



The Influence of Community-Based Participation on Sustainable Tourism Development: Mediating Effect of Local Support through a Structural Equation Modelling Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the dynamic relationship between the community-based participation (CBP) and sustainable tourism development (STD), with the particular focus on mediating role of the local support. The core objective of this current study, is to explore that how society involvement contributes in the effectiveness of sustainable tourism initiatives. On the bases of primary data collected through an empirical survey of 150 local residents from south Punjab of Pakistan. This study also helps to reveals the significant and positive connection between the community-based participation and sustainable tourism development. The simple random sampling technique applies for this study. Furthermore, the finding of this study indicate that local support mediates this relationship and suggesting the main acting endorsement and involvement of the local people help to enhance the sustainability of the tourism development. The results of this study, underscore the importance of inclusive community involvement which helps to empower the local stakeholders and local leaders to make the successful tourism outcomes. The theocratical implementation of this study adds the value by demonstrating the local support operate as a critical intermediary, reinforcing the link between the local people's involvement and sustainable tourism practices.

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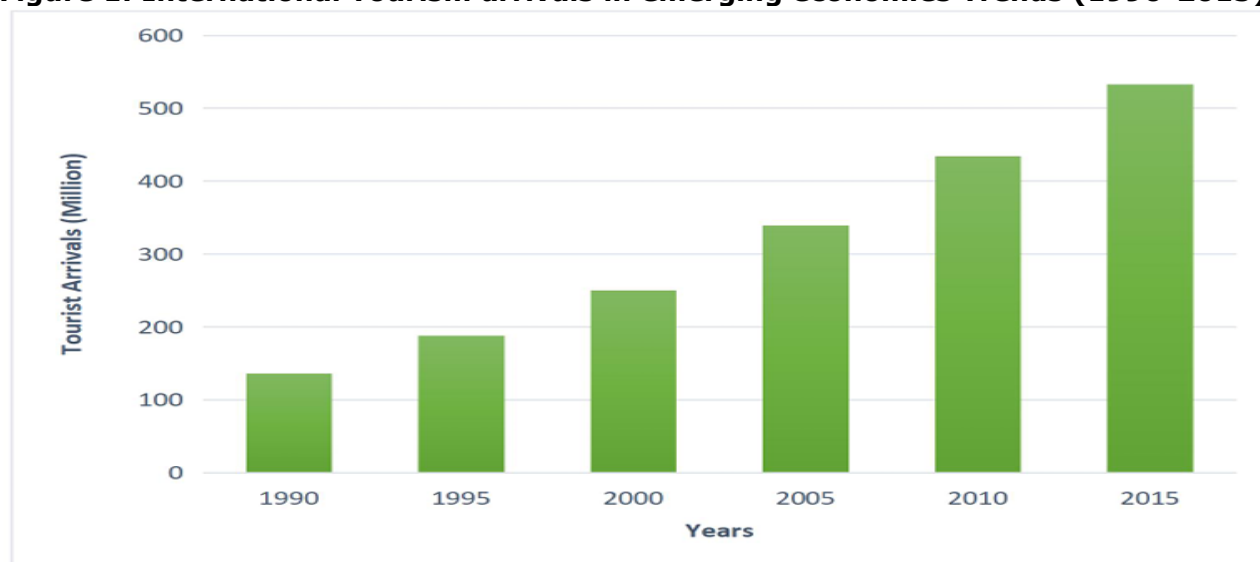
1. Introduction

Over the past 60 years, the importance of tourism as an financial industry has significantly improved. Tourism sector is the major source of the expansion of revenue and economic growth for many countries all over the world, when we categorized the tourism as an industry. The effects of tourism are multifaceted and relevant to both national economies at the country level and local communities at the territorial level, same as the global economy as a whole. The sustainable development approach for policymaking is essential to minimizing the negative consequences of the industry of tourism ongoing growth and optimizing the financial benefits within and between generations. This paper help to expounds the need and the economic predictions of sustainable tourism development for local peoples of Pakistan and also present the policy making recommendations in the light of abovementioned (Ahmad, Zada, & Ahmad, 2024). The most important feature which are influencing the economic development and growth worldwide is tourism. In a larger sense, it leads to the earning of foreign exchange, an upgrading in the balance of expenses, the reduction in revenue gaps, and the improvement of scarcity. It also generates job opportunities, boosts national income, and supports economic growth. Today, tourism is unquestionably a part of global trade and a significant source of services exports (Kamran M., 2025).

