Village Tourism Empowerment Against Innovation, Economy Creative, and Social Environmental

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Abstract

This study explores the vital role of village tourism in fostering innovation and elevating the creative economy. Through enhancing tourist experiences and advancing local innovation, it investigates the intricate impacts of village tourism on innovation, the creative economy, and society. Utilizing a qualitative approach, 145 participants are engaged via surveys to analyze factors that influence Tourism Village: Environment (En), Economic (Ec), Socio-Culture (SC), Innovation Promotion (IP), and Tourism (Tr). Employing partial quadratic-structural equation modeling through SmartPLS, it examines how citizen engagement and tourism-induced economic gains influence psychological, social, and political empowerment, and place attachment. The findings emphasize village tourism’s vast potential in driving innovation, igniting creativity, and contributing significantly to economic and social growth. Nonetheless, its sustainability relies on harmonizing social, economic, and environmental aspects. The study underscores the urgency of sustainable management for lasting benefits for locals and visitors alike. Synthesizing impacts, contributions, challenges, solutions, novel insights, and revelations, this research highlights village tourism’s transformative power in propelling innovation-focused advancement in the creative economy, highlighting the necessity of responsible management approaches.

Keywords: Tourism, SmartPLS, Environment, Empowerment, Innovation

1. Introduction

Tourism Village is a rural area that offers a general atmosphere that reflects the village's authenticity in terms of socio-economic, cultural and various unique village potentials developed as a tourism component. Over the last 20 years, tourism has been overgrown, which has significantly impacted the region's economic growth by providing the area with financial, socio-cultural and environmental improvement and development. Rural tourism is tourism activities carried out in rural tourist destinations. Tourism villages make natural resource tourism one of the attractions [1].

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Development can empower local communities by participating in tourism activities, creating employment opportunities and increasing their incomes. In addition, rural tourism can promote the preservation of the environment and local culture by maintaining existing traditions and culture to raise public and tourist awareness of the importance of preserving the environment and culture [2]. The challenge is protecting the environment and culture while growing the local economy and social welfare. One solution that can be taken is to develop innovation and creativity in creating unique and attractive products and services. Creation can also encourage the development of creative industries, thereby increasing tourism attractiveness and providing economic benefits to local communities. With sustainable and inclusive growth, it is hoped that it will improve the welfare of the local community and preserve the local environment and culture [3].

Despite its importance, empowerment in the context of population attitudes towards tourism is still a relatively under-researched concept [4]. Most of the studies focus primarily on the economic benefits of tourism for residents and communities, including sharing economic benefits, job creation, control of community economic benefits where appropriate, and maintenance of tourism spillover effects in communities. The researchers, therefore, argue that a significant research gap in the emerging population empowerment literature is how empowerment occurs between individuals and communities (history) and what outcomes empowered citizens are likely to have [5].

By understanding the various dimensions of empowerment and their requirements and consequences, experts can help empower more people and achieve desired outcomes such as supporting tourism, innovation promotion, and socio-culture. Of course, this will help me to concentrate [6]. Community empowerment in tourism is a recurring theme in development goals, which are aimed at overcoming gender, power, and also economic inequalities in society, which are closely related to the principle of sustainable tourism development. Therefore, this study examines the history and outcomes of empowerment, particularly community engagement, on individual psychological, social, and political empowerment and economic benefits from tourism, which in turn influence the impact on innovation promotion and, ultimately, places of attachment [7]. These concepts and the proposed relationships can be tested in the research discussed below (Figure 1).

![Figure 1. Conceptual model and research hypothesis.](image-url)
The figure above explains how innovation promotion encompasses two hypotheses: socio-culture and tourism environment, aiming for the integration of tourism and society in fostering innovation. Subsequent hypotheses include the linkage from the tourism environment to the impact on economics, the correlation of tourism engagement with socio-culture, and ultimately, the effect of economics on engagement in tourism.

This article discusses the potential of village tourism as a tool for community empowerment in increasing innovation, the creative economy, and the social environment. Sustainable and inclusive village tourism development needs to be supported by collaboration between the government, local communities, and tourism actors. With good cooperation, village tourism development can provide optimal benefits for all parties and be sustainable in the long term [8].

