

Exploring Sustainable Tourism Through the Theory of Planned Behavior: A Study in Pemuteran Tourism Village, Buleleng, Bali

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Abstract

Unsustainable tourism can cause environmental damage, cultural degradation, and socio-economic inequality. Pemuteran Tourism Village in Bali applies sustainable tourism principles to balance economic benefits, environmental preservation, and community empowerment. This study aims to analyze tourist behavior in supporting sustainable tourism in the destination using Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as the theoretical framework. A quantitative approach was used with a sampling of 100 respondents, namely foreign tourists who have visited Pemuteran Tourism Village and have an interest in sustainable tourism. The sampling technique applied was purposive sampling, with data collection through questionnaires. Data were analyzed using the Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with SmartPLS software, supported by qualitative descriptive analysis. The results showed that tourists' intention to participate in sustainable tourism, as predicted by the TPB model, comprising attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control significantly influences their actual behavior in practicing sustainable tourism at the destination.

Keywords: theory of planned behavior, tourist intention, tourist behavior, sustainable tourism



INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become a tool to improve the quality of life and express oneself along with the rapid development of the economy and the continuous improvement in human living standards (Bernini and Fang, 2020). As one of the key industries driving global economic growth, tourism not only serves as a source of income and employment but also stimulates the development of other sectors and promotes cultural exchange (Duarte et al., 2023). In Indonesia, the rapid growth of the tourism industry is underscored by its ranking as one of the fastest-growing tourism markets in the world according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) "Top 30 Travel and Tourism Countries Power Ranking" (Detik, 2019).

The sustainability of Indonesia's tourism industry is greatly influenced by developments in Bali, which is renowned as a hub for tourism activities and sustainable destinations with a rich diversity of natural and cultural resources. Bali's unique tourism offerings are evident from its conservation areas, such as Bali Barat National Park and various nature destinations distributed across the region (Adikampana, 2021). The environmentally friendly tourism transformation and management in Bali have generated significant revenue and contributed substantially to the national economy.

A vivid example of sustainable tourism in practice is found in Pemuteran Tourism Village. This village has transformed from a place of severely damaged coral reefs affected by destructive fishing practices in the 1980s into a conservation tourism destination. The development of Pemuteran began when I Gusti Agung Prana, an environmentally concerned tour guide, took the initiative to educate the local community about the importance of conservation. This early effort was realized with the establishment of Hotel Pondok Sari in 1992 and further reinforced by the adoption of Biorock technology to accelerate coral reef recovery (Trialfhianty and Suadi, 2017). This approach not only aided in the restoration of the marine ecosystem but also raised community awareness and offered tourists an authentic eco-tourism experience.

In addition to coral reef restoration, Pemuteran Tourism Village has expanded its sustainable tourism portfolio to include terrestrial ecotourism through collaboration with local institutions such as the Sari Nadi Village Forest Management Board (LPHD) and Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes). These initiatives have resulted in various nature-based activities that integrate hills, forests and waterfalls while increasing local community participation in managing natural resources. The achievements of these initiatives can be seen in the various awards and recognitions the village has received, such as an award from the ASEAN Tourism Standard and its inclusion in the Sustainable

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Destinations Top 100 list as a recognized sustainable tourism destination (Mananda and Sudiarta, 2024).

In light of changing tourist behavior, understanding the intentions and attitudes toward choosing sustainable destinations becomes increasingly important. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) offers a robust framework to understand how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence an individual's intention to engage in sustainable tourism activities (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen, 1991). This perspective is particularly relevant amid the challenges of recovering tourist visitation numbers in the post-pandemic era, where local community involvement and environmental education are key to enhancing the attractiveness and value of tourism destinations such as Pemuteran Tourism Village.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Attitude and Sustainable Tourism Intention

Attitude refers to an individual's assessment, whether positive or negative, regarding the outcomes of a particular behavior (Ajzen, 1991). As suggested by Lam and Hsu (2004) and Moutinho (1987), attitude represents a person's predisposition to act based on prior knowledge and experiences. In tourism research, numerous studies have identified a strong positive link between attitude and the intention to visit a destination (Han et al., 2010; Bianchi et al., 2017; Huang and Hsu, 2009; Mananda et al., 2021). Furthermore, attitude is frequently evaluated based on prominent beliefs that may be shaped through indirect information, reasoning processes, or direct observations (Abbasi et al., 2020a; Meng and Choi, 2019). In the context of Pemuteran Tourism Village, these insights indicate that attitude plays a crucial role in influencing the intention to participate in sustainable tourism. Consequently, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Attitude influences tourists' intention to engage in sustainable tourism in Pemuteran Tourism Village.