Over the last three decades, the growth rate of tourism industries has been steadily increasing, with a few short-term oscillations. In 2015, the tourist sector directly created 2.5

million employments globally, accounted for 7% of global services exports, and contributed a total of 9.8% to the global GDP as of July 2016. For the sixth year in a row, the tourism sector outpaced the global economy increase the growth rate. Its proportion of the global GDP is predicted to expand at an average annual rate of 4.0%, supporting an estimated three seventy million employment worldwide. In terms of the expansion of the tourism industry, South Asia is anticipated to be the financial region with the quickest rate of development throughout the ten-year period from 2016 to 2026 (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2016).

Figure 1: International Tourism arrivals in emerging economies Trends (1990-2015)



1.1. Tourism Industry in Pakistan

An Account Based on Facts Despite tourism's growing importance globally and in emerging nations over the past three decades or more, it remains an unexplored business in Pakistan. Due to the government's and policymakers' incompetence as well as a number of other socioeconomic and political issues, the nation's tourist industry has grown very slowly. In terms of the proportional contribution of the nation's gross domestic product, Pakistan is rated 128th as of 2015; in terms of absolute size, the world economy is placed 50th (Kamran M., 2025). In the same year, the tourist sector's percentage of the global GDP was 9.8%, while its overall contribution to Pakistan's GDP was 7.0%. The global contribution to employment was 9.5%, but Pakistan's total contribution was 6.2%. In Pakistan, tourism accounted for a startling 9.3% of all capital investment, compared to the global contribution of 4.3% in the same year. The business is growing quickly in the nation, especially in Pakistan's northern regions, thanks to a high rate of tourist investment, shifting social patterns, and initiatives to promote travel both domestically and abroad. The tourism industry's overall percentage contribution to Pakistan's GDP is predicted to expand at an average annual rate of 4.2% during the 2016–2026 decade, while the industry's contribution to global GDP is predicted to increase by 4.0% during the same time frame. With a projected direct share of 2.3%, the tourist industry's overall contribution to national employment is expected to grow by 2.4% between 2016 and 2026 (Kamran M., 2025). The total contribution of visitor's export behind to the total export and tourism investment to the total investment related to the capital of the country which are estimated to exceed the world % that are already mentioned on the basis of annual results. Aside from recent socioeconomic changes, these projections, which are based on numerical data and time tendencies, highlight the positive image in future for Pakistan's tourism sector and the subsequent stimulation of multifaceted economic growth (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2016).

Figure 2: Tourism Industry Growth Forecasts (2016-2026)



1.2. Approaches of Sustainable Development to Tourism

Global expansion of the tourism work as a key factor of economic growth in any country and tourism also help to gained industrial status. However, the effects of the industry of tourism are not limited to macro-economic level growth. The tourism play role in rapidly growing involvement to the national income, creation of the employment, foreign reserves exchange, growth of robust export, development of infrastructure etc., which are statistically clear. Through a strong culture-society-environment prism, with the help of tourism sector and also has a considerable influence on the local communities. Unplanned and uncontrolled tourism can negatively impact local communities' economic outlook through the creation of seasonal revenue and jobs, risky economic dependence, "exploitation of life-supporting resources" like food, water, and "fuel energy", as well as timber, "environmental degradation", "ecological disturbance", and sociocultural deterioration (Kamran M., 2025). It has been noted that approximately 2/3 of the natural world has been dishonoured by increased the human activities since the 1970s, pollution and care free from the uses of harmful products as one of the main factors that is highlighted is the effective utilization of the scenic beauty. Ecological imbalance will produce the result from the destruction of biodiversity, and the degradation of the ecosystem, and also dangerous for climate changes brought on by this loss of the natural world. Leadership has a vital role in sustainable development (Ahmad, Zada, & Ahmad, 2024).

1.3. Research Question

The research questions are given below which help to addressing the identified research gap:

1. Does the community-based participation influence the sustainable tourism development in south Punjab of Pakistan tourism landmark?
2. Does the community-based participation influence the local support in south Punjab of Pakistan tourism landmark?
3. Does local support influence the sustainable tourism development in south Punjab of Pakistan tourism landmark?
4. Does local community support mediate the relationship b/w community-based participation and sustainable tourism development in south Punjab of Pakistan tourism landmark?

1.4. Research Hypothesis

The research hypothesis is below:

- H1: "Community-based Participation positively influences the Sustainable Tourism Development".
H2: "Community-based participation positively influences local support for tourism"
H3: "Local community support for tourism positively influences STD".

