

TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

A MODERN FUSION OF SECTORS



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Tourism and Hospitality Management - A Modern Fusion of Sectors

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PREFACE

There are a lot of exciting ideas for the travel and hospitality sector's future. Regardless of their size, players in the tourism industry are making significant progress in developing more inclusive, environmentally conscious, and egalitarian methods to travel the world. Recreation, leisure in five-star hotels, and luxury travel were all common in the classical world. However, things have changed since then, and a new type of tourism and hospitality has emerged where visitors actively and meaningfully engage with a country, city, or specific location by learning about its history, people, culture, cuisine, and environment. The theme of “Tourism and Hospitality Management: A Modern Fusion of Sectors” suggests that the book explores how the tourism and hospitality industries are converging and overlapping, leading to new business models and customer expectations. This edited book will provide a holistic understanding of the interconnections between the tourism and hospitality sectors, emphasizing how these two industries collaborate and complement each other in the modern business landscape and offer up-to-date insights into the latest trends, challenges, and opportunities in both the tourism and hospitality fields, showcasing how modern management practices address these dynamics. This book will also guide professionals and students in crafting effective management strategies that align with the evolving demands of the tourism and hospitality industries, taking into account technological advancements, changing consumer behaviors, and global market shifts.

There are many topics included in this edited book, including the relevance of fusion with 21st-century tourism perspective, i.e., new wine in the old bottle, new forms of tourism in the next-normal (post-covid era), use of various technologies like virtual reality and artificial intelligence in today's era and its impact on tourist experience, integrating tradition and innovation within tourism and hospitality experience, balancing growth and sustainability, India's expanding E-Tourism sector, developing the age of Smart Tourism and many more chapters.

This book is the meticulous effort of many minds from India, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Bangladesh, Malaysia, China, and Argentina. We would like to thank all the contributors for their hard work.

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CHAPTER 1

New Wine in Old Bottle: How Far Is It Relevant to the 21st Century Tourism Perspective?

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Abstract: In the post-1950s, the increasing tourist mobility en masse has become an indicator of economic success for most tourist destinations. The success caused the dramatic overgrowth of tourism. As a result, the perceived resource carrying capacity and guest-host experience degrade. The authentic or real-time socio-cultural experiences during the visit were, by and large, missing. Environment-friendly tourism activities were not evident. Thus, a severe inconvenience to live in or visit a destination occurred. It became a serious concern to both the hosts and tourists. The overgrowth of tourism, known as the overtourism phenomenon, and its effects contradicted. Contradiction champions the need for new wine, *i.e.*, niche forms, to counter the mass mobility and overtourism phenomenon. New forms emerge with a focus on the environmental accountability of tourism. They become known by various terms. The world then came to know about Adventure tourism, Agro-tourism, Farm tourism, Rural tourism, Cultural tourism, Doom tourism, Border tourism, Experiential tourism, War tourism, Accessible tourism, Dark Tourism, and more. They are diverse in understanding and different in the contents emphasized by the modifiers of the terms, but identical in their goals, ideological preoccupations, values, and agendas.

The present chapter will deal with the rationale of the origin and growth of new forms of tourism since they set the story of redefining tourism business ecology and market dynamics. It will also focus on how those forms are pragmatic to the neo-technological and new-touristic demand perspective.

Keywords: Contradiction, Fusion, Mass tourism, Narrative, Niche tourism, Synthesis.

INTRODUCTION

Leisure and recreation-based travel was predominantly a venture of the wealthy class in the preindustrial epoch. It was either a pilgrimage or a wellness tour. The industrial society featured the mobility of capital and labour for the market. The emerging neo-riches of the industrial society preferred recreation-linked tours in

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nature or knowledge-seeking tours at cultural marvels at the behest of tour companies. The post-industrial society features the rise of the service economy. The high mobility of new capital, ventures, and people for leisure and recreation stands as the marked feature of this society (Ray, 2021a). The movement of the capital and people multiplied faster, making leisure-recreation-linked tourism a global culture. Post-1950, mobility drove tourism to grow at a massive scale, acclimating tourism contents such as space, inhabitants, culture, and nature to the needs and progress of the contemporary market and economy (Ray, 2017b). Hence, the mass consumerism syndrome has emerged in the name of 'mass tourism'. It attempts to commoditise all types of tourism content and quantifies tourist consumption with frequent swaps from authentic to pseudo experiences (Ray, 2017a).

In the late 20th century, disquiets arose within a significant section of the hosts and guests against mass tourism. The need for niche forms in the market as the alternative became the demand of the day. Niche forms set goals to counter mass tourism and its effects. The primary goal is to control tourists' arrival within a considerable limit (Ray, 2021b). Alternatives promote particularised gaze and limited edge guest-host interaction for the unique visitation experience. Thus, a shift from standard to special packages becomes crucial. The particularised gaze substitutes for the bubble gaze. The visits undertaken for particularised gaze-based unique experiences supersede the practice of mere visits for attractions. Alternative niche forms thereby attempt to minimise the cumulative effect of mass tourism.

With the Web revolution in the 21st century, the world enters the information age. A techno-cultural class comprising hundreds of millions across all edges of society, called netizens or digital literates, has emerged (Ray, 2021b). They create, upload, and share images and information about their visits in digital media. They perceive the destination in real-time while in the travel-related virtual interactions during and after the visitation. It takes place across time and boundaries. Indeed, nearly 70% of the social media content is of vacation and holiday tales. Those contents influence 50% of netizens in deciding on their vacation plans. (Kimberlee, 2015) The changes in tourist expectations, choices, perceptions of destination realities, and purchase decisions appear. It sets the story of disruption in tourism culture, business ecology, and market dynamics in motion. Neither bubble nor secluded settings of tourist gaze can cope with changes in progress. Hence, new forms require fresh brewing to redefine tourism culture and translate the changes into practice.

APPROACHES

Industry and academics assume that tourist mobility at a mass scale is the tourism success indicator. To them, it contributes toward an enormous makeover in the earnings from tourist spending at many destinations. (Greenwood, 1972; Boissevain, 1977; Dekadt, 1979; Loukissan, 1982; Sezgin & Yolal, 2012; Naumov & Green, 2016; Butcher, 2020) Comparatively, more studies focused on the ill impacts of mass tourism on the physical and socio-cultural environment (Perez, 1973; Cohen, 1978; Britton, 1983; McMinn, 1992; Singh, 1992). A defensive approach to minimize the ill impacts had appeared. The priority was to limit tourist footfall within the carrying capacity for sustainable growth (Rodenburg, 1980; Getz, 1983; Shelby & Heberlein, 1984; Krippendorf, 1992; McIntyre, 1993; Henry, 1996; Hawkins & Middleton, 1998; Price, 1999; Berrow, 2003; Bramwell, 2004; Kennell, 2016). Hence, the alternatives to mass tourism, not as a mere term but as a concept, have emerged (Holden, 1984; Cohen, 1987 & 1992; Butler, 1992; Singh, 1992; Price, 1992; Ray, 2004; Vainikka, 2013; Jovicic, 2014; Theng *et al.*, 2015). The most dramatic and logical extension to mass tourism is the rise of 'turismofobia' (Milano, 2017; Martin *et al.*, 2018; Martins, 2018) or Overtourism (Goodwin, 2017; Milano, 2017; Anuar *et al.*, 2019; Clancy, 2019; Cheung & Li, 2019; Dodds & Butler, 2019; Sæþórsdóttir & Hall, 2020; Żemła, 2020; Ray, 2021a & b; Sharma & Hassan, 2021; Tiwari *et al.*, 2021; Santos-Rojo *et al.*, 2023; Pechlaner *et al.*, 2024). Indeed, limited or mass-scale tourist mobility in a bubble or an isolated tourist setting, such as a ghetto (Krippendorf, 2002), encourages profit progression at interest groups' behest (Ray, 2021a & b). Hence, both ignore the authentic gaze at the visitation. As a counter-reaction, shifts from pseudo to authentic experience and delusion to reality perception commence (Ray, 2017a, 2021a). Mass tourism and its early alternatives slowly became extraneous. Thus, it prompts fresh brewing to redefine alternatives (Wearing, 2001; Karlsson, 2005; Lyons and Wearing, 2008; Sin, 2009; Urry & Larsen, 2011; Macek, 2012; Cheia, 2013; Ong *et al.*, 2014; Ray, 2021a & b).

METHOD

The chapter used the dialectic reasoning method. The study will open a dialogue between the narrative embedded within mass tourism and the counter-narrative that raises the need for alternatives. It further seeks to understand how far the emergence of freshly brewed and new rising counter alternatives in tourism business culture and market is pragmatic to the newly emerging digital world and tourist demand perspective.

CHAPTER 2

Dystopian or Narcissist (Selfish) Forms of Tourism? New Forms of Tourism in the Next Normal

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Abstract: The turn of the century has brought many global risks that have transformed radically the morphology of the tourist system. These risks include terrorism, climate change, and the devastating COVID-19 pandemic. The next normal was a term coined in this book chapter to denote the passage of the new normal to a state of normalization where the COVID-19 restrictions have been incorporated into daily life. Henceforth, the next normal evinces a radical shift in travel behavior. As discussed, COVID-19 not only accelerated an unparalleled crisis in the tourism industry but also aligned with the changes produced after the turn of the century. Traveling freely in a risky world facilitated the introduction of technologies that changed radically the morphology of tourism. The Apollonian sense of beauty, as well as the physical displacement, should be at the best revisited by scholars. To be honest, I do not know –paragraphing Gale- if tourism has gone extinct, but it was radically mutated into a new skin. In this book chapter, I have criticized the notion of dystopian dark tourism, offering a broader spectrum that includes other types of tourism as virtual tourism, last chance tourism, or even creative tourism. My model is based on five elements, which include the *ego factor*, *playful experience (impossible to share with others)*, *the co-presence-absence of the “Other”*-, *the ideological recovery of the past*, and *the voyeurism of resignation (adaptation)*.

Keywords: Dystopian dark tourism, Narcissism, Technology, Tourism crisis, Tourism’s forms.

INTRODUCTION

A *utopia* can be defined as an imaginary society, situated in science fiction or fantasy literature, where the elements share a landscape of perfection and harmony in the constellations of social relationships, laws, and conditions. Rather, a *dystopia* –going in the opposite- is seen as a place where mankind is dehumanized, precaritized, or simply forced to live fearful lives. Over recent

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years, some voices have called dark tourism a new dystopian form of tourism. These new tourism experiences are based on macabre or morbid forms of consumption, moved by psychological, individual, or social motivations (Podoshen, 2018; Podoshen *et al.* 2015). As Jeffrey Podoshen *et al.* (2018), dark tourism seems to operate in an increasingly violent world mainly marked by political violence and terrorist attacks. In that respect, this violent world is symbolically incorporated through different narratives fabricated and consumed in the media space. For the author, this type of consumption evinces not only a moral decline but also the rise of a dystopian (violent) world. This conception has invariably led many scholars to declare dark tourism as a dystopian form of tourism. I agree these new forms of tourism emerged after the turn of the century, but in this chapter, I explain why dark tourism (like post-disaster tourism) should not be defined as a dystopian form of tourism. Part of the argument is based on my publications and interrogation revolving around dark tourism consumption in recent decades. This confusion behooves scholars to believe that dark tourism is black or negative. I also argue that dark tourism is not very different from other emerging forms of tourism as creative or virtual tourism. For the sake of clarity, it is necessary to understand the evolution of tourism in history. At the least, I describe in this chapter the evolution of modern tourism from 1915 to date. Far from being a static entity, tourism has changed in time according to economic-social dynamics (like the technological breakthrough applied in transport means) and major events. At the same time, the recent COVID-19 pandemic has radically transformed the industry as well as our travel behavior.

