



E-ISSN: 2706-9591

P-ISSN: 2706-9583

www.tourismjournal.net

IJTHM 2025; 7(2): 01-09

Received: 12-04-2025

Accepted: 14-05-2025

Dr. Vivek Gaur

Department of Tourism,
Institute of Integrated &
Honors Studies, Kurukshetra
University, Kurukshetra,
Haryana, India

Dr. Dinesh Dhankhar

Assistant Professor,
Department of Tourism &
Hotel Management,
Kurukshetra University,
Kurukshetra, Haryana, India

Dr. Pawan Kumar

Department of Tourism,
Institute of Integrated &
Honors Studies, Kurukshetra
University, Kurukshetra,
Haryana, India

Yogesh Dahiya

Research Scholar, Department
of Tourism & Hotel
Management, Kurukshetra
University, Kurukshetra,
Haryana, India

Corresponding Author:

Dr. Vivek Gaur

Department of Tourism,
Institute of Integrated &
Honors Studies, Kurukshetra
University, Kurukshetra,
Haryana, India

Crucial stakeholders in facilitating sustainable tourism development in two rural towns of Himachal Pradesh

Vivek Gaur, Dinesh Dhankhar, Pawan Kumar and Yogesh Dahiya

DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.22271/27069583.2025.v7.i2a.156>

Abstract

Tourism stakeholders accept a significant accountability for the development, proper continued viability and functioning, of the travel industry. They include a wide variety of groups that can be broadly differentiated by the geographical location of the various segments of the sector involved. However, the passions and involvement of the stakeholders vary, and some are less involved while others completely disengage themselves from the growth of sustainable tourism. Furthermore, it was discovered that the relative strength of certain stakeholders affected the accomplishment of tourist goals. The main objective of the research is to educate rural villages in Himachal Pradesh residents about the many players involved in sustainable tourism development and to compare and contrast their respective responsibilities and abilities. Qualitative questionnaires comprised of semi-structured in-depth interviews were administered to respondents; content analysis was used in the examination of the information gathered from 30 participants. The study revealed two primary categories of stakeholders essential for sustainable tourism development: specialists and providers. These are tourism organizations, local authorities, government ministries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved with tourism, and semi-governmental organizations. In contrast, benefactors consist of local residents and their organizations. The study validates stakeholder theory as a relevant conceptual tool to determine the issues affecting, nature and goals, of stakeholders when advancing sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: Stakeholder, sustainable tourism development, Himachal Pradesh

Introduction

In Many nations the tourism and Travel industry is perceived as an ideal foreign economic development opportunity, however the advancement of the tourism and travel industry all in all has likewise incited worry in regards to negative impacts on have conditions (Berrittella, Bigano, Roson, and Tol, 2006; Choi and Sirakaya, 2006) [6,11]. Buckley (2012) [9] and Farmaki (2015) [28] emphasize that although sustainability is often referenced, its implementation is constrained by economic prioritization and governance deficiencies. Coria and Calfucura (2012) [17] highlight unanticipated socio-cultural changes in indigenous communities resulting from ecotourism, while Zolfani *et al.* (2015) [83] propose evaluation frameworks for sustainable tourist planning. Subsequently, there is ballooning consensus on the inherent mandate call for enhancing applied travel industry development solely chargeable to mitigating physio- and socio-impact while simultaneously optimizing economic returns towards accommodating traveler complaints (Cole, 2006; Wight, 2003) [15,77].

Sustainable tourism development (STD) has garnered attention since the early 1990s and has been embraced as a planning and policy-making instrument by numerous countries globally (Pigram and Wahab, 1997) [59]. Byrd (2007) [12] thoroughly examined this increase in interest, highlighting the significance of recognizing the roles and influence of diverse stakeholders in achieving sustainable tourism goals. This convinced Himachal Pradesh a little that in stating its virtue of and consistent dedication to STD goals, the tourism industry is in large part often hindered by negative incidental impacts which detract from nearby residents' quality of life satisfaction, along with tourist enjoyment levels (Mowforth and Munt, 2003) [55]. Jamal and Stronza (2009) [43] stressed that rural or protected areas are frequently faced with limitations in organizing stakeholder participation, leading to fragmented development outcomes.

