**Impact of Environmental and Social Attitude towards sustainable tourism on resident's satisfaction**: **Moderating Role of Gender**

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**Abstract**

This research intends to fill this void by determining the influence that residents' environmental and social attitudes have on the success of local, sustainable tourism initiatives, as well as by investigating how the correlations between these elements and gender can be altered to produce alternative results. By taking into account the circumstances that are unique to Jammu and Kashmir, the objective of this research is to provide a nuanced knowledge of gender-responsive policymaking and to contribute to the construction of living environments that are both sustainable and welcoming to people of all backgrounds. Taking into account Jammu and Kashmir's one-of-a-kind geographical characteristics is the key to achieving this goal. According to the data that are shown in the table that is located above, the level of satisfaction experienced by a resident is positively impacted not only by their social attitude but also by their environmental attitude regarding sustainable tourism. The findings indicate that gender has a moderating role in the relationship between social and environmental attitudes regarding sustainable tourism and residents' satisfaction levels.

**Keywords: social attitude, tourism, sustainable tourism, environmental attitude, resident satisfaction.**

**1. Introduction**

Due to its ramifications for the economy, the environment, and society, the sustainable tourism business has become a prominent research subject in recent years (Assante et al., 2012; Obradović & Stojanović, 2022). To ensure the sustainability of resources, both natural and artificial, sustainable tourism integrates diverse facets of tourist development with an emphasis on long-term considerations over short-term advantages. To ensure permanent benefits to recipient communities, tourism development must strike a balance among its economic, social, and environmental facets (Park et al., 2015). A key element is resident satisfaction, which is directly impacted by the environment and societal perceptions of sustainable tourism (Boley et al., 2017). A multidimensional concept, resident satisfaction measures an individual's level of contentment with their living conditions. A wide range of social and environmental elements can impact this contentment (Choi & Murray, 2010). Understanding the elements contributing to resident satisfaction is becoming increasingly important as urban environments grow. This is because understanding these aspects is necessary for formulating policies and practices that encourage sustainable living and enhance the quality of life. In this light, the residents' perspectives on the natural and social conditions in their immediate surroundings appear as critical factors in determining the degree to which they are satisfied. Although environmental and social components of community living are receiving a growing amount of attention, there needs to be more knowledge of how the attitudes of individual residents towards these aspects influence the level of contentment they experience within their living arrangements. This knowledge gap becomes much more apparent when one considers the possibility of gender variations in perceptions of and levels of satisfaction with sustainable tourism (Ayazlar & Ayazlar, 2016).

Moreover, there is a significant gap between citizens' levels of engagement in community life, quality of life, and general well-being in many towns since satisfaction levels among inhabitants vary greatly. One possible explanation for some of this variation is that different people have different perspectives on the environment and the various social features of the community. It may be helpful to establish policies and initiatives that enhance communal life if one thoroughly understands how the attitudes in question influence one's level of pleasure. In addition, one's gender can have a considerable impact on how they interpret their surroundings and how they interact with others (Eslami et al., 2016). For instance, it is frequently noticed that women may place a higher value on community interactions, whereas males may focus more on the area's physical characteristics. Another example is that women may value family and friends more. The moderating effect of gender in the relationship between environmental and social attitudes and resident satisfaction is not frequently investigated, despite the apparent inequalities between the sexes (Obradović et al., 2023).

As a result, the challenge is to investigate how the environment and social attitudes concerning sustainable tourism influence the level of satisfaction felt by residents, as well as how gender influences the strength of this link. Individuals' views and ideas about their surroundings are meant to be called their environmental attitudes. These perspectives might be influenced by various elements, such as the neatness and upkeep of the surrounding area, the availability of open green space, and the degree to which pollution is present. Individuals' perceptions of social conditions and interactions within their living environment, such as community cohesion, safety, cultural activities, and access to social services, are reflected in their social attitudes, reflecting their perspectives on these circumstances and interactions. In addition, the study will determine whether there are gender-specific goals or concerns, which would help researchers adjust community development programs to be more effective. This is vital for ensuring that all residents, regardless of gender, are provided with living conditions that are more sustainable, inclusive, and gratifying (Khan et al., 2022).

