Integrating Cultural Sustainability into Tourism Management Models: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This research will apply sustainability of cultural tourism in tourism management models by exploring its effects on tourist satisfaction and behaviour intention on cultural destinations. The study conceptualises cultural sustainability as a strategic determinant of a perceived service quality, visitor satisfaction, and revisit intention grounded on the concepts of the theory of sustainable tourism and the views of cultural authenticity. The research design was quantitative and the research instruments used were a structured questionnaire to be distributed among the tourists visiting specific cultural sites, and gathered data was analysed using multivariate methods to provide a valid sample. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to test the proposed model. The measurement model was found to have good strength of reliability and validity where the composite reliability values were greater than accepted by guidelines and the average variance extracted (AVE) rated higher than 0.50. The results of structural models show that cultural sustainability has a significant and positive impact on the perception of service quality and tourist satisfaction, and satisfaction is the predictor of revisit intention and mediates the correlation between cultural sustainability and loyalty effects. The model describes a significant variance in major endogenous constructs as the model has a strong predictive power. In practise, the results demonstrate the significance of cultural preservation, authenticity, and community participation in the strategies of managing tourism in order to promote the satisfaction of visitors and longevity of the destinations on the long-term competitiveness. The work makes contributions to the existing body of literature on tourism management by providing empirical support to cultural sustainability as a key construct in structural tourism frameworks and its explanatory-predictive value research by applying a strong PLS-SEM methodology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Cultural sustainability has grown to become a key point of sustainable tourism development, no longer depending on environmental and economic aspects, but also on the need to preserve the heritage, customs, cultural identity and the values of the community. In current tourism research, it has been stressed that no destination can be able to stay competitive in the long term without protecting their socio-cultural bases [8], [14]. Authenticity and local participation are important in cultural heritage sites, intangible traditions, as well as community-based tourism programmes to guarantee the achievement of meaningful visitor experiences. The empirical studies prove that genuine cultural experiences also play a very important role in determining tourist satisfaction and loyalty intentions [6], [12], and unregulated commercialization can lead to the risks of cultural distortion that destroy destination image and long-run sustainability [11], [15]. Consequently, cultural sustainability has been one of the most strategic issues in tourism management systems as opposed to being marginal.

In spite of such increased awareness, cultural sustainability has been researched very rarely in relation to other tourism management constructions. Numerous works concentrate either on authenticity, visitor satisfaction or behavioural intentions independently not placing cultural sustainability as an accountable scope of explanation with a single structural construct in its system [6], [12]. Even though the recent studies have developed measurement scales on the sustainability of culture [3] and conceptualised socio-cultural sustainability in the context of

hospitality and tourism [14], few studies have undertaken a sustained empirical investigation on the role of the latter in determination of core management outcomes, including service quality perceptions, and satisfaction as well as revisit intention. Moreover, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) has already gained broad use as a research instrument in hospitality and tourism studies to estimate the multidimensional links among latent constructs [1], but the use of the partial least squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to evaluate cultural sustainability as a multidimensional factor influencing tourism performance is relatively underdeveloped. PLS-SEM is especially recommended to predictive and exploratory modelling of complex structures in tourism because of its robustness and flexibility [4], [10], but his combination with the constructs of cultural sustainability needs additional empirical confirmation.

In line with this, there is an apparent gap in the research to create and test the overall structural model that integrates cultural sustainability in the process of tourism management. To facilitate theoretical knowledge and offer evidence-based advice to destination managers and policymakers, it is important to fill this knowledge gap. Consequently, this research has the objective of conceptualising cultural sustainability as one of the central construct that affect perceptions of quality of service and tourist satisfaction and, in turn, re-examine the intention, in a one-structure PLS-SEM framework. In particular, the authors of the study explore the direct relationship between cultural sustainability and enhancement in service quality perceptions and satisfaction, predictions of satisfaction on revisit intention and the mediations between cultural sustainability and outcomes of loyalty. The empirical method by which the research will aim to offer strong explanatory and predictive accounts is through means of PLS-SEM procedures being empirically applied to the hypothesis to test the relationship, in line with established methodological requirements [4], [5].

