



Sustainable and Inclusive Development through Heritage Tourism: An Empirical Study of Nalgonda and Warangal Districts, Telangana State

Kosanoju Ravichandra* and K. Sridevi*

Abstract

This research article is based on the study conducted to understand the importance of heritage tourism in endorsing sustainable growth in the tourism destinations (Lopes & Estêvão, 2024) in the districts of Nalgonda and Warangal in Telangana State. Primary data were collected from 400 stakeholder respondents to understand the relationship among heritage tourism, sustainability, and inclusive development. The respondent's perceptions were analysed using SEM (Structural Equation Modelling). The results from the data analysis show that heritage tourism substantially improves sustainability and has a significant impact on inclusive growth. Sustainability moderately shows the relationship between tourism and social inclusion. The research findings indicate that economic, environmental, and socio-cultural sustainability play an important role in improving the quality of life of stakeholders and the social outcomes of living in the destination areas. However, further improvements in infrastructure facilities and governance are needed to enhance support for heritage tourism. Overall, this research study concludes that the heritage tourism sector can contribute to adequate regional development and provides important insights for decision-makers to make sound decisions towards sustainable tourism strategies.

Keywords: Heritage Tourism, Sustainable Development, Inclusive Development, Telangana Tourism Policy, Community Empowerment.

* Department of Commerce, Mahatma Gandhi University, Yellareddygudem, Nalgonda, Telangana. 508254; kosanojuravichandra@gmail.com; sridevikoutha@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Telangana, a newly formed state, was established on 2nd June 2014 and is the youngest state in India. In the state's economy, the tourism sector makes a significant contribution to economic development. This sector establishes and maintains relationships with ethnic origins. Sustainable and inclusive development is possible through the tourism sector, particularly in the newly established State of Telangana.

The tourism sector interacts with sectors such as hospitality, transportation, recreation, entertainment, local speciality shopping, and tour guiding. Because of these interactions, the local community gains livelihoods in various ways, such as through employment as drivers, hotel staff or management, tour guides, and small entrepreneurs.

Heritage tourism is essential for blending economic diversity with the protection of the destination's cultural identity. This creates an opportunity for destinations to display their monuments, crafts, rituals and traditions. It also encourages the local community to get involved and develop local pride (Abdelazim et al., 2025).

Telangana State has strong historical and heritage tourism destinations that are recognised by the international organisation UNESCO. This potential is a key driver of sustainable and inclusive development, including local community development, heritage site protection, and the promotion of local pride.

Meanwhile, since the establishment of Telangana as a state, tourism infrastructure development has been very poor despite its substantial tourism potential. The absence of a dedicated tourism policy since 2014 has slowed comprehensive development in the tourism sector.

Begum (2025) mentioned that the Telangana State Government recognised the need for a comprehensive tourism policy and administrative framework that enhances investor confidence, encourages private entrepreneurial investment, and provides a blueprint for the development and operation of the tourism sector.

The Telangana State Government has introduced its first tourism policy, Telangana Tourism Policy 2025–30 (Government of Telangana, 2025). This policy is designed to provide the necessary support for tourism infrastructure development, offer strategic business incentives through public-private partnerships to significantly accelerate the establishment of new tourism destination projects, and promote Telangana as one of the top tourist destinations globally through effective marketing strategies and the creation of strong branding and institutional mechanisms. This policy

initiative supports India's broader goal of Viksit Bharat @ 2047, which aims to achieve balanced economic, cultural, and environmental progress for future generations (Begum, 2025).

Even with the well-supported policy environment mentioned above, only a few district-level studies were conducted in Telangana State to examine how heritage tourism impacts sustainability and inclusion in the state's development.

Most research studies have been conducted at the state level (Kavacik et al., 2024). These studies often overlook district-level differences in infrastructure, stakeholders' perceptions and experiences, local community participation, sustainable and inclusive development, and the role of heritage tourism in the economic development of tourism destinations (Pati & Husain, 2023). This type of research helps to create evidence-based tourism strategies that reflect local realities.

The most prominent heritage-rich tourism circuits in Telangana State are located in the districts of Nalgonda and Warangal. Nalgonda district is situated in the south-central part of Telangana State and reflects a rich cultural history, ranging from ancient Buddhist territories to the medieval Deccan kingdoms. The district's prominent landmarks include Chaya Someshwara Temple at Panagal, which is renowned for its self-casting shadow, as well as Devarakonda Fort, Yadadri Temple, Rachakonda Fort, Pillalamarri Temple, and Buddhavanam at Nagarjuna Sagar Dam. However, limited accessibility, visitor amenities, and promotional efforts hinder tourism growth in the area.

On the other hand, Warangal district was the capital of the Kakatiya dynasty and is home to Telangana's medieval art, architecture, and traditional engineering. The district is home to some of the most popular heritage sites for tourists. World-renowned heritage sites, including Ramappa Temple, Warangal Fort, and the Thousand Pillar Temple, stand as testaments to traditional engineering mastery and cultural richness.

The selected destinations for this study, from both the Nalgonda and Warangal districts are recognised under State and Central Government schemes such as HRIDAY and Swadesh Darshan, although they continue to face challenges related to sanitation, infrastructure, and stakeholder management.

Both the Nalgonda and Warangal districts are major attractions in Telangana's heritage tourism circuits, blending archaeological significance with living traditions that continue to flourish today. The present research was conducted to examine the role of heritage tourism and to determine how it can facilitate sustainability, inclusiveness, and community

development—key goals outlined in the Telangana Tourism Policy 2025–2030 and the Viksit Bharat @ 2047 vision.

2. Review of Literature

The literature review is conducted to understand how heritage tourism contributes to sustainable development and inclusive growth. This heritage tourism benefits not only local economies and travel destinations but also supports the protection of culture and traditions, cares for the environment, encourages community involvement, and promotes social well-being. This heritage tourism combines sustainability with the development of local communities.

Previous research studies have explored various facets of sustainable tourism, including economic and environmental well-being, cultural preservation, community engagement, infrastructure, livelihood improvement, destination management, and to policy support.

The Inclusive tourism development emphasised the role of adequate participation by all local communities and equitable distribution of benefits among them. However, these aspects are often studied separately, making it difficult to fully understand how heritage tourism fosters sustainable as well as inclusive growth.

In this research study, the literature review explores various aspects of sustainable and inclusive development through heritage tourism. The literature review is organised into eight interrelated themes: economic sustainability, environmental protection, socio-cultural sustainability, community participation, inclusive tourism, infrastructure and regional development, quality of life and social impact, governance and policy support, and regional studies in India and Telangana.

