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Validating the Social Dimension of the Village Index in Supporting Village Tourism Development: A Confirmatory Factor Analysis

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Abstract

This study aims to validate the social dimension of the Village Index in supporting village tourism development using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The social dimension is essential for village tourism, as tourism activities depend on community participation, social cohesion, security, and the availability of community facilities. This research employs a quantitative confirmatory approach using secondary data derived from the Village Index. The population consists of 285 villages in Kerinci Regency, and a total sampling (census) technique is applied. The results show that the correlation between community activities and community facilities is very strong (r = 0.875), indicating a close interrelationship between social engagement and social infrastructure. These findings confirm that the social dimension of the Village Index is a valid and reliable framework for assessing social readiness in village tourism development. The study provides an empirically validated measurement model and offers policy-relevant insights for strengthening sustainable village tourism aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8, SDG 11, and SDG 16.

Keywords: CFA; Social Dimension; SDGs; Tourism; Village Index.

INTRODUCTION

The Village Index functions as a national policy instrument designed to measure village development performance across multiple dimensions, including the social dimension, which captures key aspects of community life such as social activities, mutual cooperation, security mechanisms, and the availability of community facilities. These social

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indicators are highly relevant to village tourism development, as tourism activities depend heavily on community acceptance, social stability, and the active involvement of local residents (Havadi Nagy & Espinosa Segui, 2020; Kallmuenzer & Peters, 2018; McGehee, 2014). Social activities rooted in local culture and traditions contribute to the authenticity of tourist experiences, while community facilities such as public spaces, sports facilities, and libraries serve as supporting amenities that enhance visitor comfort and quality of stay (Haryono et al., 2022; Haryono & Lova, 2025; A. E. Sari et al., 2024).

From a sustainability perspective, the social dimension of the Village Index aligns closely with the principles of community-based tourism and the broader agenda of sustainable development. Strong social cohesion and inclusive community participation support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, SDG 11 on sustainable communities, and SDG 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions(Halimah & Haryono, 2025; Haryono et al., 2022; Lova & Haryono, 2023). However, despite the strategic role of social factors in both tourism development and the SDGs framework, the social dimension of the Village Index has rarely been empirically examined in relation to village tourism outcomes (A. Sari, 2022; A. E. Sari et al., 2025).

In addition, the increasing emphasis on evidence-based policymaking in rural and tourism development highlights the need for measurement tools that are not only conceptually sound but also empirically validated. Local governments require reliable indicators to prioritize social investments, strengthen community institutions, and design tourism interventions that are socially inclusive and resilient (Bacsi et al., 2023; Mhlongo et al., 2024; Temba et al., 2023). By validating the social dimension of the Village Index through Confirmatory Factor Analysis, this study provides a methodological contribution that bridges policy instruments and tourism research, enabling the social indicators of the Village Index to function as a robust analytical framework for monitoring progress toward sustainable village tourism and the achievement of the SDGs (Abualyazed, 2023; Kallmuenzer & Peters, 2018).

Existing studies on village tourism largely emphasize physical infrastructure, attractions, and economic impacts, while social aspects are often addressed descriptively without rigorous statistical validation (Getz & Carlsen, 2005; Núñez-Ríos et al., 2020; Yamagishi et al., 2024). Similarly, research on the Village Index primarily focuses on village classification and development mapping, with limited integration of tourism perspectives and limited use of advanced analytical techniques (Chatra et al., 2023; Efdison et al., 2024). The absence of empirically validated measurement models raises concerns regarding whether existing social indicators accurately represent social readiness for village tourism

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development and provide a reliable basis for evidence-based policy formulation (A. Sari, 2022; A. E. Sari, Abdallah, et al., 2022; A. E. Sari, Munir, et al., 2022).