Results of this research should improve the tourism management books and literature in three main aspects. To start with, the research makes cultural sustainability a strategic managerial construct, as opposed to one that is normative concept of sustainability. Second, it expands the research of authenticity and behavioural intention beyond the realms of prediction structure by incorporating cultural sustainability. Third, the study enhances methodological transparency and predictive evaluation in tourism sustainability researches by utilising the rigorous PLS-SEM techniques that are largely supported in the hospitality studies [1], [4], [10]. The second part of the paper entails the literature review and development of hypothesis, the methodology, discussion of results and closing.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

The concept of cultural sustainability has turned out to become one of the core aspects of sustainable tourism disputing an environmental and economic perspective on it, including the protection of cultural heritage and traditions, identity, and community values. Under the tourism context, cultural sustainability is understood to mean preserving the authenticity and integrity of both tangible and intangible heritage as well as making it possible to have proper visitor involvement and community involvement [8], [14]. Recent research observes cultural sustainability as a multidimensional concept incorporating heritage preservation, community participation, authenticity and shield against culturally distortive encroachment [3], [11], [15]. Preservation of heritage offers the protection of historical resources and customary activities: In terms of community involvement, preservation and heritage conservation will provide equitable participation of the local stakeholders in the tourist planning activity and acquisition of profits. The authenticity is considered one of the main aspects that positively influence the perceptions of meaningful experiences and emotional attachment to the destinations among the visitors [12], [15]. On the other hand, extreme commercialization and unchecked tourism development can also create a threat of cultural distortion that negates the level of satisfaction and future competitiveness of the destination [11]. Thus, it is possible to place cultural sustainability as a strategic asset that can help in tourism management effectiveness and sustainable competitive advantage.

The classical literature in tourism management has had a long-standing concern on the aspect of service quality, destination branding, visitor satisfaction and behavioural intentions as determining factors of destination performance. Service quality is the assessment of the quality of services and experiences provided in a destination by tourists, which is an important factor in determining the results of satisfaction and loyalty [1]. Service quality in cultural destinations has a strong association with delivery of authentic heritage experiences, which implies that culturally sustainable practises can be found to boost perceived quality. The further key to destination branding is reliance on special cultural identity and symbolic differentiation that become even strong in cases when heritage resources are managed in a responsible manner [14]. Visitor satisfaction is a key mediating variable in the tourism models as it indicates the total review of

experiences and powerfully foreshadows behavioural intentions which include revisit intention and positive word-of-mouth [6], [12]. As much as these constructs are well defined, little literature combines culture sustainability as a key antecedent in a holistic structural tourism management framework. The gap can be filled to make a holistic approach to understanding how socio-cultural preservation can be transformed into managerial and behavioural results.

The study has been based on Sustainable Tourism Theory and Stakeholder Theory. Sustainable Tourism Theory focuses on a balance between the development and the socio-cultural preservation of the destination in order to sustainability maintain its existence in the long term [8], [14]. Stakeholder Theory emphasises the value creation processes to exist between tourists, local people, policymakers and the tourism companies through interdependence. Cultural authenticity and community involvement increase the weight of the stakeholders and build destination trust. Resource-based view Cultural heritage and authenticity are powerful, uncommon, and substitutable resources as far as they provide competitive advantage when well incorporated into management practises. These theoretical underpinnings explain the rationale of making cultural sustainability a strategic value driver that would affect service quality perceptions, tourist satisfaction, and loyalty outcomes.

This research has been based on the literature and theoretical analysis which postulates that cultural sustainability has a structural relationship with perceived service quality and tourist satisfaction that in turn has an effect on revisit intention. The cultural sustainability and the loyalty outcomes are also likely to have a mediating relationship through tourism satisfaction. The relationships between these variables are drawn in (Figure 1) which is the proposed conceptual framework.