1.5. Research Problems

CBP has not play the strong role in the development of natural beauty and rich cultural legacy. The facilities which are available, the natural and cultural heritage, and the opportunities and problems faced by stakeholders in the prospects of CBP in the sustainability

of tourism are all examined in this study. The absence of substructure, the importance of collaboration of the stakeholders, and the absence of active support of local community in tourism sector and preservation initiatives are all highlighted in this research. It suggests long-term ways to advance CBP and local community support in Pakistan (Khan et al., 2025). The main biggest issue in the world is fight against extreme poverty, which is especially severe in emerging countries. Pakistan has abundance of natural and traditional resources, which can be used for community-based tourism to help their poorest areas and better the economic conditions. Community-based participation is growing more popular in many other countries. Communities use tourism as a tool to promote the financial and economic growth. The leaders of the community in the field of development play the important role while the tourism issue is being handled. There is a wealth of research on the economic and social advantages of tourism for the local peoples (Ullah et al., 2021). According to Cheng et al. (2019), tourism has the potential to significantly increase the employment possibilities for the local people, and also help to boost the village infrastructure, raise the standard of living in local communities, and generate foreign exchange revenues. Furthermore, the growth in tourism sector also plays a significant role in the social advancement in the local communities. At the same time, there are few drawbacks of tourism development, which can negatively impact local communities, the environment, and culture through things like noise pollution, crowding, traffic jams, and environmental contamination (Huong & Lee, 2017). There are few studies which have been conducted on the base of different objective assessment and create the impact on local community support and community-based participation on the base of sustainable tourism development (Khalid et al., 2019).

1.6. Significance of The Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine the responsibilities, opportunities, and difficulties of local community, local people involvement and stakeholder collaboration in the CBP growth of Pakistan's tourism industry. This research enhances our theoretical and practical knowledge of CBP in Pakistan's tourism industry. From a practical standpoint, local societies highlight the active contribution of local peoples in CBP efforts and also highlights the observable results of their involvement. CBP procedures can be enhanced to assist the betterment of Pakistani people and safeguard their environment and cultural legacy by putting these learned lessons into effect. The paper also highlights the difficulties in creating the CBP and offers ideas and recommendations and also provide the friendly environment for travelling the tourists. It makes the audience feel involved and involved by highlighting the value of active local community participation and stakeholder collaboration in pursuing conservation which create the impact on support sustainable tourism projects. (Khan et al., 2025).

2. Literature Review

One of the most active industries in the world is tourism, which has grown quickly. It has made impressive strides regardless of a nation's income level. Without a question, tourism significantly affects a country's revenue while also being essential to advancing its civilization and cultural legacy. Pakistan's tourism industry has grown significantly due to rising interest in a variety of travel experiences, such as corporate travel, leisure travel, games, health care, religious activities, cultural discovery, and "educational endeavours" (Pervaiz, Manzoor, & Awan, 2024). At its core, the main aim of the sector tourism to achieve a balance between enabling tourists to see new places and protecting regional ecosystems and populations. The local society and social structure both are benefit from tourism at the same time. The industry covers a broad range of pursuits, such as lodging, dining, shopping, and other travel-related activities. Tourism serves a variety of tourists' needs and experiences, whether they are traveling for work, pleasure, or social interaction (Pervaiz et al., 2025). The tourist sector in Pakistan makes a considerable contribution to the economic growth of the country. For instance, this industry supported 4.2 million employments in 2022 and contributed 5.9% to the GDP of the country. Despite this, considering the nation's wide range of tourism attractions and rich cultural diversity, the sector's performance is still below par. In 2022, tourists spent about 16 billion dollars (USD) in Pakistan; this amount is expected to rise sharply, possibly reaching 30 billion dollars (USD) by 2033. With leisure activities as the main focus, domestic tourism dominated the industry in 2022, accounting for 91% of tourist spending. But foreign influxes had been more erratic, peaking at 3.58 million dollars (USD) in 2019 before falling to 163,000 in 2020, mostly because to the unanticipated COVID-19 epidemic (Pervaiz et al., 2025).

Fortunately, the industry recovered gradually, with 1.91 million foreign arrivals in 2022 (WTTC, 2024). With its varied edifying legacy, historical sites, and scenic beauty, Pakistan has enormous potential as a travel destination. Numerous historical, religious, and archaeological sites throughout the nation draw tourists from all over the world. Before the pandemic, Pakistan annually drew more than two million foreign visitors, mostly from its picturesque northern areas. Pakistan has drawn interest from all over the world with its stunning mountains, tranquil lakes, charming valleys, holy places, historical monuments, traditional cuisines, a wide variety of eating options, and legendary friendliness (Ali et al., 2021). According to Saqib et al. (2019), the northern areas of Pakistan, especially Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, are popular tourist destinations because they provide chances for hiking and explore the local culture. Nonetheless, Pakistan has a great chance for future expansion based on it increasing the number of visitor spending and rising international tourism rankings. The government of Pakistan take some initiatives to launched some different projects for attracting the tourists from all over the world. Additionally, the government has simplified the procedure, so that the foreign tourist can more easily obtain visas (GOP, 2024). The idea of the society's development, particularly in developing nations, is now extensively acknowledged as a way to reduce poverty level. Community-based participation is one of the many strategies for uplifting and developing local societies. However, the long-term feasibility of tourism, which is maintained and run by different stakeholders, that are depends heavily on the host community (Seraphin et al., 2021).