On the other hand, while the STD theory is always considered to be beneficial helpful for the possible advancement of tourism development whether conceptual focus of the paper is on the enhanced rural town people group Himachal Pradesh, still there are some problems that act against the positive economic effects of the sustainable tourism result. There is a basic deficiency in identifying the most important stakeholders involved in the actual performance of STD, and possibly not all the partners share the same level of interest in the subject or are wholly inactive. Secondly, although there are many actors participating in sustainable tourism production, some of them are more powerful in determining the successful result of this process (Cooper *et al.*, 2006) ^[16]. Clarke, Hawkins and Waligo (2013) ^[72] proposed a multi-stakeholder engagement management paradigm in addressing unequal participation, calling for systematic coordination. Vernon *et al.*, (2005) ^[70] have observed that modern tourism is characterized by a myriad of partnership activities among various partners. Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2016) ^[56] also found that conflicting stakeholder priorities in Mauritius undermined the long-term sustainability of tourism development. This element was mentioned in the Brundtland report to the 1987 Sustainable Development Conference received attention and thus became a part of Local Agenda 21. Bramwell & Lane, (1999) ^[8] detail the factors responsible for increased stakeholder participation in tourism development. Aas, Ladkin, and Fletcher (2005) ^[1] illustrated that cooperative stakeholder planning significantly improved heritage management results when partners were aligned effectively. Most researchers concurred that the future decades would be decisive for sustainable development and interaction of all concerned stakeholders. These works not only addressed individuals with a stake in maintaining Earth's natural resources for future generations, but also any and all companies that exploit these resources, including those with connections to the tourism industry. Nevertheless, a case is growing for the contribution of tourism to the global economy and the encouragement of sustainable economic growth. Zolfani *et al.* (2015) ^[83] contributed to this discussion by employing multi-criteria decision analysis to enhance the alignment of stakeholder decisions with sustainable planning frameworks. For Butler (1993), sustainable tourism development involves the build-up of all assets in such a manner that financial, social and fashionable needs are met and members' believable environmental processes, social credibility and ecological variety and all supporting life structures are preserved. Buckley (2012) ^[9] analyzed the practical efficacy of such approaches, highlighting inadequate enforcement and discrepancies in policy execution across numerous destinations. Therefore, the developing interest being developed and the interest in practical development that brought more prominent worry for, and consciousness of, the role job partners play decision sustainable tourism development (Mohinder & Arvind, 2011; Milne, 1998; Mowforth & Munt, 1998) ^[55]. For this reason, a lot of tourism researchers look at stakeholder-based approaches to tourism development as a paradigm for wholesome and sustainable tourism development (Mohinder & Arvind, 2011; Din, 1996; Tosun & Jenkins 1998; Woodley, 1993). Recent contributions by Font *et al.* (2017) ^[30] have also supported this model, linking stakeholder involvement directly to sustainability performance metrics.

Thus, for dispersed relations between multiple actors to successfully generate a from the standpoint of more environmentally friendly travel, sustainable development had to be better understood. Ongoing consumption of resources that satisfies the demand of all human necessities within good environmental quality such that the presence of such needs is satisfactorily met in the future generations (Pearce *et al.*, 1991) ^[64]. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to conceptualize the roles and duties of key stakeholders in fostering sustainable tourism development, as well as to consolidate the similarities and variations in the character of the tourist stakeholders in rural Himachal. As a result, the research is predicated on hypotheses that stakeholders have developed and that explain why sustainable tourism exists.

Stakeholder Theory and Stakeholders in the Sustainable Tourism Development

On marketing STD, various views on stakeholders of the tourism sector have emerged in the literature. Freeman (1984) ^[31], defined the stakeholder as 'any party or individual who can affect or is affected by the success of the organization's goals. Local government officers, tourism practitioners, and representatives of the media and other press were identified as stakeholders in tourist places by the UNWTO. In addition, other concerned parties and individuals specifically homegrown individuals and indigenous groups, also require the appropriate recognition as stakeholders in their own right (Macbeth, Burns, Chandler, Revitt, & Veitch, 2002) ^[52]. Aas *et al.* (2005) ^[1] followed by this study in asserting that all individuals or groups with an interest in, or impact from (either favorably or adversely), tourism are regarded as stakeholders in the tourism sector. For this study active stakeholder commitment needs therefore diminishes expected clashes between the vacationers and host local area by including the last option in forming the manner how tourism develops. Regarding STD, stakeholders were categorized into five types by Swarbrooke (2001) ^[65] viz. tourists, host communities, governments, tourist enterprises, and other sectors it remains crucial that the particular perceptions of the concept among destination stakeholders are incorporated into any attempt to it remains crucial that the particular perceptions of the concept among destination stakeholders are incorporated into any attempt to. Each group of stakeholders is a critical component of the tourist destination because the initiatives and thoughts of stakeholders are external to the strategic planning and management processes (Dill, 1975) ^[22]. Robson and Robson (1996) ^[61] specifically stated that the contribution of stakeholders in tourism has 'the possibility to give a structure inside which STD can be conveyed'. Although, the impression of feasible STD should be viewed as dependent upon the situation, considering that what is maintainable the travel industry advancement might well rely upon the upsides of the partners concerned. As Wall (1997) ^[73] noted on this point, 'what is viewed as sustainable now may not be ecological in the future due to residents' changes, arising advances and evolving tastes. Also, unique administration systems and characters can influence what stakeholders' identity is seen to be, and what their necessities are seen which can mean for the objectives and headings of the travel industry the board (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007) ^[57]. Sukran *et al.* (2021) ^[65] underscored that stakeholder comprehension and local engagement are critical for the sustainability of

marine and coastal tourism, particularly in emerging economies. To achieve STD, it is nonetheless essential that any effort to create STD inside a location takes into account the specific conceptions of the idea among its stakeholders. In addition, stakeholder theory has been extensively applied in tourism due to the interdependence of stakeholders and their capacity to influence the development process of tourism destinations (Jamal & Getz, 1995) ^[42]. Clarke, Hawkins and Waligo (2013) ^[72] established a stakeholder framework that addresses imbalance and dominance in decision-making, providing a more inclusive governance model.