Fig. 1. Proposed Conceptual Framework Integrating Cultural Sustainability into Tourism Management Models

Based on previous empirical data, culturally sustainable practises leading to enhancement of authenticity and heritage conservation are supposed to help increase the perception of service quality and the level of satisfaction [6], [15]. Based on this, the cultural sustainability will be theorised to have a positive effect on service quality perception (H1) and tourist satisfaction (H2). In line with formulated tourism models, there are more chances of stronger revisit intention with higher satisfaction (H3) [6], [12]. Moreover, it is expected that satisfaction acts as a mediating variable between cultural sustainability and revisit intention since the culturally sustainable experience would result in improved satisfaction, which in turn leads to the resulted loyalty (H4) [11], [12]. These postulations help to create the structure of relationships which will be empirically tested with the help of PLS-SEM in the following sections.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
This paper uses a quantitative research design to investigate how cultural sustainability can be integrated in tourism management designs. Since the aim of the research was to test hypothesised

relationships between latent constructs and determine the extent of prediction, a structured cross-sectional survey design was utilised. The research employs Writing of Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) as the main method of analysis. PLS-SEM can be used when there is any complex predictive models that the objective of research is the extension of theory and explain the variance in significant endogenous variables like visitor satisfaction and desire to revisit the location. Moreover, PLS-SEM is also resistant to non-normal data distributions and applicable to models with several relationships in parallel. A survey was carried out among tourists visiting identified cultural heritage sites on a cross sectional basis. The target market was domestic and international tourist who had attended the cultural facilities, heritage sites, or community based tourism activities. Non-probability convenience sampling method was adopted because that is a common practise when conducting a research in tourism field since the respondents are familiarised at the destination location. The data were gathered at the field and through online dispensation during a specified time of data collection. There was no compulsory participation, and the screening questions were used to make sure that the respondents were experiencing cultural tourism in the recent past.

Sample size is calculated in respect to the set guidelines on PLS-SEM. According to the 10-times rule, the minimum sample size needed is ten times the maximum number of latent construct structural paths directed by any latent construct in the model. The last sample met this minimum requirement which guarantees good statistical power and consistent estimation of path coefficient. The measurement tool was based on the pre-tested scales that were made to suit the cultural tourism setting. The scale of all constructs measured was a five-point Likert scale, where the 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 indicated strongly disagree, strongly disagree, disagree, agree and strongly agree respectively. The cultural sustainability items embraced the dimensions heritage preservation, community engagement and authenticity. Service quality items evaluated the overall service excellence guidance by tourists to the destination. Items of tourist satisfaction involved overall assessment of the tourism experience whereas revisit intention items involved the possibility of returning back to the destination or referring others. Small changes of vocabulary were also considered in order to make it contextually clear and relevant. The constructs were operationalized and given in Table 1 with all the measurement items that were to be utilised in the study.

Table 1. Construct Operationalization

Construct	Definition	No. of Items
Cultural Sustainability	Preservation of heritage, authenticity, and community participation in tourism development	4–6
Service Quality	Tourists' evaluation of overall service excellence at the destination	3–5
Tourist Satisfaction	Overall evaluation of tourism experience fulfilment	3–4
Revisit Intention	Likelihood of returning to or recommending the destination	3

This methodology design provides measurement reliability, structural model stability and predictive relevance as recommended in the PLS-SEM-based research on tourism.

4. Data Analysis and Results (PLS-SEM)
Variables were evaluated through a two-step methodology (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling-PLS-SEM) which involves the evaluation of testing measurement model and structural model. The statistical significance of the hypothesis relationships was tested and bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was used. The assessment of the measurement model was

initiated with the reliability of the indicators. All of the outer loadings were over the suggested cut off of 0.70 which indicates good item reliability and that every indicator is a sufficient measure of its latent construct. Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) was used to test internal consistency reliability. All constructs also yield high values (above 0.70) as to internal consistency as shown in Table 2. The assessment of convergent validity was done on the basis of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and all the values of AVE were more than 0.50 which proved that the constructs are explaining more than one-half of the variance of the indicators.

Table 2. Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
Cultural Sustainability	0.88	0.91	0.67
Service Quality	0.86	0.90	0.69
Tourist Satisfaction	0.89	0.92	0.74
Revisit Intention	0.85	0.90	0.75

The FornellLarcker criterion and the HTMT ratio were used to measure the discriminant validity. The inter-construct correlations were lower than their square roots of AVE (Table 3 diagonal values), and this met the FornellLarcker criterion. Besides, the values of HTMT were also in the range of 0.48 to 0.79, which is found to be lower than the conservative value of 0.85, which proves that the values are below the discriminant true value.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity (Fornell–Larcker Criterion)

Construct	CS	SQ	TS	RI
Cultural Sustainability (CS)	**0.82**			
Service Quality (SQ)	0.56	**0.83**		
Tourist Satisfaction (TS)	0.62	0.65	**0.86**	
Revisit Intention (RI)	0.49	0.58	0.71	**0.87**

Once the adequacy of measurement models was established, the structural model was measured. It was diagnosed that all variance inflation factor (VIF) values were less than 5 indicating lack of multicollinearity. Bootstrapping that involved 5,000 resamples was used in order to test path coefficients. Table 4 indicates that all the hypothesised relationships were positive and statistically significant.

