonal part,

D is the seasonal differencing,

S is the maximum number of seasons (S can be 4 for quarterly data or 12 for monthly data),

Q represents the order of the non-seasonal moving average part,

Q represents the order of the seasonal moving average part,

Δ^{d} represent a non-seasonal difference with $\Delta^{\mathrm{d}} = (1-\mathrm{B})^{\mathrm{d}}$,

$\Delta_{\mathrm{S}}^{\mathrm{D}}$ represent the seasonal difference with $\Delta_{\mathrm{S}}^{\mathrm{D}} = \left(1-\mathrm{B}^{\mathrm{S}}\right)^{\mathrm{D}}$.

3.2 Model adequacy

The Box-Jenkins methodology employs three main steps to model building which are model identification, model estimation and model diagnostic checking (model adequacy checking). Model adequacy checking play a crucial role in determining model accuracy as well as model's forecasting power. Model diagnostic checking involves an examination of the model specified and estimated's residuals in addressing to the assumptions of constant variance (homoscedasticity), linearity, autocorrelation, normality. On model specification, one need to consider the area the data is coming from as well as data stationarity as this influence fulfilment of constant variance, autocorrelation and normality assumptions. The Mean Absolute Percentage Error (MAPE), Mean Absolute Error (MAE), Root Mean Squared Error (RMSE) and Mean Absolute Scaled Error (MASE) are measures primarily adopted for the model's goodness of fit. In this study, the MAPE and the RMSE are to be used to evaluate the forecasting accuracy of the model developed. The model to be considered is the one with the least value of BIC.

3.3 Box-Ljung test

The Box-Ljung test is a diagnostic tool used in checking the fitted model's residuals for serial dependence. Its test statistic is denoted by

$$\chi^2 = n(n+2)\sum_{k=1}^{h}\frac{\hat{\rho}_k^2}{n-k}, \tag{2}$$

where n is the sample size, $\hat{\rho}_k$ is the estimate of the sample autocorrelation at lag k, and h is the number of lags being tested.

3.4 Bayesian information criterion (BIC)

The BIC is used for model selection, when the model with a lower BIC is considered the better model from a set of finite models. Mathematically, it can be represented as:

$$BIC = ln\,(n)k - 2ln\,(\hat{L}), \tag{3}$$

where $(\hat{L})$ is the maximum value of the likelihood function, n is the number of data points and k, being the number of free parameters to be estimated.

3.5 Data analysis

Monthly total tourist arrivals data to SA were obtained from http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0351 of the Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) through the Tourism and Migration P0531 reports for the January 2009 to December 2023 period. Monthly data from January 2009 to February 2019 were used as the train data for developing a forecasting model, and this is also data from the pre-COVID-19 era; data from March 2019 to December 2023 was used as the test data set. The period from March 2019 to February 2020 is considered the validation period as it helps highlight model adequacy through a comparison of actual and forecasted values and data for validation still from the pre-COVID-19 era. The test data from March 2020 to the end of April 2023 is considered the COVID-19 era, and data from May 2023 to December 2023 still from test data is considered the post-COVID-19 era. The pre-COVID-19 era, validation period, COVID-19 era and post-COVID-19 era will help give a visual view of tourist arrivals dynamics for the SA case as well as the effect of a rare event COVID-19 era on tourist arrivals. The R software package was used in data analysis.

4. Data analysis on total tourist arrivals in South Africa

4.1 Model development and analysis

Model development and analysis, started with an analysis of the descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics were obtained using data from January 2009 to December 2023.

The minimum number of tourists per month is 29,341, with 1,103,940 as its corresponding maximum value, as shown in **Table 1** for the period under consideration. The values of this dataset are too far apart, as evidenced by its range; hence, data from the COVID-19 period will be excluded in model development as we try to highlight the effects of COVID-19 on time series model forecasts.

The plot of all tourists to SA in **Figure 1** indicates that the data follow a steady and fluctuating increasing pattern with seasonality from January 2009 to February 2020, a massive drop from March 2020, and a sluggish increase as COVID-19 restrictions were continuously being reviewed. The peak values are recorded in December each year,

Mean	First Qu.	Min.	Max.	Median	Third Qu.
674,244	614,740	29,341	1,103,940	726,628	823,353

Table 1.
Descriptive statistics of SA tourists.

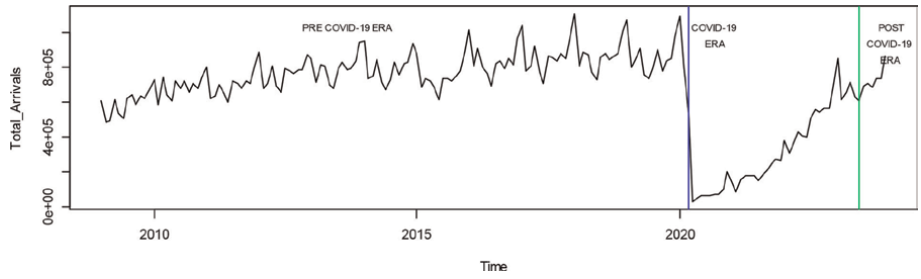

Figure 1.
Time series plot on total tourist arrivals to SA.

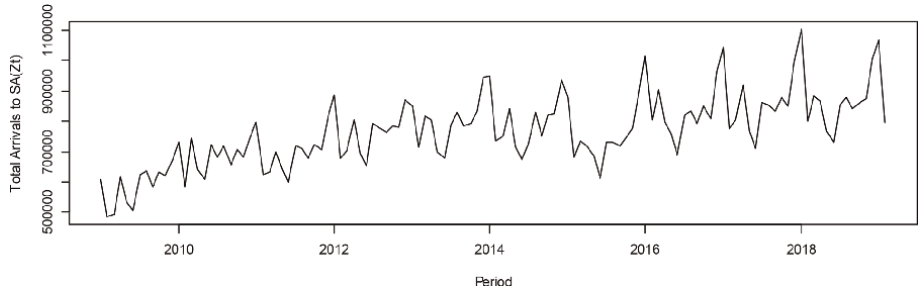

Figure 2.
Time plot of total tourist arrivals from January 2009 to February 2019.

typically because of the festive season. The lowest values were recorded in February, May and June for each year. A time plot of the train data is done, as shown in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2 show that total tourist arrivals to SA depict an increasing fluctuating pattern. Decomposition of time series data of total tourist arrivals is performed to gain a deeper understanding of the various components of a time series present in the total tourist arrivals data, as shown in **Figure 3**.

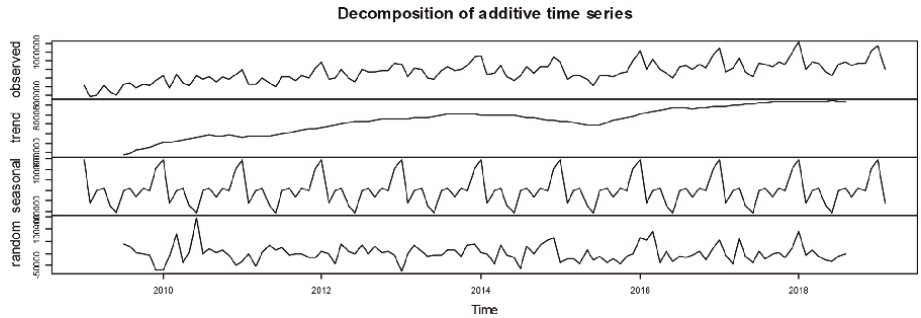

Figure 3.
Decomposition of the additive time series model on tourist arrivals to SA.

Observing the four graphs in **Figure 3** on the decomposition of monthly total arrivals data, one can see the need to deal with the increasing pattern. The total tourist arrivals data set shows seasonality as evidenced by regular fluctuating patterns, hence the need for non-seasonal and seasonal differences. The Box-Cox transformation is employed on the data before the non-seasonal and seasonal difference as this serves as a diagnostic tool to identify potential data transformations necessary in attaining normality, as shown in **Figure 4**.

The Box-Cox transform in **Figure 4** shows a lambda = 0.5, thus indicating the need for a square-root transformation of the total number of tourist arrivals. The square-root transformed data is deseasonalised and detrended through a first and seasonal differenced tourism data and checked for stationarity using the Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test showing a p-value of 0.01 confirming stationarity. The Kwiatkowski–Phillips Schmidt–Shin (KPSS) test for stationarity is done on the square root, transformed data that is deseasonalised and detrended through a first and seasonal differenced and a p-value of 0.01 is obtained, indicating the data is now stationary and ready for use. Graphs of the autocorrelation function (ACF) and partial autocorrelation function (PACF) plots of square-root, first and seasonal differenced tourism data are in **Figure 5**.

The ACF plot shows that the model cuts off at lag 1, with a seasonal spike at lag 12. The PACF plot is cutting off at lag 2, suggesting a SARIMA$(0,1,1)(1,1,2)_{12}$ as the initial model. The extended autocorrelation function (EACF) is shown in **Table 2** to confirm the tentative model further.

The EACF plot in **Table 3** of the square root, first and seasonal differenced tourism data suggests the existence of models such as ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,2)_{12}$, ARIMA $(0,1,1)(1,1,3)_{12}$, ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,2)_{12}$, and ARIMA $(2,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$ as examples. The tentative models and other potential models are considered, with their results tabulated in **Table 3** taking into consideration the model adequacy measure, BIC.

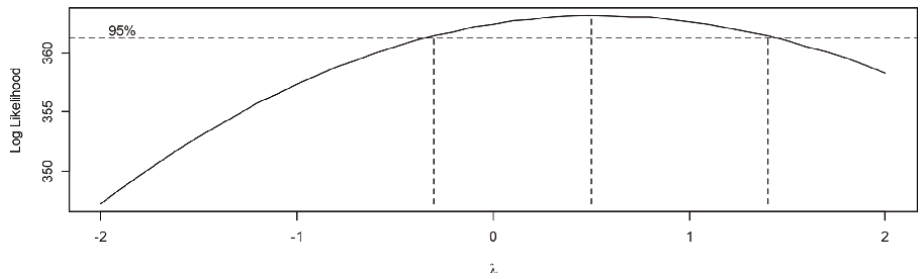

Figure 4.
Box-Cox plot of total tourist arrivals.

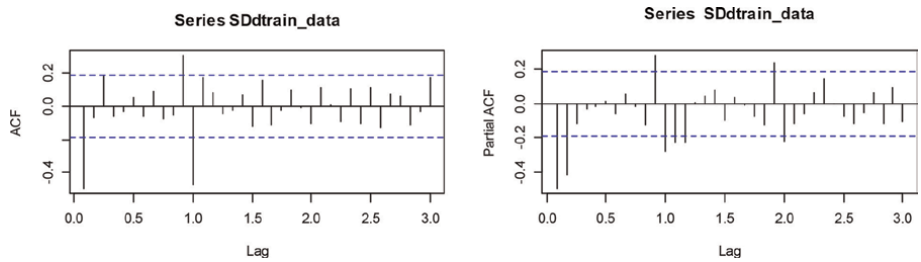

Figure 5.
ACF and PACF plot of square-root, first and seasonal differenced tourism data.

AR/MA														
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**
0	x	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	x	x	o	o
1	x	x	x	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	x	x	x
2	x	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	x	o	o
3	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	x	o	o
4	x	x	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	x	o	o
5	x	x	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	x	x	o
6	x	x	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	x	o	o
7	x	x	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	x	o	o

Table 2.
The EACF plot of the square-root, first and seasonal differenced tourism data.

Model	BIC	RMSE	MAPE
ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,2)_{12}$	1037.08	23.45012	1.922099
ARIMA $(0,1,2)(0,1,2)_{12}$	1041.4	23.44053	1.922912
ARIMA $(1,1,1)(0,1,2)_{12}$	1041.52	23.44254	1.919928
ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$	**1034.81**	**23.68839**	**1.934579**
ARIMA $(1,0,1)(0,1,2)_{12}$	1051.01	23.50619	1.91125
ARIMA $(3,1,1)(1,1,1)_{12}$	1044.31	23.28691	1.928692
ARIMA $(2,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$	1041.53	23.4845	1.929295

Note: Better model is in bold.

Table 3.
Model adequacy checking.

The ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$ was considered as the better model due to its low value of BIC, as presented in **Table 3**, despite its corresponding high values of RMSE and MAPE. The model has a MAPE value of 1.934579%, which is less than 10%, implying a high accuracy level in forecasting. A plot of the model residual is shown in **Figure 6**.

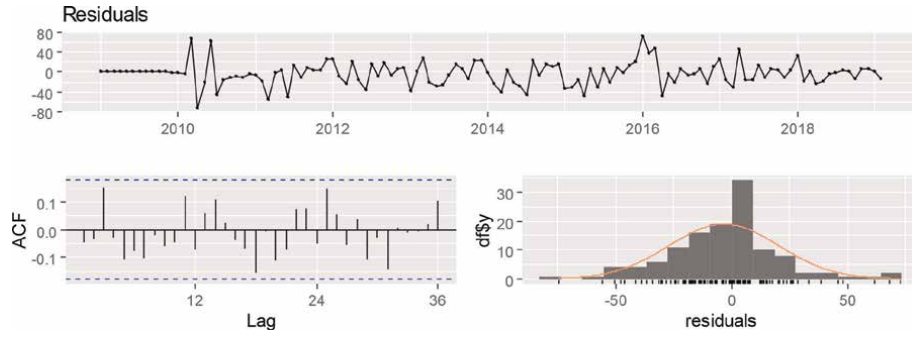

Figure 6.
Residual, ACF and histogram plots of residuals for the ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$.