2. Research Method
2.1 Instruments and Data Collection

The respondents provided answers to the questionnaire using a Likert scale consisting of five points. To prevent biased responses, the questions were formulated in both positive and negative forms [9] [10]. The questionnaire was provided in English, and its design was informed by existing scientific literature. Data collection was conducted through online surveys specifically targeting the research subjects. It is important to note that the sampling of respondents was carefully considered to ensure representation of the relevant population [11]. To obtain a valid and consistent questionnaire, the refinement process was carried out in three different stages:

- A review of the questionnaire by researchers specializing in heritage tourism.
- Questionnaire analysis by several city tourism managers participating in the organization and promotion.
- Completion of a validation pre-test on 100 tourists representing the surveyed population.

After the data was collected, it was analyzed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method, a multivariate statistical analysis method used to test structural models. The proposed structural model assessed with SmartPLS V.4 is used to complete the model estimation [12]. Table I displays the instruments to be tested using SmartPLS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourism Environment</td>
<td>I love the tourist environment of this place.</td>
<td>TE1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(TE)</td>
<td>I like the clean/neat/beautiful tourist environment and the positives about this place.</td>
<td>TE2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This visit provides a thorough insight into this cultural tourism environment.</td>
<td>TE3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of Economic (IE)</td>
<td>The AI Smart Tourism application helps find tourist attractions that support the local area's economic development.</td>
<td>IE1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The AI Smart Tourism application provides information about tourism activities or events that support the development of the tourism industry in the local area.</td>
<td>IE2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This application provides information about shops or markets for creative economy businesses that sell souvenirs.</td>
<td>IE3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-Culture (SC)</td>
<td>The positive social impact of the Smart Tourism Application in the Community</td>
<td>SC1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The AI Smart Tourism application affects interactions between</td>
<td>SC2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2 Data analysis
Data Analysis Techniques Data Analysis Techniques in PLS with SmartPLS version 4 software with the following stages:

1. Outer Model Testing involves examining the connection between latent variables and their corresponding indicators. In other words, the outer model determines the relationship between each indicator and its respective latent variables [13]. The tests performed on the outer model are as follows:
   a. Convergent validity refers to the factor loading value of indicators on the latent variable. It is expected that this value is greater than 0.7, indicating a strong correlation between the indicators and the intended construct.
   b. Discriminant validity is assessed through the cross-loading factor values, which determine if a construct demonstrates adequate discrimination. In this case, the loading value of the indicators on the intended construct should be higher than the loading value with other constructs.
   c. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is an expected value greater than 0.5, indicating that the indicators explain more than 50% of the variance in the latent variable.
   d. Composite reliability measures the overall reliability of the data. If the composite reliability value is higher than 0.7, it suggests high reliability of the construct [14].
   e. Cronbach’s Alpha is used to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the data. It is expected that all constructs have a Cronbach’s Alpha value higher than 0.7, indicating good reliability.

2. Structural Model Measurement (Inner Model)
   a. The structural model (Inner Model) is evaluated by examining the R-Square value, which serves as a test for the goodness of fit of the model. Additionally, the significance of the parameter coefficients and the t-statistic in the
Algorithm Bootstrapping report - Path Coefficients is analyzed. It is determined whether the t-statistic value exceeds the critical value from the t-table (t-table significance 5% = 1.96) to assess the significance of the coefficients.

2.3 Literature Review

2.3.1 Empowerment through Tourism

Empowerment through tourism refers to the process of enabling and strengthening local communities, especially in rural or village areas, by involving them in various aspects of the tourism industry [15]. It goes beyond simply attracting tourists to a destination; it focuses on empowering the local community to actively participate and benefit from tourism development. One aspect of empowerment through tourism is economic empowerment. By involving local communities in tourism activities, such as providing accommodations, offering local products and services, or organizing cultural events, tourism can generate income and employment opportunities for community members [16]. This economic empowerment can enhance their financial stability, improve their living standards, and reduce poverty.

Furthermore, tourism can empower local communities socially and culturally [17]. When communities actively participate in tourism development, they have the opportunity to showcase their unique traditions, arts, crafts, and cultural heritage to visitors [18]. This can lead to a sense of pride and identity among community members, as well as the preservation and revitalization of their cultural practices. Additionally, interactions with tourists and exposure to different cultures can promote cross-cultural understanding and tolerance, fostering social cohesion within the community [19] [20].