Subjective Norms and Sustainable Tourism Intention

Subjective norm represents the perceived social influence that encourages or discourages an individual from engaging in a particular behavior (Ajzen, 1991). According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) and Lam and Hsu (2004), subjective norms are shaped by how individuals perceive the expectations of those around them and their willingness to adhere to those expectations. Research conducted by Bianchi et al. (2017) and Choi et al. (2015) highlights the significant role of subjective norms in influencing destination

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choices through social validation. In the context of Pemuteran Tourism Village, the motivation to align with the expectations of significant others is likely to contribute positively to the intention to engage in sustainable tourism. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Subjective norm influences tourists' intention to engage in sustainable tourism in Pemuteran Tourism Village.

Perceived Behavioral Control and Sustainable Tourism Intention

Perceived behavioral control reflects an individual's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing a behavior, influenced by past experiences and anticipated challenges (Ajzen, 1991). Within tourism, factors such as personal capability, available time, and resources play a crucial role in determining visitation intentions (Bianchi et al., 2017). Studies by Chen and Tung (2014), Han et al. (2010), Hsu and Huang (2012), and Mananda et al. (2021) provide evidence that perceived behavioral control positively affects the intention to visit a destination. Further research within the hospitality sector supports this relationship (Han, 2015; Verma and Chandra, 2018; Wang et al., 2018b). Accordingly, in the case of Pemuteran Tourism Village, perceived behavioral control is expected to enhance tourists' intention to engage in sustainable tourism. Based on this, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3: Perceived behavioral control influences tourists' intention to engage in sustainable tourism in Pemuteran Tourism Village.

Sustainable Tourism Intention and Sustainable Tourism Behavior

Behavioral intention serves as a strong internal motivator and is widely recognized as a direct predictor of actual behavior (Moisander, 2007; Ajzen, 1991; Untaru et al., 2014). Within tourism, the decision to choose sustainable destinations plays a crucial role in fostering long-term commitment and environmental responsibility (Kaiser and Gutscher, 2003; Oliver, 1997; Mohaidin et al., 2017). Studies by Ventakesh (2006), Luo and Deng (2008), and Zhang and Lei (2012) suggest that travelers with a positive environmental attitude are more likely to engage in sustainable tourism experiences. Further research (Hunter, 2000; Mobley et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2015; Morren and Grinstein, 2016) reinforces the strong link between environmental behavioral intention and actual behavior. In the context of Pemuteran Tourism Village, it is anticipated that tourists' intention to participate in sustainable tourism will translate into sustainable



tourism behaviors following their visit. Therefore, based on the discussion above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Tourists' intention to engage in sustainable tourism does not influence their sustainable tourism behavior after visiting Pemuteran Tourism Village.