Table 4. Structural Model Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Path	β	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	Cultural Sustainability → Service Quality	0.52	8.41	<0.001	Supported
H2	Cultural Sustainability → Tourist Satisfaction	0.48	7.96	<0.001	Supported
H3	Tourist Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	0.61	10.22	<0.001	Supported
H4	CS → TS → RI (Indirect Effect)	0.29	6.87	<0.001	Supported

The coefficient of determination (R^2) demonstrates that Tourist Satisfaction is explained by Cultural Sustainability 54% ($R^2 = 0.54$) and 63% ($R^2 = 0.63$) by the combination of Cultural Sustainability and Tourist Satisfaction. Such values denote moderate to high explanatory power. The analysis of the effect size (f^2) indicates that the noise of Cultural Sustainability on Service Quality ($f^2 = 0.27$) and Tourist Satisfaction ($f^2 = 0.23$) is medium, and the noise of Tourist Satisfaction on Revisit Intention ($f^2 = 0.41$) is large. The Q^2 of 0.38 with the blindfolding procedure of predictive relevance of Tourist Satisfaction and Q^2 of 0.44 with the blindfolding procedure of predictive relevance of Revisit Intention are more than a value of 0 and this means that the model has strong predictive power.
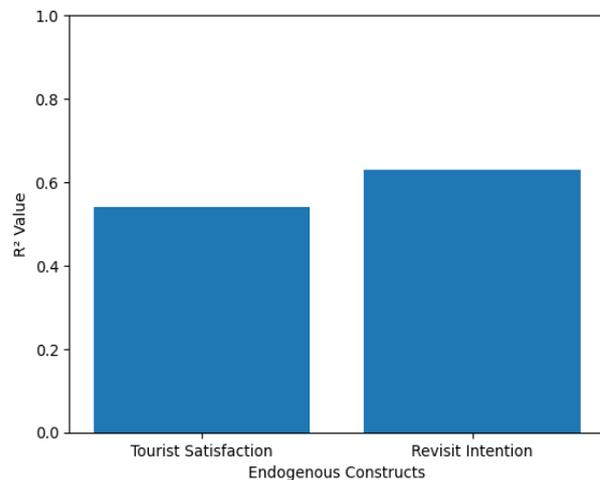

Fig. 2. Explained Variance (R^2) of Endogenous Constructs

In (Figure 2), it is indicated that the explanatory power of the endogenous constructs is represented on a bar chart. The outcome reveals that the R^2 value of Tourist Satisfaction is 0.54 whereas the R^2 value of Revisit Intention is greater at 0.63 indicating the significant predictability of the put forward model. All in all, PLS-SEM findings affirm that cultural sustainability, both perceptions of services delivered and satisfaction of tourists are greatly boosted, and satisfaction is a critical mediating factor in amplifying the revisit intention. The proposed conceptual framework is backed by the fact that the structural model has a great explanatory power and predictive relevance.

5. DISCUSSION

The results of the research give empirical evidence in terms of the introduction of cultural sustainability as the part of the tourism management models and support their strategic interest in the development of the service quality perception, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention. The structural model has significant explanatory power, and there is the need to bring in socio-cultural preservation in destination management practises. The findings have shown significant and positive impact of the cultural sustainability and perceived service quality. This implies that as destinations actively conserve their heritage, engage in community development and remain authentic, the tourists will feel a greater level of service excellence. The cultural aspects are not symbolic qualities of the tours but serve as quality-adding aspects to the entire experience of tourism. Moreover, cultural sustainability is a major positive boost on tourist satisfaction, which illustrates meaningful, genuine, and culturally conscientious activities result in more emotional and evaluative reactions among tourists.