Eraqi (2007) conducted a study on the suggestions of local residents on the consequences of tourism growth. The communities link from rural areas must be invigorated to utilize the resources of tourism which are available to them. Governments in developing countries frequently use tourism to sell their countries with the help of tourism and make quick foreign cash. According to numerous publications, one of the main socio-cultural effect of tourism is changing how the local communities view themselves. In order to effectively develop the tourism in local communities, it must consider the views of the locals for cooperative associations which are based on respect, belief, and specially to promote the indigenous acceptance and care (Canavan, 2016). Empowerment is the capacity to act on an individual or group level. As a result of enablement, individuals luxuriate and enhance in their control and command of oneself on the features and decisions that improve their living standers. The best way for a community to develop tourism sustainably and, thus, raise the chances of successful tourism initiatives is through empowerment (Wani, Dada, & Shah, 2024). The WTO has started sustainable tourism initiatives and poverty eradication efforts in the past ten years, to increase the economic benefits in underserved the local communities (Asmelash & Kumar, 2019). Specifically, the capability of community-based participation to boost local communities which has been widely acknowledged. The interest of tourist in local cultures has increased as a result of the local's preservation of their traditional evolution and culture. Additionally, a variety of rare and unusual classes which have raised the local's awareness regarding to the environmental issues and sparked a desire to preserve natural resources so that visitors can have beautiful travel experiences (Lee & Jan, 2019). In other words, community-based participation is a successful approach for guaranteeing the sustainable tourism development (STD) by promoting resource protection and benefit sharing among all community members. Community-based tourism, which contend not only creates economic capitals but also helps to reduce the negative impact on the mass tourism, such as ecological degradation, is an substitute to the mass tourism in developing nations. In other words, by lowering the poverty and protecting the local natural and cultural resources, successful community-based participation contributes to improving the standers of living for the local communities (Khalid et al., 2019).

3. Research Framework

Figure 3: Conceptual Framework



3.1. Community-Based Participation and STD

Despite from fact the tourism sector help to the local communities economically and can effectively reduce the poverty level, its growth has harmed the typical culture and altered the ways of living for locals. Locals suffer adverse environmental, social and cultural effects in the initial stages of development of tourism rather than gaining the financial rewards. In order to give locals a better standard of living, promote a greater appreciation for traditional culture, and preserve the atmosphere with the help of tourism planning and administration, academics have thus proposed community-based participation. In the domains of tourism planning and development, STDs have been extensively studied. In contrast to the early steps of tourism development, STD not only boosts the local economies but also meets the requirements of visitors, improves the living standers for locals, and protects the natural resources for upcoming generations. In other words, the community-based participation has been seen as a vital component of effective STD (Khalid et al., 2019). Therefore, we generate that:

H1: Community-based Participation positively influences the Sustainable Tourism Development.

3.2. Community-based participation and local support

Now in this era the participation of the local peoples in the development of the community and the expansion of the community is essential. The resident's adverse opinions of tourism are prejudiced by an inequity influence in the host community (Suess, Baloglu, & Busser, 2018). Additionally, the locals substitute or a more optimistic behaviour toward tourism growth and develop the care when they are involved in training and development of the tourism sector. In community-based participation research, the dynamics of the power and trust are seen as key ideas which are focusing to the local's perceptions which are related to the tourism. Murphy (1985) asserts that a crucial element in assessing the sustainability destination of tourism development require the local support for planning and development. It is implied that local residents should have the same economic capability to earn profit from tourism sector and its links to the other industries in order to participate in the distribution of tourism benefits. As a industry of the community, tourism must encompass not just locals who directly benefit from the society but also those who indirectly benefit from its ongoing growth. Participation from the community will enhance the individuals' perceptions and willingness to support the tourist development (Wani, Dada, & Shah, 2024). The dynamics of power and trust are seen as fundamental concepts in community-based participation and research on local communities' perceptions about the tourism sector. Residents of the host community have an unfavourable opinion about tourism sector as a result of an inadequate power dynamic. Perceptions of the local residents create the impact on tourism which are mainly influenced by their degree of control over the tourism-related projects and power dynamics. Locals support and having a good attitude toward the growth of tourism provide the help in planning and management (Wani, Dada, & Shah, 2024). Therefore, we assume that:

H2: Community-based participation positively influences local community support for tourism.