The first and second sections of this book chapter contain a debate on the strengths and weaknesses of dystopian dark tourism in applied research. The section holds that the multifaceted nature of the tourist experience makes dystopian dark tourism very hard to measure –at least empirically. The third section offers a model based on the evolution of the tourism industry into three clear-cut stages: the classic stage, the sustainable stage, and the new forms of tourism, each one mainly influenced by major political events. Mass tourism is being recycled to decentralized forms of consumption based on the hegemony of sign and individualism. After the turn of the century, tourism coped with global risks with devastating consequences. Terrorism, as well as natural disasters –without mentioning the recent COVID-19 pandemic- has led tourism to a decentralized form where narcissism and selfish consumption prevail. This seems to be a common point of debate between new niches such as creative or virtual tourism (based on positive elements of engagement) and other morbid options like post-disaster or dark tourism. The last section is also entitled *What we do when we want* to denote the solipsist nature of tourism, where the host-guest relationship is mediated by digital technologies, virtual or augmented reality. In the chapter, the figure of Narcissism –at least as it was borrowed from Christopher Lash- is the

position of the “Other” is constructed or deconstructed according to what the tourist desires. The engagement with the “Other” is switched off or on according to a narcissistic character. In practical terms, the emerging new forms of tourism contain five elements which are discussed in the section: *ego factor, playful experience (impossible to share with others), the co-presence –the absence of the “Other”-, the ideological recovery of the past, and the voyeurism of resignation (adaptation)*.

DYSTOPIAN DARK TOURISM

Glenn Hooper & John Lennon’s seminal book *Dark Tourism* ignites a hot debate revolving around the epistemology of dark tourism. Authors look to find answers to what motivates dark tourists to be in contact with macabre spaces. As per their stance, dark tourism has received considerable attention from scholarly circles, but it paradoxically created fragmentary (patchy) knowledge regarding its nature. Many similar terms like dark tourism, Thana-tourism, mourning tourism, or grief tourism are studied according to separate fields and methodologies. The reversal seems to be true, there is no consensus to offer a unified definition of dark tourism to date (Hooper & Lennon, 2016). To fill this gap, an emerging set of scholars has argued that all new forms of morbid tourism (where death is widely commercialized) should be defined as sub-segments of dark tourism studies. This means that post-disaster or conflict tourism, or another form that certainly contains a morbid element, should be adjoined to dark tourism studies (Stone & Sharpley, 2008; Walter, 2009; Stone 2013); Hartmann 2014). Other academic group holds that dark and thana-tourism are interchangeable terms that may be very well applied in any context (Light, 2017; Verma & Jain, 2013; Korstanje 2016). Beyond any discrepancy, dark tourism alludes to the process of thanatosis, which suggests a reflective engagement with the “Other’s death” (Biran & Hyde, 2013; Raine 2013). Dark tourism has also received countless approaches based on core (divergent) conceptual elements such as emotions (Martini & Buda, 2020; Germann Molz & Buda, 2022), nostalgia (Tarlow 2007), heritage (Sather-Wagstaff, 2016) selfish behavior (Seraphin & Korstanje, 2021), neo-colonial politics (Tzanelli 2016), or even escapement (James, Cronin & Patterson, 2024) –only to name a few of them-. The efforts to homologize dark tourism into a coherent model have plausibly led some academicians to define dark tourism as a dystopian new form of tourism consumption. Having said that, dystopian dark tourism studies (or DDT) are centered on the rise of a new, more violent world where uncertainty about the future remains high. As a result of this, society sublimates this uncertainty into dark encounters with death, culturally enmeshed into dark aesthetics. Dark tourism is not only dystopian but also a combination of a morbid fascination for death with simulation. This happens simply because secularized societies are often faced with strange insecurity about death. At the

CHAPTER 3

**Robotic Technologies in Professional Kitchens:
Turkish Chefs' Evaluations****Nurhayat İflazoğlu^{1,*} and Ebru Kemer²**¹ *Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts, School of Tourism and Hotel Management, Hatay Mustafa Kemal University, Hatay, Turkey*² *Hotel Restaurant and Catering Services, Nigde Vocational School of Social Sciences, Nigde Omer Halisdemir University, Niğde, Turkey*

Abstract: The study is an investigation into the impact of robotic technologies in professional kitchens, with a particular focus on their potential to enhance workflows and increase productivity. The implementation of robotic systems can facilitate the optimization of kitchen operations, the automation of repetitive processes, and the enhancement of the chef's creativity and innovation. Notwithstanding the advent of new technologies, the significance of human craftsmanship and traditional cooking methods remains paramount in preserving distinctive flavors and textures in dishes. The findings are in accordance with existing literature on robotic technologies, underscoring the theoretical consistency and the necessity for substantial investment in maintenance. The implementation of automation in large-scale restaurant settings has the potential to reduce labor costs, enhance operational consistency, and facilitate remote monitoring and control of kitchen operations. The study recommends further investigation into the adoption of robotic technology in a variety of locations and contexts. Further studies should include an examination of the impact on service quality and customer satisfaction, as well as a detailed analysis of the costs, advantages, and disadvantages associated with robotic technologies.

Keywords: Chefs, Gastronomy, Professional kitchens, Robotic, Technology.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary society, there is a discernible trend of services offered in various domains, encompassing both public and private sectors, gravitating towards systems characterized by autonomous functionality. This phenomenon is not exclusive to the catering sector; it is a pervasive trend observable across multiple sectors. There has been a gradual substitution of human labor with electronic devices, and the utilisation of robotic equipment in culinary settings has witnessed

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a surge in conjunction with the advent of autonomous systems, intelligent applications, and artificial intelligence programs (Junge *et al.*, 2020). In this context, the catering sector is notable for its rapid adoption and integration of technological innovations.

The digital transformation of the hospitality industry has precipitated a series of radical innovations in the domain of food and beverage management. Despite the heterogeneity among these enterprises in terms of the services they offer, there is a common pursuit among them to enhance the creativity of their services, optimize their operational efficiency and effectiveness, personalize customer experiences, boost profits, optimize food utilization, and contribute to a more sustainable world (İflazoğlu and Can, 2022). For instance, augmented reality (AR) technology offers a multifaceted approach, providing customers with unique experiences, facilitating feedback collection, and assisting in the creation of food recipes using available ingredients and detailed process steps (Cankül *et al.*, 2018; Chițaniuc *et al.*, 2018). Smart kitchen technology has been shown to reduce food waste, create new and creative food recipes, regulate personal nutrition, extend the shelf life of food, and allow chefs to be more creative (Shukla and Ailawadi, 2019; Zoran *et al.*, 2021). The integration of artificial intelligence technology and robotic chefs/waiters has been demonstrated to enhance visitation intentions by stimulating customer curiosity, facilitate marketing by rendering the business more attractive, reduce costs, and increase customer satisfaction by reducing ordering and waiting times (Asif *et al.*, 2015; Kim *et al.*, 2020; Uzan and Sevimli, 2020). Three-dimensional (3D) printing technologies (Sun *et al.*, 2015; Yang *et al.*, 2017; Nachal *et al.*, 2019; Yıldız and Davutoğlu, 2020) have been shown to facilitate creative food presentation, provide an alternative production method to feed the growing population and appeal to consumer groups with special dietary requirements (gluten allergy, vegan, and vegetarian).

A review of the extant literature reveals a plethora of studies that establish a correlation between the food service sector and various technological advancements. The following studies are pertinent to the present discussion: Sun *et al.* (2015) conducted a study that explored the first generation of food printer concepts and applicable prototypes, which aimed to revolutionize customized food production using 3D printing. Angara *et al.* (2017) explored the Foodie Fooderson (Foodie) application, developed by IBM Watson, using artificial intelligence technology. Celik *et al.* (2018) examined an interactive cutting board named Choptop, and Mu *et al.* (2019) investigated the mechanics and control of blade movement in robotic cutting. Zhu and Chang (2020), Fusté (2021), and Xiao and Zhao (2022) investigated the effect of the anthropomorphism of robotic chefs on food quality through temperature, competence, and difficulty levels while cooking. Spence (2023) examined the psychological and financial

dimensions of robotics in catering. However, there are no studies that have examined chefs' evaluations and predictions of robotic technologies in professional kitchens. Consequently, it is hypothesized that this study will provide novel insights and establish a foundation for future research in this domain. The objective of this study is to assess chefs' perceptions of robotic technologies. It is further postulated that the adoption and utilization of robotic technologies in professional kitchens is influenced by the developmental stage and culinary traditions of nations. To this end, the present study is constrained to the perspectives of Turkish chefs.

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

In this study, the evaluation of robotic technologies by chefs is based on the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 2003). According to Berger (2005), innovation can be defined as anything new to an individual or organization. In this context, innovation can be stated as a new product, technology, perspective, or a new method or solution (Demir, 2006). Robotic technologies also bring innovations to today's world. Robotic systems are defined as the science of perceiving the physical world with computer-controlled mechanical devices and producing solutions (Thrun *et al.*, 2006). However, the integration of robotic systems with artificial intelligence endows them with the capacity for autonomous management, thereby expanding their capabilities to encompass systems that can direct human-like cognitive abilities. This integration enables the optimization of human potential and efficiency by leveraging all systems that interact with the Internet of Things in the task-planning process (Andreu-Perez *et al.*, 2017). Conversely, the concept of artificial intelligence is evolving, which will enable the control of these systems. The field of artificial intelligence analyzes the cognitive processes involved in human thought, learning, and decision-making when attempting to solve a problem and subsequently replicates these processes in intelligent software, thereby enabling the perception of its environment. Within this context, robotics is defined as the field concerned with the construction, design, and utilization of robots for the execution of tasks traditionally performed by humans (Varol, 2000).

In the context of catering, robotics is equipped with integrated sensors, optical cameras, and advanced artificial intelligence technologies to perform multiple tasks, thereby mimicking the actions and movements that chefs perform in real time. A variety of kitchen robots are now available on the market, depending on the type and level of assistance required in the cooking process. Robotic kitchen systems support artificial intelligence, thereby minimizing and eliminating human interaction in the cooking process. Consequently, the catering industry is increasingly adopting automation tools to reduce human error, enhance work

CHAPTER 4

The Modern Fusion of Hospitality and Social Media Marketing: Promoting Culinary Tourism in India

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Abstract: This study delves into the burgeoning domain of culinary tourism in India, renowned for its rich gastronomic heritage, and explores how the amalgamation of hospitality and social media marketing has fueled its remarkable growth. Examining the modern fusion of hospitality and the role of social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, this research elucidates how they amplify the promotion of India's culinary tourism through real-time engagement, user-generated content, and extensive promotional outreach. Hospitality establishments capitalize on visually captivating content, influencer collaborations, and interactive narratives to showcase India's culinary diversity. Social media influencers and food bloggers play pivotal roles, offering authentic content that resonates with global audiences and drives culinary tourism. The study underscores the profound impact of digital marketing on the hospitality sector, emphasizing the necessity for a cohesive approach to promoting culinary tourism. The symbiosis between hospitality services and social media not only enhances attractiveness but also catalyzes economic growth and fosters cultural exchange. By highlighting the transformative influence of social media on India's culinary tourism landscape, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the intricate dynamics between digital marketing, hospitality, and cultural exploration. It accentuates the indispensability of embracing digital innovation for the sustained advancement and enrichment of culinary tourism in India.