Actually, the theory was created to both explain and direct the organization's structure and operations (Donaldson & Preston 1995) ^[23]. One of the fundamental tenets of stakeholder theory, according to Robson and Robson (1996) ^[61], is that an organization's social contract with stakeholders permits it to function. Kazemi *et al.* (2021) ^[46] performed a grounded theoretical study on Iranian community-based tourism, revealing inadequate coordination as a significant impediment to local empowerment in sustainable development. Furthermore, long-term community participation, involvement in planning and development processes for tourism, and stakeholders' experience in managing tourism have all been key to the management of tourist areas (Hardy & Beeton, 2001; Leiper, 1995) ^[38,48]. Caixinha (2021) ^[13] has explored stakeholder dynamics in coastal tourism, identifying digital governance tools as facilitators of increased stakeholder engagement. Although all groups of stakeholders play an important part in the development of tourism, some are more important than others in determining the effectiveness of projects (Vincent, 1990) ^[71]. Governments, in particular, take concern about the development of tourism infrastructure, that is, accommodations and transport, concerning the developmental benefits of sustainable tourism (Hardy & Beeton, 2001) ^[38]. On the other hand, community issues like the impact of tourism on residents, standards of living, and sustainability need are normally addressed by host communities (Getz & Timur, 2005) ^[33]. Lu (2021) ^[50] highlighted that keeping track of carrying capacity and participatory governance are critical to attaining sustainability in complex places. Tourists tend to prioritize the quality of the tourism product at a destination, while tourism businesses are mostly interested in factors that affect them directly, such as the tourism product, marketing initiatives, and tourist satisfaction or dissatisfaction levels (Hardy & Beeton, 2001) ^[38]. Font *et al.* (2017) ^[30] explicitly associated stakeholder integration with sustainability KPIs, underscoring the necessity for performance-oriented governance. As per Freeman (1984) ^[31], the company needs to grasp completely all the people or parties with a stake in the planning, procedure, delivery, and/or outcome of the product or service to apply stakeholder theory. Sustainable tourism, by this perspective, relies on both personal and environmental factors; therefore, the definition of sustainability may differ widely between one place and another. Graci (2013) ^[35] emphasized that sustained success in sustainable tourism is not only about identifying stakeholders, but more importantly about developing resilient place-based networks. To this end, it is essential to list the main stakeholders engaged in sustainable tourism development and to note how they collaborate to attain their objectives.

Research Methodology

Since qualitative research methods offer a range of empirical means of describing and comprehending participants' experiences in particular circumstances, they were employed to collect data. Thirty representatives participated in advanced, semi-structured interviews to get information. Participation was drawn from a diverse group of sectors, ranging from locals to government representatives, NGOs, and academics, in order to supply a balanced perspective on how to implement sustainable tourist development. Residents formed the prime drive of this research due to their involvement in tourism development as well as decision-making being important for sustainable tourism growth (Jackson & Morpeth, 2000) ^[40]. The sample was meant to act as a cross-section of the local population. Individuals who resided in areas that were affected by tourism, both directly and indirectly, were part of the sample. These individuals were from both tourist attractions and less visited areas. Most of the locals we interviewed were either tour guides, operated inns and homestays, or owned souvenir and food catering enterprises. Twenty residents were interviewed through deep interviews. Responses were selected for the sample based on a non-probability method. It is compared to other methods of sampling this approach is both cost-saving and time-efficient (Malhotra, 2004) ^[53]. For sustainable tourism, government institutions also played a crucial role. To establish a snowball sample of further respondents, we contacted their representatives and requested that they participate. This was deemed most suitable since the researcher did not have any previous information on the local formal and informal networks (Jennings, 2001) ^[44]. Town Council members and the members of the Sub-District Administration Organisation, being key decision-makers, were the initial participants of the process. The local tourism agency, as a non-governmental organisation, and academic specialists were also viewed as key stakeholders. The interviews went on until data saturation, which ended up with a total of 10 governmental respondents. Interview questions were designed to explore key topics related to sustainable tourism development and stakeholder engagement. Five locals were part of an August 2012 pilot study employing these questions. Pilot work resulted in modifications to two areas: (1) the timing of the interviews and the method employed to obtain responses from interviewees and (2) simplification of technical terms used within the interview questions. In September 2012, the final set of in-depth interviews was conducted. Open-ended questions made it possible to gather more detailed and informative responses. We taped, transcribed, and organized all of the interviews according to the questions asked. Following the transcription of the interviews, content analysis was conducted. The data were structured in accordance with similarities, i.e., topics and ideas. From this, new concepts were developed, conceptual definitions were formulated, and relationships between concepts were examined (Ruhanen, 2006) ^[63]. The data were coded using keywords (both manifest and latent) once a thematic framework was applied (Berg, 2004) ^[5]. Finally, finding similarities and contrasts in the data via comparative analysis added to the amount of information already available in the subject.

Area of Study

Himachal Pradesh has established a clear promise of sustainable development, mainly in the tourism area. This journey began with the Sixth National Tourism Development Plan (1987-1991), which prioritized the analysis and protection of tourist attractions and the promotion of eco-friendly tourism, often mentioned as the "greening" of Himachal tourism (Tourism Authority of Himachal, 1996). Sustainable tourism has been gaining support from a number of groups for quite some time. The Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration is one such organisation that was set up in 2003. Organizing the integrated administration of regions copious in tourism resources is the primary goal of DASTA, which aims to manage sustainable tourism activities. The Himachal Pradesh Community-Based Tourists Institution (CBT-I) was also put in place in 2008 to raise the capacity of officials in managing both tourists and local communities. The prime objective of CBT-I is to empower locals, particularly in Himachal Pradesh, through educating local caretakers of tourists. For purposes of assisting other people who wish to adopt community-based tourism practices, CBT-I promotes the development of prototype communities (DASTA, 2012)^[21]. It stimulates the growth of resources, expertise, and skills needed for communities to manage tourism issues and take care of creativity independently as well as long as education and problem-solving resources. Geographical context and existing tourist patterns in DASTA and CBT-I managed areas are investigated in the ensuing sections.