Empowerment through tourism also extends to environmental aspects. Sustainable tourism practices encourage the preservation and conservation of natural resources, ecosystems, and biodiversity [21]. By involving local communities in sustainable tourism initiatives, they become stewards of their own environment. This empowerment includes promoting responsible tourism behavior, implementing eco-friendly practices, and raising awareness about the importance of environmental conservation among tourists and community members alike [22] [23] [24].

Overall, empowerment through tourism involves creating opportunities for local communities to actively participate, benefit economically, preserve their culture, and contribute to the sustainable development of their area. It aims to ensure that tourism becomes a catalyst for positive change, enabling communities to have control over their own destinies and fostering a sense of ownership and pride in their cultural and natural heritage.

2.3.2. Tourism Innovation Affects Empowerment through Tourism

Tourism innovation refers to developing and implementing new concepts, approaches, and strategies within the tourism sector. This can include technological advancements, creative marketing techniques, sustainable practices, and creating unique tourism experiences. These innovations can potentially transform the tourism industry and bring about positive changes in the empowerment of local communities [25].

One way in which tourism innovation affects empowerment is through economic opportunities. Innovative tourism initiatives can attract more visitors, increase tourism revenues, and create new job opportunities for the local community [26]. Community members can gain access to employment, entrepreneurship, and income-generating activities by participating in these creative ventures, thus improving their economic well-being and empowerment [27].

Moreover, tourism innovation can empower local communities by involving them in decision-making and enhancing their participation in tourism development. When communities are included in the planning, design, and implementation of innovative tourism projects, they can shape the direction of tourism in their area, voice their concerns, and contribute their local knowledge and expertise [28]. This involvement fosters a sense of ownership, control, and empowerment among community members.

Furthermore, tourism innovation can also positively impact local communities' social and cultural empowerment [29]. Innovative tourism initiatives often emphasize preserving and promoting local culture, heritage, and traditions. This can lead to increased pride and identity.
among community members and opportunities for cultural exchange and interaction with tourists. Recognizing and celebrating local culture can empower communities by preserving their unique identity and fostering social cohesion[30].

In summary, tourism innovation plays a significant role in empowering local communities through tourism. It creates economic opportunities, promotes community participation and decision-making, and fosters social and cultural empowerment. By embracing and implementing innovative practices, the tourism industry can contribute to the commission of local communities and facilitate their active engagement in sustainable tourism development. Based on these reasons, we propose the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 1:** Citizen participation in tourism positively affects their social life through tourism.

**2.3.3. The Economic Benefits of Tourism Influence Empowerment through Tourism**

The economic benefits of tourism have a profound influence on the empowerment of local communities. Tourism can generate significant economic opportunities, such as job creation, income generation, and entrepreneurial ventures, which directly contribute to the charge of community members. When tourism thrives, it stimulates the local economy by attracting visitors who spend money on accommodations, dining, transportation, and local products or services. This increased economic activity leads to employment opportunities within the hospitality sector, providing residents a means to earn a stable income and improve their economic well-being. By having access to sustainable livelihoods, community members gain a sense of empowerment, as they have the financial means to support themselves and their families.

Furthermore, tourism's economic benefits extend beyond direct employment. Tourism growth can trigger a ripple effect, stimulating the development of supporting industries and creating indirect job opportunities. These industries may include transportation, agriculture, handicraft production, and other sectors that supply goods and services to the tourism industry. The multiplier effect of tourism-generated income spreads throughout the community, enhancing economic empowerment and reducing dependency on a single sector. As community members benefit from these indirect employment opportunities, their financial capacity and self-reliance increase, leading to greater charge.

Moreover, the economic benefits of tourism can contribute to entrepreneurship and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) within the community. Tourism often provides a platform for locals to establish their businesses and offer products or services that cater to tourists' needs and interests. This entrepreneurial opportunity enables individuals to take control of their economic destiny, fosters innovation and creativity, and empowers them to be self-reliant. By nurturing a culture of entrepreneurship, tourism enhances the capacity of community members to shape their economic future and promotes a sense of ownership and pride in their local businesses.