The residuals obtained from the ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$ are plotted as shown in **Figure 6**, highlighting that the model chosen is a good fit for the total tourist arrivals data with residual behaving in a white noise fashion. The histogram of residuals does indicate that the normality of residuals is being reasonably fulfilled. The Box-Ljung test's p-value of 0.5548 approves independence of residuals.

Model parameters of the ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$ in **Table 4** are all significant. The model has managed to capture the trend and seasonality with a monthly pattern present in the square-root transformed total tourist arrivals data. A plot of the train data, forecasts and test data before during and after the COVID-19 era is shown in **Figure** 7.

The 82 ahead forecasts of the ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$ model forecasts are shown in **Figure** 7. The plot in **Figure** 7 is in four phases, which show the train data phase, the model validation phase, the COVID-19 pandemic phase and the post-COVID-19 pandemic phase. The validation phase between the two green lines, as shown in **Figure** 7, solidifies the model's adequacy in forecasting total tourist arrivals in the SA pre-COVID-19 era. The close pattern between the forecasts and the validation data is evidence of a better model obtained, as the pattern between the forecasts and the validation data shows very little variability that can be of concern. The COVID-19 era and post-COVID-19 phase show how devastating the COVID-19 pandemic inflicted on the tourism and hospitality sector, as evidenced by a drastic decline in the number of total tourist arrivals from March 2020 due to travel bans imposed by governments in curbing the pandemic. This period is shown in **Figure** 7 as the period between the second green line and the purple line. The COVID-19 era in this study is the period when strict measures were taken to curb the virus and the period when COVID-19 was stated as no longer a public health emergency starting 5 May 2023, even though some strict COVID-19 measures had been loosened. The substantial increase in the number of total tourist arrivals after the strict lockdown had been lifted is evidence enough that the tourism sector in SA is a necessity in influencing people's behaviours and spending as they try to deal with the aftershock of the COVID-19 pandemic. The

	MA1	SMA1	z value	Pr(> |z|)
Coefficients	−0.6100	−0,7185	−7.6737	1.671e-14
Standard error	0.079490	0.085817	−8.3721	2.2e-16

Table 4.
Model parameters of the ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$.

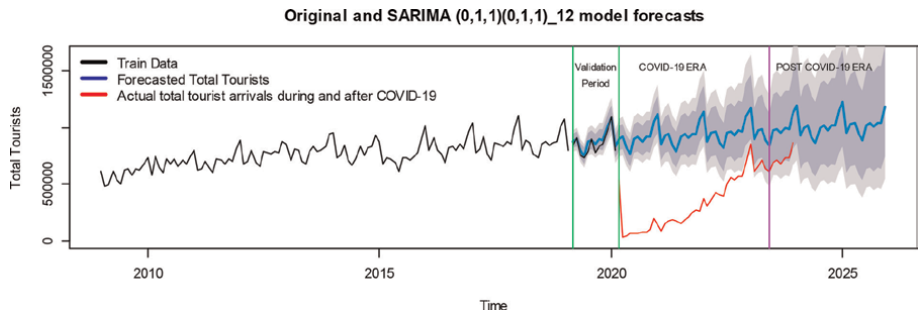

Figure 7.
Plot of square root, detrended and seasonal differenced train data and test data on total tourist arrivals.

period beyond the purple line shows that the total pattern is continuously increasing. Statistics SA (2023) reported that 1.4 million same-day visitors were recorded in 2022 considering the massive drop in tourist arrivals from February 2020, thus highlighting a massive tourism recovery.

The ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$ can be expanded as follows:

$$H_t = H_{t-1} + H_{t-12} - H_{t-13} + e_t - \theta_1 e_{t-1} - \Theta_1 e_{t-12} + \theta_1 \Theta_1 e_{t-13} \quad (4)$$

where Θ_1 and θ_1 are the model coefficients and e_t is a random error term. With the parameter estimates, the model becomes:

$$H_t = H_{t-1} + H_{t-12} - H_{t-13} + e_t + 0.6100\, e_{t-1} + 0.7185\, e_{t-12} + 0.438285 e_{t-13} \quad (5)$$

The coefficients of the estimated model are all significant as they are less than one in magnitude, and the model used to obtain forecasts from March 2019 to December 2025. Actual values from March 2019 to December 2023 were used to determine the accuracy of forecasts before, during and after the COVID-19 era.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The main thrust of this chapter was to give an insight on trends in tourist arrivals before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, with SA considered as a case study using data of total tourist arrivals to SA from January 2009 to December 2023. Tourist arrivals are one key indicator used in determining the viability of the tourism sector in a host country as well as around the globe. Tourist arrivals are prejudiced by numerous push/pull factors, and these factors may lead to the extinction of tourism resources when not properly managed. Tourism has been considered a driver of the economy, be it developing or developed economies, SA included, as the sector has demonstrated continuous growth in employment creation, infrastructure development, cultural preservation and foreign currency earnings as examples. The industry is reported to have contributed to 5% of direct GDP globally and 235 million jobs as of 2018, according to [11]. In 2020, [12] highlighted that the Travel and Tourism sector contributed to the creation of 334 million jobs (direct, indirect and induced) and was responsible for 1 in every 4 of all new jobs generated from 2014 to 2019 and US$ 10.3 trillion of global GDP which translates to 10.4%. These statistics are, therefore, reason enough why the modelling of tourist arrivals needs to be prioritised for informative planning, decision making and policy formulation, considering the occurrence of rare events.

The data used exhibits a steadily increasing variance and seasonality. The square-root transformation was employed to tame the increasing variance. The transformed data was detrended and deseasonalised for model building. An ARIMA (0,1,1) $(0,1,1)_{12}$ model was fitted and considered due to its low BIC value. Ref. [1] highlighted that, as the COVID-19 pandemic is a random event, their consequences are therefore not subject to forecasting as rare events may come in a nature that destroys infrastructure and accessibility to a host country, thus making accessibility more difficult, which will in turn affect impact negatively on expected over actual results. However, rare events, such as COVID-19, do not invalidate the need for statistical modelling of

tourist arrivals due to the many benefits of forecasting tourist arrivals. Forecasts help responsible authorities to come up with various models that will help in the optimal utilisation of resources for increased viability and sustainability of the tourism sector through full stakeholder engagement strategies that will minimise issues of bottlenecks during implementation.

5.2 Recommendations

With the SA tourism industry contributing immensely to the country's GDP and employment creation, according to Ref. [68], good forecasts are therefore needed for informative planning, restructuring and growth as well as employment of aggressive marketing strategies. The SA tourism sector needs maximise on activities and products they can improve or develop such as twin packs of product coupling for use during its peak periods and maximum spending by tourists. Gender and age-sensitive tourism products also need to be considered. Social media platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, twitter, and WhatsApp have been knowing of late to impact positively on information dissemination coupled with the use of prominent socialites in marketing. The tourism sector may therefore need to make use of socialites and social media platforms in marketing tourism products and dissemination of information.

According to Ref. [31], understanding the effects of seasonality and push/pull factors on tourist arrivals is crucial for destination managers, tourism operators and policymakers in developing effective strategies for rebuilding and resilience of the tourism sector. Ref. [69] also supports the contribution of seasonality on tourist arrivals to SA, pointing out that the country's peak tourism season is typically during the summer months (November to March), when the weather is warm and sunny. This information helps in maximising products or services to be offered during the peak periods, diversification of tourism products or services, targeting new market segments, maximising new weather trends and their effect on the ecosystem and adapting to changing consumer preferences and travel patterns. Age and gender issues may also be considered in product development.

With artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) taking a toll in almost every sector of the economy, the authors propose the adoption of AI-based algorithms in tourism modelling.

Author details

Musara Chipumuro, Delson Chikobvu and Tendai Makoni*
Department of Mathematical Statistics and Actuarial Science, University of the Free State, South Africa

*Address all correspondence to: tpmakoni@gmail.com

References

[1] Chipumuro M, Chikobvu D, Makoni T. Statistical analysis of overseas tourist arrivals to South Africa in assessing the impact of COVID-19 on sustainable development. Sustainability. 2024;**16**:x. DOI: 10.3390/xxxxx

[2] Song H, Li G. Tourism demand modeling and forecasting. Tourism Management. 2008;**29**:203-220

[3] Law R, Li G, Fong DKC, Han X. Tourism demand forecasting: A deep learning approach. Annals of Tourism Research. 2019;**75**:410-423

[4] Volgger M, Erschbamer G, Pechlaner H. Destination design: New perspectives for tourism destination development. Journal of Destination Marketing & Management. 2021;**19**(1–6):100561. DOI: 10.1016/j.jdmm.2021.100561

[5] Diunugala HP, Mombeuil C. Modeling and predicting foreign tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka: A comparison of three different methods. Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing. 2020;**6**(3):3-13. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.4055960

[6] Omoruyi O, Dakora EA, Oluwagbemi O. Insights into the impacts of and responses to COVID-19 pandemic: The South African food retail supply chain perspective. Journal of Transport and Supply Chain Management. 2022;**16**(a739):47

[7] Sucheran R. The COVID-19 pandemic and guesthouses in South Africa: Economic impacts and recovery measures. Development Southern Africa. 2022;**39**(35–50):48

[8] American Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA). COVID-19's Impact on the Hotel Industry. 2020. Available from: https://www.ahla.com/covid-19s-impact-hotel-industry [Accessed: January 23, 2024]

[9] Li G, Wu DC. Introduction to the special issue: Tourism forecasting – New trends and issues. Tourism Economics. 2019;**25**(3):305-308

[10] World Trade Organization. World Trade Report 2002: Firm in a Globalizing World. France: World Trade Organization; 2002. Available from: https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/anrep_e/world_trade_report_2002_e.pdf

[11] UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. 2018. Available from: www.e-unwto.org/loi/wtobarometereng [Accessed: July 20, 2024]

[12] World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). 2020. Available from: www.wttc.org [Accessed: June 18, 2024]

[13] Oh C. The contribution of tourism development to economic growth in the Korean economy. Tourism Management. 2005;**26**:39-44

[14] Song H, Turner L. Tourism demand forecasting. In: Dwyer L, Forsth P, editors. International Handbook on the Economics of Tourism. United Kingdom: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd; 2006. pp. 89–114

[15] Richardson RB. The Contribution of Tourism to Economic Growth and Food Security. Sweden: USAID Mali Office of Economic Growth; 2010. DOI: 10.22004/ag.econ.97140

[16] Medina-Muñoz DR, Medina-Muñoz RD, Gutiérrez-Pérez FJ. The

impacts of tourism on poverty alleviation: An integrated research framework. Journal of Sustainable Tourism. 2015;**24**:270-298. DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2015.1049611

[17] Asongu SA, Odhiambo NM. The sustainability of tourism: Global comparative evidence. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure. 2019;**9**(1):1-14

[18] Thommandru A, Espinoza-Maguiña M, Ramirez-Asis E, Ray S, Naved M, Guzman-Avalos M. Role of tourism and hospitality business in economic development. Materials Today: Proceedings. 2021;**80**: 2901-2904. DOI: 10.1016/j.matpr.2021.07.059

[19] World Tourism Organization. International Tourism Highlights, Edition—The Impact of COVID-19 on Tourism (2020–2022). Madrid, Spain: UNWTO; 2023. DOI: 10.18111/9789284424986

[20] World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). 2023. Available from: www.wttc.org [Accessed: June 18, 2024]

[21] Xu F, Wang J. Push and pull factors affecting Chinese tourists' travel intention to Thailand during COVID-19. Tourism and Hospitality. 2021;**2**(1): 85-100

[22] Crompton JL. Motivations for pleasure vacation. Annals of Tourism Research. 1979;**6**(4):408-424

[23] UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. 2014. Available from: www.e-unwto.org/loi/wtobarometereng [Accessed: July 20, 2024]

[24] Singh EH. Forecasting tourist inflow in Bhutan using seasonal ARIMA. International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR). 2013;**2**:242-245

[25] Africa Tourism Monitor 2018 - The High 5s – Tourism as a Pathway to Industrialization, Integration, Quality of Life, Agriculture, and Powering Up Africa. 2018;**5**(1):1-70

[26] World Travel and Tourism Council. The Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism: Mali. London: World Travel and Tourism Council; 2010

[27] Bhorat H, Steenkamp F, Rooney C, Kachingwe N, Lees A. Understanding and Characterising the Services Sector in South Africa: An Overview. Germany: WIDER Working Paper. 2016, No. 2016/157; 2016

[28] Statistics South Africa. Annual Report. 2017. Available from: www.statssa.gov.za [Accessed: December 10, 2023]

[29] South African Tourism Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan. 2015. Available from: www.statssa.gov.za [Accessed: April 10, 2024]

[30] World Bank. World Development Indicators CD-ROM. Washington, DC: World Bank; 2019