Keywords: Culinary, Digitalization, Food tourism, Social media, Tourism, Tourism marketing.

INTRODUCTION

The rise of culinary tourism in India has become a powerful force in promoting the country's rich gastronomic heritage, and this trend is increasingly intertwined

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with advancements in digital marketing, particularly through social media platforms. Culinary tourism, which involves travelers seeking authentic and unique culinary experiences, has seen a remarkable surge globally, and India, with its vast diversity in food culture, is one of the top destinations benefiting from this trend (Verma & Sharma, 2024). This paper delves into how the fusion of hospitality services with modern social media marketing techniques has not only catalyzed the growth of culinary tourism in India but also revolutionized the way local cuisines are promoted and consumed by both domestic and international tourists.

Evolution of Culinary Tourism in India

India's culinary heritage is an amalgamation of centuries-old traditions, regional specialties, and unique cooking techniques, making it a highly sought-after destination for food enthusiasts. Over the years, this inherent diversity in culinary practices has attracted attention from tourists looking for cultural immersion through food (Gupta, 2018). Traditional food tours and local cuisine experiences have now evolved into a highly specialized form of tourism, often referred to as food or culinary tourism. This shift is driven not only by the natural appeal of Indian cuisine but also by the increasing role of hospitality establishments, which have positioned themselves as cultural ambassadors of Indian gastronomy (Singh & Bhatia, 2019). While the country's rich culinary diversity was always a key attraction for travelers, the use of social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube has transformed the way these culinary experiences are showcased. According to Verma and Sharma, (2024) social media's visual and interactive nature allows hospitality businesses to market culinary tourism in a way that traditional methods cannot. The visually driven platforms capitalize on the sensory appeal of food and culture, enhancing the attractiveness of Indian culinary tourism to global audiences.

Social Media as a Catalyst for Culinary Tourism

The integration of social media into the promotion of culinary tourism is both timely and transformative. With over 4.7 billion social media users worldwide as of 2023, these platforms have become essential tools for marketing across industries (Kemp, 2023). In the hospitality sector, particularly in culinary tourism, social media acts as a conduit for real-time engagement, fostering a direct and authentic connection between potential tourists and the culinary experiences they seek. Visual platforms such as Instagram and YouTube play a critical role in this dynamic, enabling hospitality businesses to showcase their culinary offerings through high-quality images, videos, and live interactions (Choudhury, 2021). Influencer marketing has further strengthened the relationship between social

media and culinary tourism. Food bloggers and influencers with substantial followings have become central figures in the promotion of India's culinary tourism, offering authentic reviews, behind-the-scenes insights, and user-generated content that resonates deeply with their audiences (Verma & Sharma, 2024). This content not only amplifies the visibility of local cuisines but also creates a sense of community among food enthusiasts worldwide, encouraging them to experience the authentic culinary delights of India firsthand. The hospitality industry has embraced these digital influencers, partnering with them to reach broader audiences through targeted campaigns and collaborations. Influencers provide a sense of authenticity and trustworthiness, which traditional advertising often lacks. Studies indicate that tourists are more likely to trust recommendations from influencers they follow than from conventional promotional materials (Evans, 2020). As a result, influencer-driven content has become an integral part of culinary tourism marketing strategies, particularly in destinations such as India, where culinary diversity is a key selling point.

Economic and Cultural Impact of Culinary Tourism

Culinary tourism, driven by social media marketing, is not only a cultural exchange but also an economic engine. In India, the hospitality sector is a significant contributor to the national economy, and culinary tourism plays an increasingly vital role in its growth. The synergy between social media and culinary tourism has helped to draw more tourists, both domestic and international, leading to increased revenue for local businesses, restaurants, and hotels. The economic benefits of this trend are seen across the entire hospitality ecosystem, from small, family-owned eateries to high-end, fine-dining establishments (Bansal & Jain, 2020). Moreover, the promotion of culinary tourism through social media allows for the preservation and global dissemination of India's culinary traditions. In doing so, it contributes to a deeper appreciation of the cultural significance of food in India's heritage. Social media platforms enable small, regional food producers and local chefs to reach international audiences, helping to sustain and celebrate culinary traditions that might otherwise fade into obscurity in the face of globalization (Verma & Sharma, 2024). This exchange of cultures, facilitated by social media, enhances global awareness of India's gastronomic diversity while promoting cross-cultural understanding.

The Role of User-Generated Content

One of the key aspects of social media's impact on culinary tourism is the prevalence of user-generated content. Travelers who visit India and experience its culinary diversity often share their experiences on social media, contributing to a

CHAPTER 5

Integrating Tradition and Innovation within Tourism and Hospitality Experience

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Abstract: The tourism and hospitality sectors are at a point where blending tradition and innovation is critical for providing meaningful and memorable experiences. The convergence of tradition and innovation in tourism and hospitality is increasingly acknowledged as a crucial component in improving tourist experiences and preserving cultural heritage. This study investigates the mutually beneficial link between old traditions and current technologies, focusing on how their confluence might enhance the entire consumer experience. The research identifies important areas where traditional elements—such as local food, customs, and cultural heritage—can be effectively merged with contemporary technology like virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and digital marketing methods. The study also analyzes the implications of this incorporation for sustainability, community participation, and financial stability in the hospitality sector. The findings show that when tradition and innovation come together, they not only help sustain cultural identities but also provide enterprises with unique advantages in the market. The study also provides practical suggestions for industry stakeholders to successfully utilize this integration, ensuring that tourism and hospitality are both authentic and proactive in responding to changing preferences among various tourist demographic trends.

Keywords: Authentic cultural experiences, Customer satisfaction, Community revitalization, Innovation, Sustainable practices, Tradition, Technological integration, Tourism and hospitality services.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism destinations that effectively incorporate their cultural legacy into the hospitality business, whether through heritage-based structural facets in hospitality establishments or culturally influenced food services, are likely to leave a lasting impression on visitors. The unveiling of boutique hotels and eco-resorts that embrace local traditions is another example of this trend, offering a

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unique alternative to standardized accommodation experiences. One of the key advantages of integrating traditional features into tourism and hospitality is that it fosters cultural resilience (Bui, H. T. *et al.*, 2020). Hospitality acts as a means of preserving cultural inheritance and transmitting traditions to future generations. Tourism also serves as a revitalization tool in areas where cultural traditions are fading due to modernization or urbanization.

Native festivals, rituals, and handmade goods that obtain aid from tourism operations usually prosper as a result of greater exposure and monetary rewards. Community-based tourism initiatives that include traditional storytelling, localized artisan training centers, or countryside homestays, for example, can save neglected cultural traditions (Makandwa G. *et al.*, 2023). The revenue made from these events may be put back into the community, ensuring that these traditions continue while nurturing confidence in the inhabitants. Furthermore, when effectively administered, cultural tourism enables residents to preserve their legacy and actively participate in sharing culture with visitors. This mutually beneficial interaction helps both visitors, who obtain a greater knowledge of the customs and traditions of the region, and the residents of the destination, who have the capacity to embrace and protect their own identity.

Indigenous tourism attributes have a significant impact on contributing to monetary benefits and market distinctiveness (Yang & Wall, 2009). In an increasingly industrialized and dynamic tourism commercial setting, destinations must differentiate themselves by emphasizing their unique heritage. Heritage tourism, which involves visiting historical places, participating in local customs, and engaging with ancestral crafts, is one of the fastest-growing units of the travel industry worldwide. The locations may appeal to specialized clients who value gaining cultural insight through traditional practices (Le, T. H., *et al.*, 2022). The recognition and adoption of ancient healing techniques, such as Ayurveda in India or Onsen bathing in Japan, have been crucial to the development of health tourism (Kudlu, 2022; Billore, 2024). Similarly, culinary tourism capitalizes on the enticing qualities of traditional food and beverage consumption (Bahri, S., *et al.*, 2024), where visitors seek to explore a region's gastronomic history through indigenous recipes, cooking classes, and food festivals. These cultural assets give destinations a competitive edge by meeting the increasing demand for experiential and innovative experiences. Tourists are often willing to pay higher prices for experiences that connect them to the local way of life, resulting in greater financial rewards for destinations that preserve and promote their traditional characteristics.

Traditional Elements Influencing Tourism and Hospitality

As the tourism and hospitality industries expand, the inclusion of traditional features gains prominence, merging modern methods with cultural heritage. This combination of innovation and tradition is essential for offering travelers unique and unforgettable experiences. Traditions, which are based on conventions, rituals, folklore, crafts, and gastronomy, are powerful inducements that provide credibility to tourism encounters while instilling a sense of cultural identity in the local populations (Jimenez Ruiz, A. E. *et al.*, 2024). The blending of traditional aspects in tourism operations improves visitor perception by providing more customized and genuine encounters. Holidaymakers are predominantly interested in more intimate experiences with the areas they ought to explore, and cultural practices offer an opportunity to engage with the native legacy. It becomes especially obvious in regions in which celebrations of culture, ancestral celebrations, and locally produced goods are central to the vacation experience. Folklore performances, archaeological representations, and village craftsman trading partners throughout, for instance, socialize as well as encourage guests, which makes their visit more meaningful.

Table 1 outlines traditional/cultural aspects preferred by tourists during their stay at a destination, along with significant case studies that illustrate these preferences.

Table 1. Traditional aspects of culture preferred by tourists.

Traditional Aspects/Factors	Description	Noteworthy / Illustrated Case Situations
Local Cuisine	Tourists often seek authentic local food and traditional dining experiences.	Italy's Culinary Tourism: Italy's focus on traditional pasta-making workshops and local food markets attracts food enthusiasts globally. (Sabatini, A. <i>et al.</i> , 2021)
Festivals and Celebrations	Cultural festivals and traditional celebrations offer unique insights into local customs and practices.	Rio Carnival, Brazil: The Carnival showcases vibrant parades, samba music, and cultural traditions, drawing millions of tourists each year. (da Silva Neto and Gastal, 2021)
Traditional Crafts and Arts	Tourists appreciate local handcrafted goods, art, and traditional crafts, reflecting the region's cultural heritage.	Kyoto's Kimono Industry, Japan: Kyoto's kimono makers offer tourists the chance to experience traditional Japanese clothing and craftsmanship. (Sedita and Ozeki, 2023)

CHAPTER 6

Conscious Distancing from Technology in the Digital Age: Mindfulness-Based Digital Detox Tourism

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Abstract: Digital detox tourism has emerged from the desire to detox from digital addiction caused by the overuse of technology and to get away from digital stimuli. Although it has been used to define a type of tourism that takes place in destinations that are digitally free, where internet networks and mobile signals are absent, or where the use of technology can be controlled, it is thought that it would be useful to expand the definition by basing it on mindfulness. Mindfulness-based digital detox tourism argues that by bringing mindful practices to their travels, tourists can consciously disconnect from technology and improve their well-being, physical and mental health, focus, and quality of life. This study discussed digital detox tourism, mindfulness, mindful travel, and the benefits of all of these, then defined mindfulness-based digital detox tourism and made predictions for the future.

Keywords: Digitalization, Digital detox tourism, Mindful travel, Mindfulness.