All themes mentioned above are intended to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of how heritage tourism can support sustainable development through the inclusive growth of communities in the Nalgonda and Warangal heritage circuits.

2.1 Heritage Tourism and Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability is possible through heritage tourism. Heritage tourism has a significant impact on creating jobs (Tahiri et al., 2026) for local people, supporting local businesses, promoting destination-based entrepreneurship, such as handmade crafts and local food items, and strengthening stakeholders' livelihoods (National parks and economic development, 2024). Business activities at tourism destinations, hospitality facilities, transportation hubs, and local markets help heritage

sites balance regional growth and public health while protecting cultural assets for future generations. (Kostakis & Lolos, 2024)

The literature review indicates that heritage tourism supports the local community's economic status by raising incomes, developing infrastructure, and creating livelihood opportunities. (Brooks et al., 2023) describes how heritage tourism supports employment, helps reduce poverty, encourages local businesses, and restores regions' traditions and culture, especially when local communities effectively participate in planning and organising resources. Correspondingly, Phori et al., 2024 specified that the local people consider tourism to be a source of income generation through job creation and rural business development. However, achieving sustainable development requires equality among economic gains, local cultural values, and environmental concerns (Gaunker, 2025).

Local community participation and government-supported policies play a significant role in enhancing the sustainability of heritage tourism. (Fan et al., 2024) and (Pezeshki et al., 2023) described the importance of local community involvement in tourism activities. It helps to improve both tourism sustainability and inclusive growth. Similarly, Mzembe et al. (2023) and Silva et al. (2024) described that a destination's stakeholder cooperation, joint governance, and community management are important for more effective destination planning, local development, and long-term tourism resilience.

Generally, destination stakeholders benefit from heritage tourism, as it supports their economic development, fosters business growth, and facilitates regional development (Wang et al., 2026, pp. 1-20). However, long-term benefits can be achieved only when communities actively participate, governance is inclusive, and tourism opportunities are shared fairly among all stakeholders (Brooks et al., 2023).

2.2. Heritage Tourism and Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability and heritage tourism are closely associated and interdependent. When tourists visit historical and natural sites, their behaviour and activities affect ecosystems. These practices also protect cultural treasures and improve destination management. The goal of making heritage tourism eco-friendly is to safeguard our natural beauty and cultural resources while practising responsible travel that lessens environmental impact.

The study shows that preservation and understanding of sustainable tourism are important for keeping heritage sites in good condition for others. (Gaonkar & Sukthankar, 2025) explain that components such as

authenticity, awareness, empowerment, and protection measures positively affect the development of sustainable cultural tourism. Likewise, (Dadizadeh & Doğan, 2024) emphasised that heritage interpretation and community involvement enhance visitor awareness and promote heritage conservation.

Sustainable tourism practices help the enduring sustainability of tourism destinations. Fieldwork shows that most temples in the Warangal district follow sustainable practices. (Pai et al., 2025) says that accountability is very important at tourism destinations. Through this accountable behaviour of stakeholder heritage preservation will improve. Similarly, (Sobhani et al., 2022; Xu & Hu, 2025) say that the estimation of tourist numbers and handling that crowd is very important for tourist management, decreasing environmental risk and helping sustainable destination planning.

Finally, heritage tourism helps to protect the environment through tourist management, raising tourist awareness, supporting responsible tourism practices, and managing tourism capacity.

2.3. Heritage Tourism and Socio-Cultural Sustainability

Socio-cultural sustainability is a vital aspect of heritage tourism because it helps preserve our cultural identity, traditions, and genuineness, while also raising awareness among locals, residents and visitors. In preserving cultural practices, heritage tourism plays a significant role.

The previous studies discuss how heritage tourism speeds up socio-cultural sustainability by enabling cultural conservation, accountability and community involvement in tourism activities. (He et al., 2025) emphasised that integrating cultural heritage into tourism promotes greater residents' attachment to their place, strengthens cultural identity, and increases support for heritage preservation. Apart from my fieldwork, it can be observed that the Nalgonda tourism department has initiated a home-stay policy and is monitoring it. Likewise, (Ginting et al., 2024) noted that cultural tourism like village festivals creates an opportunity to maintain traditions and cultural sustainability through active stakeholder participation and effective heritage management.

Based on field observations, sustainable heritage tourism works only when it feels authentic and promotes genuine cultural information (Li et al., 2024). It has been found that unique cultural experiences encourage tourists to visit destinations and support conservation efforts and heritage preservation. Similarly, Dadizadeh and Doğan (2024) observed that effective interpretation of heritage values raises visitor awareness,

encourages community involvement, and increases appreciation for heritage resources, all of which support sustainable tourism practices.

Heritage protection and cultural continuity are very important for future generations to understand and carry forward the cultural legacy. Sustainable tourism helps communities preserve their culture and maintain authenticity. It also promotes visitor awareness and protects the true value of heritage sites. (GEÇİKLİ et al., 2024) also point out that authenticity, cultural continuity, heritage preservation, and stakeholder participation are central to discussions on sustainable heritage tourism.

Heritage tourism is a way to keep our culture alive by holding onto our identity, traditions, and authenticity. It helps future generations enjoy and learn from our shared cultural roots.

2.4. Community Participation and Inclusive Tourism Development

Inclusive tourism development is possible only through effective community participation. Local stakeholders are involved in planning, decision-making, and the equitable sharing of tourism benefits. Field observations indicate that the Medaram Jathara is one of the largest cultural festivals of the tribal communities. During this festival, devotees from across India participate in and celebrate the event. The festival is held in Medaram village, where local farmers often declare a crop holiday to manage the large influx of visitors and accommodate the devotees.

On the other hand, inclusive tourism guarantees equal opportunities for women, youth, artisans, and marginalised groups. This promotes empowerment and supports sustainable livelihoods.

Research shows that local community participation strengthens tourism. (Reindrawati, 2023) stressed the necessity of transparent governance, coordination among the institutions, and shared decisions. Still, institutions can sometimes hold back true involvement. Community-based tourism is one way forward. Reindrawati said that transparent governance and coordination among institutions are important for tourism development, however, field observations indicate that transparency and institutional coordination are lacking in Nalgonda district. (Jackson, 2025; Luc et al., 2026) found that jobs, engagement, and skill-building help communities grow, strengthen resilience, and share tourism benefits fairly.

Community involvement or participation is very important for managing heritage tourism. (Liorančaitė-Šukienė & Jurėnienė, 2025; Turčinović et al., 2025) find that tourism development and empowerment

will happen when the community is involved in tourism. (Wei et al., 2024) added that fair sharing of economic, cultural, and infrastructure benefits among stakeholders builds long-term support for tourism.