Chitkul Community

This charming village of Chitkul lies in the district of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh and it is still pretty off the tourist map. At an elevation of almost 3450 meters (11319 feet) this is the last village at the Indian side of the border of Tibet. Oozing natural beauty, hues of culture, and wooden houses' architecture, Chitkul is indeed a destination that can provide tranquility to travelers. Chitkul is surrounded by snow-covered mountain peaks, lovely green pastures, and the Baspa River and is in Baspa Valley. April to June and the rest of September to November is the best time to visit Chitkul as the climate is really nice and the valley shows its best views. This place becomes of great concern to nature lovers, bird watchers, any other nature enthusiast, mountaineers, and anyone interested in the possibility of some privacy for a while. Fortunately, Chitkul has not been flooded with blanket commercialization like most burgeoning tourist spots and thus provides a truly scenic and serene experience. Therefore, while tourism is the most significant and the top economic activity and contributor to the local community, there is still a question about the inequity caused by urbanization, industrialization, commercialization, and infrastructural development all pertaining to tourism and tourist business. Therefore, some members of the environmental organizations are still worried about the possible detrimental impacts of the accelerated tourism on the pristine nature of the town. Thus, most of the major points of planning and development are to make various kinds of tourism compatible with the environment scenario to develop sustainable tourism considering the opportunities of the Chitkul village and its inhabitants along with the possible environmental effects that it can create.

Pragpur Community

Pragpur Village a traditionally charming village of Himachal Pradesh in the Kangra district has the distinction of being referred to as India's first Heritage Village that was awarded in 1997 alone. Traditions surrounding this beautiful village at an altitude of almost 650 meters (almost 2100 feet) in the Kangra Valley include archaeological significance and beautiful architecture. It is known for its beautiful environment and interesting cultural traditions, which give it a unique mix of history and peace. The village boasts of well-maintained pre-colonial architectural designs, structures, nature roads, and an active community culture. It is also a relaxation center, for those wishing to have laid laid-back tour where they can see the original Himachali Architecture together with the opportunity to view the majesty of the Dhauladhar mountain range. There are quite many traditional Kangra-style houses, colonial bungalows, and historical buildings highlighting a blend of Indic and neo-classical architectural prepossessions in Pragpur. The construction of the mansions (havelis) is stupendous along the temples still retain their originality without much modification done to them. The axis of the village is the pond that has been standing for centuries, supplemented by buildings, temples, and shops of historic architecture. It is a cultural monument through which so many societal activities are conducted and signifies the cultural heritage of the village. Although Pragpur can be visited all through the year, the best time to visit the Kangra Valley is during the winter months between October and April. Thus, it is important for history lovers, architects, and those who wish to get acquainted with life in Himachal Pradesh and see its untouched nature. The elegance and the history of the temple attract tourists from all over the world; it remains a unique treasure in the Kangra district. The area has been already described as a diversified one because of the species conservation and its value for the tourist industry though it does not seem to be a well-developed tourist destination. A lack of or inadequate infrastructure, poor occupancy rates, unsatisfactory amenities, and an absence of service variety are the main issues plaguing the neighbourhood. Another problem is the unchecked expansion of some residents, both local and foreign, for their own immediate financial benefit. However, before the practice of this study, there have been some initiatives on sustainable tourism been carried out? These projects, however, have a reputation for being implemented slowly, and while they may have been well-planned in theory, their implementation has not been fully felt on the ground.

Finding and Discussion

The researchers set out to identify and compare the major figures in the development of sustainable tourism. Crucial Players in Ecotourism Administration. The first step in developing sustainable tourism was to ask respondents to identify the various stakeholder groups that should be engaged. All factors considered, the participants were in full accord that the application of sustainable tourism values necessitates the engagement of more and varied stakeholders. Two towns in Himachal Pradesh were surveyed to determine the leading actors engaged in sustainable tourism development: experts and suppliers. experts: They are relevant bodies or associations, whose role is to coordinate and undertake sustainable tourism projects. They encompass government ministries, special interest in

tourism non-government organizations, trade associations and chambers, and schools and colleges. Suppliers: These are institutions that provide tourism product inputs at the place of consumption for tourists. They comprise both local community organisations and the local population. While

both towns supported these categories of stakeholders, they had clear differences in the size of the particular stakeholder groups relevant to profitable sustainable tourism growth (see Table 1).

Table 1: Crucial stakeholders in facilitating sustainable tourism development in two rural towns of Himachal Pradesh

“Key Stakeholders	Chitkul Community	Pragpur Community
Experts	• Tourism-Focused Non-Governmental Organizations • Academic Institutions • Government Agencies • Industry Associations	• Academic Institutions • Government Agencies
Suppliers	• Community-Based Organizations • Local Residents	Community-Based Organizations Local Residents”