INTRODUCTION

The progressive advancement of technology has facilitated and accelerated societal and human advancement on a daily basis. One of the most significant contributions of these developments is the implementation of digitalization. The foundation of digitalization is the integration of traditional methods with technology, particularly the advancement and pervasive implementation of information and communication technologies (Olçay, 2018). Digitalization can be defined as the conversion of data into a digital format through the use of electronic tools. However, the general public perceives digitalization as the use of electronic media in conjunction with advanced technology, thereby facilitating the

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rapid and effortless retrieval of information (Yücel and Adiloğlu, 2019). Social networking sites have become an important part of people's daily lives all over the world (Poushter *et al.*, 2018; Perrin and Anderson, 2019). The fact that smart devices are always connected, portable, and accessible from anywhere provides great convenience for individuals (Lup *et al.*, 2015; Jeong, *et al.*, 2016). Reinecke and colleagues (2018) found that the continuously updated news feed on social networking sites triggers individuals' tendency to check these platforms on a daily basis and their online behavior. Salehan and Nagehban (2013) stated that the ubiquity of smart mobile devices causes distraction, unconscious usage behaviors, and addiction.

As reported by "We Are Social" in 2023, 5.44 billion people out of the 8.01 billion people living worldwide are phone users, 5.16 billion people access the internet, and 4.76 billion people are active social media users particularly in Italy (We Are Social, 2023). The aforementioned data illustrate that AI-enabled devices, including smartphones, tablets, and computers, have become an integral aspect of modern life. Indeed, while the internet and technological devices facilitate numerous aspects of life when used correctly (Güzel, 2018), the phenomenon of technostress, or stress caused by the excessive use of computers, tablets, and smart mobile devices in the workplace due to digitalization, is regarded as an occupational health concern in many countries. The risks associated with this phenomenon are evaluated in accordance with the laws of each country. The condition is typified by a constellation of symptoms, including anxiety disorders, hypertension, sleep disturbances, panic attacks, deficits in memory and attention, and other cognitive impairments. Despite the manifold benefits of technology in modern life, the pervasiveness of digital devices has concomitantly precipitated a surge in digital addiction (Jiang and Balaji, 2022). Consequently, the accelerated adoption of digital technologies has resulted in a situation where individuals and societies are increasingly reliant on digital communication and devices, despite a lack of conscious choice in this regard. The phenomenon of digitalization has evolved beyond the realm of mere option to become a pervasive aspect of contemporary culture. This situation represents a significant social issue resulting from digital addiction (Uysa and Eren, 2020). This phenomenon has implications not only for individuals engaged in occupational activities but also for those who utilize digital devices for recreational or other purposes (Amato *et al.*, 2019). Consequently, an increasing number of individuals are seeking to disengage from their digital devices and alleviate the burden of constant connectivity in order to achieve a more balanced lifestyle. The deliberate act of disengaging from digital media and abstaining from the use of digital devices for a designated period is referred to as "digital detox" (Jiang and Balaji, 2022). The reasons for undertaking a digital detox can vary considerably from one individual to another. In some cases, negative emotional responses, such as discontent with

technological devices or disappointment that they fail to meet expectations, serve as the impetus for a digital detox. Conversely, in other instances, individuals perceive technology as a hindrance that diverts time and energy and seek to reclaim control over their lives. For some individuals, moral, ethical, or political reasons, such as concerns regarding privacy, may also serve as a rationale for avoiding the use of technology. Moreover, the apprehension of being unable to disengage from technology or the internet—that is, the risk of addiction—also serves as a motivation for individuals to temporarily disconnect from digital connectivity (Pathak, 2016). Consequently, the pervasive digitalization of modern society has led to information and communication technologies becoming a pivotal driving force in the contemporary tourism industry. In response to this demand, travel agencies and hotels have begun offering digital detox vacations for those seeking to escape the digital world. This has resulted in the formation of a niche market comprising individuals seeking to disengage from digital devices, including smartphones, laptops, and tablets, and engage in detox therapies. Although the concept of digital detox vacations first emerged in 2009 and 2010, it was not until 2011 that they began to receive significant media attention. In 2016 and 2017, these vacations ceased to be a niche product and began to appeal to a wider consumer base (Pearce and Li Jing, 2018; Syvertsen, 2020). Digital detox tourism represents a response to this need, based on a conscious and deliberate withdrawal from digital technology and social media. The objective of this study is to examine the necessity for individuals to deliberately refrain from utilizing digital technologies, with a particular emphasis on the prevalence of digital addiction and the pervasiveness of an online presence. Moreover, the study examines the practices and methodologies associated with digital detox tourism on a global scale, evaluating the destinations and activities utilized by individuals seeking to disengage from technology.

RESEARCH METHOD

The main starting point of this study is to reveal what “mindfulness-based digital detox tourism” is, which has emerged from the integration of “mindfulness” and “digital detox” applications that have been frequently mentioned in both academic studies and the industry in recent years. In this context, answers are sought to the following questions:

- What is digital detox? How can it be applied in tourism?
- What is mindfulness, and why is it relevant to tourism?
- What benefits does mindfulness-based digital detox tourism offer tourists, and how is it implemented?

CHAPTER 7

Exploring the Impact of Virtual Reality Technology on Tourist Experiences: A Case Study of Hospitality in India

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Abstract: The emergence of virtual reality (VR) technology has revolutionized various industries, including tourism and hospitality. This research investigates the influence of VR technology on tourist experiences, with a focus on its application in the hospitality sector. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, this study combines quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gather comprehensive insights. The quantitative analysis employs regression analysis to assess the relationship between VR usage and tourist satisfaction, while the qualitative interviews provide a deeper understanding and context. The sampling technique employed for this study is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling allows for the selection of participants who have specific characteristics or experiences relevant to the research topic. In this case, participants were selected based on their engagement with virtual reality technology in tourism and hospitality settings. This sampling method ensures that the study captures insights from individuals who have firsthand experience with VR technology and its impact on tourist experiences.

The sample size for this study consists of 150 participants. This sample size ensures adequate representation of diverse perspectives and experiences within the target population. Additionally, a larger sample size enhances the reliability and generalizability of the findings.

Preliminary findings suggested a positive correlation between VR usage and tourist satisfaction, highlighting the potential of VR technology to enhance the overall guest experience in hospitality settings. Qualitative insights reveal themes such as increased immersion, emotional connection, and enhanced decision-making processes among VR users.

The implications of this research may extend to hospitality businesses seeking innovative ways to differentiate themselves and improve customer experiences. By

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understanding the impact of VR technology on tourist behaviours and perceptions, businesses can strategically implement VR solutions to create memorable and engaging experiences for their guests.

Keywords: Hospitality, Technology, Tourism, Tourist, Virtual Reality (VR).

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, virtual reality (VR) has emerged as a transformative technology within the tourism and hospitality sectors, offering immersive experiences that significantly enhance pre-visit decision-making and on-site engagement. This innovative tool allows potential tourists to explore destinations and accommodations virtually, reducing uncertainty and facilitating informed choices (Guttentag, 2010; Tussyadiah *et al.*, 2018). The ability to provide realistic previews of travel experiences has garnered considerable attention from researchers and practitioners alike, with studies highlighting VR's potential to elevate tourist satisfaction and emotional engagement (Jung, 2018; Griffin *et al.*, 2017). As the hospitality industry increasingly adopts VR technology, understanding its impact on guest experiences becomes critical. Research indicates that VR can create a sense of presence that enhances emotional engagement and satisfaction levels, differentiating hospitality brands in a competitive market (Loureiro *et al.*, 2020; Neuhofer *et al.*, 2014). Despite the growing body of literature exploring the benefits of VR, gaps remain in understanding its specific applications within the hospitality sector, particularly regarding its psychological and experiential impacts on tourists. This study aims to address these gaps by examining the influence of VR technology on tourist satisfaction in luxury hospitality settings. By employing a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the research seeks to provide empirical evidence on how VR enhances guest experiences and contributes to overall satisfaction. The findings of this study will not only contribute to the existing body of knowledge on VR in tourism but also offer practical insights for hospitality providers looking to leverage this technology to meet the evolving needs of modern travelers.

Through this research, we aim to shed light on the transformative role of VR in shaping the future of tourism, ultimately contributing to the development of innovative strategies that enhance the guest experience and drive customer loyalty in an increasingly digital landscape.

VIRTUAL REALITY AND ITS ROLE IN TOURISM

Introduction to Virtual Reality (VR)

Virtual reality (VR) is a cutting-edge technology that simulates a three-dimensional, computer-generated environment with which users can interact using specialized devices, such as headsets or gloves. The immersive nature of VR allows users to feel as though they are physically present in these virtual spaces. Unlike traditional media such as videos or images, VR creates a multi-sensory experience by engaging sight, sound, and sometimes even touch, thereby offering a more realistic and engaging interaction with the digital world.

VR has gained widespread recognition across various industries, but its application in tourism has been particularly transformative. In an industry driven by experiences, emotions, and exploration, VR offers tourists the unique ability to explore destinations virtually before making any travel decisions. By enabling a deeper connection between travelers and their desired locations, VR has the potential to reshape the way tourism is marketed, consumed, and experienced.

The Role of Virtual Reality in Tourism

- **Immersive Destination Previews:** One of the most powerful applications of VR in tourism is the ability to offer immersive destination previews. Potential travelers can explore different locations, cultural attractions, or even specific hotels before physically visiting them. Through VR headsets, users can take virtual tours of cities, landmarks, resorts, and other attractions, providing them with an immersive glimpse of what to expect. This technology allows individuals to evaluate a destination's appeal and amenities without leaving their homes. As a result, VR significantly reduces uncertainty and helps travelers make more informed decisions about where to visit.

This virtual experience can be particularly useful for promoting lesser-known destinations or encouraging travelers to visit places that they might not have considered otherwise. For example, a traveler contemplating a trip to an exotic location can explore its natural landscapes, cultural experiences, and accommodations in a virtual environment, which can increase their confidence in the decision-making process.

- **Enhanced Travel Planning and Decision-Making:** VR aids in streamlining the travel planning process by giving potential tourists access to virtual experiences of destinations, hotels, restaurants, and attractions. This allows them to compare various options more effectively. A study by Tussyadiah *et al.* (2018) found that VR reduces the perceived risk associated with unfamiliar destinations by

CHAPTER 8

Balancing Growth and Sustainability: A Holistic Approach to Sustainable Development in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry

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Abstract: Tourism and hospitality are crucial to economic growth, job creation, and cultural exchange. However, its rapid expansion often comes at a significant environmental and social cost, raising concerns about long-term sustainability. This chapter explores the industry's balance between growth and sustainability, emphasising eco-friendly infrastructure, responsible resource management, and community engagement. While tourism can boost local economies, it may also exacerbate income inequality, particularly in developing regions. To ensure inclusive growth, we propose strategies for equitable benefit distribution. Collaboration among governments, businesses, and communities is essential in adopting sustainable practices that mitigate environmental harm while fostering economic prosperity. Through case studies and practical examples, we highlight successful models of sustainable development. This chapter underscores the urgency of addressing tourism's challenges and provides actionable recommendations to achieve a harmonious coexistence of growth and sustainability.

Keywords: Economic growth, Environmental impact, Inclusive growth, Sustainable development, Tourism and hospitality.