In short, community participation and inclusion make heritage tourism sustainable. They engage people, develop communities, share benefits fairly, and create socio-economic inclusion in the state.

2.5. Tourism Infrastructure and Regional Development

Tourism infrastructure facilities shape how destinations grow. It makes places easily reachable, improves visitor experiences and satisfaction, and strengthens regional competitiveness. Roads, sanitation, hotels, visitor facilities, digital networks, banking and information systems all add to a destination's appeal. In fieldwork observations, Warangal district has better infrastructure than Nalgonda district, including hotels, road connectivity to destinations, and electronic payment systems.

Existing research shows that transport facilities and amenities are crucial to the development of heritage and sustainable tourism. (Munir et al., 2025; Žunić et al., 2022) found that better transport, lodging, and information systems improve performance, tourist satisfaction, and competitiveness. (Corboş et al., 2025; Ibrahim, 2025) added that roads, sanitation, and recreational facilities enhance experiences and support sustainability when planned well. In Warangal district, sanitation at the selected destinations is well maintained.

In this digital world, digital connectivity is essential because most transactions are done online, such as e-payments, e-hotel bookings, using Google Maps to reach a destination and booking tickets at the destination. (Abbas et al., 2024; Kumari & Thakur, 2025) showed that smart systems, digital communication, and public facilities make destinations more accessible, better managed, and more vibrant.

In short, infrastructure and other amenities drive sustainable tourism successfully. It improves access, visitor comfort, digital reach, and regional growth.

2.6. Tourism, Quality of Life and Social Impact

The tourism sector helps to create communities. It creates jobs, builds social connections among different communities, and gives people a sense of belonging towards other people. It also encourages community involvement and improves everyday living.

The research study reveals that heritage tourism improves the quality of life of local stakeholders. (Kim et al., 2014; Uysal et al., 2015) found that

tourism activities increase life satisfaction, emotional health, leisure enjoyment, and social ties among the local communities. (Ramkissoon, 2020; Yayla et al., 2023) added that when residents see tourism as beneficial, it strengthens well-being, social harmony, and support for tourism growth.

Heritage tourism also supports livelihoods and social inclusion, as observed during the Medaram festival. During this festival, the local community provides homestays and sells basic necessities such as drinking water and other essentials for cooking. (Alrawadieh et al., 2025; Luc et al., 2026) mentioned that tourism jobs, community involvement, and positive visitor experiences build resilience, raise satisfaction, and improve emotional well-being.

In short, cultural and heritage tourism enhances the quality of living and the social impact on local communities. It improves welfare, cohesion, inclusion, and well-being—making tourism more sustainable and inclusive.

2.7. Governance, Policy Support and Sustainable Tourism Development

Governance and policy support are important to sustainable tourism development. Governments shape how destinations are planned, managed, and monitored to attract tourists from different regions of the state or country. Tourism governance refers to the systems and rules that guide the growth of tourism. It involves planning, working with stakeholders, and managing destinations more responsibly.

Good governance makes the tourism sector stronger. (Panagiotopoulou & Skoultos, 2025) showed that involving many stakeholders improves planning and accountability and clearly shares information among stakeholders. (Gultom et al., 2024) found that cooperation among governments, businesses, and communities helps destinations succeed in the long run and gain tourists' trust.

Governments develop clear rules and guidelines for the development of tourist destinations and for maintaining sustainable practices there. Different tourism policies stress careful planning, resilience, and balance among growth, social well-being, and sustainable environmental practices, which are very important. The Swadesh Darshan Scheme 2.0 promotes destination-focused planning and monitoring.

As observed during the field work, under the flagship Swadesh Darshan Scheme launched in 2014–15, the Government of India sanctioned ₹5,290.33 crore for 76 projects. One of these was the Telangana

Tribal Circuit (2016–17), covering Mulugu, Laknavaram, Medavaram, Tadvai, Damaravi, Mallur, and Bogatha Waterfalls, for which ₹79.87 crore was released (Ministry of Tourism, 2023, pp. 25- 30, S. No. 61). Apart from these destinations, Laknavaram, Medavaram, and Bogatha waterfalls fall under the present research area. Field observations indicate how this funding improved facilities, strengthened management, and created opportunities for local communities. It demonstrated how policy support turns into real development on the ground.

The Telangana Tourism Policy 2025–2030 (Government of Telangana, 2025) underlines sustainable and inclusive growth in the tourism sector. In this policy, the government focuses on destination development, collaboration, tourism circuits, and responsible sustainable practices at tourism destinations.

In general, governance and policy support in the tourism sector build resilience and ensure sustainability. They make tourism more inclusive, responsible, sustainable and future-ready.

2.8. Regional Studies (India and Telangana Context)

Regional studies show that the tourism sector is dynamic for India's economy, culture, and destination growth. Heritage and pilgrimage tourism play a significant role in generating substantial business for local people. (Sahoo, 2021) describes how tourism helps regional development by providing jobs, boosting spending, and improving demand for cultural and pilgrimage travel. The present research observes the same at the Medaram and Laknavaram destinations, where most local stakeholders depend on these tourism destinations for their livelihoods.

In Telangana, the newly formed state, the tourism sector is growing because of its rich heritage. Religious temples, forts, eco-sites, and pilgrimage temples like Yadadri Temple (similar to Tirumala Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh) attract tourists from all over the country. (Saidamma, 2022; Sarkar, 2024) Highlighted tourism destinations such as the UNESCO-recognised Ramappa Temple, the Thousand Pillar Temple in Warangal district, and the Ramalyam temple at Bhadrachalam district have a great impact on local livelihoods. These sites strengthen cultural identity and make the region more appealing.

Pilgrimage tourism is more important in attracting devotees from different religions. (Raghu & Kumar, 2025) pointed out Yadadri, Basara, Bhadrachalam, Vemulawada, Kaleshwaram, and Medak Church as key religious and pilgrimage tourism destinations, which are attracting devotees not only from India but also from other countries. (Lal et al.,

2025) showed how the Medaram Samakka-Sarakka Jatara boosts tourism and stimulates the local economy.

Still, the heritage tourism sector is facing different challenges and needs to address them. Telangana state faces overcrowding, sanitation issues, environmental impacts, weak visitor management, underdeveloped infrastructure and a lack of coordination among the institutions (Raghu & Kumar, 2025; Ramanaiah & Panjabi, 2025).

Overall, Telangana State has high potential in heritage, cultural, and pilgrimage tourism. However, sustainability challenges need to be addressed to safeguard long-term growth. This emphasises the importance of conducting research on heritage tourism alongside sustainable and inclusive development, especially in circuits such as Nalgonda and Warangal.