[31] Gössling S, Scott D, Hall CM. Pandemics, tourism and global change: A rapid assessment of COVID-19. Journal of Sustainable Tourism. 2020; **29**(1):1-20

[32] World Health Organization. World Health Statistics 2022: Monitoring Health for the SDGs, Sustainable Development Goals. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization; 2022. Available from: https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/352685/9789240048764-eng.pdf

[33] South Africa Government. 2020. Available from: https://www.gov.za/news/media-statements [Accessed: April 10, 2024]

[34] Department of Tourism. 2021 Annual Report. Republic of South Africa: Department of Tourism; 2021. Available from: http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications [Accessed: April 10, 2024]

[35] Toerien D. Tourism and poverty in rural South Africa: A revisit. South African Journal of Science. 2020;**116**(1/2):1-8. DOI: 10.17159/sajs.2020/6506

[36] Koenig-Lewis N, Bischoff EE. Seasonality research: The state of the art. International Journal of Tourism Research. 2005;**7**(4–5):201-219

[37] Wen J, Sinha C. The effects of past experience, tourist involvement, and future travel plans on tourist pro-environmental behavioral intention. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research. 2019;**43**(2):154-177

[38] Allcock JB. Seasonality. In: Tourism Marketing and Management Handbook. London: Prentice Hall; 1989. pp. 387-392

[39] Naudé WA, Saayman A. Determinants of tourist arrivals in Africa: A panel data regression analysis. Tourism Economics. 2005;**11**:365-391. DOI: 10.5367/000000005774352962

[40] Goh C, Law R. Modeling and forecasting tourism demand for arrivals with stochastic time series models. Tourism Management. 2002;**23**(5): 499-510. DOI: 10.1016/S0261-5177(02)00010-2

[41] Chu FL. A fractionally integrated autoregressive moving average approach to forecasting tourism demand. Tourism Management. 2008;**29**:79-88

[42] Song H, Witt SF. Forecasting international tourist flows to Macau. Tourism Management. 2006;**27**(2): 214-224

[43] Coshall JT, Charlesworth R. A management orientated approach to combination forecasting of tourism demand. Tourism Management. 2011; **32**(4):759-769. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2010.06.011

[44] Salman AK, Shukur G, Bergmann-Winberg M. Comparison of econometric modelling of demand for domestic and international tourism: Swedish data. Current Issues in Tourism. 2007;**10**(4): 323-342. DOI: 10.2167/cit257.0

[45] Wong KKF, Song H, Witt SF, Wu DC. Tourism forecasting: To combine or not to combine? Tourism Management. 2007;**28**(4):1068-1078

[46] Song H, Qiu RTR, Park J. A review of research on tourism demand forecasting: Launching the annals of tourism research curated collection on tourism demand forecasting. Annals of Tourism Research. 2019;**75**:338-362. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2018.12.001

[47] Sun P, Cárdenas DA, Harrill R. Chinese customers' evaluation of travel website quality: A decision-tree analysis. Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management. 2016;**25**:476-497. DOI: 10.1080/19368623.2015.1037977

[48] Claveria O, Monte E, Torra S. Tourism demand forecasting with neural network models: Different ways of treating information. International Journal of Tourism Research. 2015;**17**(5): 492-500

[49] Thushara SC, Su JJ, Bandara JS. Forecasting international tourist arrivals in formulating tourism strategies and planning: The case of Sri Lanka. Cogent

Economics and Finance. 2019;7(1):1-32. DOI: 10.1080/23322039.2019.1699884

[50] Nanthakumar L, Ibrahim Y. Forecasting international tourism demand in Malaysia using box Jenkins Sarima application. South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage. 2010;**3**:50-60

[51] Box G, Jenkins GM, Reinsel G. Time Series Analysis: Forecasting and Control. 3rd ed. London: Prentice Hall; 1994

[52] Wu JS, Font X, Liu J. The elusive impact of pro-environmental intention on holiday on pro-environmental behaviour at home. Tourism Management. 2021;**85**:104283

[53] Sharma N. Tourism led growth hypothesis: Empirical evidence from India. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure. 2018;7(2):1-11

[54] Govdeli T, Direcki TB. The relationship between tourism and economic growth: OECD countries. International Journal of Academic Research in Economics and Management Sciences. 2017;**6**(4):104-113

[55] Suresh J, Senthilnathan S. Relationship between tourism and economic growth in Sri Lanka, chapter 7. In: Vijayakumar S, editor. Economic Issues. Sri Lanka: Eastern University; 2014. pp. 115-132

[56] Purna CP. Forecasting international tourists footfalls in India: An assortment of competing models. International Journal of Business and Management. 2011;**6**:190-202. DOI: 10.5539/ijbm.v6n5p190

[57] Makoni T, Chikobvu D. Modelling and forecasting Zimbabwe's tourist arrivals using time series method: A case study of Victoria falls rainforest. Southern African Business Review. 2018;**22**:1-22. DOI: 10.25159/1998-8125/3791

[58] Jere S, Banda A, Kasense B, Siluyele I, Moyo E. Forecasting annual international tourist arrivals in Zambia using Holt-winters exponential smoothing. Open Journal of Statistics. 2019;**9**:258-267

[59] Athanasopoulos G, Hyndman RJ, Song H, Wu DC. The tourism forecasting competition. International Journal of Forecasting. 2011;**27**:822-844. DOI: 10.1016/j.ijforecast.2010.04.009

[60] Li H, He LY, Yang JJ. Forecasting the medium-term performance of restructured tourism firms with an adaptive integrated predictor. Tourism Management. 2022;**88**:104436. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2021.104436

[61] Mao Y, He J, Morrison AM, Andres C-SJ. Effects of tourism CSR on employee psychological capital in the COVID-19 crisis: From the perspective of conservation of resources theory. Current Issues in Tourism. 2021;**24**(19): 2716-2734

[62] Saayman A, Saayman M. Forecasting tourist arrivals in South Africa. Acta Commercii. 2010;**10**(1):281-293

[63] Peiris HRI. A seasonal ARIMA model of tourism forecasting: The case of Sri Lanka. Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Sports. 2016;**22**(2312–517):98-109

[64] Louw R. Forecasting tourism demand for South Africa [thesis]. Potchefstroom: North-West University; 2011

[65] Makoni T, Chikobvu D, Sigauke C. Combined hierarchical tourist arrival forecasts for great Zimbabwe National Monuments. African Journal of

Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure. 2022; **11**(6):2092-2102

[66] Msofe ZA, Mbago MC. Forecasting international tourist arrivals in Zanzibar using box-Jenkins SARIMA model. General Letters in Mathematics. 2019;**7**: 100-107

[67] Nurhasanah D, Salsabila AM, Kartikasari MD. Forecasting international tourist arrivals in Indonesia using SARIMA model. Enthusiastic International Journal of Statistics and Data Science. 2022;**2**(1):19-25

[68] Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). 2022. Available from: http://www.statssa.gov.za [Accessed: July 5, 2024]

[69] Kruger M, Saayman M. The determinants of visitor length of stay at the Kruger National Park. Koedoe. 2014; **56**(2):1-11

Chapter 8

Good Practices and Recommendations in the Management of Cruise Tourism in the Port of Ibiza

Alberto Camarero Orive, Javier Vaca-Cabrero, Nicoletta González-Cancelas and Ignacio Revilla Alonso

Abstract

This chapter explores the management of cruise tourism in the port of Ibiza, focusing on its recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. The main objective is to assess how port infrastructure and transport options have adapted to support the growth of cruise traffic while emphasizing sustainability. The methodology involved a comprehensive review of existing literature, a collection of secondary data from the Port Authority of the Balearic Islands, and a critical analysis of passenger flow and infrastructure capacity. Statistical and graphic analyses were conducted to identify trends in passenger numbers and evaluate the adequacy of the current infrastructure. A key finding is the significant recovery in cruise traffic in 2023, surpassing pre-pandemic levels, which highlights the port's importance to the local economy. The adoption of sustainable transport options, such as busses and boats using cleaner fuels, has also been crucial in reducing environmental impact and managing increased passenger numbers. In conclusion, the port of Ibiza has demonstrated resilience and effective capacity management, consolidating its position as a key tourist destination in the Mediterranean. Long-term sustainability strategies and innovative transport solutions are essential for ensuring balanced growth and enhancing the overall tourist experience.

Keywords: coastal tourism, cruises, ports, port management, maritime transport

1. Introduction

The port of Ibiza plays a crucial role in the island's economy, acting as a central hub in attracting tourists through cruise ships. During the COVID-19 pandemic, operations were significantly affected, generating a negative impact on tourism and, therefore, local revenues. However, the year 2023 represented a resurgence and an increase in demand, with a total of 551,030 passengers and 188 stopovers, exceeding the figures of 2019. This chapter details how the port has responded to this recovery, adapting its infrastructure and modal sharing strategies, to maximize efficiency and respond to sustainability and capacity challenges. A comprehensive analysis is also

presented that can serve as a basis for planning port and transport infrastructure in other tourist destinations. The recovery of cruise tourism in Ibiza in 2023 reflects a sustained demand and a growing interest in safe destinations, with the capacity to offer a balanced experience between enjoyment and safety measures. The adoption of sustainable transport options, such as electric busses and boats with less polluting fuels, highlights the port's commitment to innovation and environmental responsibility. In summary, the port of Ibiza has demonstrated a robust and efficient capacity to handle cruise traffic, with a significant impact on the recovery and growth of tourism in Ibiza post-COVID. The port infrastructure, together with the transport options available, has made it possible to effectively manage the increase in passenger numbers, consolidating Ibiza as a key tourist destination in the Mediterranean.

1.1 Context of cruise traffic in Ibiza after the pandemic

The port of Ibiza, located on the island of Ibiza, is one of the main entry points for tourism in the Balearic Islands. Cruise ship traffic has historically been a crucial driver for the local economy, generating revenue and attracting thousands of visitors each year. However, the COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating impact on the global tourism industry, and cruise ships were no exception. The pandemic stopped the flow of cruise tourists in Ibiza, a situation that was replicated globally. The suspension of port activities and the imposition of restrictions reduced the number of stopovers and passengers in 2020, leaving Ibiza's economy without one of its most significant revenues. The return of activity in 2023, with record numbers of passengers and stopovers, shows a clear recovery and highlights the importance of a port prepared to handle large volumes of tourist traffic. In this context, the port of Ibiza has adopted an innovative modal distribution model, including busses from tour operators, boat transport from the port to the city, and taxis, which helps alleviate the pressure on land infrastructure and improves the visitor experience. This strategy aligns with the recommendations of sustainable mobility experts who advocate for multiple transport options to reduce dependency on traditional modes.

The recovery in 2023, with figures reaching 551,030 passengers and 188 stopovers, shows a growth trend in interest in cruises. This growth poses new challenges in terms of infrastructure and mobility, especially in a post-pandemic context that emphasizes the importance of sustainability in the management of tourist destinations and reflects the resilience of the industry and sustained demand from tourists.

All in all, the objective of this chapter is to study, with the existing information, the cruise traffic in the port of Ibiza, the modal distribution of passengers who disembark, as well as the port land facilities that host this traffic, as an element that enhances tourism on the island of Ibiza.

2. Literature review

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically disrupted the global tourism industry, with the cruise sector being one of the hardest hit. The suspension of operations, travel restrictions, and health and safety concerns forced ports and operators to re-evaluate their strategies and priorities.

Recent literature emphasizes the need for *resilience* in the tourism sector, particularly in the wake of the unprecedented disruption caused by COVID-19. According

to S.-H. Lee et al. [1], the concept of resilience has taken on a central role for cruise operators, who must adapt quickly to changes in consumer demands and expectations. In the case of cruise ships, health safety has become a key aspect of recovery strategies, the industry has had to implement strict hygiene protocols and adapt to increased regulations to ensure the safety of passengers [2].

On the other hand, studies have been carried out that show the importance *of repositioning destinations* to maximize their attractiveness after the pandemic, highlighting the need to develop more personalized tourism offers, focused on sustainability and more intimate and less crowded experiences [3].

Sustainability in port management is a recurring theme in recent literature. Studies suggest that ports that receive cruise ships must adopt *sustainable practices* to manage the growing volume of passengers and reduce environmental impact. The *management of port resources* and the reduction of environmental impact are the main challenges for ports looking to adapt to a more environmentally conscious tourism market. It is suggested that infrastructure improvements, such as the implementation of electric power systems on docks and the use of cleaner fuels, are critical measures for ports that want to remain competitive [4].

On the other hand, it highlights the importance of *inter-institutional collaboration* to promote sustainability in the cruise sector. Coordination between port authorities, municipalities, and cruise operators has proven essential to implement practices that reduce the environmental footprint of tourism [5].

The management of cruise passenger mobility is another key aspect identified in the literature. *Optimizing the flow of passengers* from ports to tourist destinations is essential to minimize the negative impact of mass tourism. Diversifying transportation options is an effective strategy to improve the passenger experience and reduce congestion. The use of options such as public transport, electric bicycles, and shuttles allows for a more equitable distribution of passenger flow and contributes to the sustainability of the destination [6].

The implementation of multiple transport options is key to reducing dependence on traditional modes and promoting sustainable mobility [7].