Theory of Planned Behavior

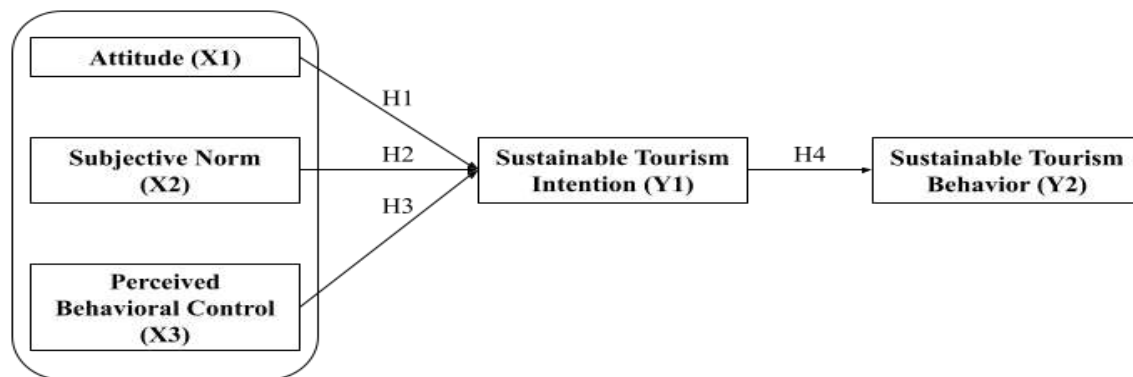


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

Source: Data Results, 2025

RESEARCH METHOD

The research employs a quantitative descriptive approach with a conclusive method, testing hypotheses derived from the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) empirically. It examines how TPB constructs, which are attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence tourists' intention and behavior toward sustainable tourism in Pemuteran Tourism Village. A single cross-sectional design is used, where data is collected at one point in time. Both quantitative and qualitative data are utilized. Quantitative data is collected through structured questionnaires using a Likert scale to measure TPB dimensions, sustainable tourism intention, and behavior. Qualitative data includes field observations and secondary sources such as journal articles, online reviews, and official reports to provide contextual insights. The data sources consist of primary data from respondents and secondary data from publications and reports relevant to the study.

Respondents are tourists who have visited Pemuteran Tourism Village and participated in sustainable tourism activities. Purposive sampling is used, selecting international tourists over 17 years old who have visited the destination at least once. The minimum sample size is determined based on Hair et al. (2014), with at least 100

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respondents required for 20 questionnaire indicators. The primary research instrument is a structured questionnaire comprising open-ended and close-ended questions, including multiple-choice, dichotomous, and Likert scale questions. Data collection methods include survey distribution, direct observation, and literature review. Questionnaires are distributed in person and online, while field observations assess sustainable tourism implementation in Pemuteran Tourism Village. The literature review supports theoretical and empirical analysis.

The study applies the Theory of Planned Behavior as its framework, explaining how attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence behavioral intentions. Data analysis is conducted using descriptive qualitative analysis, frequency distribution, and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 4. To ensure data credibility, triangulation is applied by comparing questionnaire results with observations and secondary sources. Reliability is tested using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, with a threshold of 0.7. Convergent validity is assessed through Average Variance Extracted (AVE), requiring a value of at least 0.5. Bootstrapping with 5000 sub-samples is used to test the significance of relationships between variables. These methodological approaches ensure valid and reliable insights into sustainable tourism behavior in Pemuteran Tourism Village.

RESULT

Table 1. Tourist' Profile

Category	Group	Percentage
Gender	Female	56%
	Male	44%
Country of Origin	United States	5%
	Australia	5%
	Netherlands	19%
	China	7%
	United Kingdom	1%
	Italy	3%
	Germany	22%
	France	25%
	Russia	11%
	Spain	2%
Age	17 - 25	4%



	26 - 35	26%
	36 - 45	16%
	46 - 55	35%
	>55	19%
Level of Education	Diploma or associate degree	5%
	Bachelor's degree	78%
	Master	15%
	Doctorate	2%
Occupation	Government employee	5%
	Housewife	8%
	Private employees	37%
	Retired	34%
	Entrepreneur	16%
Annual Income	35,000 USD - 49,999 USD	18%
	50,000 USD and over	82%
Frequency of Visit	Two to three times	28%
	More than three times	8%
	One time	64%
Travel Companion	Family	27%
	Friends	21%
	Couple	42%
	Solo	10%
Accommodation preference	Homestay	45%
	Hotel	38%
	Villa	17%
Length of Stay	Three days	38%
	Four days	40%
	More than five days	22%
Purpose of Visit	Diving and marine activities	58%
	Nature tourism (hills and waterfall)	6%
	Seeking a rural atmosphere	24%
	Seeking local cultural experience	12%

Source: Data Results, 2025

This study analyzed the demographic and behavioral characteristics of tourists visiting Pemuteran Tourist Village. Based on gender distribution, the majority of



respondents were female, accounting for 56% of the total 100 respondents, while male respondents made up the remaining 44%. Regarding country of origin, most visitors came from France (25%), followed by Germany (22%) and the Netherlands (19%). Other nationalities included Russia (11%), China (7%), the United States and Australia (5% each), Italy (3%), Spain (2%), and the United Kingdom (1%). In terms of age, the largest group of respondents fell within the 46–55 age range (35%), followed by those aged 26–35 (26%). Meanwhile, 19% of respondents were over 55 years old, 16% were aged 36–45, and only 4% belonged to the youngest age group of 17–25 years. The majority of tourists held a bachelor's degree (78%), followed by master's degree holders (15%). Additionally, 5% had completed a diploma or associate degree, while only 2% had attained a doctorate degree.

