THE ATTITUDES OF THE YOUNG ALBANIANS AND ROMANIANS ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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Abstract
Sustainability has become widely accepted in tourism as a means of mitigating the negative effects of mass tourism. However, constructing a credible scale in cross-cultural settings is crucial for assessing the outcomes of sustainable tourism. The Sustainable Tourism Attitude Scale (SUS-TAS) in an Albanian and Romanian context is examined in this study, and the local population in both countries is used to collect data. The sample consists of younger people belonging to two age groups: 18-29 years old and 30-39 years old. These segments correspond broadly to Gen. Z and Millennials in the two countries. The sustainable tourism attitude scale (SUS-TAS) is designed to assess the attitudes of local populations toward sustainable tourism development. The study uses a seven-dimensional SUS-TAS model with 37 questions. The findings indicate that the SUS-TAS can be used to ascertain resident attitudes toward sustainable tourism in Albania and Romania. Results show that attitudes are quite similar in most aspects between the two countries.

Key words: *Sustainable Tourism, SUS-TAS, Young people, Albania, Romania*.

JEL Classification: *Z32, L83*

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism continues to experience growth and the trend is expected to continue despite the setbacks due to the global pandemic caused by COVID-19. For decades, tourism has been championed as the savior of many communities around because of its ability to generate new income, hard currency, and create new jobs. According to World Travel and Tourism Council (2020) in 2018, the Travel & Tourism sectors hit a growth of 3.9%, beating that of the global economy for the 8th consecutive year. However, the industry is still dependent on the environment to provide services, and meeting the needs of the customers further adds to this challenge (Legrand., 2017). The dependence often affects the environment negatively. Therefore, the environmental aspects of tourism require more attention (Pjerotic et al., 2017). In 2018, research shows that tourism contributes to the world emission of carbon dioxide by 8% (Lenzen et al., 2018). Hence, the importance of sustainable tourism is of immense significance.

According to Bramwell & Lane, the founders of sustainable tourism, the concept emerged in response to the many issues of tourism, mainly environmental damage and its impacts on society and traditional culture (Bramwell & Lane, 1993). However, with time tourism development has been seen as a solution with capabilities to create positive changes through the ideas of sustainable tourism. Therefore, sustainable tourism plays a significant role in finding ways to secure positive benefits, as well as establishing approaches related to regulation and development control (Bramwell et al., 2017).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Sustainable Tourism – an overview/ a framework

A core notion of development is sustainable tourism, and tourism has a huge economic, environmental, and social impact on the world we live in. Several guidelines have been developed for sustainable tourism, providing crucial indicators like pollution reduction, climate change mitigation, waste disposal, use of renewables, etc. (UNWTO, 2018).

The tourism industry is intertwined with all three elements of sustainability. (Streimikiene et al., 2020). Quality of life also is still an important target of sustainable tourism, providing services to the tourist as well as taking into account the quality of life of residents of tourist destinations (Jeon et al., 2016). Residents' attitudes toward sustainable tourism are affected by the cost and benefit relationship (Poudel, Nyaupane, & Buduruk, 2016). Through scientific literature, key aspects of sustainable tourism can be defined as the following: employment opportunities

including the creation of new workplaces in tourism, climate change mitigation, waste reduction, preservation of the natural environment, and promotion of green sustainable consumption practices (UNWTO, 2018; Hall, 2019). These effects are visible through social factors, like resident employment, availability of social services in tourist destinations, psychological climate, etc. Currently, the tourism sector is particularly underlying to ensure sustainable tourism to sort waste, preserve natural resources, and other issues of ethical tourism (Akademir, 2021; Obersteiner et al., 2021).