Further research by experts in rural communities shows that increased self-confidence, well-being, and respect for women represent more psychological than economic empowerment. The level of community empowerment through tourism is based on the actual realization of potential and financial benefits. Based on this logic, we propose the following:

**Hypothesis 2:** The economic benefits of citizens from tourism positively affect their social life through tourism.

**2.3.4. Empowerment influences through the Tourism Environment**

Importance of studying empowerment influences through the tourism environment. Charge effects through the tourism environment refer to how the tourism industry can empower local communities regarding their social, cultural, and environmental well-being. This empowerment occurs through various mechanisms within the tourism environment, such as cultural preservation, environmental stewardship, and intercultural exchange. By preserving and promoting local culture, engaging in sustainable practices, and fostering intercultural
understanding, the tourism industry can empower communities and enhance their sense of identity, self-sufficiency, and active participation in tourism development. Importance of further research on empowerment influences through the tourism environment.

However, it has also been shown that empowerment can provide information about attachment points. Organizational psychology and other research have shown that various forms of empowerment are unique predictors of employee engagement. Recent researchers have demonstrated similar results in terms of employees and organizational culture. Recently, in the tourism context, researchers found that empowering residents significantly predicted their commitment to using Airbnb as a hosting platform. With these results, it is not surprising that residents who feel empowered in their communities feel more connected to their communities and places. Although individual studies suggest engagement as a precursor to empowerment (albeit with limited effect sizes), more support in the literature provides evidence that empowerment serves as a precursor to attachment formation. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

**Hypothesis 3:** Social empowerment through tourism will positively impact their environmental identity.

**Hypothesis 4:** Social empowerment through tourism will positively impact their environmental dependence.

### 2.3.5. Innovation Promotion Affects Place Environment

The novelty of this research is innovation promotion refers to the deliberate efforts to stimulate and foster innovative ideas, practices, and technologies within a particular place or community. This can involve providing resources, funding, incentives, and supportive policies to encourage individuals, businesses, and organizations to develop and implement innovative solutions.

The effects of innovation promotion on the place environment can be multifaceted. On the one hand, innovation can lead to developing environmentally friendly technologies and practices that promote sustainability and reduce the environmental footprint. For example, innovations in renewable energy, waste management, and water conservation can create a cleaner and more sustainable environment.

On the other hand, the innovation and its implementation can also have unintended negative environmental consequences. For instance, the production and disposal of new technologies or products may generate waste or pollution, and the increased use of resources to support innovative processes can have environmental implications. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis 5:** People's innovation promotion will have a positive impact on their place identity and place dependence.

### 3. Findings

#### 3.1. Results of PLS-SEM

The measurement model, also known as the outer model, was created using PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling) and consisted of an 8-factor structure. In Table 2, the moduli and mutual loads for each element within the structure are displayed. One element was excluded from further analysis due to low factor loads below the recommended cutoff value of 0.70, as indicated in Table 2. The remaining elements exhibited factor loadings ranging from 0.84 to 0.95, with each factor having a higher load than the others. Moreover, the Cronbach's alpha values for all elements exceeded 0.70, indicating high reliability.