This study aims to validate the social dimension of the Village Index in the context of village tourism development using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Specifically, it seeks to examine whether indicators of social activities and community facilities validly and reliably constitute the social dimension of the Village Index, assess the empirical suitability of these indicators in representing social readiness for village tourism development, and develop a robust, policy-relevant measurement model that supports sustainable village tourism aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite extensive discussions on village tourism and rural development, several research gaps remain evident. First, many studies on village tourism emphasize attractions, infrastructure, or economic impacts, while social dimensions are often treated descriptively and rarely subjected to rigorous construct validation. Second, existing research on the Village Index primarily focuses on village classification and development mapping, with limited integration of tourism perspectives into its analytical framework. Third, previous studies tend to rely on composite indices or exploratory analyses, which do not sufficiently test whether social indicators truly represent a coherent latent construct. Consequently, there is a lack of empirically validated measurement models that connect the social dimension of the Village Index with village tourism development and SDGs-oriented outcomes.

The novelty of this study lies in several aspects. First, it provides an empirical validation of the social dimension of the Village Index within the specific context of village tourism development, an area that remains underexplored. Second, by employing Confirmatory Factor Analysis, the study advances methodological rigor in assessing social indicators that are commonly used for policy evaluation. Third, the study explicitly integrates the Village Index, village tourism development, and the SDGs, offering a holistic and policy-relevant analytical framework. Finally, the validated model contributes practical insights for policymakers by identifying socially grounded indicators that can strengthen sustainable, inclusive, and resilient village tourism development.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research design with a confirmatory approach to validate the social dimension of the Village Index in supporting village tourism development. The research is explanatory in nature, aiming to test whether predefined social indicators—derived from policy and tourism theory—form a valid and reliable latent construct. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is adopted as the main analytical technique, as it allows

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for rigorous testing of measurement models based on established theoretical and empirical foundations. (A et al., 2020)

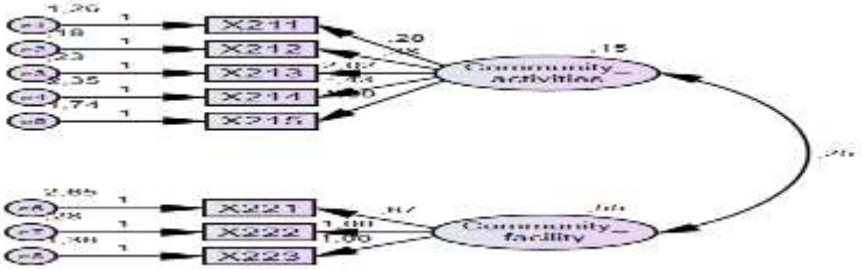
The population of this study comprises all villages in Kerinci Regency, totaling 285 villages. Given that the population size is finite and manageable, this study employs a total sampling (census) technique, in which all 285 villages are included as research samples. By applying a census approach, the study ensures comprehensive coverage of accessibility conditions across the entire regency, minimizes sampling bias, and enhances the robustness of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) results within the Village Index framework.

In the measurement model, the social dimension of the Village Index is specified as a latent construct, measured by multiple observed indicators representing social activities and community facilities. A first-order CFA model is applied to test the construct validity of these indicators. Where theoretically justified, the model allows for refinement through the removal of indicators with low factor loadings, while maintaining conceptual coherence with village tourism and sustainable development principles.

Data analysis is conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with CFA. The analysis follows several stages, including assessment of data adequacy, evaluation of standardized factor loadings, and testing of construct reliability and validity using Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Model fit is evaluated using commonly accepted goodness-of-fit indices, including CMIN/DF, Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). A model is considered acceptable when it meets recommended threshold values for these indices(Widjajanti et al., 2022).

RESEARCH AND RESULTS

The diagram presents a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) model representing the social dimension through two latent variables, namely community activities and community facilities. These constructs are reflected by several observed indicators, with standardized loadings illustrating the contribution of each indicator and the relationship between social components in supporting village tourism development.



Picture 1. Structural Equation Models Confirmatory Factor Analysis

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Model Goodness of Fit Indices

The key goodness-of-fit indices used to assess the adequacy of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) model. These indices represent absolute, incremental, and error-based measures, providing a comprehensive evaluation of how well the proposed measurement model fits the observed data and meets established statistical criteria.