1.2 The Sustainable Tourism Attitude Scale (SUS-TAS)
The sustainable tourism development scale (SUS-TAS) was developed by Choi and Sirakaya (2005), to measure the residents' attitudes towards the current sustainability status of tourism development as well as the expected extent of its sustainability. Sustainability, the new environmental paradigm (NEP), and social exchange theory (SET) were all incorporated into the SUS-TAS. The sustainable tourism paradigm is guided by the notion of balancing utilitarian values and their environmental effects; the NEP is concerned with resource conservation and quality of life enhancement the SET is concerned with the exchange of costs and benefits.
The 44-item SUS-TAS measure was initially designed and validated using data obtained from 427 people in a tourist city in Texas, United States. This scale is composed of seven factors. The factors are labeled as: (1) Environmental sustainability, (2) Perceived social costs, (3) Perceived economic benefits, (4) Long-term planning, (5) Ensuring visitor satisfaction, (5) Maximizing community participation, and (7) Community centered economy (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005). This highlights the facets of tourist development that must be balanced in order to achieve sustainable tourism growth, including 'ecological stewardship, social compatibility, cultural appropriateness, political equity, technological support, and economic viability for the local community (Zhang et al., 2014). Subsequent researchers have taken confirmation from several steps of the SUS-TAS to conduct cross-cultural sample verification using data from Turkish residents (Sirakaya-Turk & Gursoy, 2013), African island context (Ribeiro et al., 2018), Eastern Island context (Hsu, 2019), and lately also in Serbia (Obradovic & Stojanovic, 2021). Moreover, validity verification and scale simplification using data from an American sample (Zhang et al., 2014). Researchers have also explored and compared various versions of SUS-TAS (i.e., 21-item, 27-item, 33-item, 44-item, one factor and second-order models). From their results, we can conclude that the original 44-item scale that includes seven dimensions has sound psychometric properties. The seven dimensions are further classified into two higher-level categories: perceived tourism impacts and expected tourism sustainability. However, SUS-TAS has not been validated in the comparative Albanian and Romanian contexts, which differentiates in aspects of culture, history, geography, and nature. This study was conducted in both Albania and Romania.

III. METHODOLOGY

The scope of this study is to evaluate how young adults perceive sustainable tourism in their region. To achieve this aim, we decided on a quantitative approach, considering the SUS-TAS scale (Choi, 2005). The survey was translated from English into Romanian and Albanian to facilitate the collection of answers. Further tests like backward translating and discrepancy correction were conducted back and forth until the test was consistent with the Romanian version of the scale. The last part of the survey included 3 items of demographic information: age, gender, and income. IBM SPSS 20 was used for data analysis. The survey took place in April 2022, in Romania and Albania, and was conducted using Google Forms.

The SUS-TAS scale considers seven factors, including 37 items, presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Items of the SUS-TAS scale

Factor	Item	Code
Factor 1 Environment sustainability	Community environment must be protected now and for the future	ES1
	The diversity of nature must be valued and protected	ES2
	I think that tourism development should strengthen efforts for environmental conservation	ES3
	Tourism must protect the community environment	ES4
	Tourism needs to be developed in harmony with natural and cultural environment	ES5
	Proper tourism development requires that wildlife and natural habitats be protected at all times	ES6
	Tourism development must promote positive environmental ethics among all parties that have a stake in tourism	ES7
	Regulatory environmental standards are needed to reduce the negative impacts of tourism development	ES8
	I believe that tourism must improve the environment for future generations	ES9
Factor 2 Social costs	Tourists in my community disrupt my quality of life	SC1
	My quality of life has deteriorated because of tourism	SC2
	I often feel irritated because of tourism in the community	SC3
	Community recreational resources are overused by tourists	SC4