3.3. Local Support and STD

In order to ensure the community-based participation and the preserve the natural resources, a study carried out in Botswana by Sebele (2010) showed how crucial participation of local residents and involvement of societies in tourism planning and management. The community becomes more conscious related to the benefits and disadvantages of tourism when it is included in the development process. Communities that are given the chance to influence the decisions that impact their lives utilize their traditional culture and history (Dodds, Ali, & Galaski, 2018). The development of the sustainable tourism occurs when locals do not support it. Support from the community is very critical factor for STD. Residents' support for the STDs has been highlighted by researchers. For tourism to be sustainable, locals must be involved in decision-making and have a favourable outlook on travel (Canalejo et al., 2015). According to the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria, the sustainability significantly affects the quality of life of the local communities. When local communities participate in tourism planning, they believe that tourism development is more acceptable (Khalid et al., 2019). Therefore, we postulate that:

H3: Local community support for tourism positively influences STD

3.4. Local Support as a Mediator

Active support of the community in this modern era is very necessary for sustainable tourism (Cheng et al., 2019). Locals are excited about the ideas related to the tourism development when they are involved in the society's betterment. Participation from the local peoples and a welcoming attitude toward local communities for tourists are very essential for sustainability in the tourism sector (Canalejo et al., 2015). The participation of the general public in the development of the tourism sector and also helps them to comprehend the benefits and drawbacks. To benefit their tourists, communities must have total control over their resources. Community involvement in tourism sector is essential for the sustainability of tourism and local lives, (Thetsane, 2019). Murphy argued that the local residents should be the main stakeholder in the development of tourism sector because of the snowballing impact on the growth of tourism (Wani, Dada, & Shah, 2024). Opportunities related to the development for tourists can also provide the benefits of the communities more and work more efficiently when community-based participation is present. Community members must actively support the tourism development if sustainable tourism is to be realized. Governments and markets need community participation and support for achieving the STD initiatives (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017). In order to illustrate the significance of community-based participation for STD and the prior work has taken a quantitative approach. Checking local support was suggested by the Nunkoo and So (2016) as a conceivable mediator for sustainable tourism. They recommended that the appropriate pathway from community-based participation to STD through intervention should also be examined. Prior research has demonstrated that support for tourism works as a mediator in the association between the apparent impacts of tourist and support for tourism planning. The empirical testing to determine its mechanism and proposed support for tourism as a dependent variable of government trust. According to Nunkoo and So (2016), one of the elements influencing local support for tourism is power. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H4: "Local Community Support mediate the relationship between Community-based Participation and sustainable tourism development".

4. Research Methodology

This study uses a cross-sectional survey as its research design. In order to characterize the relationship between variables of interest, this method entails to gathering data from a sample of participants all at once. In order to examine the connection between community-based participation and sustainable tourism development, data is gathered from a sample of North Punjab Pakistan's tourism industry. The survey is conducted by using a self-administered questionnaire, the questionnaire includes measures of community-based participation, local support and sustainable tourism development. The current study concentrates on analysing the tourism sector of Pakistan, necessitating the collection of data from Tourists. Therefore, the unit of analysis will be individual tourist. Sample collection will be collected by using the Sekaran and Bougie table. Obtaining the primary research data is an essential task. The current study used a questionnaire-based survey to achieve the purpose. The questionnaire was painstakingly created using solid empirical data and which was modified from other studies. It covers a range of scales, such as sustainable tourist development, local community support, and community-based participation. There are fourteen closed-ended questions on the instrument used in this study. The first section of the question paper consists of demo-graphic information such as age, gender, employment, education and income level. All of the items for each construct that was investigated using the five-point Likert scale recommended by the earlier researchers are included in the second section of the question paper. "1" indicates strongly dis-agree (SD), "2" dis-agrees, "3" is neutral (N), "4" is agrees (A), and "5" indicates strongly agrees (SA) on the five-point Likert scale.

