

SUSTAINED COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE FOR SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: A STAKEHOLDER CAUSAL SCOPE ANALYSIS

Michael Christofi 

Demetris Vrontis

University of Nicosia

Riad Shams 

Northumbria University

Zhanna Belyaeva

Ural Federal University

Michael R Czinkota

Georgetown

The hospitality and tourism industry “presents challenges that need to be addressed, including how to manage their growth sustainably, so as not to diminish its potential” which solicits the “need to move toward more sustainable practices” (World Tourism Organization [UNWTO], 2017). The call for papers for this special issue was received with much enthusiasm, as illustrated by the large number of submissions covering a wide range of topics on the interface of hospitality and tourism, stakeholder engagement and sustainability. Accordingly, papers accepted for inclusion in this special issue represent the diversity of submissions, with each making a unique contribution to the existing knowledge base.

To start with, Fang, Nguyen, and Armstrong strive to initiate a conversation on how the collective leadership capacity can assist in balancing the economic needs of a destination with the environmental and social goals. By drawing on leadership and tourism literature, their findings show that tourism-based leadership programs have the capacity to initiate the development of collective leadership capacity, a necessary element for building effective stakeholder networks that drive change at tourism destination, workplace, and community levels.

Vrontis et al., examined how the business model of the tourism sector that is used in Italy’s Langhe region is aligned to the promotion of a “sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and

decent work.”⁸⁴⁷ Their findings showed that a variety of stakeholders play an important role toward the sustainable development of the region. Adding to this, the authors categorize the various stakeholders as either internal or external, followed by the identification of definitive stakeholders.

Furthermore, Sun and Yoon examined and proved the effect of organizational virtuousness on employees' engagement and organizational citizenship behavior in a deluxe hotel. Their research also tested and validated the moderating role of a positive personality at the individual level of analysis and the perception of organizational support at the organizational level on the aforementioned causal relationship.

Nuseir examined the impact of brand equity and demographic characteristics on brand loyalty within the United Arab Emirates' hotel industry by using customer experience as the mediating role. Overall, the results showed a positive association between brand equity and brand loyalty.

Moreover, Vrontis, Iazzi, Maizza, and Cavallo developed and tested an evaluation model for the communication of stakeholder engagement process, an aspect that is able to enhance companies' reputation and social legitimacy. Based on this, their study offers a contribution to improve the management of relations with stakeholders and their involvement in value co-creation activities.

Pereira, Gupta, and Hussain investigate the relationship between travel motivation and tourists' attitude toward a destination. Their research also examines the mediating role played by destination image between travel motivation and tourists' attitude toward destination. Drawing on the theory of image and theory of planned behavior, the findings of the study showed a positive relationship between tourists' travel motivation and their attitude toward the destination, which is mediated by the destination image.

Continuing, Shams, Vrontis, and Christofi provide a research note that offers insights into how analyzing stakeholder causal scopes would be instrumental in simplifying tourism data management structure to support sustainability research and practice in the tourism sector.

Lopez, Boluda, and Marin-Aguilar compare two public marketing strategies that could be used to change residents' attitudes to further stimulate tourist attraction: (a) an experiential marketing strategy based on the development of a public mega-event; and (b) a green marketing strategy based on the promotion of green actions. Their results showed that in low-context cultures (Spain), an experiential marketing strategy provides better results than a green one; however, in high-context cultures (Mexico), the effectiveness of a green marketing strategy is higher.

On another note, Jang proposed a testable model that incorporates causal and outcome variables for stakeholder engagement in order to investigate the moderating effect of chain affiliation on the relationship between the significant variables, managements' environmental values and leadership (casual factors), stakeholder engagement, environmental performance, and restaurant performance (outcome factors). By drawing on survey research within the United


States' restaurant industry, the results showed that managers' environmental values were found to be important predictors of stakeholder engagement for chain restaurants compared with independent restaurants, and that managers' environmental leadership was an important determinant of stakeholder engagement for independent restaurants rather than for chain restaurants.


Moreover, using the context of sharing economy accommodation in London, Apostolidis and Brown's article focuses on investigating the conflictual relationships between hosts, guests, and locals and the role of developing effective conflict management strategies. Their results showed that relationship, information, values, interest, and structural issues can create conflict, leading to a loss of personal, environmental, financial, social, and material resources, as well as value destruction. In turn, this can negatively affect the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of sharing economy accommodation. Effective conflict management strategies, such as the development of effective communication channels and consistent policies, are significant for enabling value co-recovery and co-creation, via the recovery of lost resources.

Lastly, Falatoonitoosi, Schaffer, and Kerr develop a prosperity model for a tourism destination and investigate stakeholders' perceptions of the role of sustainable tourism development in enhancing the prosperity. Their findings showed that sustainable tourism development positively affects the prosperity of the target destination in general. Moreover, sustainability operates as a predictor of core prosperity dimensions, especially for sociocultural empowerment and environmental quality.

In conclusion, although this special issue is primarily intended to inspire and broadly direct researchers' focus on developing a competitive advantage for sustainable hospitality and tourism development in line with UNWTO's 2030 agenda for sustainable development, we very much hope that this work offers pathways for general hospitality and tourism researchers to embrace, leverage, and contribute to hospitality and tourism knowledge.

ORCID iDs

Michael Christofi  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7457-2701>

Riad Shams  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8007-7400>

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