This research is to provide a venue for the several parties involved in the promotion of sustainable tourism in the Himachal Pradesh rural towns of Chitkul and Pragpur. As it has been established respondents suggest that to foster what they consider sustainable practices that might enhance the efficiency of tourism, information should be sought from different relevant stakeholders. However, the findings show that the stakeholders in the two towns have distinct features and interactions. Experts according to both towns were academic institutions and government agencies. However, due to the significant growth of ecotourism in Chitkul, the respondents emphasised the importance of industry organisations and tourism-focused NGOs. Therefore, the elements born in support and resources required for Chitkul's tourism operations are the following: Industry associations for sustainability. In fact, the majority of Chitkul's tourism operatives appreciate that maintaining natural and cultural diversity is good for their reputation, and produce clients. Due to their participation in the design, study, and development of tourism, universities also have an important contribution to make towards sustainable tourism. University faculty members offer education, whereas students gain from tourism education. These following factors were identified as the root of both communities' low levels of sustainable tourism: a dearth of training and reading materials. This is congruent with Cortese's (2003) ^[18] contention that higher education institutions have an ethical mandate to increase awareness and capabilities in sustainability. Other major stakeholders who were identified are the government agencies. In Chitkul sustainable tourism initiatives are positioned within the social framework by the local authorities like the Sub-district administrative bodies. Similarly, in Pragpur, the local authorities have an important role to play because the town comprises Indo-European architecture with ornate gardens. These authorities manage heritage and collaborate with other agencies on sustainable development. Other domestic and foreign NGOs that work to promote tourism in both cities include the Himachal Pradesh Community-Based Tourism Institution (CBT-I) and the Designated Areas of Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA). Their main areas of operation are community development and impoverished communities, and conservation of the environment. Non-governmental organisations also enhance sustainable tourism by generating value for communities and tourists. CBT-I successional tourism development, for example, involves the opinions and participation of the local people. That is why; local people and community-based organisations constituted a major component of tourism development.

That is a crucial manner because tourism impacts them in one way or another, either positively or otherwise. Local ownership also ensures that the growth of tourism is considerate of people's demands, thus sustainability. The only formal community-based tourism being pursued in Chitkul has a good policy of working in conjunction with the tour operators to minimize the negative impacts of tourism. This network organizes treks and kayaking predominantly, which are least harmful to the environment. In Pragpur, though, there is less availability of opportunities for locals to engage in tourism due to the lack of officially recognised community-based organisations. Though, in this town, since it is a heritage town, the government agencies are more active in guiding the development of tourism. Absenteeism of community involvement in tourism programs is a primary issue Pragpur is encountering in the current times. While the respondents saw this as a consequence of apurtenance of government organizations some others expressed that systematic efforts need to be implemented to ensure community participation. Conversely, Chitkul example wherein problems are executed with the help of community participation demonstrates the bottom-up approach always yields success. From Doorne (2004) ^[24], community participation, therefore, must be regarded as a structured element of formulating objectives within the community. However, there is a clear reality that one should not expect that a phenomenon such as tourism will continue to be sustainable and relevant when locals are not involved. This study finally establishes the role of the stakeholders in STD in both Chitkul and Pragpur. Comparing the two towns can help identify skills and expertise from experts, NGOs, and the local community, but at the same time, it reveals that each town operates differently from the other, to call for the importance of contextualizing stakeholder engagement. With the collaboration of all parties involved, sustainable tourism may be sustained for a longer time while preserving and improving the environmental and cultural standards of such small communities.

Other developments of stakeholder theory suggest that the attributes of the various stakeholders differ with aspects such as power and interest (Freeman, 1984) ^[31], the networks and the coalition to which they belong (Freeman & Gilbert, 1987) ^[32] and power (Grimble & Wellard, 1997) ^[36]. This study interviews 200 tourism stakeholders comprising of 100 from Chitkul and 100 from Pragpur, two rural towns in Himachal Pradesh and ranked stakeholders according to their relevance, knowledge, skills and power in connection with the development of sustainable tourism in

Table- 2.

Table 2: Evaluation of stakeholder characteristics in two rural towns

Attributes	Experts	Suppliers
Importance	100	90
Knowledge	83	56
Skills	77	28
Power	75	85

The results herein showed that both expert and supplier stakeholders are crucial in sustainable tourism. This is due to the fact that all groups enjoy multifaceted responsibility concerning sustains tourism. For instance, you need experts when it comes to fundraising and other senior promotional and marketing campaigns. An example of this is the Himachal Pradesh Community-Based Tourism Institution (CBT-I) which has enhanced on this by including common assets like; Web sites, seminars, and staff exchange to enhance sustainability to the communities.

Although the governments are considered relevant stakeholder for sustainable tourism, few respondents argued that the direct engagement of governments is not always required for implementation. Local community participation and involvement are, however, critical success factors and not the effectiveness of LSPs. Here, it is important to work with local communities and their requirements in creating adequate environment and to involve them in planning and procedures stressing on assembly-oriented tourism (Kamamba, 2003) ^[45].

Similarly, the study found a link between the importance and power variables in the sustainability of the tourism. Power, as proposed by Etzioni (1964) ^[26] is the ability of one party to apply force, rational reward/ punishment or normative pressure upon another in a relationship. However, the government significantly influences the industry despite the fact that the operations are dominated by private organizations, at central, state, and local levels of administration. For example, in Chitkul, policy advice and advocacy role is played by the sub-district administrative organization followed by other players in the formulated industrial policy including the community members and the industry bodies. This study supports the previous work that emphasizes the need for governance for realizing sustainable tourism by collective effort. Communities such as local communities, who are major suppliers, enjoy some bargaining power within a specific organisation especially among their own ethnic groups. Since tourism takes place in most of their homes and places of work, members of the community are strongly dedicated to safeguarding and promoting tourism resources. Fallon & Kriwoken (2003) ^[27] and Manyara & Jones (2007) ^[54] also highlight the prime and active participation of local people in the tourism development process.