Fifteen elements in all were taken from earlier studies and modified according to the current research framework. To fit the current work, certain changes were made in that way these items were worded. The operationalization of community-based participation involved the adoption of five items from Khan et al. (2025). Eslami et al. (2019) provided five items for the construction of sustainable tourist development. Additionally, five metrics were used from Nunkoo and So (2016) to gauge the level of local community support for tourism. Academic specialists systematically pre-tested the survey of the original questionnaire before it was administered, and no foremost amendments were made in response to their comments. The data was gathered from the respondents by using a straightforward simple random sampling

technique. These samples were selected on the base of the following criteria: (1) locals who worked in the tourism industry, (2) local leaders chosen by the local populace, and (3) tour operators. The research team asked respondents if they would want to take part in the study. Those who responded in the affirmative were given the questionnaire after we briefly explained the determination of this study. According to the pertinent studies which help to employ the structural equation modelling (SEM) technique, the sample size is 150 samples (Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

4.1. Analysis of data

The structure of the sample was described in this study by using the SPSS (18.0) statistical program. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was done using AMOS 23.0. The determined the probability of estimation was assessed by using the SEM analysis tool. Data analysis was done in two steps, which are based on the work of Anderson and Gerbing (1988). First, we estimated the understandable levels of the variables which are using for the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) after establishing the validity of the variables and reliability of the variables. Second, SEM analysis was used to test the conceptual model's hypotheses.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics

In this paragraph the author explains the basic demographic information in detailed. Total 300 respondents and we get the total genuine data from 150 respondents (61.68%) were male and (38.30%) were female. Regarding to the respondent's level of education, primary/secondary (13%), 10th-12th (26%), Graduates (24%), masters/doctoral (16%), diploma (21%). In terms of age, approximately 28% of respondents said that they are under the age of 30, followed by those between the ages of 31 and 40 (29%), between the ages of 41 and 60 (34%), and 60 years old or above were (12%). Furthermore, 59% of respondents specified as community members, 20% respondents were local leaders and 21% respondents were belong to the different tour operators companies.

Table 1: Demographic profile

Demographic	(n) Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	227	61.68
Female	141	38.30
Age of Respondent		
Below 30	96	26.1
31 - 40	104	28.3
41 - 60	132	35.8
Above 60	36	9.7
Level of Education		
Primary/Secondary	51	13.8
10 th - 12 th	92	25.1
Graduates	81	22.1
Master/Doctoral	66	17.9
Diploma	78	21.1
Type of residents		
Local leaders	84	22.8
Community members	210	57.1
Tour operators	74	20.1

According to the given results, the measurement model satisfied the model fit criteria of Hu and Bentler (1999), with $\chi^2=146$, $df = 87$, $\chi^2/df = 1.68$, $p < 0.001$. TLI=0.974, RMSEA=0.043, GFI=0.950, and CFI=0.978. Furthermore, the validity and reliability of the scales were assessed. First, we find the reliability of the measurements were evaluated by using the cronbach alpha and composite reliability (CR). All values of the cronbach alpha were higher than the suggested threshold of 0.70, which are shown in Table. 2 (Nunnally, 1978). The Composite Reliability scores were higher than the 0.70 cutoff point set by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Second, convergent and discriminant validity were used to evaluate the measures' validity. Convergent validity was proven since, as Table 1 illustrates, "the values of AVE > 0.50 and CR > AVE (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 2: Reliability and validity measurement

Constructs	Items	Loading	Alpha	CR	AVE
Community-based Participation	CBP	0.801	0.852	0.865	0.563
	CBP2	0.804			
	CBP3	0.751			
	CBP4	0.643			
	CBP5	0.743			
Local Support	LS1	0.781	0.866	0.875	0.585
	LS2	0.801			
	LS3	0.774			
	LS4	0.659			
	LS5	0.803			
Sustainable Development	Tourism		0.892	0.897	0.638
	STD1	0.794			
	STD2	0.831			
	STD3	0.821			
	STD4	0.630			
	STD5	0.895			

4.3. Hypotheses Testing

The results of the direct and indirect effect hypotheses are shown in Tables 3 and 4. First, our hypothesis is that community-based participation has a favourable impact on the growth of sustainable tourism. Table 2 indicates that community-based participation has a significant and favourable impact on the sustainable tourism development ($\beta = 0.16$, $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 1 was recognized in this way. Second, we believe that local support is positively and significantly impacted by community-based participation. Table 2 demonstrates the considerable direct impact of community-based participation on local support ($\beta=0.35$, $p<0.05$). Thus, hypothesis number two is approved. The "growth of sustainable tourism is positively and significantly impacted by local support", as shown in Table 3 ($\beta=0.41$, $p<0.05$). Hypothesis 3 is thus acknowledged. Figure 1.4 shows the outcomes of the structural model. Table 3 illustrates the indirect effects of community-based involvement on the growth of sustainable tourism. According to Hypothesis 4, local support for tourism has an indirect impact on the sustainable tourism development through community-based participation. The four requirements outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986) must be fulfilled in order to validate this hypothesis. Since the independent variable (community-based participation) significantly and favourably influences the dependent variable (sustainable tourism development), the first requirement for this mediator effect is met. With local community support serving as the mediator, the second situation shows a positive relationship between the independent variable and mediator variables.