The *theoretical framework of organizational resilience* has been used by several researchers to explain how tourist destinations can adapt to crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Resilience in tourism involves not only the ability to recover quickly but also the adaptation of strategies to mitigate future risks [8]. In the case of tourist ports, this adaptation can be reflected in the implementation of *real-time monitoring technologies*, which allow authorities to better manage days of high demand and adjust resources according to needs [9].

On the other hand, the *triple bottom line approach* (economic, social, and environmental) has also been widely discussed in the literature as a fundamental criterion for the evaluation of sustainability in cruise tourism [10]. These authors point out that the adoption of sustainable transport strategies and the improvement of port infrastructure are examples of how ports can comply with these three pillars and contribute to the sustainable development of destinations.

The literature reviewed highlights that cruise tourism faces significant challenges, especially in terms of sustainability and passenger mobility. However, these challenges also represent opportunities to innovate and create new niches within the tourism sector. The case of the port of Ibiza is a concrete example of how resilience, sustainability, and innovative mobility strategies can lead to a successful post-COVID recovery and serve as a model for other tourist destinations.

3. Methodology

The methodology used for this research is based on a mixed approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data collection. This method was selected to provide a comprehensive view of the operation of the port of Ibiza in its management of cruise ship traffic and its impact on local tourism. The main methodological steps were as follows:

1. Literature review: An exhaustive review of previous documents, studies on port capacity, and the impacts of cruise ship traffic on tourist destinations was carried out. Technical reports from the APB, local policy and regulatory documents, and international frameworks on sustainability and cruise terminals [11] were also consulted.

2. Secondary data collection: Passenger and stopover data between 2016 and 2023 were provided by the Port Authority [12]. Specific data was also collected on berth occupancy and the modal distribution of passengers during the days of high influx in 2023. The information was organized in a database to facilitate its analysis and comparison.

3. Statistical and graphical analysis: The data collected were statistically analyzed to identify trends in the number of stopovers, passengers, and occupancy levels of berths. In addition, graphs and visualizations were made to represent the evolution of traffic and passenger transport preferences.

4. Critical capacity assessment: The days of maximum influx have been selected (those with more than 9500 cruise passengers, according to the Delphi analysis carried out), and an assessment of the intensity of disembarkation and the occupancy of port and land transport facilities has been carried out. This analysis made it possible to establish a range of critical capacities that could support the port infrastructure without affecting the user experience.

5. Proposals for improvement and sustainability: Finally, proposals were made based on the data obtained and international best practices in the port management of cruise destinations [11]. The recommendations focused on strategies to improve modal sharing, increase the sustainability of port operations, and optimize the experience of cruise passengers when traveling.

This methodology has allowed the analysis to be structured in a technical and comprehensive way, ensuring that the data and information provided provide a solid basis for assessing the role of the port of Ibiza in the island's tourism and for developing evidence-based recommendations.

4. Analysis of the evolution of cruise ship traffic in the port of Ibiza

4.1 Traffic statistics

According to data provided by the Port Authority of the Balearic Islands (APB), the number of cruise passengers in the port of Ibiza has shown a notable recovery in

Figure 1.
Evolution of the number of cruise passengers. Source: own elaboration.

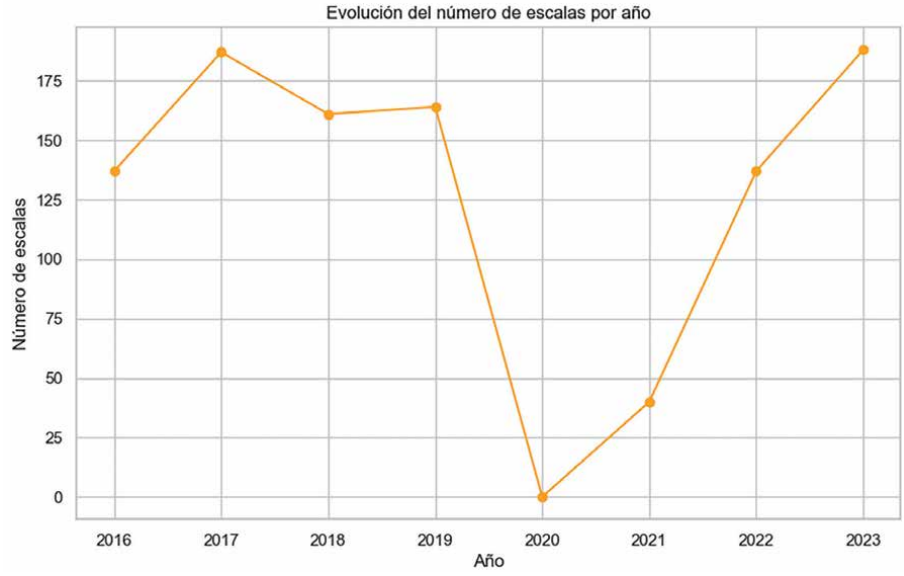

Figure 2.
Evolution of the number of stopovers. Source: own elaboration.

2023. The figure reached 551,030 passengers (**Figure 1**), far exceeding the levels of 2019, the last year before the pandemic, which recorded significantly lower numbers. Likewise, the number of cruise ship calls has also shown an increase, reaching 188 calls in 2023, which exceeds the 187 calls recorded in 2017, the year with the highest number of calls before the pandemic (**Figure 2**).

These figures show the evolution of the number of passengers and cruise ship calls in the port of Ibiza between 2016 and 2023. These figures clearly illustrate the impact

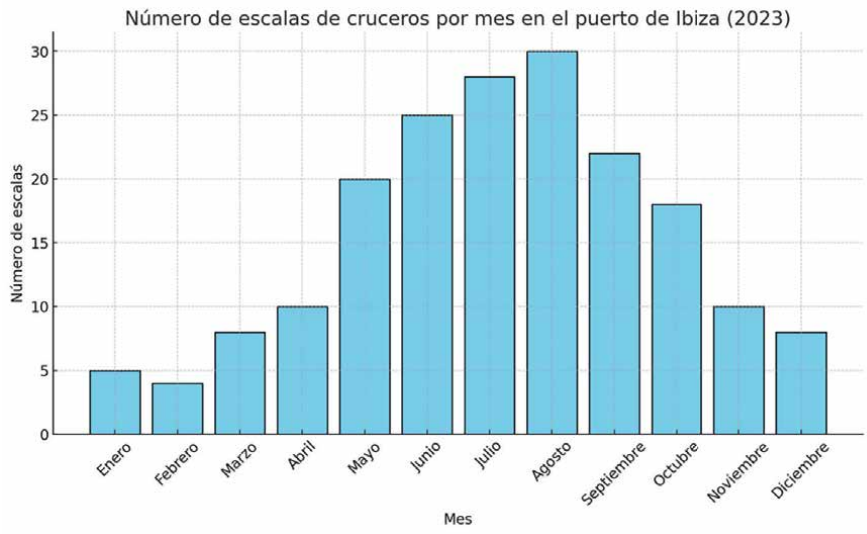

Figure 3.
Evolution of the number of stopovers by month. Source: own elaboration.

of the pandemic in 2020, with a significant recovery in 2023, reaching record levels in both passengers and stopovers.

4.2 Demand analysis during the 2023 peak season

The year 2023 marked a return to total normality after the impact of COVID-19. The pandemic severely affected cruise ship traffic globally, but 2023 saw levels of activity that not only matched but exceeded pre-COVID-19 values. In Ibiza, cruise ships dock mainly at the Botafoc dock and pontoon 4, with support from pontoons 2 and 3 in periods of high demand. The Botafoc dock handled 64.2% of cruise passenger traffic, followed by pontoon 4 with 31.4%, and pontoons 2 and 3 with lower percentages.

The seasonality of cruise ship traffic shows peaks in the summer months, particularly in August, followed by May and October. These months coincide with the peak tourist season in Ibiza, which maximizes the positive economic impact of cruise tourism.

Figure 3 shows the number of cruise ship calls in the port of Ibiza per month in 2023. As can be seen, the summer months, especially May, July, and August, register the highest number of stopovers, confirming the peak of activity during the high season.

5. Port infrastructure capacity for cruise ship traffic

5.1 Docking capacity and occupancy of the Botafoc Dock and other berthing points

The Botafoc Dock (**Figure 4**) is the main berthing point for cruise ships in the port of Ibiza, with an occupancy rate of 20% during the months of greatest demand. This infrastructure allows the simultaneous operation of cruise ships and oil tankers, complying with Instruction 01/22 of the Port Authority of the Balearic Islands, which

establishes preferential schedules to minimize conflicts between both types of traffic. Occupancy at other points, such as pontoon 4, is more variable, reaching a maximum of 23% in August.

Figure 4.
Ibiza port map. Source: Port Authority of the Balearic Islands.

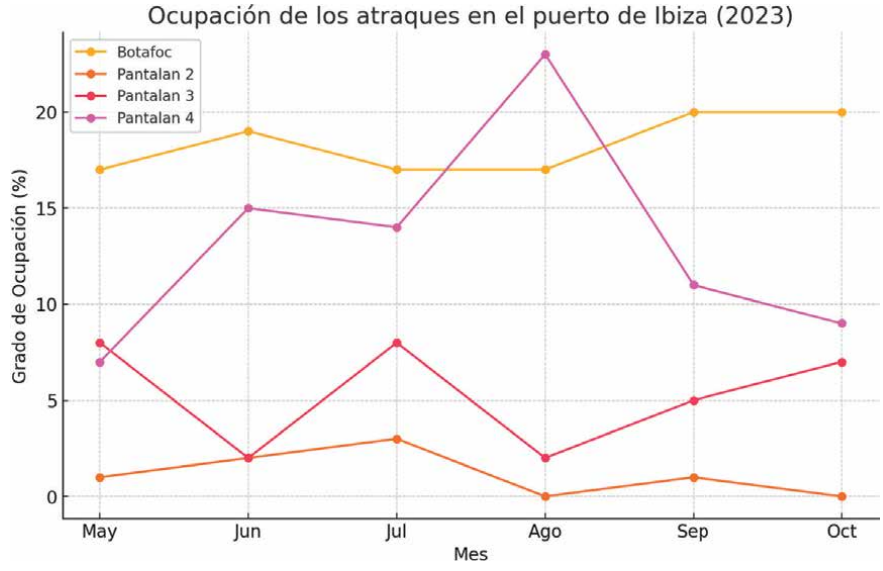

Figure 5.
Degree of occupancy of the docks. Source: own elaboration.

Days	Number of cruise passengers (pax)					Number of oil tankers
	Botafoc	Pant 2	Pant 3	Screen 4	Total	Botafoc
21-Jun	5.300	0	0	4.494	9.794	0
19-Jul	5.618	0	2.543	4.672	12.833	0
26-Jul	5.592	0	0	3.067	8.659	0
09-Aug	5.658	0	0	4.672	10.330	1
16-Aug	5.534	0	0	4.679	10.213	0

Source: A. P. de Baleares and own elaboration.

Table 1.
Data for the selected days.

Figure 5 shows the degree of occupancy of the different berths in the port of Ibiza during the busiest months in 2023. It is noted that the Botafoc Dock and Dock 4 have the highest occupancy rates, especially in August, when the port experiences the maximum flow of passengers.

5.2 Selection of critical days and analysis of maximum influx of cruise passengers

To evaluate the days with the greatest influx, those in which the port received more than 9500 passengers were analyzed, resulting in June 21, July 19, and 26, and August 9 and 16. During these days, the intensity of disembarkation reached between 2400 and 3200 passengers per hour, which places a significant demand on land transport infrastructure. These critical days offer a basis for assessing the port's performance and ability to adapt to high passenger densities in a short period. These values are manageable within the port's current transport capacities and land infrastructures.

Table 1 represents the number of passengers disembarked at the different docks on the selected days of maximum influx.

6. Maximum transfer capacity of disembarked cruise passengers

6.1 Available transport options and coordination with local operators

In 2023, thanks to the collaboration between the APB, the Ibiza City Council, the Ibiza Council, and various associations and operators, multiple transport options were implemented for disembarked cruise passengers. These options included shuttle busses from tour operators, the city boat, the port bus, taxis, regular line busses (L45), and pedestrian options. This diversity of options allows for a more efficient distribution of passengers and minimizes congestion.

This modal split model was designed to reduce congestion and optimize the flow of passengers from the port to different points of interest on the island. All this was aimed at promoting tourism on the island.