It was determined that tourist satisfaction is a powerful positional factor to determine the revisit intention, and as such the key indicator in the formation of the loyalty effects. The mediation examination also indicates that satisfaction is a very important mechanism between cultural sustainability and revisit intention. This signifies that the effect of cultural sustainability on behavioural outcomes takes place mostly by the formation of greater experiential fulfilment. Not only do the destinations that manage cultural assets well maintain identity, but also develop visitor loyalty in the long-term due to the satisfaction pathways.

Compared to other past research studies on tourism and sustainability, the current results are congruent with the previous studies that talked of the role of authenticity and heritage preservation in determining satisfaction and loyalty scores. Other literature has established that genuine cultural experiences increase visitor satisfaction and behavioural intentions, but most of them have focused on one of the two aspects authenticity or sustainability. The research further elaborates the already established research through placing cultural sustainability as a multi-dimensional construct based on a single structural framework. Furthermore, the previous models of tourism mainly concentrated on model of service quality and satisfaction relationships, the current study incorporates the cultural sustainability as a strategic antecedent, thus enhancing the conceptual capacity of the tourism management models.

In the theoretical sense, this research has a contribution to the tourism management literature in a number of ways. To begin with, it redefines cultural sustainability as a central managerial concept and not an external moral phenomena. The research shows the relevance of cultural sustainability explanation to the process of defining the main tourism outcomes by entrenching it within a predictive structural model. Second, the study contributes to the sustainable tourism theory by empirically confirming the socio-cultural dimension as a driver of the notion of service quality and loyalty intentions directly. Third, PLS-SEM application enhances the rigour of the method through offering prospective insights, and multi-variance assessment approach thus, improving theoretical strength with regard to tourism sustainability study.

When viewed through the lens of management, the results highlight the need to incorporate cultural sustainability in the destination planning and branding strategies. The preservation of heritage, the participation of local community, and protection of authenticity should appear among the priorities of cultural tourism management so as to make visitors happier. Destination managers must ensure to note that cultural preservation is no longer a conservation strategy, but also a competitive strength to boost services perceptions, and promote repeat visitation. The possibility of cultural distortion is nullified to preserve the long-term attractiveness of the destination by policies that perform a balance between commercialization and authenticity protection. Also, tourism agencies need to invest in community involvement initiatives and interpretation services that add culture to the storey either increasing the experience value and loyalty outcomes. In sum, it is validated that cultural sustainability as a strategic pillar in tourism management is an engine that promotes satisfaction and revisit intention and serves to instil the sustainability of cultural destinations in the long-term.

6. Practical and Managerial Implications

The results of the study present definite managerial solutions to the inclusion of cultural sustainability in the tourism development strategy and destination management strategy. Since cultural sustainability plays a crucial role in service quality perceptions, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention, destination managers must not look at cultural preservation as a regulatory tool only but as a strategic resource. The diverse needs of heritage conservation, authenticity protection and community involvement can be integrated in destination core strategies to improve quality of experiences and reinforce long term competitiveness. Destination master plans, performance indicators, and branding framework to ensure that preservation goals are in line with tourism growth objectives should cultural sustainability be included in these plans. Policy wise, the tourism authorities need to come up with regulatory frameworks that allow equal consideration given to commercialization and the cultural integrity. It should be made the policy to promote sustainable flows of visitors, preserve heritage sites against overexploitation, and promote cultural industries in the local population. Sustainable tourism practises can be supported by incentive plans on heritage conservation, support on cultural interpretation projects and criteria on authentic representation. Moreover, monitoring systems can be used to evaluate the exposure to cultural distortion and make sure that the development of tourism is placed in the context of the goals of socio-cultural sustainability.

Another important implication of this research entails increasing the involvement of the community. Because community participation would contribute to cultural genuineness and amplify the demands of visitors, destination managers must consider the local residents in the planning process, decisions, and sharing of benefits in tourism activities. The communities can be empowered by capacity-building initiatives and support to the business sector and the participative quality of governance to help generate ownership and social integration. Local stakeholders who feel that tourism is positive and cultures are honoured will tend to embrace sustainable practises which will lead to better quality of destinations. It is necessary to improve the real cultural experiences to boost the levels of satisfaction and loyalty of tourists. The emphasis that ought to be placed by managers on immersive and substantive cultural exchange, like directed heritage narratives, craft workshops, community-festivals and local-based tourism programmes. These approaches would enhance visitor attraction and satisfaction to destinations through authentic interpretation services and provision of culturally aware services. Meanwhile, it should be handled with great care to prevent faked authenticity or over commercialization that could kill perceived value.