Although an ever-expanding body of research has investigated the connection between environmental and social attitudes and resident happiness, relatively few studies have considered that gender may play a moderating role in this connection. Given that men and women frequently have entirely different experiences and perspectives of their surroundings due to society and cultural standards, the role of gender is a significant factor to consider. For instance, women may place a higher value on the safety and cleanliness of their neighbourhood, whilst men may be more concerned with characteristics like access to recreational facilities. Similarly, males may place a higher value on the availability of employment opportunities (Ravikumar et al., 2022).

This study aims to address this gap by evaluating the impact of environmental and social attitudes concerning sustainable tourism on resident happiness and analyzing how the correlations between these factors and gender can be modulated differently. This study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of gender-responsive policymaking and contribute to the establishment of sustainable and inclusive living environments by taking into account the specific context of Jammu and Kashmir. This will be accomplished by considering the unique setting of Jammu and Kashmir.

**Rationale**

The Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) region is marked by its distinct geographical, social, and cultural contexts, making an investigation into resident satisfaction in the area not only relevant but also timely. There is a growing recognition that resident satisfaction is an essential facet of community development and sustainability. It directly influences the quality of life and overall well-being, which is pivotal for achieving the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Environmental and social attitudes concerning sustainable tourism undoubtedly play a significant role in resident satisfaction. An individual's perception of and attitude towards their surrounding environment and social conditions directly contribute to their feeling of contentment, happiness, and satisfaction with their residence. However, there needs to be more research examining these relationships in the context of J&K, where environmental and social conditions differ from other regions due to their unique topography, climate, and socio-political issues.

Moreover, the gender-based analysis of these relationships is often overlooked in research, although gender plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions and attitudes. A socio-ecological perspective recognises that men and women may experience their environments differently due to cultural norms, societal roles, and individual behaviours. Therefore, understanding the moderating role of gender in the relationship between environmental and social attitudes and resident satisfaction can reveal nuanced insights, contributing to more gender-sensitive policies and initiatives.

In conclusion, the proposed study will provide a much-needed investigation into the factors influencing resident satisfaction in the context of J&K. The findings will contribute to the understanding of how residents' attitudes and gender differences impact their satisfaction, leading to the development of targeted strategies for enhancing the quality of life in J&K. This study will thus be an essential addition to the literature on sustainable community development, resident satisfaction, and gender studies.

**2. Literature Review**

**Sustainable tourism**

A long-term strategy known as sustainable tourist development (STD) promotes commercially viable tourism while protecting the environment and society while guaranteeing an equitable distribution of costs and benefits (Khan et al., 2022). Decisions are made based on the effects on the economy, the environment, culture, the generation and distribution of wealth, stakeholder interactions, and relative power dynamics. The stakeholders' requirements and the environment are balanced with the industry's need for profit via STD (Bramwell, 2006). Sustainable tourism necessitates stakeholder collaboration; otherwise, only the wealthy would profit. The environment and culture must be safeguarded in order to maintain stakeholder satisfaction with tourist development and their community (Ahn et al., 2002).

***Resident attitudes***

Surveys of resident attitudes measure residents' attitudes (Ahn et al., 2002). The demographic data acquired makes the evaluation of differences within resident population groups possible (Ahn et al., 2002). Several variables influence the views of locals towards tourism. Residents who value economic impacts will have positive attitudes towards tourism but unfavourable attitudes towards environmental and cultural change, according to surveys of resident opinions (Yoon et al., 2001).

*Environmental attitude* refers to residents' understanding, beliefs, and actions regarding environmental matters. These may include perspectives on recycling, preventing pollution, conserving resources, and sustaining the environment. Residents with favourable attitudes towards the environment may be more likely to appreciate and be content with their living conditions, provided that they perceive the environment in which they live to be clean, green, and managed sustainably.

When discussing citizens' *social attitudes,* we refer to their viewpoints on social concerns and communal life. Potential factors could be attitudes towards community diversity, neighborhood interactions, societal norms, and community administration. The residents' perception of a strong sense of community, inclusion, and good government could improve the likelihood that they will have positive social views towards their residential location (Lata et al., 2023).