Employment status also varied among respondents, with the largest proportion working as private sector employees (37%), followed by retirees (34%). Self-employed individuals comprised 16%, homemakers accounted for 8%, and government employees represented the smallest share at just 5%. In terms of annual income, most respondents (82%) reported earning 50,000 USD and over, while the remaining 18% fell within the income range of 35,000 USD to 49,999 USD. The frequency of visits to Pemuteran Tourist Village also varied. The majority of respondents (64%) were first-time visitors, while 28% had visited two to three times, and only 8% had returned more than three times. When analyzing travel companions, 42% of tourists traveled with their spouse, followed by those who traveled with family (27%) and friends (21%), with only 10% traveling alone.

Accommodation preferences showed that homestays were the most popular choice among visitors (45%), followed by hotels (38%) and villas (17%). Regarding the length of stay, most respondents (40%) spent four days in Pemuteran, while 38% stayed for three days, and 22% chose to stay more than five days. Finally, the main purpose of the visit was explored. The majority of respondents (58%) visited Pemuteran for diving and marine activities, while 24% were attracted by the rural atmosphere. Additionally, 12% visited for cultural experiences, and 6% were interested in nature tourism, such as hiking in the hills and exploring waterfalls.

Table 2. Hypothesis Test Analysis

Hypothesis	T-Statistics	P-Values
Attitude → Sustainable Tourism Intention	8.957	0.000
Subjective Norm → Sustainable Tourism Intention	3.080	0.028



Perceived Behavioral Control → Sustainable Tourism Intention	3.806	0.000
Sustainable Tourism Intention → Sustainable Tourism Behavior	4.779	0.019

Source: Data Results, 2025

- **H1: Attitude → Sustainable Tourism Intention**

The analysis yielded $p = 0.000$ and T-Statistics = 8.957, which indicates that the influence of attitude on sustainable tourism intention is highly significant. Since the T-Statistics exceeds the minimal threshold of 1.96 at the 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), H1 is accepted, which shows that a positive attitude significantly increases the intention to engage in sustainable tourism.

- **H2: Subjective Norms → Sustainable Tourism Intention**

The analysis yielded $p = 0.028$ and T-Statistics = 3.080, which indicates that the influence of subjective norms on sustainable tourism intention is significant at the 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Since the T-Statistics exceeds the minimal threshold of 1.96, H2 is accepted, which shows that supportive social norms significantly enhance the intention to engage in sustainable tourism.

- **H3: Perceived Behavioral Control → Sustainable Tourism Intention**

The analysis yielded $p = 0.000$ and T-Statistics = 3.806, which indicates that the influence of perceived behavioral control on sustainable tourism intention is highly significant. Since the T-Statistics exceeds the minimal threshold of 1.96, H3 is accepted, which shows that the perception of ease in participating in sustainable tourism significantly increases the intention to engage in sustainable tourism.

- **H4: Sustainable Tourism Intention → Sustainable Tourism Behavior**

The analysis yielded $p = 0.019$ and T-Statistics = 8.957, which indicates that the influence of sustainable tourism intention on sustainable tourism behavior is significant at the 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Since the T-Statistics exceeds the minimal threshold of 1.96, H4 is accepted, which shows that a strong intention significantly influences the actual behavior in practicing sustainable tourism.

DISCUSSION

This study confirms that attitude positively and significantly influences tourists' intentions to engage in sustainable tourism in Pemuteran Village (Hypothesis 1 accepted), aligning with Nguyen et al. (2023), who found that the Theory of Planned

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Behavior (TPB) constructs significantly predict sustainable tourism intentions. The findings are consistent with prior research emphasizing the role of attitude in shaping behavioral intentions within sustainability contexts (Kim and Hall, 2019; Nowacki et al., 2021; Sujood et al., 2023). Tourists with favorable attitudes toward sustainable practices are more likely to participate in such behaviors, as observed in environmental activities like recycling and green consumption (Cheng et al., 2006; Han et al., 2010; Fiorello, 2011; Manosuthi et al., 2020).