6.2 Estimation of modal distribution on days of high demand

During the days of high influx, the analysis shows that 38% of passengers used the shuttle busses of tour operators, while the city boat and the port bus accounted for 11

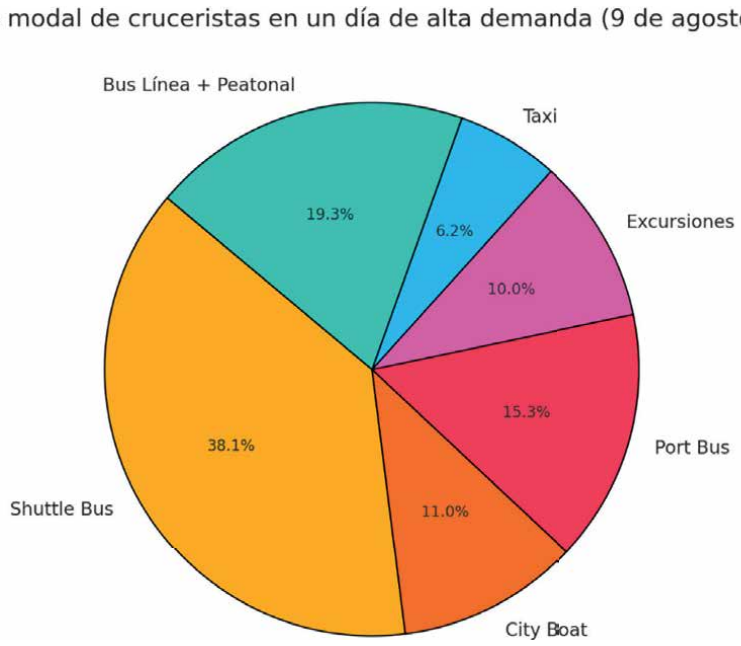

Figure 6.
Modal shift. Source: own elaboration.

and 15.25%, respectively. These figures are compared to the APB's target of increasing the combined share of city boats and port busses to 30% to improve sustainability and reduce reliance on shuttle busses (**Figure 6**). The implementation of additional measures could improve this distribution and reduce the environmental impact of tourist traffic.

The sector graph shows the modal distribution of cruise passengers on a day of high demand (August 9, 2023). It is observed that the shuttle bus is the most used option, followed by the pedestrian mode combined with the line bus. These data suggest that there are opportunities to increase the participation of the city boat and the port bus to achieve the goal of a more balanced distribution.

7. Impacts of cruise ship traffic in Ibiza

7.1 Economic and social impact of cruise traffic

Cruise ship traffic in the port of Ibiza is not only crucial to the local economy but also has a significant social impact. The arrival of cruise passengers boosts various economic sectors, including hospitality, commerce, and transport services and excursions. In addition, cruise activity generates employment and promotes the development of tourism infrastructures.

7.2 Direct and indirect economic impact

The direct economic impact of cruise ship traffic includes revenues generated by port taxes, passenger expenses on the island, and services provided to shipping

companies. These revenues are essential for the maintenance and development of port infrastructures and contribute significantly to the local GDP.

The indirect economic impact is manifested through the demand for goods and services by visitors. Cruise passengers spend money on restaurants, shops, and recreational activities, which in turn benefits local businesses and encourages job creation. This positive economic cycle is fundamental for the sustainability of tourism in Ibiza.

7.3 Social and cultural impact

Cruise tourism also has a social and cultural impact. The arrival of visitors from different parts of the world enriches the cultural environment of Ibiza, promoting cultural exchange and global understanding. However, it also poses challenges, such as the need to manage environmental impact and ensure that tourism is sustainable.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

The following conclusions can be considered from the study carried out:

- Recovery of cruise tourism: Following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the port of Ibiza has experienced a notable recovery in cruise traffic in 2023. The recovery reflects a sustained demand and a growing interest in safe destinations, with the capacity to offer a balanced experience between enjoyment and safety measures. With figures exceeding 2019 levels, the port's role as an important driver for the local tourism economy and its resilience to global crises is confirmed. The recovery reflects a sustained demand and a growing interest in safe destinations, with the capacity to offer a balanced experience between enjoyment and safety measures.

- Mobility and modal sharing challenges: The mobility of cruise passengers and their modal sharing on busy days reflect a reliance on tour operators' shuttle busses, with 38% of passengers using this option. Although the city boat and port bus show significant use, it is necessary to promote these sustainable modes to reduce the environmental impact of cruise ship traffic and alleviate congestion in land transport infrastructure. **In the case of the port of Ibiza, collaboration with the City Council of Ibiza and other authorities has been crucial to introduce more sustainable transport options for passengers, such as the use of electric busses and boats operating on less polluting fuels. Additionally, the port has adopted an innovative modal distribution model, including busses from tour operators, boat transport from the port to the city, and taxis, which helps alleviate pressure on land infrastructure and improves the visitor experience. Implementing multiple transport options is key to reducing dependence on traditional modes and promoting sustainable mobility.

To maximize the benefits and mitigate the challenges of cruise traffic, it is essential to implement long-term strategies that focus on sustainability and continuous improvement. These strategies may include:

1. Promotion of sustainable transport: It is recommended to prioritize the use of sustainable and electric vehicles in city boat and port bus services, thus

improving energy efficiency and reducing the environmental impact of cruise tourism on the island.

2. Improvements in waiting and transit infrastructure: It is essential to optimize waiting areas, offering more shade, rest areas, and food services at strategic points. These improvements will help better absorb passenger flows and contribute to a more comfortable experience for visitors.

3. Implementation of real-time monitoring technology: The collection of real-time data on the influx of passengers and the use of transport will be facilitate. In the case of tourist ports, this adaptation can be reflected in the implementation of real-time monitoring technologies that allow authorities to better manage high-demand days and adjust resources as needed. A shared control system between the APB, the Consell de Ibiza, and the City Council would allow better decision-making and adaptive planning on days of high demand.

4. Inter-institutional collaboration: Continuous coordination between the APB, the Consell de Ibiza, the City Council, and tour operators will be crucial to implement improvement measures and ensure a satisfactory experience for cruise passengers. This cooperation will also facilitate the achievement of shared goals, such as sustainability and operational efficiency.

5. Tourist education and awareness: Informing tourists about the sustainable transport options available and the advantages of less invasive modes will help promote the use of services such as the city boat and the port bus. Tour operators and the port itself could facilitate the sale of tickets for these services on board cruise ships or at arrival points.

6. Promoting sustainable tourism: Implement sustainable tourism practices that minimize environmental impact, promote respect for local culture, and ensure that economic benefits are equitably distributed.

7. Diversification of the tourism product: Diversify tourist offers to attract different types of visitors and extend the tourist season beyond the summer months, reducing seasonality and distributing the economic benefits throughout the year.

As a final conclusion, we can consider that cruise ship traffic in the port of Ibiza has proven to be a vital component of Ibiza's tourism economy, especially in the post-COVID-19 context. The recovery seen in 2023 is a testament to the island's resilience and continued appeal as a cruise destination. With proper management, a focus on sustainability, and long-term development strategies, the port of Ibiza can continue to be a key driver for the island's economic growth and social well-being.

Author details

Alberto Camarero Orive[1], Javier Vaca-Cabrero[1], Nicoletta González-Cancelas[1*] and Ignacio Revilla Alonso[2]

1 Department of Transport, Territorial and Urban Planning Engineering, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Madrid, Spain

2 Port Authority of Baleares, Palma, Spain

*Address all correspondence to: nicoleta.gcancelas@upm.es

IntechOpen

References

[1] Lee S-H, Kao H-T, Kung P-C. Staying at work? The impact of social support on the perception of the COVID-19 epidemic and the mediated moderating effect of career resilience in tourism. Sustainability. 2022;**14**(9):5719

[2] Kulkov I, Hellström M, Tsvetkova A, Malmberg J. Sustainable cruise tourism: Systematic literature review and future research areas. Sustainability. 2023;**15**(10):8335. Art. No. 10. DOI: 10.3390/su15108335

[3] Vila-Lopez N, Kuster-Boluda I. Data mining to reposition a religious tourist destination in COVID-19. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management. 2024;**36**(2):457-477

[4] Kuznetsov A, Dinwoodie J, Gibbs D, Sansom M, Knowles H. Towards a sustainability management system for smaller ports. Marine Policy. 2015;**54**:59-68

[5] Campisi J, Watson A, Yip J. Equator to pole: Using science diplomacy to incorporate best practices from Latin America and the Carib-bean for sustainable cruise tourism in the polar regions. The Journal of Science Policy and Governance. 2022;**20**(03)

[6] Andrade MJ, Costa JP, Jiménez-Morales E. Challenges for european tourist-city-ports: Strategies for a sustainable coexistence in the cruise post-COVID context. Land. 2021;**10**(11):1269

[7] Banister D. The sustainable mobility paradigm. Transport Policy. 2008;**15**(2):73-80

[8] Zhang F, Lv Y, Sarker MNI. Resilience and recovery: A systematic review of tourism governance strategies in disaster-affected regions. International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction. 2024;**103**:104350

[9] Siano P. Demand response and smart grids—A survey. Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews. 2014;**30**:461-478

[10] Tyrrell T, Paris CM, Biaett V. A quantified triple bottom line for tourism: Experimental results. Journal of Travel Research. 2013;**52**(3):279-293. DOI: 10.1177/0047287512465963

[11] Guidelines for Cruise Terminals. Pianc. Disponible en: https://www.pianc.org/publication/guidelines-for-cruise-terminals/; [Accedido: de noviembre de July 2016:**18**:2024]

[12] Index | Ports de Balears. Disponible en: https://www.portsdebalears.com/es [Accedido: de noviembre de 18, 2024]

Chapter 9

Impact of AI Tools in Tourism: Transforming the Industry

Kanagasabai Thiruthanigesan, Aravinth Thevarajan Swampillai and Nagalingam Nagendrakumar

Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools have increasingly become a transformative force within the tourism industry which is revolutionizing how services are delivered and consumed. This chapter explores the multifaceted impact of AI on the tourism sector, examining its role in enhancing customer experiences, operational efficiency, and safety. The integration of AI technologies such as Natural Language Processing (NLP), Machine Learning (ML), Computer Vision (CV), and predictive analytics is reshaping the way travelers interact with desired destinations and service providers. AI-driven innovations like chatbots, personalized recommendation systems, and smart infrastructure drive a new era of customized and efficient travel experiences. Adopting AI also presents challenges, including privacy concerns, potential biases, and ethical considerations. This chapter delves into these challenges and discusses how AI can contribute to sustainable tourism practices, ultimately offering insights into the future trends and innovations that will continue to shape the tourism industry in the Generation AI era.

Keywords: transforming the tourism industry, artificial intelligence in tourism, artificial intelligence in hospitality management, generative AI, computer vision

1. Introduction

The relatively recent development of AI has become one of the most important sources of change in various industries. In industries where it has penetrated, changing the ways of functioning of companies and the mechanisms of the consumer approaches to various services. The employment of highly advanced AI, known as Gen AI, has enabled growth from the original simple automation methodology, introducing new capabilities such as NLP, ML, and CV. This fast evolution has already placed AI significantly in healthcare, financial, retail, entertainment, and more industries. Reacting to the evolving environment within the tourism industry, which contains unprecedented opportunities and threats, the application of AI solutions can equally offer considerable opportunities for the reinvention of the traveler experience and for enhancing the organizational management of tourism. Compared with other sectors, the tourism industry is set to benefit from incorporating AI systems in the determination of personalized recommendations, risk analysis, smart infrastructures,

and emergency measures, among others, in a way that delivers the principal reformation of convenience and sustainability. The up-surging maturity of AI not only enhances customer satisfaction and organizational effectiveness in the tourism sector but also sets higher standards for creation in the travel and hospitality sphere. In this chapter, we discuss how AI tools play a crucial role in tourism, highlighting the existing breakthroughs, challenges, or trends experienced by the industry transforming into the one that had welcomed the period of Generation AI.

1.1 Future trends and innovations

Even beyond, the possibilities of applying AI in tourism are expected to open up even more in the future. Technology predicts innovations like the incorporation of AI technologies like Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) are likely to encourage unique travel experiences by creating curiosity to visit natural destinations, providing potential tourists with a chance to "experience" their preferred traveling areas before they even decide to travel.

AI-based predictive analytics predict factors such as pandemics or climate change. This will allow the creation of more accurate travel forecasts that will allow businesses to respond to new tendencies. AI will also be instrumental in improving the safety and security of travelers. Superior and complex AI systems are capable of estimating and averting threats that range from natural disasters to security threats and contribute to making travel safer. Also, self-driven platforms will persist in making traveling easy and stress-free since planning and executing a trip do not require extensive effort as in the past.

2. Objective

This chapter aims to investigate and assess the transformative influence of AI tools on the tourism sector. It seeks to analyze how AI technologies, encompassing advanced AI (Gen AI), are reshaping various facets of tourism, ranging from augmenting customer experiences and operational efficiencies to advocating for sustainable practices and addressing ethical considerations. Tailored recommendations, prognostic analytics, and intelligent infrastructure, endeavor to offer insights into AI transformation of the tourism domain, catalyzing innovation, and establishing novel benchmarks for service provision and industry advancement. Moreover, it deliberates on the obstacles and possibilities linked with the integration of AI in tourism and predicts forthcoming trends in which AI continues to play a pivotal part in revolutionizing the traveler experience on a global scale.

3. Background of study

The application of AI, specifically in the tourism industry, has already been a popular subject of research; the focus has recently been on publishing such changes across multiple spheres of the tourism sector. AI is instrumental in servicing, facilitating processes, and increasing sales to improve the competitiveness of business organizations in the tourism sector.

AI offers several benefits, but its adoption in tourism also presents challenges and ethical concerns. Data privacy remains a critical issue as AI systems rely heavily on

personal data to function effectively. The potential for bias in AI algorithms could lead to unequal treatment of tourists based on race, nationality, or socioeconomic status. Additionally, the rapid deployment of AI may result in job displacement within the tourism industry, particularly in roles traditionally reliant on human interaction, such as customer service and tour guiding [1, 2].