Table 3: Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Relationship	p-Values	Decision
H1	CBP → STD	0.015	Supported
H2	CBP → LS	0.004	Supported
H3	LS → STD	0.019	Supported

Table 4: Hypothesis Testing

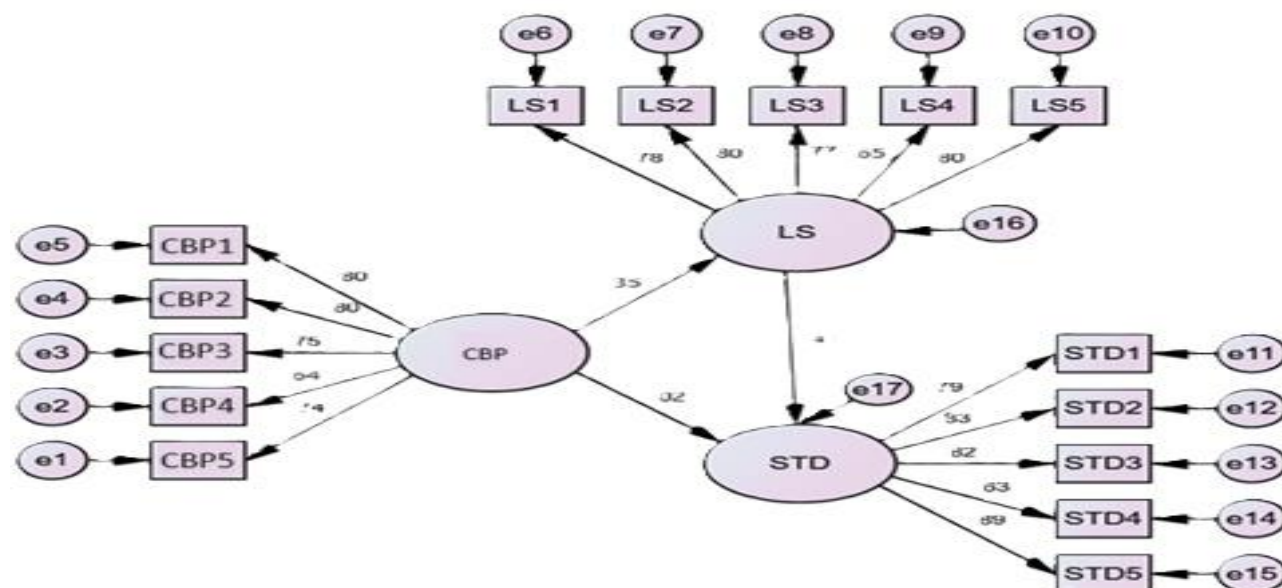
Hypothesis	Relationship	p-value	Decision	Mediation
H4	CBP → LS → STD	0.005	Supported	Full Mediation

Indices: CBP = "Community-based Participation", LS = "local support", STD = "Sustainable tourism development"
Source: Authors

This condition is met by the authentication of hypothesis 2. For the third criterion, there must be a connection between the dependent variable of "sustainable tourism development" and the mediator variable of the local support. This condition is met by the validation of hypothesis 3. The fourth criteria are that the "relationship between the independent and dependent variables must be erased", when the mediator variable is incorporated into the model. The impact of community-based participation on the "sustainable tourism development"

disappeared (from 0.168 to 0.024) and was not significant when these three factors were incorporated into the model. "We may therefore draw the conclusion that the relationship between community-based Participation and the sustainable tourism development is entirely mediated by local support". Thus, "H4 is also supported, since we see that community-based participation has an indirect effect of (0.144) on sustainable tourism development through local support".