Four indicators, which are perceived usefulness, perceived positivity, perceived enjoyment, and perceived happiness shape tourists' attitudes. For instance, Pemuteran's Biorock Reef Restoration project highlights perceived usefulness, where tourists recognize the tangible benefits of sustainable actions, such as supporting coral conservation and local economies (Cheng et al., 2006; François-Lecompte and Prim-Allaz, 2011). Perceived positivity stems from Pemuteran's authentic, low-impact tourism experiences, contrasting with over-touristed areas (Kim and Hall, 2019). Perceived enjoyment arises from activities like snorkelling in conservation zones, which blend leisure with environmental contribution (Nowacki et al., 2021). Lastly, perceived happiness reflects the meaningful satisfaction derived from participating in conservation efforts, such as turtle releases (Sujood et al., 2023). Demographic factors further influence attitudes. Respondents aged 25–44, predominantly female (56%), and highly educated (68% bachelor's degree holders) exhibited stronger sustainable intentions, consistent with studies linking education, gender, and age to environmental awareness (Kim and Hall, 2019; Khan et al., 2019; Nowacki et al., 2021). Repeat visitors also demonstrated heightened commitment, aligning with Tonglet et al. (2004), who found prior experience enhances sustainable behavior adoption.

This study also confirms that subjective norms positively and significantly influence tourists' intentions to engage in sustainable tourism in Pemuteran Village (Hypothesis 2 accepted), aligning with Nguyen et al. (2023) and previous research that highlights the significant role of social influence in shaping behavioral intentions (Juschten et al., 2019; Khan et al., 2019; Kim and Hall, 2019; Nowacki et al., 2021). When tourists perceive strong social pressure, whether from family, friends, or coworkers to choose environmentally responsible destinations, their intentions to adopt sustainable tourism practices are significantly reinforced.

Subjective norms in this context are structured around three key indicators: family support, social pressure from friends, and coworker approval. For example, family support is demonstrated by data showing that 42% of respondents travel with their partners and



27% with their families, suggesting that collective family decisions and values heavily influence the choice of sustainable destinations such as Pemuteran. Social pressure is further underscored by the fact that 21% of tourists travel with friends; many participants reported being influenced by positive recommendations from peers, which encouraged them to engage in practices like using eco-friendly products and participating in local conservation activities. Coworker approval also plays a crucial role, as many respondents working in the private sector and entrepreneurial fields indicated that endorsements from colleagues significantly shaped their travel decisions. Qualitative insights from interviews reinforce these findings, for instance, tourism stakeholders and visitors alike noted that word-of-mouth recommendations, whether from family discussions or professional interactions, help validate the choice of a destination known for its sustainable practices.

This study confirms that perceived behavioral control positively and significantly influences tourists' intentions to engage in sustainable tourism in Pemuteran Village (Hypothesis 3 accepted). This finding aligns with Nguyen et al. (2023) and previous studies that demonstrate a significant relationship between perceived behavioral control and behavioral intentions (Chen and Tung, 2014; Han, 2015; Toni et al., 2018; Wu and Chen, 2018). In the context of sustainable tourism, perceived behavioral control refers to individuals' perceptions regarding the ease or difficulty of undertaking sustainable practices. Three key indicators are ease of participation, resource sufficiency, and external factors, shape this construct.

For instance, ease of participation is reflected in the ready accessibility of sustainable activities in Pemuteran, such as coral reef planting and conservation education programs. Data indicate that activities designed for collective experiences (e.g., 42% of tourists traveling with partners) enhance this perception. Resource sufficiency is evident in the comprehensive provision of information via tourist centers, local guides, and digital platforms, which meets the expectations of European visitors, with notable representations from France (25%), Germany (22%), and the Netherlands (19%) who are accustomed to structured informational systems. Lastly, external factors including affordable pricing and supportive facility arrangements garner the highest average score, suggesting that these external elements are not seen as barriers but rather facilitate participation. Together, these three indicators foster a strong sense of ease in engaging in sustainable tourism, thereby positively influencing tourists' intentions.

This study further confirms that tourists' intentions to engage in sustainable tourism have a positive and significant impact on their actual sustainable tourism behaviors in Pemuteran Village (Hypothesis 4 accepted). This result is consistent with the Theory of



Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which posits that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control collectively shape behavioral intentions, eventually leading to actual behavior. Tourists who hold strong sustainable tourism intentions are more likely to translate these intentions into concrete actions such as reducing plastic usage, conserving energy, and supporting local businesses through their accommodation choices.