Table 1. Key Goodness of Fit Indices for the CFA Model

Fit Index	Result	Recommended Cut-off	Model Evaluation
CMIN/DF	1.900	≤ 3.00	Good Fit
GFI	0.968	≥ 0.90	Good Fit
AGFI	0.940	≥ 0.90	Good Fit
CFI	0.938	≥ 0.90	Good Fit
TLI	0.909	≥ 0.90	Good Fit
RMSEA	0.056	≤ 0.08	Good Fit
P-close	0.325	≥ 0.05	Close Fit

The table summarizes the key goodness-of-fit indices used to evaluate the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) model. The CMIN/DF value of 1.900 indicates that the model has an acceptable level of complexity relative to the data and meets the recommended threshold for a good fit. The GFI and AGFI values of 0.968 and 0.940, respectively, demonstrate that the model adequately explains the observed variance and fits the data well. Furthermore, the incremental fit indices, namely CFI (0.938) and TLI (0.909), exceed the commonly accepted cut-off value of 0.90, suggesting that the proposed model provides a substantial improvement over the null model. The RMSEA value of 0.056 indicates a close and acceptable fit, while the P-close value of 0.325 further confirms that the model achieves a close approximation to the population covariance matrix. Overall, these results confirm that the CFA model exhibits good overall fit and is suitable for further analysis.

Regression Weights

The results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) demonstrate that all observed indicators load significantly on their respective latent constructs, namely Economic Support Facilities and Village Production. For the construct Economic Support Facilities, all

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indicators exhibit statistically significant critical ratios (C.R. > 1.96) with p-values below 0.05, indicating strong empirical support for their inclusion in the model.

Table 2. CFA Regression Weights

Latent Construct	Indicator Code	Indicator Description	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P-value	Significance
Community Activities	X211	Social/Cultural and Religious Values	0.276	0.202	1.363	0.173	Not Significant
	X212	Frequency of Mutual Cooperation (Gotong Royong)	0.376	0.114	3.298	***	Significant
	X213	Sports Activities	2.016	0.541	3.726	***	Significant
	X214	Social Conflict Mitigation and Resolution	-0.433	0.282	-1.535	0.125	Not Significant
	X215	Community Security (Satkamling)	1.000	–	–	–	Fixed (Reference)
Community Facilities	X221	Community Reading Park / Village Library	0.669	0.166	4.030	***	Significant
	X222	Sports Facilities	0.996	0.132	7.543	***	Significant
	X223	Availability of Public Open Spaces	1.000	–	–	–	Fixed (Reference)

The results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis indicate that the social dimension of the Village Index is adequately represented by two latent constructs: community activities and community facilities. Overall, the majority of indicators show acceptable and statistically significant loadings, confirming the validity of the proposed measurement structure.

For the community activities construct, the indicator sports activities (X213) exhibits the strongest and statistically significant loading (Estimate = 2.016; C.R. = 3.726; $p < 0.001$), suggesting that organized sports activities play a substantial role in reflecting social engagement within villages. Similarly, the frequency of mutual cooperation (gotong royong) (X212) shows a positive and significant contribution (Estimate = 0.376; C.R. = 3.298; $p < 0.001$), highlighting the importance of collective community participation in supporting social readiness for tourism development.

In contrast, social/cultural and religious values (X211) and social conflict mitigation and resolution (X214) do not demonstrate statistically significant loadings ($p > 0.05$). While these indicators are theoretically relevant to social cohesion and community stability, their

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weaker statistical contribution suggests that they may function as contextual or background social conditions rather than direct drivers of tourism-related social readiness. The community security indicator (satkamling) (X215) is used as the reference indicator with a fixed loading of 1.000, serving as a baseline for interpreting the relative strength of other indicators within the construct.

For the community facilities construct, all observed indicators display strong and statistically significant loadings. Sports facilities (X222) emerge as the most influential indicator (Estimate = 0.996; C.R. = 7.543; $p < 0.001$), followed by community reading parks or village libraries (X221) (Estimate = 0.669; C.R. = 4.030; $p < 0.001$). The availability of public open spaces (X223) is specified as the reference indicator with a fixed loading of 1.000, indicating its fundamental role in defining community facilities that support both social interaction and tourism activities.

Taken together, these findings confirm that community facilities contribute more consistently and strongly to the social dimension of the Village Index compared to community activities. The results imply that tangible social infrastructure plays a critical role in enhancing social readiness for village tourism development, while certain social activities may require strengthening or complementary policy support to more effectively contribute to tourism outcomes. Overall, the validated measurement model provides a robust empirical foundation for integrating social indicators into sustainable village tourism planning and SDGs-oriented policy formulation.