	My community is overcrowded because of tourism development	SC5
	I do not feel comfortable or welcome in local tourism businesses	SC6
	Tourism is growing too fast	SC7
	I believe that the quality of the environment in my community has deteriorated because of tourism	SC8
Factor 3 Economic benefits	I like tourism because it brings new income to our community	EB1
	I believe tourism is a strong economic contributor to the community	EB2
	Tourism generates substantial tax revenues for the local government	EB3
	I believe tourism is good for our economy	EB4
	Tourism creates new markets for our local products	EB5
	Tourism diversifies the local economy	EB6
	Tourism benefits other industries in the community	EB7
Factor 4 Community participation	Tourism decisions must be made by all in my community regardless of a person's background	CP1
	Full participation of everyone in the community in tourism-related decisions is a must for successful tourism development	CP2
	It is okay when tourism development decisions do not involve everyone in the community	CP3
	Tourism industry must embrace the values of all community residents	CP4
Factor 5 Long-term planning	Tourism industry must plan for the future	LTP1
	I believe that successful management of tourism requires advanced planning strategy	LTP2
	I believe that we need to take a long-term view when planning for tourism development	LTP3
	Tourism industry must ensure good quality tourism experiences for future visitors	LTP4
Factor 6 Visitor satisfaction	Community attractiveness is a core element of ecological "appeal" for visitors	VS1
	Tourism businesses must monitor visitor satisfaction	VS2
Factor 7 Community-centered economy	Tourism industry should be required to obtain at least one-half of their goods and services from within the local community	CCE1
	I think tourism businesses should hire at least one-half of their employees from within the local community	CCE2
	Tourism industry must contribute to community improvement funds	CCE3

A 5-points Likert scale has been used, ranging from 1 – not at all – to 5 – to a very wide degree.

The profile of the respondents has been considered in terms of gender, age and income. Two age groups have been considered: 18-29 years old and 30-39 years old. These segments correspond broadly to Gen. Z and Millennials in the two countries. In terms of income, four segments have been considered, two below the medium income in the two countries, and two above this level.

IV.THE SAMPLE

The total number of respondents is 166 young adults. 61 of them are Albanians and 105 Romanians. The structure of the sample is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The Sample

Variable	Segments	Number of respondents		Total	
		AL	RO	No.	Percentage
Age	18-29 years old	38	85	123	74%
	30-39 years old	23	20	43	26%
Gender	Female	41	80	121	74%
	Male	18	24	42	26%
Income	Low income	13	36	49	30%
	Lower-medium income	14	21	35	21.5%
	Upper-medium income	26	28	54	33.5%
	High income	7	17	24	15%

As expected, considering the response to self-administered surveys, most respondents are women, in both countries. Gen Z is well represented in both samples, being the majority for the Romanian case. In terms of income, the sample is balanced, the levels considered being well represented.

V.FINDINGS' ANALYSIS

To easier observe and discuss the attitude of the young adults investigated, we will analyze the results separately for the seven factors considered. We will check the statistical relevance of the perceptions and convictions in terms of location, gender, age, and

income

Perception of the environmental sustainability of tourism

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics for this factor, showing a general high appreciation of all items.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for environmental sustainability

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
ES1	166	3	5	4.95	.297	.088
ES2	166	1	5	4.91	.424	.180
ES3	165	3	5	4.77	.502	.252
ES4	166	3	5	4.71	.551	.304
ES5	165	2	5	4.76	.551	.304
ES6	166	2	5	4.78	.521	.271
ES7	166	3	5	4.74	.571	.326
ES8	166	1	5	4.66	.684	.467
ES9	165	3	5	4.79	.503	.254
Valid N (listwise)	163					

The highest means are registered for the first two items documenting a future-oriented view on tourism in relation to the environment (Community environment must be protected now and for the future) and on the importance of natural diversity (The diversity of nature must be valued and protected). The lowest score, still measuring a high appreciation, is obtained by the need to regulate tourism considering its environmental impact (Regulatory environmental standards are needed to reduce the negative impacts of tourism development).

There are also correlations between the attitudes towards various items in this factor (see Table 4). The strongest relationship is between ES4 (Tourism must protect the community environment) and ES5 (Tourism needs to be developed in harmony with the natural and cultural environment).

Table 4. Correlations between the environmental sustainability of tourism items.