INTRODUCTION

According to the UN (2015), the SDGs serve as a framework for the advancement and development of sustainable tourism. Every one of the 17 SDGs might benefit from tourism, either directly or indirectly (UNWTO, 2021). Tourism is crucial for

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achieving the following objectives 8 (Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth), 12 (Sustainable Consumption and Production), and 14 (Sustainable Use of Oceans and Marine Resources) (UNWTO, 2021). These sustainable goals balance conventional economic growth ambitions and ecological and social aspirations (Neumann *et al.*, 2017). According to the recently announced One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme, sustainability will become the new standard for the whole tourism industry (UNWTO, 2021). However, the concept of sustainable tourism development remains based on fragile theoretical foundations. More specifically, this is despite existing concerns about its inherent contradictions. The academic community uncritically adopted the theory as a framework and goal for tourism development. This might be expected since, by 2000, sustainable development had taken the lead as the central paradigm for global development (Lafferty & Eckerberg, 2013), in addition to the fact that tourism had long been approved and used as a means of “development” (WTO, 1980). However, a more thorough and theoretical understanding of the relationship between tourism and hospitality and sustainable development is needed, especially in order to guide the already polarised debate between, on the one hand, hospitality and tourism as specific business activities seeking profitable growth, and, on the other hand, sustainable tourism development, such as hospitality and tourism as vehicles for sustainable development.

The main objective of this study is to explore the balance between industry growth and sustainable development, to make stakeholders aware of the importance of sustainable development in the industry and the possibility of pursuing a balance between growth and sustainable development, and to provide stakeholders with feasible measures to formulate effective, sustainable development strategies.

Our knowledge of the parts of the sector's development that could still be unsustainable, like excessive industry expansion in some vulnerable areas, needs to be improved in light of the prevalent vision and its emphasis on sustainability. It is necessary to strike a balance between environmental protection and commercial expansion. The research interest of this paper is to explore the balance between the growth and sustainable development goals of the tourism and hotel industry, as well as the exploration of more effective sustainable development practices. Based on the understanding of the connotation and principles of sustainable development, this paper analyses the development dynamics of the tourism and hotel industry, combines the sustainable development goals, and explores an effective balance of industry development to solve the challenges of industry sustainability. We focus on how the response behaviour of tourism and hotel industry practitioners dynamically evolves in an environment of rapid economic development and fierce competition. In the face

of the contradiction between industry growth and sustainability, this paper explores sustainable industry development from development strategy formulation, stakeholder participation, technological innovation, and government policies and regulations. Then, it identifies new trends in sustainable tourism and hotel industries.

UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Since its introduction in the 1987 Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987), sustainable development has become a standard for environmental scientific study and has been paradigmatic in development (Gore, 2015). Following the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the idea has gained global hegemony and has been included in several nations' international treaties, national constitutions, and legal frameworks (Redclift, 2005). The concept of sustainable development is often linked to that of sustainability. However, different schools of thought point out that sustainable development is a paradoxical concept since it is impossible to maintain unlimited economic growth on a finite planet, and there are contradictions in its goals (Redclift, 2005). As Ruhanen *et al.* (2015) noted, the term "sustainable tourism developed alongside, but separate from, its parent paradigm of sustainable development," this distinction has largely continued to shape the field's definition. In other words, early conceptions of sustainable tourism development positioned the industry firmly within the framework of sustainable development; tourism, like any other form of production or consumption, should be environmentally sustainable in and of itself and should also be a part of a larger strategy for sustainable development (Hunter, 1995). Though it may have been believed that attaining sustainable tourism would automatically lead to sustainable development, the former (sustaining tourism) quickly superseded the latter (sustainable tourist development). As a result of the criticisms of sustainable development, changes in the philosophy and practice of development and enquiries into the nature of development in general, whether sustainable or not, have significantly influenced the development of research on sustainable tourism.

Thus, since the 1990s, authors such as José Naredo (2004) have warned of the need to consider sustainability as a different concept, which today has relevance to new environmental approaches such as "degrowth" and "good living" (Kothari *et al.*, 2014). In the 1980s and early 1990s, there was a noticeable rise in concern about the effects of mass tourism both in the popular and academic media (Poon, 1993). One commentator even went so far as to call mass tourism a "spectre haunting our planet" (Croall, 1995). Therefore, building on the work of the pioneers of what came to be known as "alternative tourism" (Smith & Eadington, 1992), sustainable tourism development gained traction as a counter to mass tourism, challenging what many saw—and continue to perceive—as an

CHAPTER 9

Art of Balancing Tradition and Innovations in Housekeeping Operations of Hotels

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Abstract: Tradition and innovations complement the rapidly evolving hotel industry. The hospitality industry witnessed tremendous changes during the 1990s, especially in hotels, due to industrialization. Innovations are necessary in hotels to provide experiential services to guests. Hence, in this chapter, the changes in housekeeping operations with blended technology are discussed, illustrating the examples of national and international hotel chains. The chapter is based on secondary data focusing on sustainability for environment-conscious travelers. Examples of hotels with modifications in miniature-size amenities like shampoo, conditioner, moisturizer bottles, smart lighting systems, inventory control systems, and robotic cleaning due to the pandemic are elucidated. Hotels are using germ-killing UV robots to disinfect guest amenities and surfaces post COVID-19. To cater to the sustainable development goals (SDG), hotels have started using eco-friendly cleaning agents that are safe for the environment and ecosystem, thus reducing pollution. Comprehensively, this chapter provides a view of the progress in housekeeping operations based on the technological innovations and suggestions to infuse the best personalized guest experiences in the hotel industry. Embracing this balance of tradition and innovations will enhance the competitive advantage and ensure the optimization of operational practices with the use of advanced technologies.

Keywords: Innovation, Housekeeping operations, Sustainability, Technology, Tradition.

INTRODUCTION

In dynamic and ever-evolving hospitality industry landscape, the interplay between cutting-edge technology and guest experience has emerged as the fundamental bedrock of the contemporary hotel sector. This intricate relationship delves into the multifaceted impact of technology and digital solutions like intelligent room technologies, data-driven personalization strategies, which

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redefine and elevates the benchmarks for guest services and satisfaction (Das, n.d.). The hospitality industry constantly evolves to stay relevant and competitive, especially with changing customer expectations and technological advancements.

Housekeeping and architecture are two crucial aspects that significantly impact the overall guest experiences in the hotel industry (Lee, 2019). A meticulously managed hotel leaves a lasting impact and guarantees repeated customers (Wijoyo, 2021). Housekeeping practices have changed significantly in recent decades (Adhistyo, 2021). Over time, technology emerged as a pivotal factor in augmenting the housekeeping operations, leading to improved efficiency and effectiveness (González, 2024) for example, using automated cleaning tools like robotic vacuum cleaners and implementing an inventory management system powered by artificial intelligence (AI) can accurately monitor and predict supply needs (Thoriq *et al.*, 2024).

Emerging events, changing needs, and new information present opportunities for innovation despite being risky, challenging, and complex. The COVID-19 pandemic began as an unprecedented event in the modern world and evolved into a global crisis. This crisis demonstrates that it is possible to innovate and succeed even under challenging conditions, offering businesses the potential to turn crisis into opportunity (Tekin, 2021). Hotels rely on technological advancements to enhance customer experience and ensure the highest service quality standards. Staying abreast of the latest technological innovations is imperative for accommodation businesses as it enables them to stay ahead in a fiercely competitive domestic and international market landscape (Çalhan, 2022).

By providing unique and innovative services and products within the housekeeping department, hotels can not only reduce costs but also foster sustainable growth by enhancing customer satisfaction, improving operational efficiency, and standing out in a competitive market (Tiwari, 2022). In today's competitive hotel industry, providing quality service and maintaining cleanliness are essential priorities to increase the percentage of repeat guests (Singh, 2012). Adopting current procedures, practices, and emerging technologies is essential to maintain a competitive edge; for example, an air conditioning unit or a TV set in a hotel room was once a unique feature, but now AI-integrated technologies and other amenities like WiFi and minibars are essential. This rapid technological change has also influenced customer needs and expectations (Wikhamn, 2018).

Organizations should assess the latest trends and approaches in the housekeeping department across three primary areas: influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, driven by technology, and focused on environmental sustainability (Shin, 2020). Sustainability is now a crucial focus for global industries and the hospitality

sector is no exception. Housekeeping, being an essential part of hotel operations, offers significant opportunities for implementing sustainable practices. By re-evaluating traditional methods, hotels can reduce their environmental impact, improve guest satisfaction, and enhance operational efficiency. Additionally, the transition from bathtubs to tech-enabled showers aligns with the preferences of business travellers who prioritize efficiency over luxury. Contactless services made their way in COVID 19 like robots were used for the housekeeping supply services (Shukla, 2024).

Purpose of the Study

This chapter examines how hotels can maintain a delicate balance between tradition and innovation in their housekeeping operations. It emphasizes the importance of incorporating modern technological advancements, while respecting established practices. This chapter aims to show how hotels can successfully implement innovative solutions to improve guest experiences and operational efficiency without compromising the timeless principles of cleanliness, service quality, and hospitality.

Various Practices and Levels of Adoption in Hotels

Ultraviolet (UV) Equipped Robots

During the COVID-19 pandemic, hotel housekeeping received significant importance. While cleanliness and sanitization have always been a hotel's priority, the pandemic made these processes even more crucial. As a result, new cleaning technologies, such as robots and ultraviolet (UV) scanning, were developed. Hotels now use robots with UV lights to clean and sanitize guest rooms, public areas, meeting rooms, restrooms, elevators, and staff areas. These robots can also sanitize guest luggage. Although UV robots are expensive, they can work longer hours than humans and without the risk of contracting COVID-19 (Qubein, 2020). In 2020, the YOTEL Boston Hotel introduced Vi-YO-Let, a UV-disinfectant robot, to its housekeeping team. This fully autonomous mobile robot uses high-intensity light to disinfect high-touch surfaces, public areas, select vacant guest rooms, and even the surrounding air. Vi- YO-Let disinfects while in motion and can target high-touch public spaces (Hospitality and Tourism Information Technology, 2021).

Inventory Control System

Hotels are incorporating RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) tags into their linens to enable precise tracking of each item. This technology helps to prevent loss, theft, and damage of laundry items, monitors cleanliness and hygiene, and

Proposing Electronic Tourism Value Chain Model (eTVCM): A Customer-Centric Approach

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Abstract: More than three decades ago, to enhance the growth of tourism, businesses closely linked ICT and Tourism. The broad purpose of this study is to investigate the technology-accepted models to design an eTourism Value Chain Model from the viewpoint of customers from Bangladesh. A qualitative research approach is applied in this research. To develop the eTourism Value Chain model, this study investigates relevant previous studies and conducts a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) using a semi-structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews. The eTourism Value Chain Model will be helpful for tourist satisfaction as well as tourism policy making with demand and supply gap minimisation. A further study can be conducted to measure the impact of eTVCM on the performance of tourism businesses.

Keywords: Customer centric, ETourism Value Chain Model (eTVCM), Internet, Technology.

INTRODUCTION

Deb (2020) stated that to ensure the satisfaction of tourists, we should focus on tourists' expectations, demand and supply of tourism products and services, and the tourism paradigm. According to the Boston Hospitality Review (2018), one of the most crucial breakthroughs in our quickly evolving world is digitisation. Digital advances and technical innovations affect all manufacturing, information and communication technology (ICT), travel and tourism services, and other service industries globally. Deb *et al.* (2024a) stated that tourism has changed dramatically as a result of advances in information and communication technologies and social media marketing. Moreover, customised services like tourist information services and knowledge regarding the location are relevant (Fritsch, 2001).

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Transactions of products and services between clients and businessmen around the world's value chain enhance the company's financial condition and competitive position (Morales-Zamorano *et al.* 2020). Value chains are defined by Porter (1985) as a "tool to diagnose and develop ways to strengthen competitive advantage- it divides a corporation into the discrete actions it undertakes in creating, producing, marketing, and distributing its product" (p.26).