Analysis of Standardized Regression Weights of Social Dimension Indicators

The standardized regression weights obtained from the Confirmatory Factor Analysis, illustrating the relative contribution of each observed indicator to its corresponding latent construct. Standardized estimates enable direct comparison of indicator strength within and across constructs, thereby clarifying which social factors most strongly represent community activities and community facilities.

Table 4. The Standardized Regression Weight of Social Dimension Indicators

Latent Construct	Indicator Code	Indicator Description	Standardized Loading
Community Activities	X211	Social/Cultural and Religious Values	0.095
	X212	Frequency of Mutual Cooperation (Gotong Royong)	0.322

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Latent Construct	Indicator Code	Indicator Description	Standardized Loading
	X213	Sports Activities	0.854
	X214	Social Conflict Mitigation and Resolution	-0.108
	X215	Community Security (Satkamling)	0.281
Community Facilities	X221	Community Reading Park / Village Library	0.291
	X222	Sports Facilities	0.813
	X223	Availability of Public Open Spaces	0.535

The standardized regression weights indicate the relative strength of each indicator in representing its latent construct, allowing direct comparison within each dimension. For the community activities construct, sports activities (X213) show the strongest contribution with a standardized loading of 0.854, highlighting their central role in reflecting active social engagement within villages. This suggests that sports-related activities are a highly visible and influential form of community interaction that supports social readiness for tourism development. The frequency of mutual cooperation (gotong royong) (X212) and community security (satkamling) (X215) exhibits moderate loadings, indicating meaningful but secondary contributions to the construct.

In contrast, social/cultural and religious values (X211) display a relatively weak loading, while social conflict mitigation and resolution (X214) show a small negative loading. These results imply that, although conceptually important for social cohesion, these indicators contribute less directly to the measurable structure of community activities in the context of village tourism. Their influence may be more indirect or context-dependent rather than operational in daily tourism-related interactions.

For the community facilities construct, all indicators demonstrate substantial positive loadings. Sports facilities (X222) emerge as the most dominant indicator with a standardized loading of 0.813, underscoring the importance of tangible social infrastructure in supporting both community interaction and tourism activities. The availability of public open spaces (X223) also shows a strong contribution, while community reading parks or village libraries (X221) provide a moderate yet meaningful representation of social facilities.

Overall, the results confirm that community facilities are more consistently and strongly represented by their indicators than community activities, suggesting that physical and functional social infrastructure plays a critical role in shaping the social dimension of

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village tourism development. These findings provide empirical support for prioritizing investments in community facilities and active social programs to strengthen social readiness and sustainability in village tourism planning.

Analysis of Covariances between Social Dimension Constructs

The following table reports the covariance estimates between the latent constructs included in the CFA model. The covariance values describe the degree of association between community activities and community facilities, indicating how changes in one social dimension are related to variations in the other within the overall measurement structure.

Table 5. Covariances between Social Dimension Constructs

Construct 1	Indicator	Construct 2	Indicator	Covariance	S.E.	C.R.	P-value	Interpretation
Community Activities	Social activities, participation, security, and community engagement	Community Facilities	Public spaces, sports facilities, and community social infrastructure	0.250	0.075	3.326	***	Significant Positive Relationship

The covariance analysis reveals a positive and statistically significant relationship between community activities and community facilities, with a covariance estimate of 0.250 and a critical ratio of 3.326 ($p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that villages with more active and cohesive social activities tend to also have better-developed community facilities, and vice versa. The result suggests a strong interdependence between social engagement and the availability of social infrastructure within villages.

From a tourism development perspective, this significant covariance implies that social vitality and physical social infrastructure mutually reinforce each other in shaping the social readiness of villages as tourism destinations. Active community participation is more likely to be sustained when supported by adequate facilities such as public open spaces and sports infrastructure, while well-developed facilities can stimulate greater levels of social interaction and collective activities. Overall, the significant covariance confirms that both constructs operate synergistically within the social dimension of the Village Index and should be addressed simultaneously in policies aimed at strengthening sustainable village tourism development.