Correlations

		ES1	ES2	ES3	ES4	ES5	ES6	ES7	ES8	ES9
ES1	Pearson Correlation	1	.491**	.201**	.237**	.405**	.274**	.239**	.178*	.261**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.009	.002	.000	.000	.002	.022	.001
	N	166	166	165	166	165	166	166	166	165
ES2	Pearson Correlation	.491**	1	.445**	.147	.324**	.265**	.203**	.124	.232**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.059	.000	.001	.009	.111	.003
	N	166	166	165	166	165	166	166	166	165
ES3	Pearson Correlation	.201**	.445**	1	.549**	.419**	.500**	.363**	.321**	.408**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	165	165	165	165	164	165	165	165	164
ES4	Pearson Correlation	.237**	.147	.549**	1	.594**	.576**	.473**	.512**	.463**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.059	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	166	166	165	166	165	166	166	166	165
ES5	Pearson Correlation	.405**	.324**	.419**	.594**	1	.557**	.364**	.287**	.411**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	165	165	164	165	165	165	165	165	164
ES6	Pearson Correlation	.274**	.265**	.500**	.576**	.557**	1	.518**	.434**	.537**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	166	166	165	166	165	166	166	166	165
ES7	Pearson Correlation	.239**	.203**	.363**	.473**	.364**	.518**	1	.318**	.463**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.009	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	166	166	165	166	165	166	166	166	165
ES8	Pearson Correlation	.178*	.124	.321**	.512**	.287**	.434**	.318**	1	.396**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	.111	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	166	166	165	166	165	166	166	166	165
ES9	Pearson Correlation	.261**	.232**	.408**	.463**	.411**	.537**	.463**	.396**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.003	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	165	165	164	165	164	165	165	165	165

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

There are some differences between the attitudes presented by Albanians and Romanians, but these are not statistically significant. Table 5 presents the T-test for gender, which shows some statistically significant differences between women and men in the case of ES5 (Tourism needs to be developed in harmony with the natural and cultural environment) and ES9 (I believe that tourism must improve the environment for future generations). In both cases, women consider that tourism should have a more active role in connection to the environment.

Table 5. T-test for environmental sustainability & gender

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ES1	Female	121	4.96	.271	.025
	Male	42	4.93	.342	.053
ES2	Female	121	4.92	.458	.042
	Male	42	4.88	.328	.051
ES3	Female	121	4.80	.476	.043
	Male	41	4.68	.567	.089
ES4	Female	121	4.74	.529	.048
	Male	42	4.62	.623	.096
ES5	Female	121	4.81	.505	.046
	Male	41	4.61	.666	.104
ES6	Female	121	4.80	.494	.045
	Male	42	4.69	.604	.093
ES7	Female	121	4.78	.524	.048
	Male	42	4.62	.697	.108
ES8	Female	121	4.65	.715	.065
	Male	42	4.67	.612	.094
ES9	Female	121	4.83	.472	.043
	Male	41	4.63	.581	.091

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
ES1	Equal variances assumed	1.285	.259	.579	161	.564	.030	.052	-.073	.133
	Equal variances not assumed			.517	59.845	.607	.030	.058	-.086	.146
ES2	Equal variances assumed	.535	.466	.474	161	.636	.036	.077	-.115	.188
	Equal variances not assumed			.556	99.755	.580	.036	.066	-.094	.166
ES3	Equal variances assumed	4.801	.030	1.312	160	.191	.119	.090	-.060	.297
	Equal variances not assumed			1.204	60.249	.233	.119	.099	-.079	.316
ES4	Equal variances assumed	3.829	.052	1.174	161	.242	.116	.099	-.080	.312
	Equal variances not assumed			1.084	62.730	.282	.116	.107	-.098	.331
ES5	Equal variances assumed	11.013	.001	2.014	160	.046	.200	.099	.004	.396
	Equal variances not assumed			1.760	56.391	.084	.200	.114	-.028	.428
ES6	Equal variances assumed	4.588	.034	1.185	161	.238	.111	.094	-.074	.297
	Equal variances not assumed			1.074	61.066	.287	.111	.103	-.096	.318
ES7	Equal variances assumed	8.126	.005	1.538	161	.126	.158	.103	-.045	.361
	Equal variances not assumed			1.342	57.929	.185	.158	.118	-.078	.393
ES8	Equal variances assumed	.135	.714	-.111	161	.911	-.014	.124	-.258	.230
	Equal variances not assumed			-.120	82.822	.905	-.014	.115	-.242	.214
ES9	Equal variances assumed	10.913	.001	2.214	160	.028	.201	.091	.022	.379
	Equal variances not assumed			1.998	58.865	.050	.201	.100	.000	.401