*Resident satisfaction*

The level of satisfaction that a community's residents have with the environment in which they live can be gauged using this metric. It includes contentment with various aspects, like living circumstances, local facilities, the social environment, and the government of the local community. Satisfied residents may result from optimistic views towards the community and the natural environment.

Gender can play a considerable role in how individuals perceive their surroundings and society and how satisfied they are with their surroundings and society. For instance, women may place a higher value on social relationships within society, whereas men may place a higher value on the physical characteristics of the surrounding environment. This variance may affect how the environment and social attitudes influence the contentment people feel. A comparison of the male and female points of view can offer insight into this moderation if it is included in the research.

*Environmental Attitude and* Resident Satisfaction

It has been known for a long time that residents' views towards the surrounding environment are a crucial factor in determining the level of satisfaction they experience. According to Bonaiuto et al. (1999), academics have highlighted the significance of the environment's physical and aesthetic characteristics on residents' satisfaction levels. This covers aspects such as the degree of noise and pollution, the availability of green spaces, the level of cleanliness, and the overall quality of the environment (Hur et al., 2010). For instance, a study conducted by Bonnes et al. (2003) revealed that the residents' level of contentment is directly impacted by the quality of the environment, specifically how well it is maintained and how visually beautiful it is. In a similar vein, Evans (2003) emphasised that environmental problems such as pollution can negatively influence the happiness, health, and overall well-being of local residents.

*Social Attitude and* Resident Satisfaction

According to studies, the level of contentment felt by residents has been shown to have a substantial association with social attitudes. According to Sirgy and Cornwell (2002), social attitudes, which might include aspects such as community cohesion, safety, and cultural activities, substantially impact how inhabitants evaluate the place in which they live. According to a study by Amérigo and Aragonés (1997), enhanced resident happiness can be attributed to high levels of social contact and strong relationships with the neighbourhood. In addition, the degree to which residents believe they are safe and secure inside the residential area is a significant factor in determining overall happiness levels (Austin et al., 2002).

*Gender as a Moderator*

Despite the vast study on the social and environmental attitudes contributing to resident happiness, the gender viewpoint has been relatively underexplored. On the other hand, the studies that have been done so far reveal that men and women may see and interact with their surroundings differently due to the existing societal and cultural norms (Dyck, 2005). According to Davidson and Cotter (1991), these inequalities can affect the degree to which individuals are satisfied with their living conditions. According to Kahlmeier et al. (2017), for instance, women's contentment with their living environment was found to be more significantly influenced by the perceived safety and cleanliness of the region, whilst males were more concerned with the availability of recreational opportunities in their environment. This suggests that gender may play a role in modifying the link between environmental and social views and residents' satisfaction levels.

In conclusion, the research emphasises the significance of environmental and social attitudes as important factors in determining residents' satisfaction levels. However, additional research is required to investigate how these interactions might be influenced by gender. When these dynamics are understood, it is possible to contribute to developing policies and actions that are more gender-responsive and inclusive to increase resident happiness.

This research project has the potential to provide insightful information regarding how resident happiness is affected by attitudes towards environmental and social issues, as well as how these relationships vary according to gender. A study of this nature can provide helpful information for making decisions about public policy, planning community development strategies, and designing programs to improve citizens' quality of life in various environments. Based on the above, the following study hypotheses were formulated:

H1: “There is an association between social attitude concerning sustainable tourism and resident satisfaction”.

H2: “There is an association between social attitude concerning sustainable tourism and resident satisfaction”.

**Theory**

The Theory of Planned Behaviour, also known as TPB, is a theory that can be utilised to gain an understanding of how attitudes towards the environment and society impact inhabitants' levels of pleasure. According to the TPB, an individual's intents and behaviour can be influenced by their attitudes towards specific behaviour, perceived behavioural control, and the subjective norms they adhere to. When seen in this light, the residents' perspectives on the environment and the social variables in their lives can be understood as components that contribute to the level of satisfaction they experience.

