



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

# Regional Science Policy & Practice

journal homepage: [www.sciencedirect.com/journal/regional-science-policy-and-practice](http://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/regional-science-policy-and-practice)

## Book review

**Book review of “Nunkoo, R., Juwaheer, T. D., & Seyfi, S. (Eds.). (2024). *A Research Agenda for the Social Impacts of Tourism*. Cheltenham. Edward Elgar Publishing”.**

Tourism has been widely recognized as a driving force for economic development in many regions. However, alongside these economic benefits, it has also been escorted by a range of negative externalities, particularly concerning environmental degradation and social pressures. Some destinations have reached a critical point, where the negative social impacts are becoming increasingly evident with locals expressing dissatisfaction with the presence of tourists. Overcrowding leading to congested public spaces and increased traffic, noise disrupting the daily lives of residents, and rising cost of living and housing prices are the reasons leading to their dissatisfaction. All these require policies that address the imbalance between the economic benefits and social costs of tourism.

A book edited by Robin Nunkoo, Thanika Devi Juwaheer and Siamak Seyfi presents *A Research Agenda for the Social Impacts of Tourism*. The book covers a wide range of topics, from theoretical foundations to empirical studies, including rethinking the importance and evaluation of tourism social impact studies, social impacts of tourism activities, some aspects related to residents' rights, community-based tourism as an approach to tourism development, current trends in tourism such as local accommodation and its impact on residents, and the social implications of COVID-19, tourism and citizenship, governance for sustainable tourism and a new tourism paradigm.

Chapter 2 presents a bibliometric analysis of the social impacts of tourism and sustainable tourism from 1974 to 2019 using the SCOPUS database. The analysis shows that the number of studies specifically addressing the social impacts of tourism is limited. In contrast, research on sustainable tourism has grown significantly in recent years, suggesting that social impacts are often considered within the broader framework of sustainable tourism rather than as a separate research area. Thus, there is a need for more focused research on the social impacts of tourism, particularly due to the diversity of tourism sector activities that result in different impacts on local communities.

The success of tourism depends on the support of local communities, and at the same time, tourists seek more local cultural experiences, history and traditions. Local people with a deep connection to a destination play an important role in shaping this experience, thus emphasising that the long-term success of tourism depends on positive interactions between the host and tourists. Resident dissatisfaction can have a negative impact on the tourist experience, emphasising the importance of exploring residents' perceptions of the socio-cultural impact of tourism.

Tourism can have both positive and negative impacts on local communities, and these impacts are assessed in different ways, ranging between support, tolerance and hostility. It depends on various factors such as economic benefits and community involvement in decision-making, which fosters their positive attitude and support. On the other

hand, overcrowding, risks to loss of cultural identity or environmental degradation due to tourism result in a lack of support. Social exchange theory (SET) suggests that residents, based on a cost-benefit analysis, support tourism if they perceive that the benefits outweigh the costs. Nowadays local accommodations are growing in many destinations, especially their high concentration results in negative externalities for residents such as housing availability, prices, parking issues, noise, and disruption of the life of locals. In this context, chapter 3 analyses the previous studies on residents' attitudes towards tourism impacts, especially outlining how tourism and quality combined with residents' attitude have grown in the last decade. Besides residents, there are other stakeholders involved in tourism, playing crucial roles in shaping and influencing the development and management of tourism activities, reflected in chapter 5, stressing the need for a social life-cycle assessment perspective application in tourism. One approach to tourism development is presented in Chapter 8, community-based tourism, which fulfils local needs and guarantees benefits for residents as well as their participation in decision-making. Its potential application is reinforced as a universal approach to different types of communities - rural, urban or socially created, thus creating a wider impact on different social groups and their development.

Indeed, understanding the dual nature of the social impact of tourism requires careful management of strategies considering the synergies between the right to life and the right to travel reflected in Chapter 7.

The impact of COVID-19 on tourism and its social consequences make this topic timely as tourism has been one of the most affected sectors globally. The sector experienced unforeseen shocks that resulted in significant economic, social and cultural impacts on destinations. The social impact of the pandemic is captured in Chapter 11, particularly in rural communities. While Chapter 13 focuses on urban tourism amidst calls for social inclusiveness during the pandemic. Chapter 12 focuses on residents' perceptions of the contagious effects of the pandemic on the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. The lessons learnt will help to develop more sustainable practices to better prepare for future challenges.

This book also addresses the social impact of knowledge produced in tourism, as reflected in chapter 4. The authors argue that the social impact of tourism research is difficult to measure because knowledge is intangible, referring to the complexity of the tourism sector and of commonly accepted frameworks for its measurement. They presented three evaluation frameworks: the Research Excellence Framework, the Engagement and Impact Assessment and the Social Impact Open Repository.

Presenting a variety of perspectives on the social impacts of tourism, this book offers a comprehensive journey starting from a theoretical framework, tracing the evolution of knowledge and research on the topic. It examines the diverse social impacts of tourism using a variety of methodologies, case studies, touching topics related to the crucial role of stakeholders, residents' rights, community-based tourism and the social implications of COVID-19, the concept of citizenship, governance for sustainable tourism, and a new tourism paradigm. This approach allows

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rspp.2024.100143>

Received 25 September 2024; Accepted 25 September 2024

1757-7802/© 2024 The Regional Science Association International. Published by Elsevier B.V. All rights are reserved, including those for text and data mining, AI training, and similar technologies.

the book to have a significant impact, contributing to both academic understanding and practical application of effective tourism management, taking into account its social impacts and in a way that benefits communities and visitors alike.

**CRedit authorship contribution statement**

**Makhabbat Ramazonova:** Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

**Declaration of Competing Interest**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial

interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Makhabbat Ramazonova  
*Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture, University Portucalense,  
Research on Economics, Management and Information Technologies, Porto,  
Portugal*  
E-mail address: [ramazonova@upt.pt](mailto:ramazonova@upt.pt).