To validate the measurement model, a bootstrap validation test was conducted with 100 samples. The results showed that the loading intervals at a 90 percent confidence level had positive lower and upper percentiles, providing confirmation of the scale's convergence for the eight-element model. Furthermore, all Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were significantly greater than 0.50, further supporting the convergence validity. Table 3 demonstrates that the square root of the AVE, represented on the diagonal, is higher than the correlation between factors, represented by elements outside the diagonal. This finding confirms the discriminant validity of the model.
### Table 2. Reliability and Construct Validity of PLS-SEM Algorithm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>rho_a</th>
<th>rho_c</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement in Tourism</td>
<td>0.881</td>
<td>0.884</td>
<td>0.913</td>
<td>0.677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of Economic</td>
<td>0.850</td>
<td>0.858</td>
<td>0.893</td>
<td>0.626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation Promotion</td>
<td>0.805</td>
<td>0.825</td>
<td>0.864</td>
<td>0.563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-Culture</td>
<td>0.886</td>
<td>0.887</td>
<td>0.917</td>
<td>0.687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism Environment</td>
<td>0.877</td>
<td>0.882</td>
<td>0.911</td>
<td>0.671</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3. Discriminant Validity (Intercorrelation) of Constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Engagement in Tourism</th>
<th>Influence of Economic</th>
<th>Innovation Promotion</th>
<th>Socio-Culture</th>
<th>Tourism Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement in Tourism</td>
<td>0.823</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of Economic</td>
<td>0.791</td>
<td>0.791</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation Promotion</td>
<td>0.815</td>
<td>0.798</td>
<td>0.750</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-Culture</td>
<td>0.793</td>
<td>0.831</td>
<td>0.750</td>
<td>0.829</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism Environment</td>
<td>0.746</td>
<td>0.836</td>
<td>0.683</td>
<td>0.775</td>
<td>0.819</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The structural model, also known as the inner model, was evaluated using 5,000 bootstrap samples and 95% confidence intervals. Estimated structural models are presented in Table 4, while Figure 2 displays the path coefficients and their average values. The significance of path coefficients between exogenous and endogenous variables, as well as the R² values, were examined to assess the model's fit. Out of the 17 tested strains, 14 were supported at a significance level of p<0.05.

The impact of citizen participation in tourism on self-determination was found to be significant across multiple dimensions: Engagement in Tourism (β = .169, t = 2.893, p <.01), socio-culture (β = .321, t = 5.408, p <.01), and Influence of Economic (β = .511, t = 10.588, p <.01). In terms of the anticipated effect of perceived economic benefits from tourism on population empowerment, it was found to be significant for Engagement in Tourism (β = .269, t = 4.415, p <.01) and social-culture (β = .149, t = 2.405, p < 0.05), but not for Influence of Economic. Overall, engagement in tourism accounts for 32% of the variation in empowerment.
factors, despite the lack of a significant relationship between economic gains and Influence of Economic.

Looking at the effect of empowerment on innovation promotion and local loyalty, all but two pathways were significant (p < 0.05). Engagement in Tourism influences place dependence (β=0.191, t=3.809, p<0.01), Tourism Environment (β=0.395, t=4.385, p<0.01), and Innovation Promotion (β=0.370, t=5.580, p<.01). Socio-culture significantly explained place dependence (β = .154, t = 4.658, p < .05) and Innovation Promotion (β = .216, t = 8.780, p < .01), but not place identity. Likewise, the effect of Engagement in Tourism is significant on location dependence (β = .229, t = 4.798, p < .01) and Innovation Promotion (β = -.104, t = 8.870, p < .05) but not on local identity. Interestingly, the effect of political empowerment on innovation promotion is negative, whereas all other effects in the model are positive. The main lesson from these findings is that politically influential residents generally feel that change is unnecessary because they are more actively involved in tourism development decisions to achieve a better innovation promotion. On the other hand, innovation promotion significantly influences the dimensions of local attachment - local dependence (β=0.264, t=8.809, p<0.01) and place identity (β=0.316, t=5.420, p<0.01). As shown in Table 4, tourism participation's beta value is greater than tourism's economic benefits.

**Table 4. Structural Estimation (Hypothesis Testing)**

| Item | Original Sample (O) | Sample Mean (M) | Standard Deviat (STDEV) | T Statistics (|O/STDEV|) |
|------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| IP -> TE -> IE | 0.571 | 0.578 | 0.065 | 8.780 |
| TE -> IE -> ET | 0.661 | 0.665 | 0.050 | 13.247 |
| TE -> IE -> ET -> SC | 0.358 | 0.361 | 0.082 | 4.385 |

**Figure 2.** Partial least squares regression paths and AVE values.
When analyzing the R2 values for the endogenous variables, we observe that tourist involvement and economic benefits from tourism have higher values compared to political empowerment (R2 = 0.159) and social empowerment (R2 = 0.178). Specifically, participation in tourism and economic benefits from tourism serve as stronger predictors for various aspects of empowerment. In fact, the results of tourism participation and economic benefits explain 30% of the differences in innovation promotion, 57% in place identity, and 57% in place dependence. These findings highlight the significant role of tourist involvement and economic benefits in shaping empowerment outcomes and their influence on innovation promotion, place identity, and place dependence.