This theory proposes that people have a hierarchy of needs, with physiological necessities at the bottom and self-actualisation at the very top. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: This theory proposes that people have a hierarchy of needs. Direct contributions from a living environment that is safe, clean, and social can be made to multiple levels of this hierarchy, ultimately affecting a person's degree of overall satisfaction.

The theory of social capital postulates that social networks have value and that participation in social interactions can lead to social capital formation. The level of social capital in a community can significantly impact its cohesiveness, trust, and level of mutual assistance, all of which can lead to an increase in resident satisfaction.

The Gender Schema hypothesis is a hypothesis that attempts to explain how individual and social beliefs of gender roles might affect perceptions and behaviour. Because men and women may have different ways of perceiving and interacting with their surroundings and society due to gender schemas, the degree to which they are satisfied may be affected directly.

These theories have the potential to provide a rigorous theoretical framework for understanding how environmental and social attitudes affect residents' satisfaction and the moderating role that gender plays in the relationship. Incorporating these theories allows for investigating the intricate dynamic at play within the relationship between individual attitudes, gender, and resident satisfaction.

**3. Research Methodology**

**3.1 Research Design**

This research inquiry used a causal design (research plan). Three hundred fifteen functional questions were used in this investigation. A survey was used to collect data from residents concerning their attitudes toward sustainable tourism in J&K, India.

Five questions each were used to measure social attitude, environmental attitude and resident satisfaction concerning sustainable tourism, which was adopted from the work of Sanchez et al. (2019).

*Factor Analysis*

"Exploratory Factor Analysis" (EFA) was used in "SPSS 26.0" due to the scale's minor revisions to better reflect the local environment (Hair et al., 2006). "Cronbach's alpha" reliability scores exceeded the reported 0.60% (Hair et al., 2006). The "EFA" findings exceeded the allowed thresholds for sample adequacy using the "Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)" and the "Bartlett's test of sphericity" (0.810 and 3123.413, respectively). The three variables account for 79.9% of the variance. Hair et al. (2006) found that each variable's loading in the dataset was more significant than 0.50.



**Figure 1 Scree plot**

**4. Data Analysis**

**4.2 Measurement Model**

The "CFA" (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) feature of "AMOS 26.0" was used to generate the measurement model (Figure 1). The outcomes show that the "model fit" values are satisfactory. Hu and Bentler (1999) calculated the following values: "CMIN/DF" = 4.1, "CFI" = 0.832, "GFI" = 0.871, "NFI" = 0.851, and "RMSEA" = 0.041.

"C. R" (composite reliability) values greater than 0.60 were used to evaluate the instrument's dependability (Table 2). Fornell and Larcker (1981) tested the convergent validity using "AVE" scores more than 0.50 and standardised loadings greater than 0.50. The analysis confirmed discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) because the correlation coefficient is less than the "AVE" square (See Table 1).



**Figure 2 Measurement Model**

**Table 1 Reliability and Validity**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **CR** | **AVE** | **MSV** | **MaxR(H)** | **EA.** | **RS.** | **SA.** |
| **EA.** | 0.939 | 0.755 | 0.403 | 0.945 | **0.869** |   |   |
| **RS.** | 0.948 | 0.784 | 0.362 | 0.978 | 0.530 | **0.886** |   |
| **SA.** | 0.927 | 0.720 | 0.403 | 0.983 | 0.635 | 0.602 | **0.848** |

**Note 1:** The values (highlighted) in the diagonal of the above matrix are the square root of the AVE.

Source: Author’s Own

**4.3 Structural Model**

The link between predictor and outcome variables was made possible using path analysis. The model is well-fitting, as evidenced by the values of "CMIN/df"=4.2, "GFI"=.823, "CFI"=.911, "RMSEA"=.047, and "NFI"=.808.

The results of the structural model analysis are displayed in Table 2. Table 3 displays additional information from a moderation analysis. The results show that gender moderates the relationship between social attitude and environmental attitude concerning sustainable tourism and residents' satisfaction.