3. Research Gap

From the review of literature, it can be observed that heritage tourism helps the economic growth of local people, maintains the environment, improves culture and increases infrastructure facilities in destinations, strengthens communities, and improves the quality of life for stakeholders. Even though most of the studies were conducted based on this aspect. This makes it difficult to see the full image of how they connect to drive sustainable and fair development progress.

In India, particularly in Telangana, research mostly focuses on pilgrimage, cultural festivals, heritage preservation, destination development, and the need for policy to develop tourism. However, A few studies have examined how sustainability and inclusiveness work together in these areas. This research gap affects planning, stakeholder coordination, infrastructure development, the improvement of stakeholders' quality of life, and policy design to ensure long-term sustainability.

The present study addresses that gap. It explores how heritage tourism can promote both sustainability and inclusiveness by examining the interrelated aspects within the heritage circuits of the Nalgonda and Warangal districts.

4. Need for the Study

Heritage tourism has an important role in sustainable and inclusive development. It protects culture, traditions and supports local stakeholders' livelihoods. This is especially needed for a newly formed state like Telangana. In 2023, more than 94 million tourists visited Telangana's tourism destinations. These tourists added about ₹82 billion to the state's

economy (Government of Telangana, 2024; Ministry of Tourism, 2023). Yet, heritage-rich districts such as Nalgonda and Warangal together drew less than 10% of these visitors. This shows that there is still significant unexploited potential in these districts (IBEF, 2024).

The Telangana state's first tourism policy, "Telangana Tourism Policy 2025–2030" (Government of Telangana, 2025), focuses on infrastructure development, the creation of new tourism destinations, and welcoming private partners in tourism development. This policy concentrates on the involvement of local people in tourism destination development, decision-making, and maintaining sustainable practices within heritage circuits

The present study examines how heritage tourism impacts sustainability and inclusiveness in Nalgonda and Warangal. The findings will provide quantitative insights to guide policy and planning in line with Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

5. Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is to understand heritage tourism and its role in sustainable development and inclusive growth in the heritage-rich districts of Nalgonda and Warangal, Telangana.

1. To examine the contribution of heritage tourism in fostering sustainable regional development.
2. To explore how sustainable growth driven by heritage tourism fosters social inclusion and local empowerment.

6. Research hypothesis

The research hypothesis was constructed based on a review of the literature and the research gap. The literature review discussed the importance and role of heritage tourism, sustainable tourism and inclusive development. It evaluates how the tourism sector impacts stakeholders' lives, including environmental protection, and the role of governance and policies in destination development.

Based on this structure and gaps in the reviewed literature, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H₀₁: Heritage tourism does not significantly contribute to sustainable development in the heritage circuits of Nalgonda and Warangal districts.

H₀₂: Sustainable development, driven by heritage tourism, does not significantly influence inclusive development in the heritage circuits of the Nalgonda and Warangal districts.

H₀₃: Heritage tourism does not significantly contribute to inclusive development in the heritage circuits of Nalgonda and Warangal districts.

7. Research Methodology of the Study

The present study uses a descriptive technique to investigate how heritage tourism improves faster, sustainable, and inclusive development within the heritage circuits of Nalgonda and Warangal districts in Telangana state. It employs a quantitative methodology that integrates both primary and secondary data to ensure empirical accuracy and policy relevance.

8. Study Area and Sample Size

For this research study, the sample area was selected from the heritage-rich districts of Nalgonda and Warangal in Telangana. From each district, 10 destinations were identified. In these destinations, researchers selected historical forts, ancient temples, culturally related destinations, pilgrimage temples, and wildlife sanctuaries etc.

The following is the list of heritage destinations from the Nalgonda district

The following heritage sites were selected from the Nalgonda district for this research. Key highlights include:

- Devarakonda Fort, a medieval hilltop fortress that reflects the clever strategic design of the Recherla dynasty to protect against enemies, was constructed on a hilltop. In this destination, there is one old shivalayam.
- Bhongir Fort is located in Bhongir town, near the bus stop. A striking monolithic rock fortress that stands as a testament to Telangana's historic defensive prowess. This fort resembles an elephant.
- Kolanupaka Jain Temple is located near Bhongiri Yadadi Temple, a revered pilgrimage site adorned with intricate carvings from the Kakatiya era.
- Nagarjuna Sagar (Buddhavanam & Nandikonda) celebrates the region's Buddhist legacy through stupas, sculptures, and ancient relics.
- Yadadri Temple (Yadagirigutta) is a sacred site dedicated to Lord Lakshmi Narasimha that draws pilgrims from near and far. It is often compared to the Tirumala Tirupati Temple in Andhra Pradesh.
- Chaya Someshwara Temple (Panagal) is renowned for its fascinating shadow play architecture.
- Cheruvugattu Temple is a spiritually significant site cherished by the local community. Local devotees most frequently visit on Mondays.

- Pillalamarri Temple is an example of traditional Dravidian architectural style.
- Rachakonda Fort features a double-fort design that embodies the strength of the Rachakonda rulers.
- Lingamanthula Temple (Peddagattu Jathara) is the site of a lively tribal festival held every two years.

The following heritage destinations are selected from the Warangal district for this study. Notable heritage sites include:

- Thousand Pillar Temple – A stunning example of Kakatiya architecture, adorned with intricate stone carvings. It is located in the center of Warangal city. Local and international tourists also visit regularly.
- Warangal Fort – Once the capital of the Kakatiya rulers, it is known for its impressive gateways and ancient ruins. Near this fort, the government has set up a children's park for recreation.
- Kakatiya Kala Thoranam – The iconic stone arch that serves as the symbol of Telangana.
- Ramappa Temple is recognised by UNESCO. It is a wonderful temple architecture.
- Bhadrakali Temple is one of the oldest temples located at lake.
- Medaram - Sammakka Saralamma Temple – It is one of Asia's largest tribal fairs, celebrating cultural unity.
- Laknavaram Lake was constructed by the Kakatiyas for water sources, but now it is one of the most popular recreation spots.
- Pakala Lake & Wildlife Sanctuary – popular for biodiversity
- Padmakshi Temple – An ancient temple reflecting Jain and Hindu religion traditions.
- Hanamkonda Fort – A historic fortress that connects the twin cities of Hanamkonda and Warangal.

9. Source of Data and Sample Size

This research was conducted using primary and secondary data sources. The primary data were collected from 400 stakeholders. The data was collected through a questionnaire. 200 respondents were selected from each district, 10 heritage sites, and randomly collected 20 samples from each site. Secondary data were taken from official reports published by the Central and State Governments.