As the tourism industry continues to embrace AI, it is essential to address these challenges through responsible AI development and implementation. This includes ensuring transparency in AI-driven decisions, protecting user data, and providing retraining opportunities for workers affected by automation. By doing so, the industry can maximize the benefits of AI while minimizing its potential downsides.

AI applications in improving customer experience in tourism have been an area of research interest. Buhalis et al. [3] focused on how personalized recommender chatbots and virtual assistants, by applying AI needs, are filled with these tools because they employ natural language processing and machine learning to facilitate recommendation and satisfaction. As Tussyadiah argued the role of AI in delivering contextual and personalized real-time services in an enhanced travel experience [4].

Operational efficiency and AI are other necessary research focal areas, and they are the effects of AI on productivity improvements within the field of tourism. Also apply that using artificial intelligence in areas like bookings, check-ins, customer relations, and so on has significantly eliminated human error and costs. They also found that using AI in scheduling, maintenance inventory, and demand forecasting has also been seen to enhance resource utilization and over-efficiency. These efficiencies are especially seen when an enhanced technological innovation such that AI is widespread [5].

Some works show the role of AI in increasing revenues in the tourism industry. According to Huang and Rust, AI and other related technologies such as big data support dynamic selling prices and targeted promotional approaches, which are central to revenue generation in the hospitality business [6]. It also helps companies to find new business opportunities and adjust price strategies due to the targeted analysis of data. There is a notable increase in revenue growth which is furthermore eminent in areas such as North America and Asia-Pacific owing to a higher uptake of AI resulting from improved investment in technologies and innovation [7].

Safety of the public, especially within the tourism industry and particularly in areas of great human traffic like tourist attractions, airports, and other terminals and transportation means, cannot be overemphasized. AI-supported object detection in these environments requires a structured approach to improve safety [8]. AI-based technologies can easily track data feed in real-time; they can detect any insecurity threats, crowd management, and emergencies and address them on time. Using those advanced object detection systems, the tourism industry can assure the tourists of safety, hence allowing them to form the required level of trust. This not only safeguards the clients and employees but also enriches the appeal of the destination; safety is a vital aspect that makes global travelers trust a destination [9, 10].

Regional differences persist despite the increasing presence of AI applications in various countries, especially in the tourism industry. According to Mariani et al. [11], European countries and the Americas lead in AI implementation due to superior infrastructure and the availability of AI expertise. In contrast, regions like Latin America and Africa face limitations related to technology and resources, hindering the full utilization of AI potential. The varying regional challenges emphasize the need for a tailored, region-specific approach to AI adoption, as different regions encounter distinct issues in implementing AI solutions.

Ethical considerations, challenges, and barriers to using AI in the tourism sector. Some of the issues raised by Murphy et al. [12] include Data privacy and protection, controversy around the use of algorithms, and loss of employment because of automation. These ethical issues create a need to provide guidelines and policies regarding the use of AI in the tourism sector to avoid compromising innovations regarding the rights of individuals and the general society [13].

This background study provides a comprehensive overview of the current research on the impact of AI tools in the tourism industry. It focuses on enhancing customer experience, improving operational efficiency, driving revenue growth, and addressing regional disparities and ethical considerations.

4. Transformative AI technologies in the tourism sector

Tourism industries by applying NLP, ML, and CV, improve significantly innovative solutions within the tourism environment. AI-based chatbots and other related products help to improve customer support and offer the opportunity to book a room, plan a trip, and receive all the necessary information immediately. AI and ML tools process large sets of data to provide customized trips and touring plans, destinations, and a selection of hotels, and attractions, based on customers' preferences and previous behavior. CV on the other hand improves the security and operations in airports and other access points through facial recognition and better luggage recognition systems. AI in tourism also helps manage secure destinations. AI can predict tourist' flow, organize people's movement in crowded places, and distribute available resources more effectively. This enhances the visitors' experience while also helping in the sustainable exploitation of the physical resources used in tourism [14].

The tourism sector is on the verge of a significant shift, driven by the incorporation of AI tools that reshape how individuals plan, enjoy, and recollect their travels. Previously limited to speculative fiction, AI has swiftly evolved into a fundamental element of contemporary tourism, providing functionalities beyond traditional mechanization. Extending from individualized suggestions and instant language translation to prognostic analytics and immersive encounters via augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), AI technologies are transforming every aspect of the travel journey [15].

In a globally connected society, where travelers desire smooth and tailored experiences. AI emerges as a stimulant for creativity, productivity, and client contentment in the tourism industry. Using extensive data and sophisticated algorithms, AI empowers travel enterprises to predict client preferences, customize recommendations, and enhance operational procedures. This not only enriches the level of service but also cultivates more vital involvement and allegiance among travelers.

In the tourism industry, AI plays major roles in areas such as customer service support, personalization recommendation systems, predictive analysis and pricing, operational efficiency, enhanced experience, and safety and security.

Figure 1 presents a spectrum of AI tools and technologies most appropriate for revolutionizing the tourism industry. Several tools are grouped under six major categories: Customer service and support, predictive analytics and pricing, enhanced experience, personalization and recommendation system, operational efficiency smartness, safety, and security. Below is a detailed explanation of each category and the specific AI tools included within them.

Figure 1.
AI tools in the tourism industry.

4.1 Customer service and support

AI chatbots and assistants: Chatbots and virtual assistants are some of the early AI applications widely seen in the tourism sector for real-time customer service. These tools can be used to cover the service offering spectrum from taking reservations to providing travel information, hence giving better response time and high customer satisfaction.

Natural language processing (NLP): NLP is the technology behind chatbots and other artificial intelligence that interact with humans and understand and respond to natural languages. In tourism, it makes the interaction between customers and the service providers possible in multiple languages which makes it easier for the customers to get the services they need [16].

Voice recognition: Articulate voice recognition allows travelers to communicate with AI systems through voice. This is especially useful when using hands to interact with the gadget is cumbersome, for example, when driving or moving around in an airport.

4.2 Personalization and recommendation system

Personalized recommendations: AI-operated recommendation-providing techniques investigate customers' demographic and behavioral patterns, such as habits, preferences, and age, among other factors, to recommend travel itineraries. This could include suggesting the exact places to visit, the hotels to book, places to dine, or places of interest the traveler may be interested in.

Behavioral analysis: AI features the prognosis of the customer's behavior, depending on the tendencies of similar actions and preferences. Tourism businesses can become more relevant in services and promotions. AI also goes a long way in improving a customer's satisfaction level, which in return increases the possibility of coming back for more.

4.3 Predictive analytics and pricing

Revenue management: AI provides tourism businesses with a method of efficiently increasing revenues through demand analysis and price alteration. This helps a business entity record high revenues during busy periods while allowing it to undercut its competitors during lean periods.

Demand forecasting: AI-driven predictive models can estimate future demand for travel services, including flights, hotels, and tours. They have the advantage of allowing businesses to foresee better what the market will require and plan accordingly to meet these demands without straining their limits.

Dynamic pricing: A dynamic pricing approach involves changing the prices of travel services by factors such as demand, price of similar services by competitors, and market prices. This enables business enterprises to operate and generate revenues in a competitive manner [17].

4.4 Operational efficiency

Smart infrastructure: AI is applied to construct smart tourism technologies, such as smart airports, hotels, and transportation. Such infrastructures employ AI to drive different processes, including energy efficiency and passenger traffic, and bring down the general costs of their operations.

Figure 2 represents the transformative role of AI in the tourism industry, where technology seamlessly integrates with traditional travel elements. It showcases a futuristic travel scene with tourists interacting with AI-driven tools, such as personalized travel itineraries, smart booking systems, and AI-enhanced customer service. Famous global landmarks are depicted in the background, symbolizing the worldwide impact of AI on tourism.

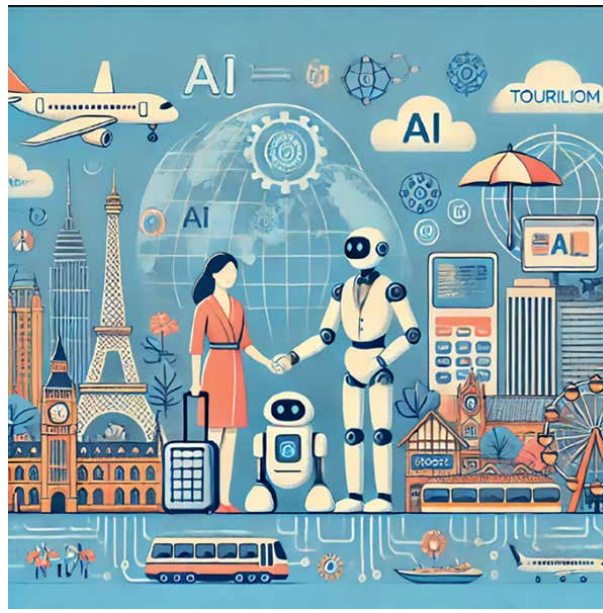

Figure 2.
The transformative role of AI in the tourism industry.

Resource optimization: These tools assist the tourism business in managing the resources effectively, including human resources, inventory, and energy. This makes them more sustainable and can, in turn, mean significant cost cuts [16].

Logistics and transportation: AI manages logistics and transport for tourists within the tourism sector by determining the best routes, traffic flow, and transport infrastructure. This reduces hitches in customers' travel experiences, making them smoother and more frequent.

4.5 Enhanced experience

Augmented reality (AR) and Virtual reality (VR): AR and VR will change the perception of traveling as people cease visiting places physically soon. The former can let potential tourists "preview" a destination before arriving. At the same time, the latter can provide a richer experience for tourists at the actual location by adding a virtual layer to reality, including an informative or directional one.

Location-based services: Since they are controlled by artificial intelligence, location-based services offer the user information based on his/her current location. This could include suggestions such as places of interest, eateries, or how to get around within that area or even within the country in general, thus enhancing the travel experience [3].

Language translation: Machine translation technologies eliminate language barriers by providing real-time translators. This is especially useful in tourism, as tourists are often in a country where they do not understand the language spoken.

4.6 Safety and security

Fraud detection: AI systems' anti-fraud option encompasses the identification of fraudulent opportunities in the distribution of tourism, the booking process, and payment transactions. These systems, through pattern and anomaly analysis, can prevent or minimize risks before they occur.

Crisis management: Thus, technologies like AI are used in managing crises, such as disasters or acts of terror. In this way, using AI, authorities and businesses can make real-time decisions to counter threats, thus providing for the security of the traveling public [18].

Biometric identification: Facial recognition and fingerprint scanning, among other biometric technologies, have begun to feature in tourism as extra security measures or as methods of simplifying processes. For example, a procedure, such as biometric identification, is beneficial and can increase authorized access to airport check-ins and control over border crossing [19].

Figure 1 encapsulates the wide-reaching impact of AI on the tourism industry, highlighting how these technologies enhance efficiency, personalize experiences, and improve safety. Each of these AI tools plays a crucial role in shaping the future of tourism, making it more responsive, secure, and attuned to the needs and preferences of modern travelers.

5. The global trend of AI technology used tourism

Table 1 illustrates how different countries use AI technologies to boost their tourism industries, highlighting various ways AI is applied and its impact in

Country	Applications	Key AI Technologies	Impact
Japan	• Robotic hotel staff • AI concierge services	• Natural language processing (NLP) • Robotics	• Enhanced visitor experience • Operational efficiency
Singapore	• Smart tourism analytics • Virtual tour guides	• Predictive analytics • AI chatbots	• Personalized experiences • Data-driven decision making
UAE	• AI in customer service – Smart infrastructure	• AI chatbots • Computer vision	• Improved visitor information access • Efficient crowd management
Spain	• Smart destinations • Personalized itineraries	• AI for traffic and crowd management • Recommendation engines	• Enhanced visitor management • Personalized travel plans
United States	• AI in Booking band customer service • AI in travel planning	• Machine learning • AI chatbots	• Optimized booking processes • Personalized recommendations
Australia	• AI in wildlife tourism • Smart tourism platforms	• AI for wildlife monitoring • Predictive analytics	• Enhanced wildlife experiences • Data-driven tourism insights
China	• AI in tourist management • AI-Powered Translation	• AI for traffic and crowd management • Natural language processing (NLP)	• Efficient tourist management • Improved communication
France	• AI for cultural heritage – AI in tourism marketing	• Virtual reality (VR) and AI • Predictive analytics	• Enhanced cultural experiences • Targeted marketing
New Zealand	• AI in tourism information • Sustainable tourism	• AI chatbots • Environmental monitoring AI	• Improved visitor support • Sustainable tourism practices
Italy	• AI in heritage preservation • Smart tourism apps	• AI for digital preservation • Recommendation engines	• Cultural preservation • Enhanced tourist experiences

Table 1.
AI technologies to boost their tourism industries, highlighting the various ways in different countries.

different areas. For example, Japan has incorporated AI into its hospitality sector through robotic hotel staff and AI concierge services. By utilizing Natural Language Processing (NLP) and robotics, they aim to enhance visitor experiences and streamline operations. Conversely, Singapore focuses on intelligent tourism analytics and virtual tour guides leveraging predictive analytics and AI chatbots to deliver personalized experiences and data-driven insights. In the UAE, AI is utilized for customer service and smart infrastructure with AI chatbots and computer vision technology, improving visitor information access and crowd management. Spain's smart destinations and customized itineraries rely on AI for traffic, crowd management, and recommendation engines to better organize visitors and tailor travel plans.

