

Book review

Nunkoo, R., Juwaheer, T.D., and Seyfi, S. (eds), *A Research Agenda for the Social Impacts of Tourism* (Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, UK 2024) 280 pp.

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The book *A Research Agenda for the Social Impacts of Tourism*, edited by Nunkoo, Juwaheer, and Seyfi, provides an overview of themes, theories, and methodologies relevant to social impact research in tourism. The editors aimed to inspire researchers to rethink social impact research, considering more than the triple-bottom-line approach to sustainability. A comprehensive, holistic approach to understand the social impacts of tourism is indeed essential, given the complexity of challenges arising from the diverse stakeholders engaged across social, environmental, and economic dimensions. The introductory chapter presents a historical evolution of themes, theories, and methodologies influencing social impact research. The editors highlight the economic approach that is rooted in the positivist paradigm and evolved into the qualitative exploration of the relationship between visitors and host communities. Qualitative research offers the most effective approach to a nuanced understanding of the intricate relationship between tourists and residents. This relationship can sometimes be characterized by interdependence, especially from the economic perspective, and divergent or even antagonistic, considering environmental and social perspectives. Contradictory results emerged, indicating that this phenomenon required a more contextualized approach. Subsequent chapters are contributions from several authors who explored social impact research following different perspectives.

Chapter 2 presents a bibliometric evaluation of research on social impact conducted since 1974. Regalado-Pezúa and Estares observed that since 1998, the topic of sustainability has constantly gained the attention of researchers, while social impact has never represented more than 20% of the total. This research shows that the social aspect of the sustainability triad has been under-researched, providing opportunities for future advancement. Chapter 3 intends to explore the current state of residents' attitudes toward tourism. Due to an editorial error, a corrigendum will be released for this chapter.

In chapter 4, the book starts a relevant discussion on social impact assessment. From a social and political perspective, the Viana-Lora and Nel Io-Andreu hereby propose that the social impact assessment is appropriate for transparency and public debate. They investigated how tourism is using three assessment tools: Research Excellence Framework, Engagement and Impact Assessment, and Social Impact Open Repository. Tourism was misrepresented in the three tools, demonstrating that tourism research generally does not consider its social impact. Following the assessment topic, chapter 5 uses social life-cycle assessment to approach tourism impact. Huertas-Valdivia explains that the UN inventory tool, which is much used for environmental impact, has objective social assessment guidelines. The unique aspects of the Social Life Cycle Assessment (SLCA) approach in the tourism context could be explored.

Chapter 6 shifts the discussion to a theoretical perspective, presenting the citizenship concept as a new approach to social impact. Hosts' and visitors' rights and responsibilities are the fundamental concepts of this discussion. Coles suggests that the government's role as the guarantor of these citizenship aspects needs further investigation, as tourist mobility can directly impact the quality of life, welfare, and economic opportunities. Evolving this discussion, in chapter 7, Nawjin, Mitas, and Klijs proposed a synergy between the right to live in a tourist destination and the tourist right to travel. Often antagonistic, as seen in recent protests against overtourism, these rights are essential for tourism. Desirable interaction between residents and tourists and market management targeting domestic and loyal tourists are the pathways for harmonic destination development.

In chapter 8, Vongvisitsin and Wong explore two novel community-based tourism (CBT) perspectives: the urban approach and the social impact on LGBTQ+ advocacy in the hospitality industry. Marketing and management initiatives are presented as examples. Although these are interesting cases, more evidence is needed to support the connections presented. Recognizing the relevance of the sharing economy to contemporary tourism, in chapter 9, Pinto, Guerreiro, Renda, Perreira, Lança, and Lai researched the residents' perception of local lodging, presenting objective aspects destinations can use to measure the social effect of Airbnb's presence that are relevant to residents' quality of life. Chapter 10 analyzes a case in the Philippines to observe the role of governance and local institutions in tourism development. Mena and Villamejor-Mendoza suggested the Learning Tourism Destination framework and the Dynamic Governance Theory as a socially inclusive approach to destination development.

The following chapters discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic from different perspectives of diversity and inclusion. Chapter 11 discusses how women's vulnerability advanced as a result of the pandemic. Sinclair-Maragh indicates that the layoffs profoundly impacted women's jobs in Latin America and the Caribbean tourism workforce. Similarly, residents of rural tourism in destinations that were highly dependent on international tourism were economically affected. Chapter 12 presents the results of residents' perceptions before and after lockdowns that left destinations empty. The hostility observed before the pandemic shifted to a positive perception of the economic impact of tourism relevance after lockdowns is analyzed by Guerreiro, Pinto, Ramos, Marques, Lança, and Lai. In chapter 13, Allam and Jones argue that the Black Lives Matter movement is a call to review how tourism portrays the history and the culture of Indigenous and transported people. These chapters demonstrated that the same phenomenon triggered different psychological impacts and highlighted that negative social impacts become more pronounced in the face of crisis, especially in developing countries. More discussions and empirical data on the topic can be further developed in future research, exploring and comparing different contexts, crises, and impacts.

Lastly, chapter 14 discusses how unsustainable tourism is becoming in a world with more pronounced environmental issues. Society's uncertainty requires more information, planning, and customization from tourists, destinations, and services. Godbey and Godbey indicate that a paradigm shift is needed to align industry practice with the regenerative tourism approach.

The editors stated that much of the research on the topic is strongly empirical and presents relevant data but needs a robust theoretical foundation. While much of the knowledge built over the years is highly dependent on Social Exchange Theory (Sharpley, 2014; Rasoolimanesh and Seyfi, 2021), future research should explore other theories such as Integrated Threat Theory (Ward and Berno, 2011), Social Network Theory (Chang, 2018), and Critical Theory (Mura and Wijesinghe, 2021).

New perspectives could be suitable for understanding the myriad viewpoints that specific segments of stakeholders are affected and benefited by the complex net of services and relationships impacted by tourism activities.

The lack of accepted measurements for recurrent concepts and the consensus among indicators identified by the authors suggest that a deeper understanding of some topics is needed. Qualitative approaches should be adopted to build a robust structure to support the quantitative measurement of the primary constructs that explain social impacts as a tourism phenomenon.

This book serves as exploratory content for researchers and practitioners starting to deal with sustainability in the tourism context. The editors reunited in this book with many concepts, frameworks, tools, approaches, and contexts from different disciplines for assessing and managing social impacts. As the topics are not explored in depth, a more experienced audience would miss a complex articulation between the content and empirical evidence in some discussions. The examples presented can inspire deep explorations of the themes, answering the editors' call for a contextualized approach to social impacts.

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