Lastly, cultural identity should be a competitive advantage that should be highlighted in the sustainable destination branding strategies. The preservation of heritage, the interaction with the community, and the genuine experiences should be discussed as the key value propositions in the process of branding. Marketing communications should be consistent with real on-site experiences because any lack of credibility and trust will occur. Through placing the idea of cultural sustainability at the heart of brand storeys, destinations would be able to stand out in the quickly-growing competitiveness of tourism markets, but also enhance resiliency in the long term. Altogether, the research proves that cultural sustainability is not merely the ethical or social task but also is the effective managing tool to improve quality and satisfaction of the offered services to visitors and loyalty to the destination. These are some of the principles that can be incorporated in the strategic planning, policy formulations, as well as branding efforts to ensure the growth and long term success of the destination.

7. Limitations and Future Research

Although this study offers significant empirical evidence on the ways cultural sustainability can be integrated into the models of tourism management, there are a number of limitations which should be recognised. To begin with, the study adopted a cross-sectional research design and this design captured the impressions of tourists at one time. Although this method is suitable to study the structural relationships, it will not allow observing the transformation of perceptions, satisfaction level, and intentions to change behaviour over time. The impacts of cultural sustainability can change due to the development of destinations or by repeated exposure by tourists to cultural experience. As such, future studies need to be based on longitudinal designs that allow the study of dynamic relations and how cultural sustainability affects loyalty and destination performance across a long period. Second, the research has a narrow geographical approach to a selected scope of cultural heritage destinations in a given situation. Perceptions of cultural sustainability and tourism behaviours can be different in different regions because of dissimilarity in cultural values, political structures and development of tourism. This means that the level of generalisation of the results may also be limited. It is recommended that future research should aim at doing multi-country or cross-cultural comparative research to establish

the strength of the proposed model in different tourism environments as well as in different socio-cultural contexts.

Third, the research is based on self-report survey information which can cause the common method bias and social desirability bias. The perceptions of cultural sustainability, service quality and satisfaction offered by respondents can be biased by the subjective view of cultural service and do not require objective measures. Even though such biases could be reduced by using statistical procedures, further studies can be enhanced by integrating several sources of data, such as observational data, managerial ratings, or secondary performance indicators to increase methodological rigour.

In the methodological development, future studies would have to examine the possibility of developing hybrid methodologies of analysis to enhance predictive power. In this regard, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) coupled with Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) could be an enhancing solution to non-linear predictive modelling and further understanding of the intricate relationships between culture sustainability dimension and behavioural outcomes. Further, a mixed-method design that combines qualitative interviews, case studies or ethnographic techniques might be useful in expanding knowledge on the way cultural sustainability has been transpired in practise and the perception of its effects to the stakeholders. These would provide more detailed knowledge in the managerial and socio-cultural processes behind the development of sustainable tourism. On the whole, the proposed solutions to these weaknesses in terms of longitudinal, cross-national, and methodologically sophisticated research designs will lead to a more holistic picture on cultural sustainability and its strategic value in tourism management.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to incorporate the notion of cultural sustainability in tourism management models by investigating the impact of cultural sustainability on service quality perceptions, tourist satisfaction and revisit intention with the PLS-SEM method. The results verify that cultural sustainability contributes a lot to perceived service quality and tourist satisfaction and satisfaction is an important facilitator in facilitating the revisit intention. The structural model displays the significant portion of explanatory and predictive power, justifying the suggested relationships and supporting the necessity to rely on the idea of integration of socio-cultural preservation into the tourism management systems. The research also adds to the theory of tourism management considering cultural sustainability as a primary, multi-dimensional construct with direct effects on key behavioural outcomes and not a marginal sustainability issue. The research focuses on cultural sustainability as the key component of sustainable tourism development and long-term destination competitiveness as empirically proved in terms of its strategic effects on the levels of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

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