**Table 2 Structural Model Estimates**

| **Hypo-****Theses** | **From** | **To** | **Standardised****(β)** | **P** | **Result** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| H1 | Social attitude | Resident satisfaction | 0.22 | \*\*\* | Supported |
| H2 | Environmental attitude | Resident satisfaction | 0.25 | \*\*\* | Supported |

**Note:** Source: Author’s Own

P=.001

**Table 3 Moderation Results**

| **Independent Variable** | **Outcome variable** | **Interaction** | P | **Result** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Social attitude | Resident satisfaction | 0.11 | .015 | Supported |
| Environmental attitude | Resident satisfaction | 0.13 | .011 | Supported |

**5.1 Conclusion & Discussions**

The findings presented in the table above indicate that a resident's level of satisfaction is positively impacted by their social and environmental attitudes about sustainable tourism. (Khan et al., 2022) indicates that these findings are consistent with those obtained from previous studies that had been carried out. This indicates that people's social attitudes must be good regarding sustainable tourism for them to be pleased with responsible tourism activities. For the locals to feel content with the activities provided by the tourism industry, they need to have a cooperative and positive viewpoint towards environmentally responsible travel. The same line of reasoning can be used to explain why there is a positive correlation between residents' pleasure and their environmental attitude. This indicates that inhabitants' ecological views should be hopeful regarding sustainable tourism for them to be pleased with responsible tourism activities. For the locals to be content with the roles that sustainable tourism plays in the community, they need to have a positive and cooperative attitude towards the industry from the point of view of its positive effects on the environment. In conclusion, the findings suggest that gender does, in fact, have a moderating role in the connection between social attitude and environmental attitude regarding residents' satisfaction with sustainable tourism.

**5.2 Implications**

By understanding the aspects that contribute to resident happiness, individuals can become better equipped to make educated decisions regarding their living environments and their community participation. The findings can serve as a roadmap for communities to use in determining areas of improvement to increase resident satisfaction. For instance, if environmental views substantially impact satisfaction, communities can prioritise green projects, trash management programs, and other such initiatives. The study can be used as a reference for policymakers to help them build gender-sensitive urban planning and community development policies. These policies should consider the diverse ways in which environmental and social elements affect men and women. It can support the design and implementation of programs intended to improve people's attitudes towards their environment and social situations, which can increase overall satisfaction levels.

This study can contribute to the current body of literature in environmental psychology, social psychology, and gender studies by providing a deeper understanding of the link between environmental and social views and resident satisfaction. It has the potential to contribute to the development of theories, particularly in regard to the comprehension of the part that gender plays as a moderator in the relationship that exists between attitudes and satisfaction. The study contributes to the larger sustainable development goals by focusing on resident happiness. This is especially true regarding improving the overall quality of life and fostering well-being for everyone. The findings may serve as a point of reference for future research of a similar nature conducted in other locations or countries. As such, they may have significance for worldwide efforts to promote sustainable development on a global scale. The study findings could assist legislators, urban planners, and community leaders with actionable advice they can consider. These might include methods for bettering environmental and social conditions and approaches for reducing gender gaps in existing settings. The findings of this study will contribute to the current body of literature on environmental and social attitudes, resident satisfaction, and gender studies by offering empirical evidence drawn from the particular circumstances of Jammu and Kashmir.

**5.3 Future Research**

Even though only residents are included in the sample, tourists may be included in subsequent studies. Future research may involve more participants from rural locations as well as urban ones. Additional research may be carried out all over India, not just in the country's big cities and rural communities. In subsequent research, the mediating and moderating effects of a number of variables, including demographic features, ought to be investigated. Given that this research was a cross-sectional study that neglected the causal linkages between the study variables, longitudinal and qualitative investigations help explain any correlations in causation among the study variables and improve knowledge of their connections. The findings of this study may also pave the way for additional research in other areas, such as the investigation of other demographic factors (such as age, socio-economic status, and education level) as possible moderators or mediators in the relationship between environmental/social attitudes and resident satisfaction. The creation of a conceptual model that illustrates the connections between residents' environmental attitudes, social attitudes, gender, and levels of happiness with their living situation. This model can be utilised in upcoming research as well as by policymakers in the process of planning interventions.

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