Investigating the differences in attitudes considering the income of the respondents, we observe that the respondents with high incomes are evaluating higher the first two items, while the rest of the items the lower-middle-income tends to score higher means. Nevertheless, none of the differences is statistically

significant. No difference has been documented between the attitudes of Gen. Z and Millennials.

Attitudes toward social costs of tourism

Table 6 shows that the evaluation of social costs associated with tourism is not as uniform as in the case of the previous factor. The lower the score, the lower the perception of the social impact of tourism on the community.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics for social costs

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
SC1	166	1	5	2.07	1.194
SC2	166	1	5	1.70	1.036
SC3	166	1	5	1.82	1.097
SC4	165	1	5	2.10	1.094
SC5	165	1	5	1.90	1.177
SC6	166	1	5	1.99	1.255
SC7	165	1	5	2.25	1.256
SC8	165	1	5	2.00	1.200
Valid N (listwise)	162				

The data shows a favorable perception of tourism connected to low social costs. The lowest score has been obtained by SC2 (My quality of life has deteriorated because of tourism), while the highest by SC7 (Tourism is growing too fast). There is a significant difference between the perceptions of Albanians and those of the Romanians only in relation to SC7. Albanians (M=3.22 , SD = 1.136) consider to a wider degree than Romanians (M= 1.70, SD =0.952) that "Tourism is growing too fast" ($t(163) = 9.194$, $p = .00$).

Pearson correlation between the items of factor 2 – social costs – shows relatively strong relationships between all eight items (see Table 7). The strongest correlation is between SC1 (Tourists in my community disrupt my quality of life) and SC2 (My quality of life has deteriorated because of tourism). The weakest correlation is between SC7 (the pace of the growth of tourism) and SC2 (the decrease in the quality of life).

Table 7. Correlations between the social costs of tourism items.

Correlations

		SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4	SC5	SC6	SC7	SC8
SC1	Pearson Correlation	1	.792**	.676**	.666**	.665**	.482**	.216**	.570**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.005	.000
	N	166	166	166	165	165	166	165	165
SC2	Pearson Correlation	.792**	1	.699**	.632**	.689**	.491**	.172*	.559**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.027	.000
	N	166	166	166	165	165	166	165	165
SC3	Pearson Correlation	.676**	.699**	1	.635**	.651**	.469**	.309**	.546**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	166	166	166	165	165	166	165	165
SC4	Pearson Correlation	.666**	.632**	.635**	1	.699**	.497**	.322**	.519**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	165	165	165	165	164	165	164	164
SC5	Pearson Correlation	.665**	.689**	.651**	.699**	1	.494**	.338**	.646**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	165	165	165	164	165	165	164	164
SC6	Pearson Correlation	.482**	.491**	.469**	.497**	.494**	1	.370**	.425**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	166	166	166	165	165	166	165	165
SC7	Pearson Correlation	.216**	.172*	.309**	.322**	.338**	.370**	1	.391**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.027	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	165	165	165	164	164	165	165	164
SC8	Pearson Correlation	.570**	.559**	.546**	.519**	.646**	.425**	.391**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	165	165	165	164	164	165	164	165

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

T-test documents no statistical differences between women and men or between younger and older respondents. When considering the incomes of the respondents, the Post Hoc Test LSD (significance level of 0.05) shows a weak statistical difference for CS2 (My quality of life has deteriorated because of tourism) between those with low income, those with a lower-middle income, and those with upper-middle income (see Figure 1). Those with the lowest incomes feel the most affected by tourism.