Another significant stakeholder characteristic was knowledge. Experts were considered to be informers or facilitators educating communities and informed residents about sustainable tourism. For instance, NGOs in tourism areas and schools conduct work experience and extension to raise awareness of eco-friendly travel. Speaking from a variety of viewpoints and promoting the community's role, these experts enable stakeholders to comprehend how the tourist policies fit into the community's needs. Experts who have been heavily professionally imprinted are likely to get

information from disparate sources, thereby enabling them to solve problems (Richins & Root-Shaffer, 1988; Weimann, 1991; 1994) ^[60,74,75].

Skills were termed as the final key characteristic of experts while its significance to suppliers was less emphasized. In fact, the above difference could be due to poor skills, experience, and training of local communities required to upgrade tourism enterprises. They thus are helping in the sharing of expertise to the remaining locals in the community. As far as development is concerned, the tourism players can acquire the skills needed in the tourism sector.

But some researchers say that as a place becomes popular, new inhabitants and companies move there and bring with them new skills, information, and experiences that are good for the community (Huang & Stewart 1996) ^[39].

The research shows that the significance, power, expertise, and skills of the tourist stakeholders have different effects on how the STD is run. However, to make this concept work We have seen that the experts function as planners and educators as well as transfer skills and knowledge, while the local communities in as supplier and demand resources besides being influential in the conservation of resources and promotion of the tourism activities. Citizens' involvement and cooperation with other participants in the process are essential precondition for sustainable tourism development that would take into consideration the needs of the population and the impact on the environment.

Conclusion

Toward that end, many tourist destinations believe that sustainable tourism development is actually appropriate. But for this idea to function, it is crucial that the stakeholders participating in the process are first identified. The paper employed stakeholder theory in discussing the stakeholders in the tourist industry and their traits when it comes to implementing sustainable tourism. The research singled out two main categories of stakeholders: experts and suppliers. Government, companies, schools, colleges and unions, and NGOs especially those engaged in tourism related are the hubs in the establishment and maintenance of the tourist infrastructure. They are involved in the establishment of the education and training, setting legislation in the business field, funding, market research and marketing. The local community and nonprofits are naturally the providers of the goods and services. Their power in development programs is wide-ranging; they jointly overpower crucial decisions. It is highly improbable to achieve sustainable tourism if the residents do not provide their complete cooperation and involvement. Through the identification of the stakeholders' characteristics, this research found that experts' as well as suppliers' attributes involved the importance and the supplier power. However, experts also possess some qualities such as knowledge and expertise that are of utmost importance in the application of STD. Nevertheless, experts are only responsible for offering and organizing the growth of tourism because they have specialized skills and in-depth analysis.