10. Questionnaire Design

The simple-structure questionnaire was developed to collect primary data from respondents. It consists of 2 parts:

- Part I included demographic details such as age, gender, occupation, and other characteristics
- Part II concentrated on stakeholder perceptions of heritage tourism. It covered seven areas: economic, environmental, and socio-cultural sustainability; community participation and inclusiveness; infrastructure and development; quality of life and social impact; and governance and policy support.

11. Tools for Analysis

To analyse the collected primary data, descriptive and inferential statistical methods were employed. These tools were chosen to evaluate data reliability, validate measurement constructs, and analyse the relationships between heritage tourism, sustainability, and inclusivity.

Table 1: Tools for Statistical Analysis

Tool of Analysis	Purpose	Expected Outcome
Cronbach's Alpha	To test the internal consistency of the questionnaire.	Guarantees measurement consistency with $\alpha \geq 0.70$.
Descriptive Statistics	Summary of stakeholders' demographic features and their perception ratings.	Offers a summary of sample trends and respondent profiles.
Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)	To validate the construct and examine how the factors contribute within the measurement model.	Confirms that the constructs are dependable and accurately capture what they intend to measure.
Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)	This model explores the connections between heritage tourism, sustainability, and inclusivity in a way that emphasizes understanding and relatability.	Shows strength and direction of causal relationships.

Tool of Analysis	Purpose	Expected Outcome
Mediation Analysis (Bootstrapping)	To analyse the indirect impact of sustainability on heritage tourism and inclusive development.	Determines whether sustainability acts as a mediating variable.
Source: Author's compilation based on standard statistical methodologies (Hair et al., 2019; Kline, 2016; Byrne, 2013).		

12. Demographic Profile of Stakeholders

- It can be observed that most of the respondents are males, i.e. 56%; the remaining 46% of respondents are females.
- The age group of the respondents shows that the maximum number of respondents come under the 31 to 50 years age classification, with 55%.
- The maximum number of respondents are literates, which includes 35% - graduates, 20 % postgraduates, and the rest of the respondents below graduates.
- Most of the respondents are engaged in service-related activities at tourism destinations, which include tourism guides, transport drivers, local shop sellers, and hotel staff, i.e. 36%. The rest of the respondents from different occupations.
- The Maximum number of respondents' annual income levels fall in the 4-12 lakh range, i.e. 66%. It reflects the middle-class income group.
- Most of the respondents, i.e. 67%, are married. Remaining 33% unmarried.
- A maximum of respondents belong to atomic families, i.e. 51%. indicating a shift towards smaller family structures.
- Respondents' representation from both the Nalgonda and Warangal districts is equal, i.e. 200 for each district.

13. Reliability Statistics of Constructs

The consistency of the questionnaire is measured by Cronbach's alpha to assess the reliability of the measures. This test shows how consistent the items are within each construct. A value above 0.70 means the data are reliable for further analysis. In our study, all constructs meet this standard. Table 2 presents the results and confirms that the measures are trustworthy.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics of Heritage Tourism Constructs

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Interpretation
Economic Sustainability	0.868	Excellent reliability
Environmental Sustainability	0.851	Good reliability
Socio-Cultural Sustainability	0.836	Good reliability
Community Participation & Inclusiveness	0.874	Excellent reliability
Infrastructure & Development	0.792	Good reliability
Quality of Life & Social Impact	0.882	Excellent reliability
Governance & Policy Support	0.815	Good reliability

Source: Researcher's Calculations based on primary data

Interpretation:

From Table 2, it concludes that all constructs have Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.70. ultimately, the values show that internal consistency and recommend for further statistical analysis.

14. Descriptive Statistics of Constructs

The descriptive statistics were used to analyse the respondents' perceptions. Field (2018) explains that the mean values indicate the level of agreement, while the standard deviation reflects the variability of responses.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Constructs

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Interpretation
Economic Sustainability	3.48	0.76	Positive impact
Environmental Sustainability	3.30	0.82	Moderate
Socio-Cultural Sustainability	3.55	0.70	High
Community Participation & Inclusiveness	3.32	0.84	Moderate
Infrastructure & Development	3.15	0.90	Needs improvement

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Interpretation
Quality of Life & Social Impact	3.40	0.78	Positive
Governance & Policy Support	3.25	0.85	Moderate

Source: Researcher's Calculations based on primary data

Interpretation: The above Table 3 shows that the Socio-Cultural Sustainability Mean value is 3.55, which is the highest mean value, indicating high acceptance of stakeholders or high impact. The Governance and policy support have a low mean value, i.e. 3.25. The rest of the constructors show a minimum value above 3.

15. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

This research employed Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to test the reliability and validity of the measurement model. The study assessed two key measures: Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). CR values above 0.70 and AVE values above 0.50 indicate good convergent validity. In this study, the constructs met these standards.

Table 4: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Construct	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Interpretation
Economic Sustainability	0.89	0.66	Excellent reliability and strong variance extraction indicate that the items effectively capture the economic benefits of heritage tourism.
Environmental Sustainability	0.87	0.62	Strong convergent validity reflects consistent measurement of environmental protection and sustainability practices.
Socio-Cultural Sustainability	0.86	0.60	Good CR and AVE values confirm that the items adequately represent

Construct	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Interpretation
			cultural preservation and social values.
Community Participation & Inclusiveness	0.88	0.64	High reliability and validity indicate a strong representation of stakeholder involvement and inclusiveness.
Infrastructure & Development	0.83	0.55	Acceptable CR and AVE values suggest that the construct reliably measures infrastructure and development aspects.
Quality of Life & Social Impact	0.90	0.68	Excellent convergent validity indicates that the items strongly capture improvements in quality of life and social outcomes.
Governance & Policy Support	0.85	0.58	Good reliability and validity confirm that governance and policy-related aspects are consistently measured.

Source: Author's computation based on primary survey data

Interpretation: Table 4 shows that all constructs listed have Composite Reliability (CR) values above 0.70 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.50. These values clearly show strong convergent validity. Quality of Life & Social Impact and Economic Sustainability display especially strong validity. The other constructs also show acceptable reliability and validity. These results suggest that the measurement model is solid and suitable for further Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) analysis.

16. Model Fit Indices

The Model fit indices are used to assess the overall fit of the CFA model. The present study uses the following indices: χ^2/df , CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR. These indices indicate how well the theoretical model matches the observed primary data.

Model fit indices indicate a good fit when χ^2/df is less than 3, CFI and TLI are above 0.90, and RMSEA and SRMR are below 0.08. Collectively, these values confirm whether the model is acceptable or excellent.