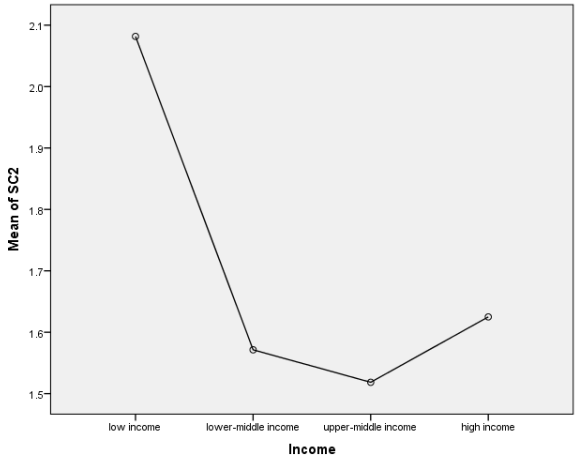

Figure 1. Means plot for CS2 (My quality of life has deteriorated because of tourism)

Attitudes toward economic benefits of tourism

Table 8 presents the attitude of respondents towards the seven economic benefits of tourism considered by the scale.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics for economic benefits

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
EB1	166	1	5	4.44	.820
EB2	166	2	5	4.54	.744
EB3	166	1	5	4.17	.995
EB4	166	2	5	4.54	.768
EB5	165	1	5	4.38	.865
EB6	166	2	5	4.34	.872
EB7	165	1	5	4.35	.882
Valid N (listwise)	164				

The mean values show a positive evaluation of the positive impact of tourism on the local economy. The highest score was obtained by EB2 (I believe tourism is a strong economic contributor to the community) and EB 4 (I believe tourism is good for our economy). The lowest evaluation, but still positive to a high level, was attributed to EB3 (Tourism generates substantial tax revenues for the local government).

As in the case of the other factors, all the items associated with economic benefits are strongly correlated (see Table 9). The strongest correlation is between EB5 (Tourism creates new markets for our local products) and EB7 (Tourism benefits other industries in the community).

Table 9. Correlations between the economic benefits of tourism items

Correlations

		EB1	EB2	EB3	EB4	EB5	EB6	EB7
EB1	Pearson Correlation	1	.714**	.585**	.663**	.538**	.517**	.536**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	166	166	166	166	165	166	165
EB2	Pearson Correlation	.714**	1	.541**	.682**	.500**	.490**	.455**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	166	166	166	166	165	166	165
EB3	Pearson Correlation	.585**	.541**	1	.603**	.477**	.436**	.483**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	166	166	166	166	165	166	165
EB4	Pearson Correlation	.663**	.682**	.603**	1	.592**	.611**	.522**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	166	166	166	166	165	166	165
EB5	Pearson Correlation	.538**	.500**	.477**	.592**	1	.670**	.748**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	165	165	165	165	165	165	164
EB6	Pearson Correlation	.517**	.490**	.436**	.611**	.670**	1	.628**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	166	166	166	166	165	166	165
EB7	Pearson Correlation	.536**	.455**	.483**	.522**	.748**	.628**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	165	165	165	165	164	165	165

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Generally, the differences between Albanians' and Romanians' perceptions are not statistically significant, except for EB6. Albanians (M= 4.15, SD =0.946) consider to a lesser degree than Romanians (M= 4.46, SD =0.809) that "Tourism diversifies the local economy" (t(164) = -2.232, p = .027). There is no statistically significant difference between women and men. When considering the age of the respondents, there is a statistically significant difference between Gen. Z and Millennial respondents relative to EB3. The younger respondents (M= 4.06, SD =1.035) consider to a lesser degree than respondents aged 30–39 years old (M= 4.49, SD =0.798) that "Tourism generates substantial tax revenues for the local government" (t(164) = -2.486, p = .014).

ANOVA test was applied to observe the mean difference in terms of incomes. The Post Hoc Test LSD (significance level of 0.05) shows a weak statistical difference for EB5 (Tourism creates new markets for

our local products) between those with low income and those with high income (Figure 2).