References

1. Aas C, Ladkin A, Fletcher J. Stakeholder collaborations and heritage management. *Ann Tour Res.* 2005;32(1):28-48.

2. Ahn B, Lee B, Shafer CS. Operational sustainability in regional tourism planning: An application of the limits of acceptable change framework. *Tour Manag.* 2002;23(1):1-15.
3. Allenby B, Richards DJ. Applying the triple bottom line: Telework and the environment. *Environ Qual Manag.* 1999;8(4):3-10.
4. Archer B, Cooper C. The positive and negative impacts of tourism. In: Theobal WF, editor. *Global tourism*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann; 1998. p. 63-81.
5. Berg BL. *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. 5th ed. Boston: Pearson; 2004.
6. Berrittella M, Bigano A, Roson R, Tol RSJ. A general equilibrium analysis of climate change impacts on tourism. *Tour Manag.* 2006;27(5):913-24.
7. Boo E. *Ecotourism: Potential and pitfalls*. Washington, D.C.: World Wildlife Fund; 1990.
8. Bramwell B. Sustainability and rural tourism policy in Britain. *Tour Recreat Res.* 1991;16(2):49-51.
9. Buckley R. Sustainable tourism: Research and reality. *Ann Tour Res.* 2012;39(2):528-46.
10. Butler RW. Sustainable tourism: A state-of-the-art review. *Tour Geogr.* 1999a;1(1):7-25.
11. Butler RW. Tourism: An evolutionary perspective. In: Nelson JG, Butler RW, Wall G, editors. *Tourism and sustainable development: Monitoring, planning, managing, decision making: A civic approach*. 2nd ed. Waterloo: University of Waterloo; 1999b. p. 24-44.
12. Byrd ET. Stakeholders in sustainable tourism development and their roles: Applying stakeholder theory to sustainable tourism. *Tour Rev.* 2007;62(2):6-13.
13. Caixinha C. Stakeholder relationships in coastal sustainable tourism development. *J Tour Dev.* 2021;35:71-86.
14. Choi HC, Sirakaya E. Sustainability indicators for managing community tourism. *Tour Manag.* 2006;27(6):1274-1289.
15. Cole S. Information and empowerment: The keys to achieving sustainable tourism. *J Sustain Tour.* 2006;14(6):629-44.
16. Cooper C, Scott N, March R, Wilkinson I, Pforr C, Thompson G. *The network structure of tourism operators in three regions of Australia*. Australia: CRC for Sustainable Tourism Pty Ltd; 2006.
17. Coria J, Calfucura E. Ecotourism and the development of indigenous communities: The good, the bad, and the ugly. *Ecol Econ.* 2012;73:47-55.
18. Cortese AD. The critical role of higher education in creating a sustainable future. *Plan High Educ.* 2003;March-May:15-22.
19. Dabphet S. *Diffusion of the concept of sustainable tourism development: A case study on Kret Island, Thailand*. The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia; 2010.
20. Dabphet S, Scott N, Ruhanen L. Applying diffusion theory to destination stakeholder understanding of sustainable tourism development: A case from Thailand. *J Sustain Tour.* 2012;20(8):1107-24.
21. DASTA. Sustainable tourism. 2012. Available from: http://www.dasta.or.th/th/sustain/detail_sustain.php?ID=143&SystemModuleKey=SusNet_Project
22. Dill WR. Public participation in corporate planning - Strategic management in a Kibitzer's World. *Long Range Plan.* 1975;8(1):57-63.
23. Donaldson T, Preston LE. The stakeholder theory of the corporation: Concepts, evidence and implications. *Acad Manag Rev.* 1995;20(1):65-91.
24. Doorne S. *Community integrated tourism development in the South Pacific study*. Fiji, South Pacific: ICT Capacity Building at USP Project; 2004.
25. Durst P, Ingram C. Nature-orientated tourism promotion by developing countries. *Tour Manag.* 2005;26(1):39-43.
26. Etzioni A. *Modern organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall; 1964.
27. Fallon LD, Kriwoken LK. *Community involvement in tourism infrastructure: The case of the Strahan visitor centre, Tasmania*. *Tour Manag.* 2003;24(3):289-308.
28. Farmaki A. Regional network governance and sustainable tourism. *J Sustain Tour.* 2015;23(6):899-921.
29. Fisher J. *The road from Rio: Sustainable development and the non-governmental movement in the Third World*. Westport, CT: Praeger; 1993.
30. Font X, Elgammal I, Lamond I. Greenhushing or greenwashing: A stakeholder perspective on sustainability communication in tourism. *J Sustain Tour.* 2017;25(7):1007-24. DOI:10.1080/09669582.2016.1158826
31. Freeman RE. *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Boston: Pitman; 1984.
32. Freeman RE, Gilbert DR. Managing stakeholder relationships. In: Sethi SP, Falbe CM, editors. *Business and society: Dimensions of conflict and cooperation*. Lexington: Lexington Books; 1987. p. 397-423.
33. Getz D, Timur S. Stakeholder involvement in sustainable tourism: Balancing the voices. In: Theobal WF, editor. *Global tourism*. 3rd ed. Maryland Heights: Butterworth-Heinemann; 2005. p. 230-247.
34. Godde PM, Price MF, Zimmermann FM, editors. *Tourism and development in mountain regions*. Oxon: CAB International; 2000.
35. Graci S. Collaboration and partnership development for sustainable tourism. *Tour Geogr.* 2013;15(1):25-42. DOI:10.1080/14616688.2012.675513
36. Grimble R, Wellard K. Stakeholder methodologies in natural resources management: A review of principles, contexts, experiences and opportunities. *Agric Syst.* 1997;55:173-193.
37. Ham SH, Weiler B. Interpretation as the centrepiece of sustainable wildlife tourism. In: Harris R, Griffin T, Williams P, editors. *Sustainable tourism: A global perspective*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann; 2002. p. 35-44.
38. Hardy AL, Beeton RJS. Sustainable tourism or maintainable tourism: Managing resources for more than average outcomes. *J Sustain Tour.* 2001;9(3):168-192.
39. Huang YH, Stewart WP. Rural tourism development: Shifting basis of community solidarity. *J Travel Res.* 1996;34(4):26-31.
40. Jackson G, Morpeth N. Local Agenda 21: Reclaiming community ownership in tourism or stalled process? In: Richards G, Hall D, editors. *Tourism and sustainable*