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Analysis of Correlations between Social Dimension Constructs

The table below presents the correlation coefficient between the latent constructs in the CFA model. This measure reflects the strength and direction of the relationship between community activities and community facilities, offering insight into how closely these social dimensions are interconnected within the overall structure of village social readiness.

Table 6. Correlations between Social Dimension Constructs

Construct 1	Indicator	Construct 2	Indicator	Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation
Community Activities	Social participation, cultural and religious activities, cooperation, and security	Community Facilities	Public open spaces, sports facilities, and community libraries	0.875	Very Strong Positive Correlation

The correlation analysis demonstrates a very strong positive relationship between community activities and community facilities, as indicated by a correlation coefficient of 0.875. This value suggests that villages characterized by high levels of social participation, collective activities, and community security tend to also possess well-developed social facilities, such as public open spaces, sports infrastructure, and community libraries.

From a village tourism development perspective, this strong correlation implies that social vibrancy and social infrastructure are closely intertwined and mutually reinforcing. Active community engagement is more likely to flourish in villages with adequate communal facilities, while the availability of such facilities encourages more frequent and diverse social activities. The strength of this relationship confirms that both constructs operate cohesively within the social dimension of the Village Index and should be addressed simultaneously in strategies aimed at enhancing social readiness and sustainability of village tourism destinations.

Variance Estimates of Latent Constructs

The following table presents the variance estimates for the latent constructs and measurement error terms in the CFA model. These values indicate the extent of variability associated with each construct and residual component, providing insight into how much variation is captured by the model and how much remains unexplained at the indicator level.

Table. 7. Variance Estimates of Latent Constructs and Error Terms

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Component	Code	Indicator	Variance	S.E.	C.R.	P-value	Interpretation
Latent Construct	Community_activities	Social activities, participation, security, and community engagement	0.149	0.072	2.081	0.037	Significant
Latent Construct	Community_facility	Public open spaces, sports facilities, and community social infrastructure	0.547	0.127	4.299	***	Highly Significant
Error Term	e1	Social/cultural and religious values	1.260	0.106	11.889	***	Significant
Error Term	e2	Frequency of cooperation (gotong royong)	0.182	0.016	11.563	***	Significant
Error Term	e3	Sports activities	0.226	0.088	2.585	0.010	Significant
Error Term	e4	Social conflict mitigation and resolution	2.348	0.198	11.879	***	Significant
Error Term	e5	Community security (satkamling)	1.738	0.150	11.556	***	Significant
Error Term	e6	Community reading park/village library	2.654	0.229	11.613	***	Significant
Error Term	e7	Sports facilities	0.279	0.061	4.596	***	Significant
Error Term	e8	Availability of public open spaces	1.364	0.129	10.562	***	Significant

The variance estimates indicate that both latent constructs—community activities and community facilities—exhibit statistically significant variability, confirming that they represent meaningful and distinguishable dimensions of the social aspect within the Village

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Index. The variance of community facilities (0.547) is substantially higher than that of community activities (0.149), suggesting greater disparities among villages in terms of social infrastructure availability than in social activity patterns.

The residual variances associated with each indicator are also statistically significant, indicating that while the latent constructs explain a considerable portion of the variance, each indicator retains unique variance not fully captured by the model. Notably, higher residual variances are observed for indicators related to social conflict mitigation, community security, and community libraries, implying that these aspects may be influenced by contextual or institutional factors beyond the scope of the current latent constructs.

Overall, the significant variance structure supports the adequacy of the CFA measurement model and demonstrates that both latent constructs and their indicators contribute meaningfully to explaining the social dimension of the Village Index. These findings reinforce the importance of simultaneously strengthening community activities and investing in social facilities to enhance social readiness and sustainability in village tourism development.

Analysis of Squared Multiple Correlations of Social Dimension Indicators

The table presents the squared multiple correlations for each observed indicator in the CFA model. These values indicate the proportion of variance in each indicator that is explained by its corresponding latent construct, offering insight into the explanatory power and effectiveness of the measurement model.