Table 5.: CFA Goodness-of-Fit Indices

Index	Value Obtained	Model Evaluation
χ^2/df (Chi-Square divided by Degrees of Freedom)	2.50	Acceptable
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	0.95	Excellent
TLI (Tucker–Lewis Index)	0.93	Excellent
RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation)	0.06	Good fit
SRMR (Standardised Root Mean Square Residual)	0.05	Good fit

Interpretation: The above Table 5 emphasises that the model statistically fits the data well. The values of the above-mentioned indices are within the specified limits. That is why this model confirms a good fit, and these results show that the measurement model is reliable and valid. It is suitable for further SEM analysis.

17. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Results

The study employs Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to test the hypothesised relationships among heritage tourism, sustainability, and inclusive development. This analysis uses maximum probability estimation and measures the implications of relationships through standardised path coefficients (β), t-values, and p-values.

Table 6: Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Results

Hypothesized Path	Standardized β	t-value	p-value	Result	Interpretation
H1: Heritage Tourism $\rightarrow$ Sustainable Development	0.79	17.10	<0.001	Supported	Heritage tourism has a strong positive influence on sustainability outcomes.

H2: Sustainable Development → Inclusive Development	0.64	12.50	<0.001	Supported	Sustainability significantly drives inclusive socio- economic development.
H3: Heritage Tourism → Inclusive Development (direct)**	0.24	3.05	0.003	Supported	Heritage tourism has a moderate direct impact on inclusive development.

Source: Researcher's Calculations based on primary data

Interpretation: From the above table 6, the results of the SEM analysis are shown. The analysis results show that heritage tourism strongly supports sustainability. For sustainability to play a significant role in driving inclusive development, Heritage tourism also has a direct impact on inclusiveness, but this impact is weaker than its indirect effect through sustainability. These results highlight that sustainability is the key link, connecting tourism efforts to broader social and economic inclusion.

18. Mediation Analysis

Mediation analysis is used in this study to test the indirect effect of heritage tourism on inclusive growth through sustainability. Bootstrapping is used with 5000 resamples to ensure the strength of the results.

The mediation effect was observed by using the Variance Accounted For (VAF) measure. The Values between 20% and 80% show partial mediation.

Table 7: Mediation Analysis (Indirect Effects through Sustainable Development)

Indirect Path	Indirect β	95% Confidence Interval	p-value	VAF (% variance accounted for)	Mediation Type
Heritage Tourism → Sustainable Development → Inclusive Development	0.50	[0.40, 0.60]	< ss0.001	67% %	Partial Mediation

Source: Author's computation based on primary survey data

Interpretation: The results from Table 7 show that sustainability plays an important mediating role between heritage tourism and inclusive development. The indirect effect is statistically significant, and the VAF value confirms partial mediation. These findings suggest that heritage tourism mainly supports inclusive development through sustainability pathways, rather than directly.

19. Endogenous Construct Performance (Model Strength - R² Analysis)

The Endogenous Construct performance explains the portion of the variation in each construct. The higher R² value indicates a stronger, more reliable model. This analysis also explains that the model is more effective at predicting outcomes within the framework.

Table 8: Endogenous Construct Performance (Model Strength - R² Analysis)

Endogenous Variable	R ²	Interpretation
Sustainable Development	0.63	Heritage tourism accounts for 63% of the variance in sustainable development.
Inclusive Growth	0.56	Sustainable development and heritage tourism jointly account for 56% of inclusive growth.

Source: Researcher's calculations based on primary data

Interpretation: The results observed from Table 8 indicate that the model explains a considerable proportion of the variance in sustainability and inclusive growth. Sustainability plays an important role in explaining these changes, while inclusive development has a moderate effect. Finally, it concludes that the model effectively demonstrates the main connections between these ideas.

20. Findings of the study

- The research study results show that heritage tourism plays an essential role in promoting sustainability. It can be observed from Table 6 that the hypothesised path (H₁: Heritage Tourism → Sustainable Development) and $\beta = 0.79$, $p < 0.001$. These values reflect how tourism activities in Nalgonda and Warangal districts significantly support Sustainable development.
- Through sustainability improvement, the quality of life of stakeholders, social equality, community well-being and involvement of the local community will improve. This statement is supported by research results, i.e. the hypothesis path (H₂: Sustainable

Development → Inclusive Development) and the SEM values $\beta = 0.64$, $p < 0.001$ and Endogenous Construct Performance (Model Strength - R^2 Analysis) analysis in Table 8 also reveals that Heritage tourism accounts for 63% of the variance in sustainable development

- The test results explain that the role of sustainability is a connecting factor between heritage tourism and inclusive development. Heritage tourism directly accelerates inclusive development; i.e., the values in Table 6 ($\beta = 0.24$, $p = 0.003$) show that its impact is somewhat modest. The Table 7 mediation analysis shows VAF = 67%. It describes that the maximum benefits from the tourism sector stem from sustainable development efforts rather than direct impacts alone.

21. Policy Implications and Recommendations

- It can be observed from these research findings that heritage tourism is more effective with suitable tourism policies like “Telangana Tourism Policy 2025-30 and Swadeshi Darshan”
- Even though the State and Central governments are implementing well-structured policies, there is an opportunity to improve infrastructure—including roads, sanitation, and visitor facilities—and many tourists and stakeholders still feel these areas need attention.
- Creating awareness about sustainable practices at tourism sites is very important to protect the environment for future generations.
- For the development of heritage tourism, community involvement is essential. This can be achieved by involving women's groups and local talented artisans in tourism development activities. These initiatives drive inclusive growth and ensure tourism benefits reach to all stakeholders.
- Without an effective marketing strategy, the tourism sector cannot be developed. The government needs to concentrate on digital and social media promotion and involve local social media influencers to promote these tourist destinations.
- Ultimately, the institutional collaboration is very important among different institutions involved, such as tourism, endowment, archaeology and forest departments and aligning efforts with “Telangana Tourism Policy 2025-30” is the key factor to achieve sustainable and inclusive development across Telangana state.

22. Conclusion

The findings of the research emphasizes the importance of heritage tourism for sustainable and inclusive development in the selected districts of Nalgonda and Warangal. This heritage tourism helps us to protect and preserve the local cultural identity of destinations and improve infrastructure facilities. This tourism sector also creates an opportunity to involve the local community in developing tourism destinations.

Collectively, the above-mentioned efforts create jobs for the local community, increase business opportunities, and, finally, all these factors contribute to the state's economic development. The research findings also identify sustainability as the key connecting factor among tourism activities, social fairness, and inclusive development.

This research study concludes that tourism development policy has a great role in accelerating the development of the tourism sector. "Telangana Tourism Policy 2025-30" is strong evidence for the above statement. By achieving the objectives/goals set in this policy, such as improving infrastructure, establishing new destinations, encouraging the local community to be involved in tourism activities, and enabling digital connectivity. These initiatives may unlock the maximum potential of heritage tourism, and it can improve sustainability and a community-centred approach to regional development in Telangana, especially in the selected districts of Nalgonda and Warangal.