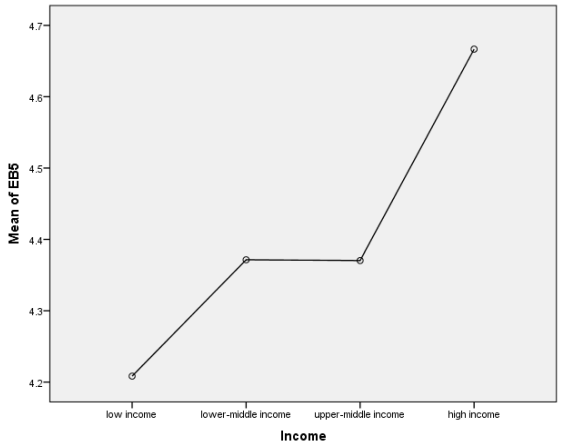

Figure 2. Means plot for EB5 (Tourism creates new markets for our local products)

Attitudes related to community participation and sustainable tourism

This factor is not so strongly evaluated compared to the previous ones (see Table 10). The highest appreciated item is CP4 (The tourism industry must embrace the values of all community residents). The lowest score is associated with CP3 (It is okay when tourism development decisions do not involve everyone in the community).

Table 10. Descriptive statistics for community participation

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
CP1	166	1	5	3.63	1.103
CP2	166	1	5	3.70	1.102
CP3	166	1	5	3.28	1.307
CP4	166	1	5	4.10	.925
Valid N (listwise)	166				

Table 11 shows that most items associated with this factor are correlated but less consistent than in the case of previous factors. This would reflect mixed attitudes in relation to community involvement and tourism.

Table 11. Correlations between the community participation items.

Correlations

		CP1	CP2	CP3	CP4
CP1	Pearson Correlation	1	.741**	-.128	.566**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.100	.000
	N	166	166	166	166
CP2	Pearson Correlation	.741**	1	-.236**	.523**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.002	.000
	N	166	166	166	166
CP3	Pearson Correlation	-.128	-.236**	1	-.029
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.100	.002		.709
	N	166	166	166	166
CP4	Pearson Correlation	.566**	.523**	-.029	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.709	
	N	166	166	166	166

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

T-tests show no significant differences between age groups, gender groups, or nationality. The exception is in the case of CP3 (It is okay when tourism development decisions do not involve everyone in the community), when Albanians (M= 3.02, SD= 1.396) tend to give lower scores than Romanians (M= 3.044, SD= 1.232): t(164) = -2.023, p = .045.

Attitudes towards long-term planning of sustainable tourism

This factor consists of four items, evaluated highly and more homogenous than in the case of other factors (see Table 12).

Table 12. Descriptive statistics for long-term planning

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
LTP1	166	2	5	4.62	.618
LTP2	165	1	5	4.61	.668
LTP3	165	3	5	4.68	.582
LTP4	166	3	5	4.74	.504
Valid N (listwise)	164				

Pearson correlation (Table 13) also shows strong correlations between all items of this factor.

Table 13. Correlations between the items of long-term planning

Correlations

		LTP1	LTP2	LTP3	LTP4
LTP1	Pearson Correlation	1	.303**	.449**	.500**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	166	165	165	166
LTP2	Pearson Correlation	.303**	1	.592**	.422**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	165	165	164	165
LTP3	Pearson Correlation	.449**	.592**	1	.642**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	165	164	165	165
LTP4	Pearson Correlation	.500**	.422**	.642**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	166	165	165	166

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There are no significant differences between respondents' attitudes in terms of nationality and age. T-test shows differences between women and men in connection to LTP2 (I believe that successful management of tourism requires advanced planning strategy) and LTP3 (I believe that we need to take a long-term view when planning for tourism development). In both cases, women score higher than men. For LTP2 the T-test is t(160) = 2.552, p = .012. For LTP3 the T-test is t(160) = 2.654, p = .009.

Attitudes towards visitor satisfaction

This factor consists of two items, evaluated highly (see Table 14) and relatively strongly correlated between them (see Table 15).