In the United States, machine learning and AI chatbots are utilized in booking and customer service to streamline processes and offer tailored suggestions. Australia employs AI technology in wildlife tourism through platforms that enrich wildlife

encounters and provide insights for wildlife monitoring and forecasting. In China, AI plays a role in managing tourists, translating languages, enhancing traffic control, and facilitating communication using natural language processing (NLP). France incorporates AI into heritage preservation and tourism promotion using reality (VR) and predictive analytics to enrich cultural experiences and refine marketing strategies. New Zealand prioritizes tourism by employing AI chatbots and environmental monitoring to enhance visitor support and encourage sustainable practices. Italy harnesses AI for safeguarding heritage and developing tourism applications utilizing preservation methods and recommendation systems to protect the cultural legacy and enrich tourist experiences [20, 21].

These instances show how AI can revolutionize the tourism industry. Nevertheless, the true benefits of AI will be unlocked when all nations embrace these advancements. With the adoption of AI, countries can enhance their tourism sectors by providing tailored, streamlined, and eco-friendly travel experiences. This shift boosts growth and creativity within the global tourism sector.

Figure 3 depicts the percentage of businesses adopting AI in the tourism industry from 2015 to 2023. The trend line indicates a steady increase in AI adoption over the years, with a significant increment between 2019 and 2020. The data suggests that AI adoption in the tourism sector is growing rapidly, with more businesses implementing AI-powered solutions to improve efficiency, enhance customer experiences, and gain a competitive advantage. This trend is likely to continue in the future as AI technology becomes more advanced and affordable.

Figure 4 shows that the global tourism industry is increasingly adopting AI tools to enhance customer experience and improve operational efficiency. AI chatbots and virtual assistants, widely used in countries like the United States, China, and Japan, provide 24/7 customer service and personalized recommendations. Personalization engines and predictive analytics help businesses optimize pricing and tailor travel experiences, with significant adoption in countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. AI-powered technologies, such as facial recognition, robotics, and voice assistants, are transforming the way travelers interact with services, particularly in airports and hotels across countries like Japan, China, and Singapore.

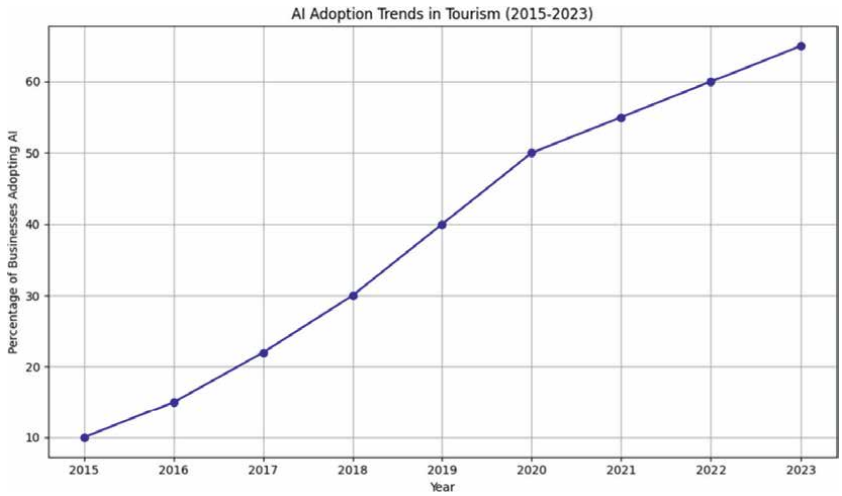

Figure 3.
AI adoption trends in tourism over time.

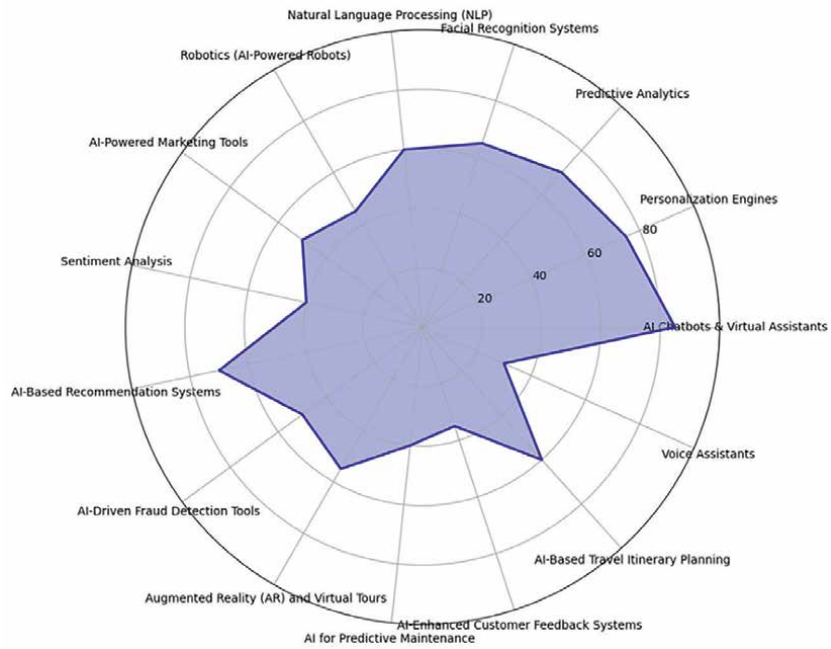

Figure 4.
Global adoption rate of AI tools or technologies in the tourism industry.

Additionally, AI tools are enhancing marketing efforts, detecting fraud, and improving customer feedback analysis, making the tourism industry more efficient and customer-centric globally.

5.1 Case studies of real-world AI technology experiences

5.1.1 Study 01: Henn na Hotel in Japan - A hotel managed by robots

Location: Nagasaki, Japan.
AI technology used: Robotics and Natural Language Processing (NLP).
Impact: The Henn na Hotel, famously called the Strange Hotel, is recognized as the world's first robot-staffed hotel. At the reception, AI-powered humanoid robots greet guests in various languages through NLP technology. Moreover, robot concierges lend a hand with luggage and share insights on nearby attractions. This groundbreaking strategy has cut expenses and delivered an extraordinary and forward-looking experience for visitors.

5.1.2 Study 02: Singapore tourism board - Smart tourism analytics

Location: Singapore.
AI technology used: Predictive Analysis and Chatbot Technology.
Impact: The Singapore Tourism Board has introduced intelligent tourism analytics powered by AI to gain insights into visitor behavior and preferences. By analyzing data from sources like media, transaction records, and travel patterns, the STB can design marketing campaigns and optimize resource allocation. AI chatbots offer information and personalized suggestions to tourists, enriching their overall experience.

5.1.3 Study 03: UAE's smart infrastructure - AI-powered crowd management

Location: Dubai, UAE.
AI technology used: Computer Vision, Chatbot Technology.
Impact: Dubai has incorporated artificial intelligence into its advanced infrastructure, especially for crowd control at major events like Expo 2020. AI cameras and sensors monitor crowd density and movement, allowing officials to manage and redirect crowds effectively to prevent overcrowding. Additionally, AI chatbots assist tourists with directions, event details, and other queries, enhancing the overall visitor experience while prioritizing safety.

6. AI's role in sustainable tourism

AI significantly contributes to sustainable tourism by improving resource management, minimizing environmental impacts, and enriching the experiences of tourists and local communities. Here are some highly applicable methods in which AI is supporting sustainable tourism efforts.

6.1 Optimizing resource management

Visitor Management through Predictive Analytics AI-powered predictive analytics assists tourism boards and organizations forecast visitor numbers and trends. This enhances crowd control, minimizes pressure on natural resources, and lessens the environmental impact at popular tourist spots. For example, by anticipating times, authorities can implement measures such as visitor limits or scheduled entry to safeguard delicate ecosystems.

Energy and Water Conservation AI technologies can streamline energy and water consumption in hotels, resorts, and other tourism-related establishments. Intelligent sensors and AI algorithms adjust heating, cooling, and lighting systems based on occupancy, leading to significant reductions in energy usage. Likewise, AI can oversee and control water consumption, ensuring that resources are utilized efficiently and sustainably [22].

6.2 Reducing carbon footprint

Travel Planning with Twist AI tools assists globetrotters in making choices by recommending transportation options, green lodgings, and sustainable activities. For instance, AI can suggest taking a train instead of a flight for journeys or point out hotels that have received eco-friendly certifications. Sustainability Through Pricing, AI can implement pricing strategies that promote travel during times, reducing the environmental impact during peak tourist seasons. By encouraging trips during periods, AI helps spread out tourist traffic more evenly throughout the year, easing the burden on local ecosystems.

6.3 Enhancing conservation efforts

Wildlife Conservation and Protection AI contributes to conservation efforts by monitoring wildlife populations, tracking endangered species, and deterring poaching activities. For example, AI-equipped drones and camera traps can autonomously

recognize and monitor animals in their natural environments. This provides valuable insights for conservationists while minimizing human interference.

Efficient Waste Management AI technologies are utilized in tourist hotspots to streamline waste collection and recycling procedures. By forecasting waste generation trends and pinpointing areas with littering issues, AI assists local authorities in managing waste more efficiently. This helps reduce pollution and fosters cleaner surroundings.

Celebrating Culture and Community Engagement Tailored Experiences with a Local Flavor AI-powered platform can create travel experiences that showcase local culture, traditions, and eco-friendly practices. This not only enhances the experience for tourists but also benefits local businesses and communities by promoting heritage tourism [23].

Supporting Community Empowerment Through AI Technology can offer training and resources to empower local communities to engage more actively in the tourism sector. For instance, AI-driven language translation applications can assist local craftsmen, tour guides, and service providers by communicating with tourists, creating avenues for economic growth while maintaining cultural integrity.

The heatmap visualization **Figure 5** provides a clear depiction of the varying effectiveness of AI tools across different regions, focusing on three key metrics: It transcends over Customer Satisfaction Improvement, Operational Efficiency, and Revenue growth. North America, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, and Africa are the regions of concern in this study. More notably, the Asia-Pacific region has been revealed to have the highest perceived increase despite having the base point of measurement in a slightly higher zone, with customer satisfaction advancing by 18%, operational efficiency by 12%, and revenue growth by 10%. This shows that AI tools make a massive difference in improving the user experience, optimizing business processes, and improving financial outcomes in this part of the world. North America

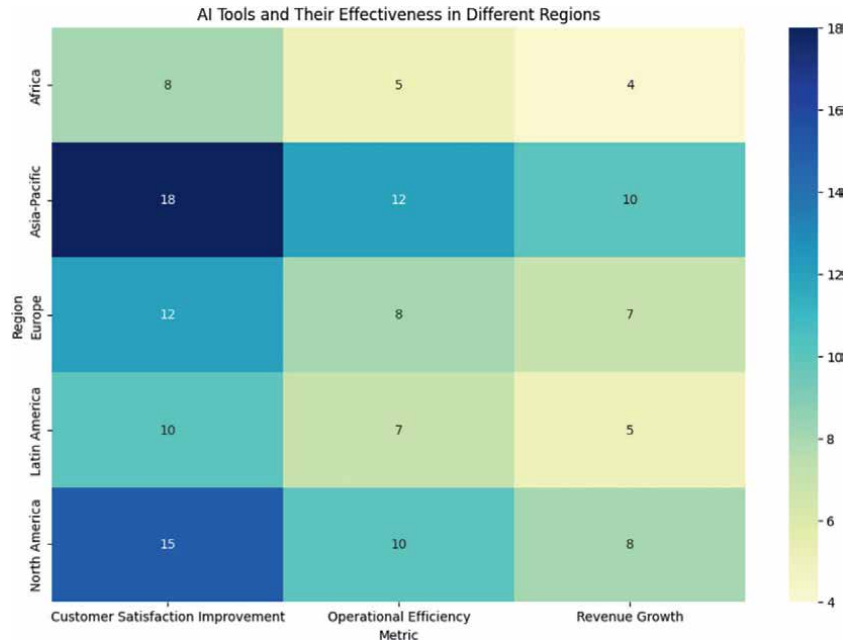

Figure 5.
Effectiveness of AI tools across different regions.

takes second place and demonstrates the growth of customer satisfaction by 15%, operational efficiency by 10%, and revenues by 8% because the region has long been closely connected with artificial intelligence technologies. As for the metrics depicted, Europe reveals slightly better gains: 12% associated with the customer satisfaction rate, 8% with operational effectiveness, and 7% concerned with revenue increase. Although utilizing the functionality of the AI tools, Latin America and Africa have a lower level of enhancement, especially for revenue growth, which at 5 and 4%, respectively, has the lowest increment. This implies that, as much as the application of AI tools is universal, their effectiveness differs depending on factors such as infrastructure, investment, or availability of skilled manpower. In summary, therefore, while the use of AI remains a strategic avenue of the growth of the tourism sector by enhancing customer experience, increasing efficiency, and revenue growth, this chapter underscores the need to customize AI solutions by region to which they will apply.