3.2. Discussion

This study embarks on an exploration of intricate dynamics within community participation, with a distinctive focus on the interplay between community involvement, economic gains from tourism, and their consequential impacts on community empowerment, innovation promotion, and local loyalty. Notably novel in its approach, this research illuminates critical insights into these relationships. The findings underscore an urgent need for heightened citizen awareness regarding the benefits of tourism engagement and its economic influence. Additionally, the study uncovers a noteworthy disparity, revealing that citizens’ levels of psychological empowerment surpass their social and political influence, potentially attributed to a lack of understanding about tourism matters or a sense of detachment from colonial authorities.

In a significant novelty, these results confirm that as citizens’ knowledge about tourism deepens, their psychological, social, and political empowerment gains strength. The study underscores that limited information serves as a primary hindrance to citizens’ active involvement in tourism decision-making. By disseminating accurate information about tourism-related opportunities, an entrepreneurial culture can be fostered, thereby fortifying community empowerment. Importantly, the research highlights that individuals nurtured in environments rich with resources and insights about entrepreneurship and government support tend to proactively engage in their communities.

A further notable contribution of this study is its proposal for the public sector to take a proactive role in promoting development initiatives that encourage community participation in tourism activities. Such endeavors hold the potential to cultivate a sense of community empowerment and foster increased engagement. The model’s explanatory power for perceived innovation is marked, albeit weaker, yet it excels in evaluating aspects of local attachment. The research’s novelty lies in its empirical evidence and the contextual application of location-specific characteristics, offering a unique lens to assess attitudes and behavioral intentions towards tourism.

Remarkably, this study navigates through conflicting results in the literature regarding location’s impact on public support and attitudes toward tourism and its development. While correlating community empowerment with engagement, this study diverges from certain previous findings. It emphasizes that individuals’ attachment to their communities, stemming from residence, birthplace, or ethnicity, inversely influences their valuation of tourism development in their area. Given the heterogeneity of societies and the varied effects of tourism, the study underscores the intricate interplay of attitudes towards tourism among diverse groups.
4. Conclusion

The findings of this study have significant relevance for academics and practitioners who are actively involved in tourism. Our innovative conceptual framework comprehensively addresses multiple dimensions, including rural tourism engagement, economic benefits derived from tourism, psychological, social and political empowerment, attachment to place, and promotion of innovation. By exploring in depth the interrelationships among these factors, our research effectively bridges an important research gap, particularly in the context of place retention, a significance that is increasingly amplified in the current landscape. This situation clearly underscores the importance of recognizing local people as key stakeholders in the tourism industry. In addition, understanding how empowering citizens affects their ties to their regions is an indispensable guide in strategic planning in the post-pandemic era.

This pioneering framework not only lays the foundation for future investigations into the relationship between population empowerment through tourism and various aspects of place attachment, but also substantially contributes to studies of innovation promotion in the tourism domain. Given the continued concern and calls for empirical exploration in this area, our model serves as a catalyst, inspiring future questions for increasing societal engagement in driving innovation – a concern that has only increased post-pandemic.

The findings of this study clearly confirm the positive correlation between community involvement in tourism and empowerment. Therefore, it becomes important for tourism planners and policy makers to actively facilitate the integration of people's perspectives. Achieving this goal involves establishing a strong platform for citizen participation in decision-making processes concerning their territory. An effective way is to hold town meetings where citizens, together with decision makers, engage in ongoing dialogue with community leaders, youth organizations and relevant stakeholders. This study underscores the important role of involving the population more substantially across the spectrum of tourism planning and management to promote increased local support.

The entire research flow, from the creation of research instruments to the publication of this article, takes place in a different environment to the existing situation. As the world is grappling with the far-reaching effects of this pandemic, it is the travel and hospitality sector that has been hit the hardest. The restrictions imposed and local residents' reluctance to travel have led to a decline in visitor numbers, resulting in long-term economic impacts on destinations that are heavily dependent on tourism. In this context, the media in various sectors are firmly focusing on rejuvenation strategies, thus increasing public awareness of the important role played by tourism and hospitality. Therefore, this research appears as a guide, explaining the complex impact of this pandemic on individual attitudes and behavior towards tourism.

References