Table 14. Descriptive statistics for visitor satisfaction

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
VS1	166	2	5	4.45	.735
VS2	165	2	5	4.70	.607
Valid N (listwise)	165				

Table 15. Correlations between the items of visitor satisfaction

Correlations

		VS1	VS2
VS1	Pearson Correlation	1	.477**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	166	165
VS2	Pearson Correlation	.477**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	165	165

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

T-test shows significant differences in attitude for all three items between Albanians and Romanians (see Table 18). In all three cases, Albanians believe stronger than Romanians that tourism should contribute to local development.

Table 18. T-test: Community-centered economy * Nationality

Group Statistics

	Country	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CCE1	Albania	60	4.05	1.111	.143
	Romania	105	3.56	.940	.092
CCE2	Albania	60	4.20	.917	.118
	Romania	105	3.69	1.013	.099
CCE3	Albania	60	4.52	.676	.087
	Romania	105	4.17	.975	.095

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
CCE1	Equal variances assumed	1.699	.194	3.000	163	.003	.488	.163	.167	.809
	Equal variances not assumed			2.867	106.949	.005	.488	.170	.151	.826
CCE2	Equal variances assumed	1.335	.250	3.246	163	.001	.514	.158	.201	.827
	Equal variances not assumed			3.335	133.192	.001	.514	.154	.209	.819
CCE3	Equal variances assumed	7.422	.007	2.427	163	.016	.345	.142	.064	.626
	Equal variances not assumed			2.673	156.869	.008	.345	.129	.090	.600

There is no significant difference between men and women. In terms of age, the older respondents show higher levels. T-test shows a significant difference between Gen. Z and Millennials only concerning CCE2 (I think tourism businesses should hire at least one-half of their employees from within the local community) - t(163) =- 2.969, p = .003.

ANOVA test shows a significant difference only in the case of CCE3 (Tourism industry must contribute to community improvement funds). The Post Hoc Test Scheffe (significance level of 0.05) shows a statistical difference between those with low income and those with lower-middle-income (Figure 3).

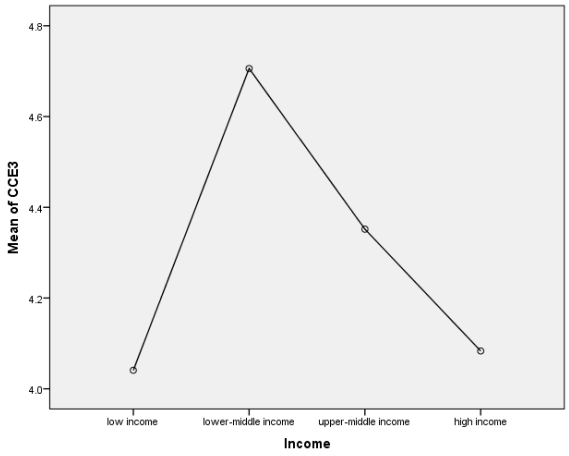

Figure 3. Means plot for CCE3 (Tourism industry must contribute to community improvement funds)

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The study's primary objective was to ascertain residents' attitudes toward sustainable tourism development. Understanding Albanian and Romanian citizens' sentiments can assist policymakers and destination developers in assessing the community's impression of tourist development, thereby enabling the sustainable development of Albania and Romania. The communities overall showed a favorable attitude towards sustainable tourism. Environmental sustainability of tourism received high appreciation in all of its items, with women showing stronger support for a tourism with a more active role in connection with the environment. Whereas no difference was documented between the attitudes of Gen. Z and Millennials. Moreover, data support a favorable perception of tourism connected to low social costs, where also the lowest incomes feel the most affected by the tourism. A positive impact of tourism on the local economy has also been evidenced by the study. In attitudes toward long-term planning of sustainable tourism, we find that women score higher than men. While no differences were found in Attitudes toward visitor satisfaction between the demographics. When analyzing attitudes toward a community-centered economy, Albanians believe stronger than Romanians that tourism should contribute to local development. Followed by different attitudes between Gen. Z and Millennials regarding whether the businesses should hire from the local communities. Further differences are found between wage brackets regarding whether the tourism industry must contribute to community

improvement funds.

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