23. Acknowledgement

I sincerely acknowledge the Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi. For providing a fellowship for Postdoctoral research. This research is part of the postdoctoral research findings. My heartfelt thanks to the tourism authorities for granting permission to visit and collect primary data. Last but not least, my sincere thanks to all my respondents for giving their valuable time to complete this questionnaire and for their insights.

References

- Abbas, J., Mamirkulova, G., Al-Sulaiti, I., Al-Sulaiti, K., & Dar, M. S. (2024). Mega-infrastructure development, tourism sustainability and quality of life assessment at World Heritage sites: Catering to COVID-19 challenges. *Kybernetes*, 54(2). <https://doi.org/10.1108/K-07-2023-1345>
- Alrawadieh, Z., Prayag, G., Adie, B. A., & Alrawadieh, Z. (2025). Tourism impacts and well-being in heritage tourism: The role of discrete emotions and site sustainability characteristics. *Journal of Heritage*

- Tourism*, 20(5), 642–660. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1743873X.2025.2502350>
- Brooks, C., Waterton, E., Saul, H., & Renzaho, A. (2023). Exploring the relationships between heritage tourism, sustainable community development and host communities' health and wellbeing: A systematic review. *PLOS ONE*, 18(3), e0282319. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0282319>
- Begum, S. J. (2025). *An analytical study on Telangana Tourism Policy 2025–2030: Challenges and prospects*. *International Journal of Novel Research and Development*, 10(9), 83–96.
- Corboş, R. A., Bunea, O. I., & Moncea, M. I. (2024). A literature review on tourism infrastructure investments and their impact on tourism development. In *Proceedings of the 18th International Management Conference: Management in the Algorithmic Era: Harmonizing AI Mastery and Human Collaboration*. <https://doi.org/10.24818/IMC/2024/03.01>
- Gaonkar, S., & Sukthankar, S. V. (2025). Measuring and evaluating the influence of cultural sustainability indicators on sustainable cultural tourism development: Scale development and validation. *Heliyon*, 11, e42514. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2025.e42514>
- Gaunker, R. R. (2025). Cultural tourism and retail shopping: A strategic conceptual model for sustainable tourism development. *International Journal of Advances in Business and Management Research (IJABMR)*, 3(Supplementary 2), 156–168. <https://doi.org/10.62674/ijabmr.2025.v3isupp2.0016>
- Geçikli, R. M., Turan, O., Lachytová, L., Dağlı, E., Kasalak, M. A., Uğur, S. B., & Guven, Y. (2024). Cultural heritage tourism and sustainability: A bibliometric analysis. *Sustainability*, 16(15), 6424. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16156424>
- Ginting, N., Zahrah, W., Hamzah, A., Mohamed, B., Trombadore, A., & Damanik, U. (2024). Preserving cultural heritage: A case study of cultural tourism sustainability development in Girsang Sipangan Bolon, Indonesia. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 56(4), 1551–1563. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.56412-1326>
- Government of Telangana. (2025). *Telangana tourism policy 2025–2030*. Department of Tourism, Government of Telangana. https://tourism.telangana.gov.in/storage/app/media/Telangana_Tourism_Policy_2025-2030.pdf

- Gultom, R. I., Marbun, A., Simatupang, S., & Siregar, V. L. T. (2024). Community-based tourism destination management: A conceptual analysis through a literature review. *PANUNTUN (Jurnal Budaya, Pariwisata, Dan Ekonomi Kreatif)*, 1(3), 201-209. <https://doi.org/10.61476/mvpdjs18>
- He, Q., Tan, G., & Zhang, W. (2025). Residents' perceptions and behaviors regarding the policy of integrating intangible cultural heritages into the tourism industry: Evidence from Dali, China. *Sustainability*, 17(2), 795. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17020795>
- Ibrahim, A. O. (2025). Assessing Saudi Arabia's tourism infrastructure and facilities: Challenges and opportunities for sustainable tourism development. *BIMA Journal of Science and Technology Gombe*, 9(1A), 195-211. <https://doi.org/10.64290/bima.v9i1A.899>
- Jackson, L. A. (2025). Community-based tourism: A catalyst for achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals one and eight. *Tourism and Hospitality*, 6(1), 29. <https://doi.org/10.3390/tourhosp6010029>
- Kim, H., Woo, E., & Uysal, M. (2015). Tourism experience and quality of life among elderly tourists. *Tourism Management*, 46, 465-476. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2014.08.002>
- KPMG India. (2024). *Sustainability in tourism: Reimagining India's sustainable tourism evolution*. KPMG Assurance and Consulting Services LLP. <https://kpmg.com/in>
- Kumari, R., & Thakur, K. (2025). Digital transformation in tourism: Enhancing tourist experience through real-time information systems and smart infrastructure in Himachal Pradesh. *International Journal of Environmental Sciences*, 11(5), 1069-1085. <https://doi.org/10.64252/yaw39f21>
- Lakshmi, V. V., Srivalli, B., Srinivas, T., & Ugandhar, T. (2024). Exploring eco-tourism perspectives for sustainable tourism in Telangana. *SSRG International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 11(3), 8-13. <https://doi.org/10.14445/23942703/IJHSS-V11I3P102>
- Lal, B. S., Raju, C., & Valya, L. (2025). Pilgrimage tourism and economic impact: An empirical study on Medaram Samakka-Sarakka Jatara. *International Journal of Environmental Sciences*, 11(6), 3108-3115. <https://doi.org/10.64252/2ycxpx14>
- Li, J., Peng, X., Liu, X., Tang, H., & Li, W. (2025). A study on shaping tourists' conservational intentions towards cultural heritage in the digital era: Exploring the effects of authenticity, cultural experience,