Romina *et al.* (2013) stated that digital technology has led to the closure of many travel bureaus, as their functions have been supplanted by online travel agencies and other online booking systems in ways never envisioned before in the tourism business. Terblanche (2014) divulges that in the digital flat form, customers today want a high level of participation in the creation of their experience in real time. Customers' connection, not only to businesses but also to other customers, is another major factor resulting from digitalization.

Della Corte & Aria (2016) stated that customers are more likely to use their advocacy roles on products or services as a result of digital technology. Businesses have less influence over their clients than in the past; thus, they must use a competition strategy, or 'cooperate and compete' at the same time, to succeed. This results in the creation of a sharing economy. The Internet has compelled businesses to share not only information but also resources and infrastructure, resulting in transparency (Melis *et al.*, 2015).

Today's tourism has transformed, with a focus on online media replacing the buzz of positive words, which used to be a major source of visitor information. Some of them are concerned with the criteria for awareness, knowledge bases, navigation routes, and the mindset of online tourism research (Pan and Fesenmaier, 2006).

ICTs encompass an entire variety of digital assets that allow agencies to perform and interact with stakeholders and get to know about their knowledge, capabilities, and efforts (Buhalis, 2003).

Fig. (1) comprises ICTs embracing an entire variety of electronic resources that enable organisations to work and move with stakeholders and their knowledge, functions, and processes in their efforts (Buhalis, 2003).

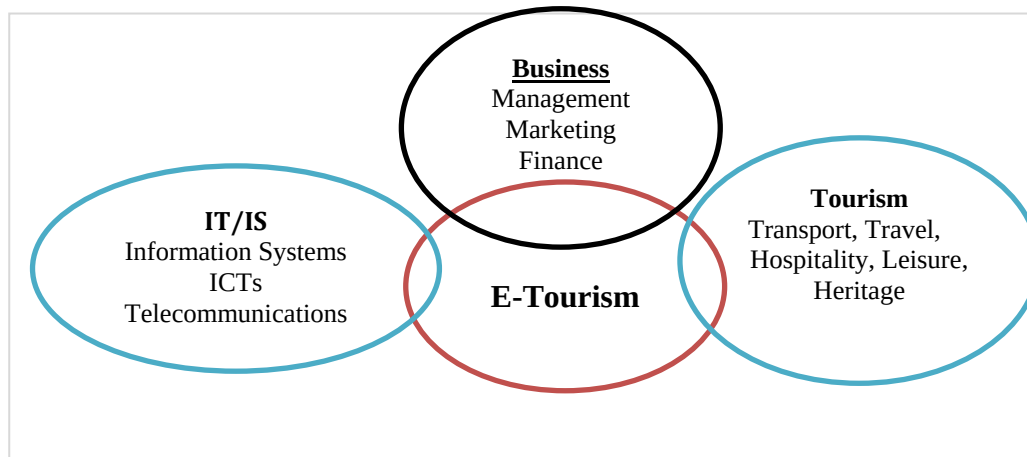


Fig. (1). Domains of eTourism.
(Source: adapted from Buhalis, 2003).

The tourism and hospitality industry is a rising part of the economy of Bangladesh, which helps create job opportunities and enhance the standard of living to meet the goal of sustainable development. In Bangladesh, 90 percent of tourists are domestic and 10 percent are foreigners. During COVID-19 and the new normal era, digital marketing and networking among the channel members of tourism are getting popular. Digital platforms are used to promote the tourism product towards the target customer (Rahman and Rahman, 2020; Deb *et al.*, 2024b). Due to travel restrictions, eTourism and online orders of tourism products became popular, which is cost-effective and efficient, also throughout the COVID-19 pandemic (Deb, 2020).

Novelty of the study

Tourism is the largest industry, which has a great contribution to generating employment and enhancing the standard of living of a nation. In the post-pandemic era, electronic tourism is gaining popularity among tourists and tourism product suppliers. Today, ICT and tourism are interconnected to meet the demand of customers (Buhalis and Law, 2008). Moreover, tourism is made up of many diverse stakeholders; the majority of them are small to medium businesses that “operate in multiple industries (lodging, transportation, attractions, food and beverages, retail, etc.)” (Goni & Yustika, 2019), which explains why the value chain is so complicated.

The use of e-tourism created a good association among the internal and external interest groups in terms of trading and trustworthiness (Buhalis, 2003). Portable devices, i.e., laptops and smartphones, have made a good contribution to adopting

CHAPTER 11

India's Expanding e-Tourism Sector: Prospects and Challenges

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Abstract: India has a substantial tourism business. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council's calculations, 6.6% of the country's GDP, or INR 6.4 trillion, was generated by tourism. Total 39.3 million jobs, or 7.9% of all jobs, were created by it. The tourist industry is among those that have been at the forefront of digitalization and is still undergoing exponential transformation. Since 2014, the government has placed a strong emphasis on digitalization. The dynamics of the various parties involved in the tourist business have been reflected in this ever-changing environment. The last ten years have seen a notable increase in the expectations of guests in the hospitality industry. To increase operational effectiveness, empower staff, and collaborate more effectively with their business-to-business (B2B) partners, hotel chains and hospitality firms have simultaneously upgraded their antiquated procedures and systems with new cloud technologies. To satisfy these changing demands, digital transformation has proven essential. However, improving experiences on a fundamental level calls for more than just software or hardware updates. A true transformation simplifies and personalizes stays by combining tools in an accessible way. Additionally, strategic implementation boosts back-end productivity, freeing up staff to concentrate more on the visitors. The following article will examine the crucial elements of the digital transformation of the hospitality sector, highlight notable instances of innovative technology and systems that are upending the market, and explain how hotels and other hospitality-related businesses might be obstacles to digital transformation.

Keywords: Cloud technologies, Digital transformation, Exponential transformation, Strategic implementation.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

India's tourism business may benefit both the economy and society. The benefits include increased income and employment, poverty alleviation, and long-term human development. The sector also stimulates investment and makes a significant contribution to foreign exchange revenues. Tourism can also help to

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alleviate interregional inequality by allowing economic gains to flow to less developed areas. Tourism could also contribute to the preservation of the country's natural and cultural assets. Another key benefit of extending the tourism industry is the impetus it provides to the development of multiple-use infrastructure that benefits the host community, such as various modes of transportation, health care facilities, and sports centers, in addition to the hotels and high-end restaurants that cater to foreign visitors.

However, important problems such as regulatory framework acceptance, methods to curb crime and corruption, and so on must be addressed before these sector benefits can be realized. To boost the sector's holistic development and create investment opportunities, the Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with other ministries, has launched schemes such as Swadesh Darshan, National Mission for Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation (PRASAD), and e-Tourist Visa (e-TV). Furthermore, the Union Budget 2017-18 included several provisions for the sector, such as the establishment of five Special Purpose Vehicle-driven Special Tourism Zones and the commencement of the second phase of the Incredible India initiative.

The Union Budget 2018-19 allocates Rs. 2,150 crore to the Ministry of Tourism, however, there has been a 21% increase over the previous fiscal year's level of Rs. 1,776.4 crore, indicating the government's significant attention to this industry. To summarize, the tourist industry has enormous potential for job creation and foreign exchange earnings, in addition to boosting the country's overall economic and social development. Tourism in India should be developed in such a way that it accommodates and entertains guests while causing minimal environmental impact and sustaining and supporting local cultures. Because tourism is a multifaceted activity and primarily a service industry, all branches of the Central and State governments, the corporate sector, and voluntary groups must work together to achieve long-term growth in India's tourist sector. While there are significant prospects in the sector, it will be necessary to solve the numerous problems that the sector faces to achieve its full growth potential. The current study attempts to assess the current situation in the sector, highlight the obstacles, and offer a growth plan.

CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

The Indian tourism industry stands at a crucial juncture. Initiatives taken by the Central and State governments, along with the preface measures in the realms of skill development, marketing and advertising, and trade shows and campaigns, have had a visible impact on the sector. Further improvements in the sector shall position the sector as an important channel for generating jobs, bridging

infrastructure deficits, and addressing the decline in exports. This would entail alleviating challenges in the sector, which cast a shadow on the success of this industry.

INTRODUCTION

The tourist and hospitality sector, which encompasses travel and hospitality services such as hotels and restaurants, is widely recognized as a development agent, a driver of socioeconomic growth, and a relevant source of foreign exchange gains in many nations. It has the potential to generate large-scale employment of various types, from the most specialized to the unskilled. It can also play a critical role in fostering equitable growth in countries. The tourist industry has emerged as a major contributor to India's economic growth, accounting for 6.8% of the total GDP in 2019. The introduction of digital technology altered the tourism landscape, resulting in e-tourism, which allows travellers to access travel-related services online. India's e-tourism market has grown dramatically in recent years, owing to increased internet access, smartphone use, and government efforts. With over 500 million internet users and 1.2 billion mobile subscribers, India represents a sizable market for e-tourism. The sector can generate jobs, drive economic progress, and bring India's rich cultural legacy to a global audience. However, the expansion of e-tourism presents substantial hurdles, including infrastructure restrictions, regulatory frameworks, and environmental issues.

The purpose of this research paper is to look at the opportunities and challenges that India's e-tourism business faces, including significant growth drivers, existing challenges, and strategies for long-term development. By assessing the existing state of e-tourism in India and finding areas for improvement, this study hopes to give policymakers, tour operators, and other stakeholders useful information.

Global Scenario

Tourism accounts for a substantial portion of world output and employment. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council's (WTTC) research on the worldwide economic impact of travel and tourism, the sector is expected to account for 10.4% of global GDP in 2017, creating 313 million jobs or 9.9% of total employment. According to a breakdown of visitor arrivals by region, Europe is the most visited region in the world, accounting for more than half of all international tourist arrivals and about 39% of total international tourism revenue in 2017. Asia-Pacific has emerged as the second most visited region, showing strong intraregional demand and aided by easier and more affordable air travel, improved visa facilitation, and rising spending power in emerging economies. In 2017, the United States had the most international tourist receipts, followed by

CHAPTER 12

Study on the Challenges Faced by Tourism Accommodation Service Providers in the Sacred City of Kataragama as a Religious Tourist Site in Sri Lanka

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Abstract: With its rich cultural and religious heritage, Sri Lanka has emerged as a prominent destination for religious tourism. Kataragama Sacred City, nestled in the heart of Sri Lanka, stands out as a significant multicultural religious tourist site, attracting pilgrims and travellers from various parts of the world. This study delves into the challenges encountered by accommodation service providers in Kataragama, aiming to enhance understanding of the unique intricacies involved in catering to religious tourists in this sacred city. This research employed a qualitative methodology, including in-depth interviews with accommodation service providers to collect specific information. The study used thematic analysis to identify several major challenges that these providers face, such as the impact of price mafias, cultural awareness, limited government support, accessibility issues, and inadequate infrastructure and sanitation. The research examined how these challenges interact and affect service standards, customer satisfaction, and the overall travel experience. Furthermore, the study analyzed the strategies utilized by accommodation service providers to overcome these obstacles. It highlighted innovative methods, collaborative projects, technological advancements, and the establishment of recreational activities to enhance tourists' satisfaction and ensure the sustainable growth of the tourism industry. The findings offer valuable insights for the tourism sector, decision-makers, and local communities, providing actionable recommendations for addressing the identified challenges. By fostering a shared understanding of the difficulties faced by accommodation service providers in reverent destinations like the bSacred City of Kataragama, stakeholders can work together to build a more resilient and sustainable tourism industry that promotes cultural preservation, economic growth, and memorable experiences for both pilgrims and visitors.