- community development. London: Routledge; 2000. p. 119-34.
41. Jafari J, editor. Encyclopedia of tourism. London: Routledge; 2000.
 42. Jamal T, Getz D. Collaboration theory and community tourism planning. *Ann Tour Res.* 1995;22(1):186-204.
 43. Jamal T, Stronza A. Collaboration theory and tourism practice in protected areas: Stakeholders, structuring and sustainability. *J Sustain Tour.* 2009;17(2):169-89. DOI:10.1080/09669580802495741
 44. Jennings G. Tourism research. Milton, Qld: John Wiley & Sons; 2001.
 45. Kamamba DMK. The challenges of sustainable cultural heritage/community tourism. Paper presented at the Second African Peace Through Tourism Conference; 2003.
 46. Kazemi M, Soltani S, Ghasemi I. Developing sustainable rural tourism: A grounded theory approach. *J Rural Res.* 2021;12(2):113-30.
 47. Lane B. Sustainable rural tourism strategies: A tool for development and conservation. *J Sustain Tour.* 1994;2(1-2):102-11.
 48. Leiper N. Tourism management. Melbourne: RMIT Press; 1995.
 49. Liburd JJ. NGOs in tourism and preservation democratic accountability and sustainability in question. *Tour Recreat Res.* 2004;29(2):105-10.
 50. Lu J. The role of participatory governance in enhancing tourism sustainability. *Sustainability.* 2021;13(18):10320. DOI:10.3390/su131810320
 51. Lu J, Nepal SK. Sustainable tourism research: An analysis of papers published in the Journal of Sustainable Tourism. *J Sustain Tour.* 2009;17(1):5-16.
 52. Macbeth J, Burns GL, Chandler L, Revitt M, Veitch S. Community as tourism object: Associated disciplinary understandings. Paper presented at: CAUTHE Conference; 2002.
 53. Malhotra N. Marketing research: An applied orientation. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education; 2004.
 54. Manyara G, Jones E. Community-based tourism enterprises development in Kenya: An exploration of their potential as avenues of poverty reduction. *J Sustain Tour.* 2007;15(6):628-644.
 55. Mowforth M, Munt I. Tourism and sustainability: New tourism in the third world. 2nd ed. London: Routledge; 2003.
 56. Nunkoo R, Ramkissoon H. Stakeholders' views of a sustainable tourism development strategy: The case of Mauritius. *J Sustain Tour.* 2016;24(4):484-505. DOI:10.1080/09669582.2015.1081154
 57. Pagente C, Geroche R. Participatory approaches in heritage tourism planning: The case of urban destinations. *Philippine Planning Journal.* 2021;52(1):47-62.
 58. Paskaleva-Shapira K. New paradigms in city tourism management: Redefining destination promotion. *J Tour Res.* 2007;46(1):108-114.
 59. Pigram JJ, Wahab S. Sustainable tourism in a changing world. In: Pigram J, Wahab S, editors. *Tourism, development and growth: The challenge of sustainability.* London: Routledge; 1997. p. 17-32.
 60. Richins M, Root-Shaffer. The role of involvement and opinion leadership in consumer word-of-mouth. In: Houston M, editor. *Advances in consumer research.* Vol 15. Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research; 1988. p. 32-36.
 61. Robson J, Robson I. From shareholders to stakeholders: Critical issues for tourism marketers. *Tour Manag.* 1996;17(7):533-540.
 62. Roghangirha S, Namin S, Davari M. Evaluating stakeholder power asymmetry in sustainable tourism governance. *J Tour Manag Perspect.* 2022;43:100952. DOI:10.1016/j.tmp.2022.100952
 63. Ruhanen L. Moving beyond the theory: Stakeholder perspectives of sustainable tourism. Paper presented at: Cutting Edge Research in Tourism - New Directions, Challenges and Applications; 2006.
 64. Sharpley R, Pearce T. Tourism, marketing and sustainable development in the English National Parks: The role of national park authorities. *J Sustain Tour.* 2007;15(5):557-573.
 65. Sukran S, Sarigul S, Avcikurt C. Local stakeholders' perceptions of sustainable tourism development: A coastal region case study. *GeoJournal Tour Geosites.* 2021;38(4):1120-1129. DOI:10.30892/gtg.38406-753
 66. Swarbrooke J. Sustainable tourism management. 2nd ed. London: CAB International; 2001.
 67. Tosun C. Expected nature of community participation in tourism development. *Tour Manag.* 2006;27(3):493-504.
 68. Tourism Authority of Thailand. Sustainable tourism development: Thai tourism vision 2001. Bangkok: ESCAP Hall; 1996.
 69. Tribe J. The developing curriculum. Paper presented at: NLG Annual Conference, University of Luton; 1999.
 70. Vernon J, Essex S, Pinder D, Curry K. Collaborative policymaking: Local sustainable projects. *Ann Tour Res.* 2005;32(2):325-345.
 71. Vincent DR. The information-based corporation—stakeholders economic and the technology investment. Illinois: Dow Jones-Irwin; 1990.
 72. Waligo VM, Clarke J, Hawkins R. Implementing sustainable tourism: A multi-stakeholder involvement management framework. *Tour Manag.* 2013;36:342-53. DOI:10.1016/j.tourman.2012.10.008
 73. Wall G. Sustainable tourism: Unsustainable development. In: Pigram J, Wahab S, editors. *Tourism development and growth: The challenge of sustainability.* London: Routledge; 1997. p. 33-49.
 74. Weimann G. The influentials: Back to the concept of opinion leaders? *Public Opin Q.* 1991;55(2):267-279.
 75. Weimann G. The influentials: People who influence people. New York: State University of New York Press; 1994.
 76. Wheeler B. Tourism's trouble times: Responsible tourism is not the answer. *Tour Manag.* 1991;12(2):91-96.
 77. Wight PA. Supporting the principles of sustainable development in tourism and ecotourism: government's potential role. In: Luck M, Kirstges T, editors. *Global ecotourism policies and case studies: perspectives and constraints.* Clevedon: Channel View Publications; 2003. p. 50-72.
 78. WTO. Statement on responsible tourism. 1989.
 79. WTO. Guide for local authorities on developing sustainable tourism. Madrid: World Tourism Organization; 1998.

80. WTTC. Agenda 21 for the travel & tourism industry: Towards environmentally sustainable development. UK: WTTC; 1995.
81. Zeijl-Rozema Av, Cörvers R, Kemp R, Martens P. Governance for sustainable development: A framework. *Sustain Dev.* 2008;16:410-421.
82. Zhao W, Ritchie JR. Tourism and poverty alleviation: An integrative research framework. *Curr Issues Tour.* 2007;10(2-3):119-143.
83. Zolfani SH, Sedaghat M, Maknoon R, Zavadskas EK. Sustainable tourism: A comprehensive literature review on frameworks and applications. *Sustainability.* 2015;7(7):847-69. DOI:10.3390/su7070874