- and place attachment. *Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering*, 24(3), 1965–1984. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13467581.2024.2321999>
- Liorančaitė-Šukienė, A., & Jurėnienė, V. (2025). Heritage management models for sustainable community tourism development. *Tourism and Hospitality*, 6(2), 111. <https://doi.org/10.3390/tourhosp6020111>
- Luc, M. H., Nguyen, Q. V., Pham, T. V., Le, T. H. H., Tran, T. G., & Nguyen, T. H. L. (2026). How community-based tourism supports sustainable livelihoods: The mediating roles of community participation and tourism-related employment. *Tourism and Hospitality*, 7(2), 37. <https://doi.org/10.3390/tourhosp7020037>
- Min, W. (2025). A scientometric review of cultural heritage management and sustainable development through evolutionary perspectives. *npj Heritage Science*, 13, 215. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s40494-025-01708-9>
- Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. (2022). *Draft national tourism policy 2022*. Government of India. <https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-09/Draft%20National%20Tourism%20Policy%202022%20Final%20July%2012.pdf>
- Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. (2022). *National strategy for ecotourism 2022*. Government of India. <https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-05/National%20Strategy%20for%20Eco%20Tourism.pdf>
- Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. (2022). *National strategy for sustainable tourism 2022*. Government of India. <https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-09/National%20Strategy%20for%20Sustainable%20Tourism%202022.pdf>
- Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. (2022). *Swadesh Darshan Scheme 2.0: Guidelines for sustainable and responsible tourism destinations*. Government of India. <https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2023-04/Swadesh%20Darshan%20%20Guideline%20Booklet.pdf>
- Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. (2023). *Travel for LiFE: A program for tourism sector under Mission LiFE*. Government of India. https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2023-09/A%20Program%20for%20Tourism%20Sector%20under%20Mission%20LiFE_Sept%2027%202023_Single%20Pages%20for%20Website.pdf
- Munir, S., Haq, I. U., Cheema, A. N., Almanjahie, I. M., & Khan, D. (2025). The role of tourists, infrastructure and institutions in sustainable

- tourism: A structural equation modeling approach. *Sustainability*, 17(7), 2841. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17072841>
- Mzembe, A. N., Koens, K., & Calvi, L. (2023). The institutional antecedents of sustainable development in cultural heritage tourism. *Sustainable Development*, 31(4), 2196–2211. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.2565>
- Pai, C. H., Zhang, Y., Wang, Y. L., Li, K., & Shang, Y. (2025). Current challenges and opportunities in cultural heritage preservation through sustainable tourism practices. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 29(5), 1016–1034. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2024.2443776>
- Panagiotopoulou, P., & Skoultos, S. (2025). Stakeholders' involvement in sustainable destination management: A systematic literature review of existing multi-stakeholder frameworks and approaches. *Tourism and Hospitality*, 6(5), 250. <https://doi.org/10.3390/tourhosp6050250>
- Pezeshki, F., Khodadadi, M., & Bagheri, M. (2023). Investigating community support for sustainable tourism development in small heritage sites in Iran: A grounded theory approach. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 29(8), 773–791. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2023.2220316>
- Phori, M. M., Hermann, U. P., & Grobbelaar, L. (2024). Residents' perceptions of sustainable heritage tourism development in a rural municipality. *Development Southern Africa*, 41(3), 551–569. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0376835X.2024.2350391>
- Raghu, M., & Naveen Kumar, A. (2025). Sustainable pilgrimage tourism practices for a sustainable future in Telangana. *International Journal of Novel Research and Development*, 10(9), 113–121. <https://ijnrd.org/papers/IJNRDF001013.pdf>
- Ramanaiah, J., & Panjabi, L. C. (2025). Sustainable tourism in Telangana: Balancing growth with cultural preservation. *International Journal of Global Research Innovations & Technology*, 3(2), 191–198. [https://doi.org/10.62823/IJGRIT/03.2\(II\).7756](https://doi.org/10.62823/IJGRIT/03.2(II).7756)
- Ramkissoon, H. (2023). Perceived social impacts of tourism and quality-of-life: A new conceptual model. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 31(2), 442–459. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2020.1858091>
- Reindrawati, D. Y. (2023). Challenges of community participation in tourism planning in developing countries. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2022.2164240>

- Saidamma, B. (2022). Developmental dimensions and pilgrimage tourism in northern Telangana: A study. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Education and Research*, 7(3), 157–162.
- Sahoo, A. P. (2020). Tourism sector and Indian economy: An evaluation from 2000 onwards. *Asian Journal of Tourism and Hospitality*, 5(4), 61–70. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5149799>
- Sarkar, S. (2024). An exploratory study on status, prospects and challenges of tourism industry in Telangana State, India. *BL College Journal*, 6(1), 189–202. <https://doi.org/10.62106/blc2024v6i1e7>
- Silva, L. F., Carballo-Cruz, F., & Ribeiro, J. C. (2024). Residents' perceptions of tourism development in the context of a new governance framework for Portuguese protected areas: The case of a small peripheral natural park. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 114, 103451. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2024.103451>
- Sobhani, P., Esmailzadeh, H., Sadeghi, S. M. M., & Marcu, M. V. (2022). Estimation of ecotourism carrying capacity for sustainable development of protected areas in Iran. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(3), 1059. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19031059>
- Turčinović, M., Vujko, A., & Stanišić, N. (2025). Community-led sustainable tourism in rural areas: Enhancing wine tourism destination competitiveness and local empowerment. *Sustainability*, 17(7), 2878. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17072878>
- Tahiri, A., Dibra, M., Kovači, I., Millaku, B., Dimoska, T., & Misini, D. (2026). The role of cultural heritage in sustainable tourism development: Balancing preservation and economic growth. *International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning*, 21(4), 1759–1767. <https://doi.org/10.18280/ijstdp.210425>
- Uysal, M., Sirgy, M. J., Woo, E., & Kim, H. (2016). Quality of life (QOL) and well-being research in tourism. *Tourism Management*, 53, 244–261. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2015.07.013>
- Wei, X., Pu, P., Cheng, L., Jiang, H., & Liu, Y. (2024). Ethnic community's perception of benefit-sharing and participation intentions in national park tourism in China: An asymmetric modelling approach. *Ecological Indicators*, 171, 112257. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolind.2024.112257>
- Xu, N., & Li, H. (2025). Towards management of sustainable tourism development in coastal destinations of the Bohai Rim: Insights from a tourism carrying capacity analysis. *Discover Sustainability*, 6, 168. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-025-00951-1>

- Yayla, Ö., Koç, B., & Dimanche, F. (2023). Residents' support for tourism development: Investigating quality-of-life, community commitment, and communication. *European Journal of Tourism Research*, 33, 3311. <https://doi.org/10.54055/ejtr.v33i.2762>
- Žunić, L., Pivac, T., & Kosić, K. (2023). The main components of tourism infrastructure development. In *Modern management tools and economy of tourism sector in present era* (pp. 393–413). <https://doi.org/10.31410/tmt.2022-2023.393>
- Lopes, J. D., & Estêvão, J. (2024). Contributions to the design of regional tourism innovation policies: Evaluation of determinants in Latin America. *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, 9(4), Article 100575. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jik.2024.100575>
- Gaonkar, S., & Sukthankar, S. V. (2025). Measuring and evaluating the influence of cultural sustainability indicators on sustainable cultural tourism development: Scale development and validation. *Heliyon*, 11, e42514. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2025.e42514>