For example, many tourists reported choosing homestays (45%) over hotels (38%) or villas (17%), reflecting a preference for locally managed accommodations that contribute more significantly to the local economy and cultural preservation. In addition, high scores for intentions such as reducing plastic and energy usage and participating in conservation activities corroborate this trend. Interviews with local stakeholders further reinforce these findings: sustainable practices such as diving in conservation zones, adhering to environmentally friendly guidelines, and engaging in local cultural activities are common among visitors. Moreover, the dominance of European tourists (66%), known for their heightened environmental awareness and purchasing power, underscores the effective translation of sustainable intentions into responsible behaviors. Collectively, these results provide strong evidence that well-formed sustainable intentions indeed drive the enactment of behaviors that support environmental conservation, local economic empowerment, and the preservation of cultural values in Pemuteran Village.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that sustainable tourism behavior among tourists is significantly influenced by attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and sustainable tourism intention. The findings highlight that a positive attitude toward sustainable tourism increases tourists' intention to engage in environmentally responsible behaviors. Tourists perceive those actions such as maintaining cleanliness, protecting coral reefs, and participating in conservation efforts provide personal satisfaction and environmental benefits, thereby reinforcing their motivation to support sustainability initiatives. Subjective norms also play a crucial role, as social influences from family, friends, and peers encourage tourists to adopt sustainable tourism practices. Those who receive strong social support are more inclined to choose eco-friendly accommodations, engage in conservation activities, and support local businesses. Additionally, perceived behavioral control significantly affects sustainable tourism intention, with tourists who feel they have adequate resources, information, and accessibility being more likely to participate in sustainable tourism activities. Finally, a strong intention to engage in

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sustainable tourism translates into actual sustainable behaviors, such as reducing plastic use, respecting local culture, supporting local economies, and following conservation guidelines.

Based on these findings, several recommendations are proposed to enhance sustainable tourism in Pemuteran Tourism Village. First, destination managers and tourism stakeholders should develop campaigns to strengthen tourists' positive attitudes toward sustainability by emphasizing the benefits of responsible tourism practices. Educational programs, eco-tourism workshops, and interactive experiences can further raise awareness about environmental and cultural conservation. Second, leveraging social influence through community engagement, peer recommendations, and influencer marketing can help reinforce supportive subjective norms and encourage more tourists to adopt sustainable behaviors. Tourism operators should collaborate with local communities to create immersive experiences that integrate sustainability principles into tourists' activities. Third, improving accessibility to sustainable tourism activities by providing better infrastructure, more eco-tourism options, and clear information about conservation efforts can enhance tourists' perceived behavioral control. Offering incentives, such as discounts for eco-friendly accommodations or participation in conservation programs, may further facilitate sustainable choices. Lastly, monitoring and evaluating sustainable tourism behaviors through visitor feedback, regular assessments, and community participation will help ensure that sustainability initiatives remain effective and relevant. Continuous collaboration among local authorities, businesses, and tourists is essential in maintaining and enhancing sustainable tourism practices in the destination.

In answering the research problem, this study demonstrates that the combination of psychological and social factors outlined in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) plays a significant role in shaping sustainable tourism behavior. The impact of these results is twofold: they provide practical insights for destination managers seeking to promote sustainable practices and contribute to the academic literature by validating TPB in the context of sustainable tourism. However, the study has certain limitations. First, the research did not include tourist experience as a variable, despite its growing importance in the current era where travelers increasingly seek unique and memorable experiences. Tourist experience can influence perceptions, attitudes, and ultimately behavior, suggesting that its inclusion might provide a more comprehensive understanding of sustainable tourism behavior. Future research should consider integrating tourist experience to capture the full spectrum of factors that drive sustainable practices. Second, the study did not examine the mediating effect of sustainable tourism intention



on the relationships between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control with sustainable tourism behavior. Exploring this mediation could reveal deeper insights into how these constructs interact and influence actual behavior. Future studies should address this gap by investigating whether and how sustainable tourism intention mediates the effects of the TPB variables on sustainable tourism behavior.

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