Figure 4: Structural Model



Source: Researcher

5. Discussion

This study set out to explore the community-based participation and its effects on locally supported sustainable tourism development. The enablement of the locals and its importance in ensuring the long-term sustainability of the tourism sector were the main topics of this current study. The constructed model is following the full mediation model, according to the given study. The development of sustainable tourism is greatly impacted on the local support and community-based participation. Additionally, it was discovered that the association between community-based participation and sustainable tourism development is fully mediated by the local support. So, "to elevate the rural areas especially with different natural resources related to the tourism which are state to the local government that grant the empowerment of the societies and also include in the president's decision powers". The most and best significant benefits regards to the tourism sector is the aptitude to empower the local communities and rally support for the tourism sector. Since local societies are well-versed in how to address the local resident's issues which help to brought up on by increased in tourism sector, there is a clear correlation between community-based participation and the sustainable tourism development. By guaranteeing the natural resources which are preserved for the benefits of the local residents, tourism with local support is a successful method for sustainable tourism development (STD) (Ellis & Sheridan, 2015). Locals should encourage the individuals to contribute in decision-making and broaden community-based participation channels if the locals want to see sustained growth in tourism sector (Cheng et al., 2019). Local residents should be in charge of the infrastructure and amenities related to tourism in their immediate area. In order to properly manage the effects and benefit related to the tourism, the local community support must be involved, as they directly or indirectly experience both the optimistic and undesirable impacts on the tourism sector. Sustainable tourism fosters the unity and revitalizes the relationship between locals and tourists with the help of local communities. It is clear that tourism plays a very substantial role in enhancing the growth of the economy in underdeveloped countries. Both the host and local communities have benefited from it in a number of ways. There are some advantages and disadvantages of tourism sectors. Sustainable tourism development aids in highlighting the benefits while simultaneously lowering the negative effects (Kontogeorgopoulos, Churyen, & Duangsaeng, 2014).

6. Conclusion

This study examined the connection between the local support, community-based participation, and sustainable tourism development. Additionally, it has looked into how the local support might act as a mediating factor to strengthen the relationship between sustainable tourism and community-based participation. Participation from the community offers a source of achieving a community's sustainable development. The local populace will get more advantages when communities are empowered and decide that how best to use local resources. Without local support, sustainability cannot be achieved. As long as sustainable tourism continues to satisfy the target population's expectations, it has the strong potential to be incredible source of long-term development. It is evident to the locals that tourism can benefit for their community, and they greatly appreciate the benefits, which include increased the recreational opportunities, improved the living standards, and a higher standard of life. One of the best ways to foster the positive behaviour and improve the living standards to empower locals through tourism. To put locals at the center of the tourism development, it is advised that local administrations employ a participating approach that increases beneficiary contribution in taking decisions that impact of them but over all they have little control (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010). In order to create tourist attractions, the planners should employ a comprehensive social incorporation and involvement in that approach which involves the people from a wide range of community groups and their backgrounds. The results clearly show that community-based participation and local support have a good and positive impact on the sustainable tourism development.

6.1. Implications

In Pakistan, tourism has grown as a significant industry. The state has a lot of potential for rural tourism as well, and sustainable tourism is the best way to move Pakistan forward. To find out the local communities are happy or unhappy with the growth of tourism, more research should be done in southern Punjab of Pakistan. By include the local residents in decision-making and implementation procedures, the government and other organizations can use this data in the future to generate suitable tourism advantages and also use for the economic growth and policy making. Empowered the local's contribution for the long-lasting sustainability of tourism development by reducing the adverse effects on the tourism sector. Tourism planners must be involved in local communities in the process of decision-making for STD projects in order to empower the local community. As part of the process of developing tourism, the local community must possess the essential knowledge, capabilities, and skills to involve the STD activities. Therefore, it has been suggested that in order to increase community members' awareness of sexually transmitted diseases, both the federal and local governments should continuously educate the local peoples. More practically, the local leaders and citizens can also create training programs, work-shops, focus-groups, public-hearings, and tourist advisory boards, which will help the locals to develop and share their skills and abilities.

6.2. Limitations of this Study

In this research, few limitations have been discussed about the current study. Limitations are given below:

1. This study covers the limited population; the area cover in this research was only South Punjab of Pakistan, which have limited ability to cover the other tourist locations.
2. This study used cross-sectional study, which are predicted so bias in nature, but the longitudinal studies need more time, more resources but the chance of biasness is low.
3. My questionnaire which are used in this study is dyadic in character, that's why the problem has been created. The questionnaire is filling up by the local residents, local leaders and tour operators, but there are many local leaders, residents and tour operators who's are not willing to fill the questionnaire. The researcher faces very difficulties to encourage them to fill the questionnaire.
4. Another limitation is author used the small sample size for this study because shortage of time and resources.

6.3. Future Recommendation

When we conclude this study, this research suggests a wide range of avenues for more direction for future investigation. Future research may be done on a larger population for more generalizability, as the sample for this research was drawn from the local community in the

study area. Future studies could examine how other factors, such local involvement, policy action, and so forth, moderate the relationship. Future researchers are advised to incorporate these moderating elements into the suggested conceptual framework. Through the inclusion of a single mediating variable, the study looked at the direct relationship between community-based participation and sustainable tourism development. Future research could look at the relationship between community-based participation and sustainable tourism development using multiple mediating variables. Although local residents and local leaders also participated in the current study, future research may include additional groups for multiple group analysis, such as NGOs and tourism officials. There is the financial impact of such innovations, especially at the home level, requires further research to analyse and measure.

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