Keywords: Challenges, Kataragama sacred city, Religious tourism.

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INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka is a signature destination worldwide for travel and tourism with its diversity of resources and strategic location within the Indian Ocean. Sri Lanka is a biodiversity hotspot. Its riches have the most beautiful sandy beaches, green hills, plenty of wildlife, flora and fauna, and a long history and culture. Visitors are welcome to visit Sri Lanka today to explore the country's glistening tapestry of culture and even the rich abundance of nature (Buddhism & Cultural tourism in Sri Lanka, 2021). Tourists visit Sri Lanka for various purposes, including pleasure/vacation, business, VFR, conventions and meetings, sports, health/Ayurveda, education, religious and cultural, official, and others (Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, 2007). Religious tourism is a particular activity oriented by religious culture, with the help of a specific eco-cultural environment. It refers to such special tourist activities as worshipping, research, and sightseeing carried out by religious followers and lay tourists (Qiaozhen Mu, 2007). Pilgrimage, missionary travel, monastery/abbey retreats, faith-based camps/events, religious conferences, and gatherings all fall under the scope of religious tourism (Dukic, 2017). Sri Lanka is a multi-religious country, while Buddhism takes an important place among the Sri Lankans. Buddhism is the primary religion Sri Lankans follow, and 70.2% of the population is identified as Buddhist (CIA World Factbook, 2020). Sri Lanka boasts a civilization that has tremendous influence from Buddhism. Significantly, Sri Lanka is well-known for its ancient Buddhist religious and cultural heritage. Sri Lanka particularly has excellent potential for Buddhist tourism because the country has over 2500 years of excellence in historical and Buddhist-based cultural resources (Jayasinghe, 2020). Sri Lanka has great potential for religious tourism to develop effective strategies. However, the respective authorities, private divisions, and professionals in Sri Lanka have not effectively considered religious tourism compared to other Buddhist countries. Therefore, almost all service providers have faced a lot of hardships. This research study focuses on challenges faced by the tourism accommodation service providers of Kataragama, a sacred city, as a religious tourist site in Sri Lanka.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Religious Tourism is a tourism segment that has been described under cultural heritage tourism and Religious Tourism represents a broader segment of the global tourism market. Sri Lanka shows great potential for religious tourism with growing significance for it. Further, it has been explained that there is no proper research to be found related to the religious tourism in Sri Lanka (Albari, 2020). When examining the closest years of 2018 and 2019, which are 0.09 and 0.03 (SLTDA Annual Statistical Report, 2019). Moreover, SLTDA has maintained a

tourism segment for those who come for religious and cultural reasons. That segment, on the other hand, has seen no significant growth compared to others (Fig. 1).

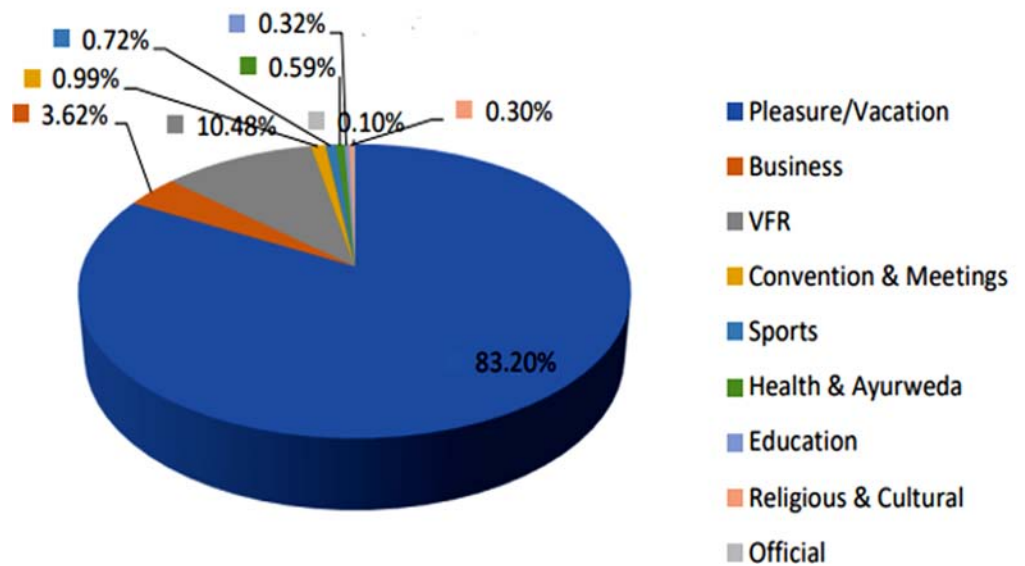


Fig. (1). Tourists' Arrivals Classified by Purpose of Visit. Source: (SLTDA Annual Statistical Report, 2019).

Purpose of Visit

The institutions and industries located in the tourist attraction areas have shown an underutilized capacity throughout the Island (Sunil, 2008). Hence, a significant level of contribution to regional development is required. The researcher suggested choosing the Kataragama pilgrim site because, as a place, it is sacred or important to not only the majority religion, Buddhism, but also to Christians, Muslims, Hindus, and the indigenous Veda (Karlsen, 2017). Kataragama pilgrim site has been positioned among the top three domestic pilgrim sites in Sri Lanka (Coningham, 2018). In developing countries and regions where traditional economic activities are no longer viable, cultural and heritage tourism has enormous potential, and the empowerment of key stakeholders in cultural heritage is critical to ensuring long-term viability (Ranasinghe, 2018). Furthermore, according to the reviews on TripAdvisor, foreign tourists mentioned both satisfied and dissatisfied points about the Kataragama area. With this background, the researcher identified that the Kataragama area can be identified as a multi-cultural and multi-religious place in Sri Lanka that supports creating a greater religious

CHAPTER 13

Developing Sustainable Destination in the Age of Smart Tourism: Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract: Smart initiatives are gradually gaining acceptance from the development of smart homes and smart community projects to the appearance of smart destinations all around the world that could progress out of existing infrastructures. Smart tourism refers to the utilization of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to enhance the overall tourism experience and promote sustainable practices. The main objective of this study will be to investigate how smart tourism will influence the sustainable destination development process. This study will also explore the opportunities and challenges of smart tourism. This study's findings will help discover the new arena of smart tourism and sustainable destination development. Furthermore, the results will demonstrate that smart destinations need to prioritize sustainability more and that sustainability is not the only avenue to pursue when creating environmental solutions. It will help to address sustainable tourism-related issues like social, economic, and environmental sustainability, and how it will be minimized by smart tourism. The findings will guide policymakers and stakeholders in making informed decisions regarding sustainable tourism practices in the age of smart tourism.

Keywords: Adoption, Destination attractiveness, Smart tourism, Sustainable destination, Technology.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has remarkable impacts on economic activities, community development, social changes, and sustainability. As one of the world's largest industries, travel and tourism contribute almost 9.1 percent of the global GDP, which is 23.2 percent more than 2022 and 4.1 percent below 2019 (WTTC, 2024). Before the pandemic, this industry contributed 10.4 percent to global GDP. However, in 2023, this industry generated 27 million new jobs in the global

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economy. The WTTC report also mentioned that international visitors spent \$1.91 trillion in 2019 (WTTC, 2024). Thus, the vastness of the industry is easily justified by the statistics shown above. The tourism industry creates many positive things for the world economy, business, community, people, and related stakeholders. Thus, there are lots of things that should be considered to maximize the positive impact of tourism and minimize the negative impact of this industry.

To achieve sustainability, benefits generated from tourism should be shared among the various stakeholders, as it involves a varied range of stakeholders (Halim *et al.*, 2022; Roxas *et al.*, 2020). Communication and building understanding are fundamental for the proper improvement of the tourism industry. Tourist demands and preferences constantly change over time. Thus, the significance of smart initiatives in tourism has gained popularity at the industry level. Smart initiatives help to combine the efforts of stakeholders to serve the tourists and ensure the sustainability of the destination.

Due to its connection to both social and economic development, it has grown to become one of the most significant sectors globally. In the tourism sector, many research works have been done in relation to technology and innovation to support sustainable development, with implications for organizations and new needs from travelers (Sigalat-Signes *et al.*, 2020). The tourism and hospitality industries rely on the collaboration of numerous parties and the advantages of digital solutions to better meet customer needs and maintain competitiveness in a market that is changing quickly (Cimbaljević *et al.*, 2019; Deb *et al.*, 2024a; Heslinga *et al.*, 2019; Zsarnoczky, 2018). We have seen the growth of social media and the internet in recent years, which has added to the idea that people live in smart environments (Zeng *et al.*, 2020). On the one hand, technology has aided in the advancement of social, environmental, economic, and cultural progress (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2021; Ismagilova *et al.*, 2019; Roy *et al.*, 2021). On the other hand, smart cities ought to have the technological means to accommodate these dimensions.

According to Sigalat-Signes *et al.* (2020), a smart city is defined as a “tourism-oriented and innovative space accessible to all, which is consolidated on a cutting-edge technological infrastructure, which must guarantee sustainable territorial development while facilitating visitor interaction and integration with the environment, increasing the quality of their experience in the destination and the quality of life of the residents”. The idea of an intelligent tourist destination, or “smart tourism destination” (Ivars-Baidal *et al.*, 2019), is based on the idea of a smart city and emphasizes tourism development as the main economic driver. Adoption of these technologies is essential for smart tourism since they allow for the collection and analysis of large amounts of data and the creation of hyper-

personalized, or individualized, experiences. This study will analyze the nexus between sustainable destination development and smart tourism in the modern world.

The Smart Concept

Although the smart concept was first introduced in the 1990s, the relevance associated with the issue began to expand, notably after 2008. Initially, this concept was viewed as a complex technological infrastructure in city centers that aimed to improve social, economic, and environmental well-being (Meijer & Bolivar, 2015). Nowadays, the smart concept refers to the combination of smart features and organizational networks that enhance the ecosystem and simplify everyday tasks for all stakeholders (Buhalis & Leung, 2018). The whole world is getting smart day by day. People develop smart buildings, use smartphones, live in smart houses equipped with smart Locks, smart TVs, smart refrigerators, smart heating systems, and so on. The growing significance of sustainability and the development of ICTs have led to the evolution of smart initiatives. To offer immediate perception of the actual environment and advanced data analysis that helps tourists make more updated decisions about their options. Simultaneously, business organizations can also provide better services by using smart technologies. However, all the processes primarily depend on information technologies that integrate software, hardware, and network technologies (Washburn *et al.*, 2010). In light of this, it can be claimed that the term “smart” has become more widely used to describe developments in big data, open data, sensors, new forms of communication and information sharing, as well as the ability to draw conclusions and reason (Romero *et al.*, 2020).