6.4 Challenges in AI integration

Intelligence (AI) in the travel sector brings advantages and challenges that must be tackled to unlock its true potential. These challenges encompass aspects such as ethics and operations. Addressing these issues is essential for successfully implementing AI in the tourism industry.

6.4.1 Data privacy and security

Concerns about Data Privacy AI systems heavily depend on vast amounts of data, including personal details like travel preferences, financial information, and behavioral patterns. Gathering, storing, and handling this data pose significant privacy issues. Safeguarding personal information from access breaches and misuse presents a challenge for tourism operators utilizing AI technologies.

Adhering to Regulations With diverse data protection laws in various countries, such as GDPR in Europe, tourism companies must navigate the challenge of complying with multiple legal frameworks. This can complicate integrating AI systems, particularly when catering to travelers.

6.4.2 Bias and fairness

Bias in Algorithms AI algorithms learn from data that may have biases based on factors such as race, gender, nationality, or social status. If these biases are not managed, they can be reinforced or even worsened in AI systems, affecting the treatment of certain groups of travelers. For instance, biased algorithms might lead to pricing or personalized suggestions that favor specific demographics.

Ethical Considerations The ethical use of AI in the industry is becoming increasingly important. It is crucial to ensure that AI systems are transparent and accountable without harming users or stakeholders. Tackling these ethical issues necessitates careful thought regarding the design implementation and oversight of AI technologies.

6.4.3 Job displacement

Effect on Jobs The use of automation to handle tasks usually done by people like customer service, booking management, and even tour guiding poses a risk to job

opportunities in the tourism sector. With advancements in AI systems, there is a potential for significant job cuts, especially in positions that involve routine and repetitive duties.

Skills Development and Workforce Shift To lessen AI's impact on jobs, it is crucial to have upskilling initiatives that assist employees in moving toward new roles that necessitate creativity, emotional intelligence, and advanced problem-solving abilities. However, executing such initiatives simultaneously presents challenges and calls for collaboration among governments, educational institutions, and industry stakeholders.

6.4.4 Technical challenges

Ensuring Data Quality and Accessibility AI systems rely on data to operate effectively. In the travel sector, data can be scattered, incomplete, or outdated, posing challenges in training precise and dependable AI models. Maintaining the availability and accuracy of data presents a hurdle for smaller tourism businesses that may not have the means to gather and manage extensive datasets.

Integration and Compatibility The tourism sector encompasses a variety of systems and platforms, such as booking engines, customer relationship management (CRM) systems, and social media and mobile applications. Integrating AI solutions across these diverse systems can be technically challenging and expensive, particularly for organizations with legacy systems.

6.4.5 Cost and investment

Initial expenses: Implementing AI solutions usually entails a substantial upfront cost for technology, infrastructure, and expertise. This can pose a challenge for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the tourism industry as these expenses may hinder their ability to embrace AI and compete with larger companies that have more resources. Uncertainty Regarding Return on Investment (ROI) Although AI holds promise in delivering value, its return on investment (ROI) can be unpredictable, especially during the initial stages of adoption. Tourism businesses might be reluctant to allocate funds toward AI without compelling evidence showcasing its long-term advantages, particularly in an industry susceptible to external influences such as economic recessions or global pandemics.

6.4.6 Ethical and cultural sensitivity

Cultural Nuances AI systems aimed at an audience may not always take into account the nuances of different cultures in terms of preferences, behaviors, and expectations. This oversight can result in misunderstandings or dissatisfaction among tourists from diverse backgrounds. Creating AI solutions that are sensitive to cultural differences and adaptable to various contexts poses a significant challenge.

Ethical Considerations in AI Decision-Making With AI's increasing involvement in decision-making processes, there is a concern that choices could be made without considering the broader ethical implications. For instance, AI-driven pricing strategies might lead to discrimination against certain groups of travelers. Ensuring the ethical use of AI systems necessitates continuous monitoring and a commitment to fairness and inclusiveness.

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.1007343

6.4.7 Public perception and trust

Skepticism Toward AI While AI holds promise for various advantages, the public remains skeptical and distrustful of it. Concerns regarding privacy, job displacement, and the opaque nature of AI decision-making processes contribute to this lack of trust. Fulfilling confidence in AI transparency is essential, along with clear communication about the functioning of AI systems and showcasing the tangible benefits of AI for both consumers and businesses.

Resistance to change the tourism sector, like other industries, may encounter resistance to adopting new approaches either from within the organization or from customers who are accustomed to traditional service delivery methods. Overcoming this reluctance requires technological solutions and effective management strategies that engage stakeholders at all levels.

7. Conclusions

Integrating AI tools within the tourism industry marks a significant shift toward a more personalized, efficient, and secure travel experience. AI technologies have already begun to redefine how travelers interact with destinations, from booking and planning to real-time support and on-the-ground experiences. As AI continues to evolve, its applications in predictive analytics, resource optimization, and safety will further enhance the tourism sector's ability to meet the demands of modern travelers while promoting sustainability. However, the adoption of AI is not without challenges. Addressing ethical concerns, ensuring data privacy, and mitigating potential biases are critical to harnessing AI's potential in tourism. By embracing responsible AI development and implementation, the industry can achieve a balance between innovation and ethical considerations, paving the way for a future where AI not only enhances the travel experience but also contributes to a more sustainable and inclusive global tourism landscape.

Author details

Kanagasabai Thiruthanigesan[1*], Aravinth Thevarajan Swampillai[2] and Nagalingam Nagendrakumar[2]

1 Faculty of Computing, Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (SLIIT) Northern Uni, Jaffna, Sri Lanka

2 Faculty of Business, Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (SLIIT) Northern Uni, Jaffna, Sri Lanka

*Address all correspondence to: thiruthanigesan.k@sliit.lk

References

[1] Nagendrakumar N, Alwis KNN, Eshani UAK, Kaushalya SBU. The impact of sustainability practices on the going concern of the travel and tourism industry: Evidence from developed and developing countries. Sustainability (Switzerland). 2022;**14**(24):17046. DOI: 10.3390/su142417046

[2] Nagendrakumar N, Lokeshwara AA, Gunawardana SADCK, Kodikara UP, Rajapaksha RWNH, Rathnayake KRMCS. Modelling and forecasting tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka. SLIIT Business Review. 2021;**01**(02):95-120. DOI: 10.54389/GKED9337

[3] Buhalis D, Sinarta Y. Real-time co-creation and nowness service: Lessons from tourism and hospitality. Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing. 2019;**36**(5):563-582. DOI: 10.1080/10548408.2019.1592059

[4] Tussyadiah I. A review of research into automation in tourism: Launching the annals of tourism research curated collection on artificial intelligence and robotics in tourism. Annals of Tourism Research. 2020;**81**:102883. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2020.102883

[5] Xiang Z, Schwartz Z, Gerdes JH, Uysal M. What can big data and text analytics tell us about hotel guest experience and satisfaction? International Journal of Hospitality Management. 2015;**44**:120-130. DOI: 10.1016/j.ijhm.2014.10.013

[6] Huang MH, Rust RT. Artificial intelligence in service. Journal of Service Research. 2018;**21**(2):155-172. DOI: 10.1177/1094670517752459

[7] Huang A, Chao Y, de la Mora Velasco E, Bilgihan A, Wei W. When artificial intelligence meets the hospitality and tourism industry: An assessment framework to inform theory and management. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights. 2022;**5**(5):1080-1100. DOI: 10.1108/JHTI-01-2021-0021

[8] Thiruthanigesan K, Nawarathna RD, Ragel RG. Enhanced YOLOv4 for facilitating public safety management amidst protests and riots. In: 2023 IEEE 17th International Conference on Industrial and Information Systems, ICIIS 2023 – Proceedings. 2023. pp. 1-6. DOI: 10.1109/ICIIS58898.2023.10253556

[9] Thiruthanigesan K, Nawarathna RD, Ragel RG. Suspicious object detection in environments with tear gas. In: 2021 IEEE 16th International Conference on Industrial and Information Systems, ICIIS 2021 - Proceedings. 2021. pp. 185-190. DOI: 10.1109/ICIIS53135.2021.9660682

[10] Ragel R, Nawarathna R, Kanagasabai T. YSF Thematic Publication-2023. no. February. 2023

[11] Mariani M, Baggio R, Buhalis D, Hua N. Tourism management perspectives on artificial intelligence applications in the tourism industry. Tourism Management. 2019;**74**:123-134

[12] Murphy H, Gretzel U, Pesonen J. Privacy and data concerns in AI-powered tourism systems. Journal of Tourism Research. 2020;**32**(4):567-590

[13] Fuchs M, Sigala M. Strategic use of information technologies in tourism: A review and critique. In: Handbook of e-Tourism. Springer International Publishing; 2021. pp. 1-37. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-05324-6_67-1

[14] Thiruthanigesan K, Nawarathna RD, Ragel RG. A systematic approach for object detection in unconstrained environments. In: 2023 IEEE 17th International Conference on Industrial and Information Systems, ICIIS 2023 - Proceedings. 2023. pp. 215-220. DOI: 10.1109/ICIIS58898.2023.10253488

[15] Tong L, Yan W, Manta O. Artificial intelligence influences intelligent automation in tourism: A mediating role of internet of things and environmental, social, and governance investment. Frontiers in Environmental Science. 2022;**10**:853302. DOI: 10.3389/fenvs.2022.853302

[16] García-Madurga MÁ, Grilló-Méndez AJ. Artificial intelligence in the tourism industry: An overview of reviews. Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute (MDPI). 2023. DOI: 10.3390/admsci13080172

[17] Milton T. International Journal for Multidimensional Research Perspectives 1\Issue 2\2023 www.chandigarhphilosophers.com International Journal for Multidimensional Research Perspectives (IJMRP) (1) Artificial Intelligence in Tourism-A Review of Trends Opportunities and Challenges [Online]. Available from: www.chandigarhphilosophers.com

[18] Bulchand-Gidumal J. Impact of artificial intelligence in travel, tourism, and hospitality. In: Handbook of e-Tourism. Springer International Publishing; 2020. pp. 1-20. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-05324-6_110-1

[19] Kazak AN, Chetyrbok PV, Oleinikov NN. Artificial intelligence in the tourism sphere. In: IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science. Institute of Physics Publishing; 2020. DOI: 10.1088/1755-1315/421/4/042020

[20] Stroumpoulis A, Kopanaki E, Varelas S. Role of artificial intelligence and big data analytics in smart tourism: A resource-based view approach. In: WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment. WITPress; 2022. pp. 99-108. DOI: 10.2495/ST220091

[21] Bulchand-Gidumal J, William Secin E, O'Connor P, Buhalis D. Artificial intelligence's impact on hospitality and tourism marketing: Exploring key themes and addressing challenges. Current Issues in Tourism. 2024;**27**(14):2345-2362. DOI: 10.1080/13683500.2023.2229480

[22] Doborjeh Z, Hemmington N, Doborjeh M, Kasabov N. Artificial intelligence: A systematic review of methods and applications in hospitality and tourism. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management. 2022;**34**(3):1154-1176. DOI: 10.1108/IJCHM-06-2021-0767

[23] Samala N, Katkam BS, Bellamkonda RS, Rodriguez RV. Impact of AI and robotics in the tourism sector: A critical insight. Journal of Tourism Futures. 2022;**8**(1):73-87. DOI: 10.1108/JTF-07-2019-0065

Edited by Konstantinos Tomazos

Tourism in the 21st century has undergone a profound transformation. As mass tourism fades, modern travellers increasingly seek unique, meaningful experiences that resonate on a deeper, personal level. This book explores the rise of niche tourism—a dynamic, multifaceted phenomenon that rejects traditional "sun-sea-sand" offerings in favor of specialized travel experiences like ecotourism, heritage tourism, and spiritual journeys. It delves into the motivations driving today's tourists, who yearn for authenticity and self-discovery amidst the alienation of modern life. The book's first section examines tourism's complex impacts, offering insights into sustainable practices and the emergence of innovative niches. It highlights destinations and businesses' challenges, from economic pressures to balancing competing interests, while showcasing sustainable initiatives that redefine success in the tourism industry. In the second section, the focus shifts to the interplay between tourists and locals, introducing concepts like the "domestic zoo syndrome" and exploring how exoticism shapes both traveller perceptions and local empowerment. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork from Brazil and Fiji, it uncovers how informal tourism and creativity reshape cultural power dynamics and foster mutual growth. The final section tackles the disruptive effects of COVID-19 and climate change, analyzing their implications for tourism. To illustrate the role of management in times of crisis, this section presents a case study of dealing with change by examining the cruise tourism industry in the port of Ibiza. Finally, the third section explores the transformative role of technology, from AI and VR to mobile apps, which redefine travel experiences and raise ethical considerations. By investigating these trends, the book offers a glimpse into tourism's future, questioning whether technological advancements can enhance authenticity and personal connection. A must-read for students, professionals, and curious travellers alike, this book provides a glimpse at the evolving landscape of tourism and its main drivers in an increasingly complex world.

Usha Iyer-Raniga,
Sustainable Development Series Editor

ISSN 2753-6580
ISBN 978-1-83769-809-7

Published in London, UK

IntechOpen