Table 8. Analysis of Squared Multiple Correlations of Social Dimension Indicators

Latent Construct	Indicator Code	Indicator Description	Squared Multiple Correlation (SMC)	Explained Variance (%)
Community Facilities	X221	Community Reading Park / Village Library	0.084	8.4%
	X222	Sports Facilities	0.660	66.0%
	X223	Availability of Public Open Spaces	0.286	28.6%
Community Activities	X211	Social/Cultural and Religious Values	0.009	0.9%
	X212	Frequency of Mutual Cooperation (Gotong Royong)	0.104	10.4%
	X213	Sports Activities	0.729	72.9%

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Latent Construct	Indicator Code	Indicator Description	Squared Multiple Correlation (SMC)	Explained Variance (%)
	X214	Social Conflict Mitigation and Resolution	0.012	1.2%
	X215	Community Security (Satkamling)	0.079	7.9%

The squared multiple correlations indicate the proportion of variance in each observed indicator that is explained by its corresponding latent construct. The results reveal considerable variation in explanatory power across indicators. Within the community activities construct, sports activities (X213) demonstrate the highest explained variance (72.9%), indicating that this indicator is strongly represented by the latent construct and serves as a key reflection of social activity within villages. In contrast, indicators such as social/cultural and religious values (X211) and social conflict mitigation and resolution (X214) exhibit very low explained variance, suggesting that these aspects are less directly captured by the underlying construct and may be influenced by contextual or institutional factors beyond the model.

For the community facilities construct, sports facilities (X222) show a substantial explained variance of 66.0%, highlighting their dominant role in representing social infrastructure readiness. The availability of public open spaces (X223) provides a moderate level of explained variance, while community reading parks or village libraries (X221) display relatively low explanatory power. Overall, the findings suggest that tangible and activity-oriented indicators contribute more strongly to the social dimension of the Village Index than normative or institutional indicators. This pattern reinforces the importance of prioritizing active social spaces and facilities when strengthening social readiness for sustainable village tourism development.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study aimed to validate the social dimension of the Village Index in supporting village tourism development using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The findings confirm that the social dimension is adequately represented by two latent constructs, namely community activities and community facilities, both of which demonstrate acceptable construct validity and overall model fit. The CFA results indicate that community facilities exhibit stronger and more consistent contributions to the social dimension compared to community

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activities, highlighting the critical role of tangible social infrastructure in shaping social readiness for village tourism.

Among the observed indicators, sports activities and sports facilities emerge as the most dominant indicators, showing high standardized loadings and explained variance. This suggests that activity-based social engagement and the availability of functional communal facilities are key drivers of social vibrancy in tourist villages. Conversely, indicators related to social norms and institutional aspects, such as cultural–religious values and conflict mitigation mechanisms, show weaker statistical contributions, indicating that their influence on tourism-related social readiness may be more contextual and indirect.

The strong correlation and significant covariance between community activities and community facilities further demonstrate that social engagement and social infrastructure are closely interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Overall, the results provide empirical evidence that the social dimension of the Village Index constitutes a valid and meaningful framework for assessing social readiness in village tourism development. This validation strengthens the relevance of the Village Index as an evidence-based policy instrument aligned with sustainable tourism principles and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 11 (Sustainable Communities), and SDG 16 (Strong Institutions).

Recommendations

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be proposed. First, policymakers should prioritize strengthening community facilities, particularly sports facilities and public open spaces, as these elements have proven to be strong determinants of social readiness for village tourism development. Investments in accessible, multifunctional communal infrastructure can stimulate social interaction, support tourism activities, and enhance visitor experience.

Second, efforts to enhance community activities should focus on programs that are directly observable and participatory, such as sports events and collective community activities, as these have a stronger empirical linkage to tourism readiness. Cultural and institutional social aspects should be complemented with more operational and tourism-oriented initiatives to increase their practical impact.

Third, the validated social indicators can be integrated into village tourism planning and monitoring systems, enabling local governments to use the Village Index not only for development classification but also as a strategic tool for tourism policy formulation. Finally, future research is encouraged to extend the model by incorporating other dimensions of the Village Index, such as accessibility and economic dimensions, or by applying longitudinal and

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comparative approaches to further strengthen the evidence base for sustainable village tourism development.

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