Smart Tourism

In the era of technology, it is quite impossible to live without using information technology, and people are mostly dependent on technology in every sphere of their lives. The smart concept is gaining popularity and is applied in every sector throughout the world. Thus, the tourism sector is utilizing clever concepts. The notion of smart tourism was first presented to Gordon Phillips in 2000. It entails using a long-term, integrated, and sustainable strategy to create, plan, and promote tourism-related goods and services (Deb *et al.*, 2024b; Li *et al.*, 2017). However, as the physical and governance aspects of tourism move into the digital sphere, new levels of smartness are achieved in tourism systems, and there are fundamental differences in the ways that tourism experiences are created, consumed, and shared. Smart tourism is unquestionably a distinct stage in the growth of ICT in tourism (Gretzel, 2011). It is now essential to apply the smart notion in tourism since the industry is knowledge-driven and dependent on

Community-based Experiential Tourism in Bangladesh: Towards a Sustainable Business Model for Community Empowerment and Engagement

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Abstract: Bangladesh offers a plethora of experiences for global and local tourists to indulge in unique lifestyle experience, cultural exposure, and immersion. With exquisite natural beauty, ethnic diversity, and numerous occupation-based communities, Bangladesh poses immense potential for flourishing Community-Based Tourism (CBT). Transcending beyond visiting places, tourists can create meaningful experiences by actively engaging with distinguished ethnic or occupational communities, such as fishermen's in the coastal area, tea-garden workers in the southern regions, and Indigenous communities in the eastern regions of this country. However, integrating Experiential Travel (ET) element into such tourism initiatives is at a nascent stage while the majority of these CBT initiatives fail to engage and empower local communities. Furthermore, the scholarly undertakings to examine the underlying causes are limited. Therefore, this chapter evaluates the appeal and capacity of current CBT initiatives in facilitation of cultural immersion experience for the tourists and attempts to identify effective Experiential Community-Based Tourism (ECBT) development scopes in different geographic regions of Bangladesh. This paper incorporates a comprehensive literature analysis of extant studies on CBT and involves in-depth interviews with representatives from the community, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), government regulators, and independent CBT entrepreneurs. Findings of this study uncover the region-wise opportunities and challenges of sustainable ECBT initiatives. Furthermore, this chapter guides future researchers to unearth unexplored domains related to CBT, provides a framework for developing an effective ECBT business model, and assists policymakers in developing countries to ensure maximum societal benefits and tourists' experience, considering community support, acceptance, and participation. Therefore, this chapter recommends developing effective community engagement and empowerment programs to uphold cultural heritage and generate incentives for the associated stakeholders.

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Keywords: Community-Based Tourism (CBT), Community empowerment, Community engagement, Experiential Travel (ET), Sustainable business.

INTRODUCTION

The pattern of tourism continues to evolve in response to the shifting expectations of modern travellers. Since ancient times, travellers have perpetuated their inquisitiveness to conquer the unknown, to escape their usual surroundings, and immerse themselves in new cultures, languages, places, foods, and lifestyles (Liang, 2022). Meeting their inherent desires, experiential tourism delivers incredible immersion opportunities for travellers to engage in cultural, social and emotional enrichment (Gutierrez, 2023; Han *et al.*, 2016). Being a crucial instrument for sustainable tourism, experiential travel can be facilitated into community-based tourism to create enhanced involvement and an authentic experience of engaging in a community, which can transform Community-Based Tourism (CBT) schemes as tourists' preferred choice (Hwang *et al.*, 2019; Pasanchay and Schott, 2021).

Recent studies have highlighted that succeeding in the competitive tourism industry requires marketers to harness the experiential aspects of tourism to develop innovative tourist products and experiences that correspond to the increasing consumer demand for unique offerings (Chan *et al.*, 2016). Although experiential travel, a phenomenon often characterized as a contemporary trend within the tourism industry, has a considerably longer history. While its recent surge in popularity has elevated it to be a buzzword among industry professionals and digital influencers, the essence of this travel paradigm has remained consistent: an exploration that transcends mere visitation, opting for deep immersion within a destination's cultural fabric. This mode of travel prioritizes authentic interactions with local communities, reciprocal exchanges, and the cultivation of enduring memories (Seeler and Schänzel, 2019).

Conversely, the rise of community-based tourism (CBT) dictates the shiny future of growing community-based entrepreneurial endeavours in developing countries (Stone and Stone, 2020). Through numerous private and government endeavours, CBT initiatives are becoming popular among local groups, ensuring community participation and control in tourism development in those countries. However, these initiatives are bestowed with numerous challenges, such as community unawareness, unpreparedness, and political unrest. Similarly, in the context of Bangladesh, a South Asian developing country, the potential for experiential tourism is promising despite numerous structural, systematic, and cultural obstacles (Hafezi *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, CBT generates economic benefits for the participating communities while ensuring the successful implementation of

several conservation efforts. Consequently, those initiatives contribute to the development of responsible and sustainable tourism (Sharma and Bhat, 2022).

On the other hand, the distribution of benefits to the associated community uplifts the status of community empowerment from the alternative sources of income generated through these tourism schemes (Han *et al.*, 2019). To accumulate the highest benefits from CBTs, these initiatives need to be matched with changing consumer demands and aspirations. Therefore, amalgamating the elements of experiential travel with CBT exposes tourists to enormous opportunities to capitulate themselves within the untapped territory of another culture and lifestyle, stimulating perennial memories. Incorporation of experiential elements in CBTs can be referred to as Experiential Community-Based Tourism (ECBT), which alleviates tourism experience by enabling them to become a part of that pertinent society, learning their ways of living and cultural heritage (Mogollón *et al.*, 2019).

CBT encompasses natural resources, community organisation, community leadership, and learning aspects as major building components. Similarly, in the case of ECBT, tourists are further induced by enthusiasm and openness to learning through multiple series of memory-building activities such as exploring folklore, arts, cuisine sessions, story sharing, and cultural events offered by local people. Thus, these augmented experience-enriching elements in CBTs make those travel destinations safer and more welcoming. In return, by triggering the psychological drivers of experiential travel, CBT can be made more appealing to the travellers as their preferred medium of travelling.

By providing a sustainable source of income for the local communities and supporting conservation efforts, CBT ensures sustainable opportunities for other economic activities development (Priatmoko *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, community involvement improves the financial contribution of tourism to the participating country. By engaging in these initiatives, low-income indigenous communities, both from urban and rural areas, gain a platform to interact with the government, from which they are frequently excluded (Laxmi *et al.*, 2023). Thus, underrepresented communities can be prioritized, and their economic conditions can be improved through CBT.

Since people's participation in decision-making is essential for achieving their economic freedom and strengthening their sense of national citizenship, CBTs serve the purposes of community empowerment and engagement by reducing poverty and uplifting community participation. In addition to this, eradicating poverty is a prime focus in many developing countries, especially considering the

CHAPTER 15

Navigating the Art of Balancing Tradition and Innovation in Tourism and Hospitality

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Abstract: The chapter “Navigating the Art of Balancing Tradition and Innovation in Tourism and Hospitality” offers an insightful exploration of the complex interplay between preserving traditional practices and embracing innovative approaches within the tourism and hospitality sectors. This dynamic balance is critical as it influences not only the economic viability of tourism operations but also the cultural integrity and sustainability of host communities. The chapter will address the pressing need for destinations to maintain their unique cultural heritage and authenticity while simultaneously adapting to technological advancements and changing consumer expectations.

Through an analysis of various theoretical frameworks, the chapter will outline the dual challenges faced by industry stakeholders: preserving cultural and historical authenticity against the backdrop of global modernization and integrating cutting-edge technological solutions without compromising traditional values. It discusses how sustainable practices can be employed to mediate these challenges, emphasizing community involvement, regulatory frameworks, and education as pivotal elements.

Moreover, the chapter will highlight innovative practices that have successfully merged tradition with modernity, enhancing visitor experiences and community well-being by proposing strategies for stakeholders to implement these practices effectively, suggesting that the future of tourism and hospitality lies in an approach that respects and revitalizes traditions through thoughtful innovation. This delicate balance, when managed well, not only enhances the appeal of a destination but also contributes to a more sustainable and equitable tourism industry.

Keywords: Cultural heritage, Hospitality, Sustainable development, Tradition, Innovation, Tourism.

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INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic landscape of tourism and hospitality, the delicate balance of tradition and innovation is a key factor in determining an industry's success and sustainability. Traditions rooted in cultural heritage and local identity provide a sense of authenticity and connection to travelers seeking unique experiences. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) emphasizes the importance of preserving local cultural heritage and traditions in tourism. Creating a connection with past destinations can give visitors a deeper understanding of their history and identity. At the same time, the WTO recognizes the importance of innovation in enhancing the tourism experience. From digital advancements to sustainable practices, the right mix of tradition and innovation is important for businesses to maintain their cultural roots to meet the needs of diverse customers. As the tourism and hospitality industries continue to evolve, finding the right equilibrium between tradition and innovation becomes a strategic imperative. This chapter delves into the strategies and approaches that businesses can employ to navigate this delicate balance effectively, ensuring a compelling and sustainable offering for modern travelers.

The Importance of Tradition in Tourism and Hospitality

Traditions contribute greatly to tourism and hospitality and it is one of the most important factors in attracting and rewarding tourist flow awareness. It allows for a deeper experience between the visitor and the destination. Cultural traditions such as festivals, food, architecture, rituals, *etc.*, offer authentic experiences that attract tourists who want to immerse themselves in the local culture. These traditions make an important difference. This makes the destination stand out in the global market. Food, service, and design styles and practices in the hospitality industry create a sense of place that is unique to a region and increase guest satisfaction. Hotels, resorts, and restaurants often incorporate local customs and traditional aesthetics to inspire an atmosphere of authenticity.

Moreover, preserving traditions in tourism and hospitality has a dual benefit. Economically, it attracts niche tourists interested in culture and history, leading to sustained income for local communities. From a cultural perspective, it helps conserve intangible heritage by passing down the tradition to others. Proper sustainable tourism practices ensure that the traditions are passed down without exploiting or diluting the cultural values represented.

Tradition is important in maintaining the attractiveness of tourism and hospitality establishments, but innovation is equally important to ensure long-term success and relevance. Innovation can take many forms. From the integration of modern technology to developing new products and services that meet needs to evolve

guest preferences, for example, the rise of digital platforms and mobile apps in the travel industry has revolutionized the way travelers plan, book, and experience their travels. Online travel agents like Expedia and Booking.com help guests find destinations. Comparing prices and booking accommodation have never been easier. Mobile apps like TripAdvisor and Yelp help travelers share experiences and discover new places. Innovations in services have led to the development of smart room features such as voice-activated assistants. Personal climate control systems, Mobile check-in and checkout options, and other technologies do not just improve the guest experience, but also increase the operational efficiency.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a secondary data collection approach to examine the balance between tradition and innovation in tourism and hospitality. Data has been gathered from academic journals, industry reports, government publications, and market research studies to analyze trends and best practices. A comprehensive literature review has been conducted to identify key themes, including cultural preservation, technological advancements, and sustainable tourism strategies. The study employs thematic analysis to identify key patterns, challenges, and strategies in the integration of modern advancements while maintaining cultural authenticity. By employing this methodology, the chapter aims to provide actionable insights for tourism stakeholders, policymakers, and industry professionals to foster sustainable and culturally respectful innovation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It could seem paradoxical to combine tradition with innovation. However, creativity can also come from tradition. In the tourism and hospitality industry, “balancing tradition and innovation” simply refers to how companies in these sectors can successfully combine traditional aspects of a destination with cutting-edge techniques to provide guests with a distinctive and alluring experience while guaranteeing the sustainability and preservation of local culture, giving them a competitive edge in the market. To put it more simply, tradition refers to deeply ingrained local customs, heritage, crafts, cuisine, and cultural practices, while innovation refers to novel concepts, technological advancements, and commercial strategies utilised to enhance visitor experiences and operations.

“An assigned temporal meaning, that is, a symbolic activity in which various social groups attribute traditional qualities to certain sectors of life that are understood as binding together different times,” is how Shoham (2011) defines tradition. Van de Ven (1986) defined innovation as “the development and implementation of new ideas by people who over time engage in transactions with others,” whereas Savino *et al.* (2017) define tradition as “the whole set of

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