

ISSUE 1

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IMPACT LAB

MARCH 2024



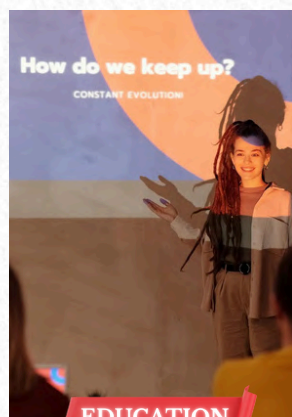
Sustainable Tourism Impact Lab aims to drive responsible & inclusive economic growth and community development in the tourism and hospitality industry.


IMPACT LAB
 Sustainable Tourism

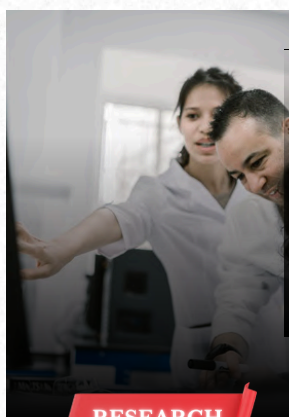
Supports Sustainable Development Goals



3 PILLARS



EDUCATION



RESEARCH



ADVOCACY

Impact labs offer students opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills to address the various complex challenges faced by society, to be addressed by the impact labs, and make an impact on the "people, planet and prosperity". Through these learning opportunities, students have a chance to live their purpose and take their productive place as leaders or change agents in the global community.

Impact labs offer academics the opportunities to work together to address the complex challenges faced by society through interdisciplinary research. Through the activities of the lab including research, academics will be able to make a positive impact on the "people, planet and prosperity" through contributing to the fundamental knowledge, practical solutions, and policy advocacy. Research will strengthen the positions of advocacy with evidence based outcomes and elevate the credibility and profile of expertise in the Impact Labs.

Impact labs are established to create awareness and advocate for support for actions to address the complex challenges faced by the world. Specifically, the purpose of advocacy is to benefit a community, to call for support from the public and authorities and to inspire more actions to address the complex challenges. To support this intended advocacy role of the impact labs, Various actions will be taken by Taylor's and by the respective impact lab directors.



VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO [HERE](#) OR SCAN

In This Issue

EDUCATION

- "We Are Water Wise Voyagers" Campaign Drives Sustainable Awareness at Taylor's University
- Empowering Local Communities through Youth Engagement: Inap Desa @ Sabak Bernam – Youth and Community Tourism

RESEARCH

- Academic Publications: Indexed Journals & Books

ADVOCACY

- Keynote Address by Dr. Jeetesh Kumar at the 27th International Tourism and Rural Space (TARS) Conference
- Distinguished Speaker Session by Dr. Jeetesh Kumar at Symbiosis Institute of Health Sciences (SIHS), Pune

“WE ARE WATER WISE VOYAGERS” CAMPAIGN DRIVES SUSTAINABLE AWARENESS AT TAYLOR’S UNIVERSITY

On 17 June 2025, Taylor’s University launched the We Are Water Wise Voyagers campaign, a collaborative effort designed to promote sustainable water consumption and conservation within the tourism sector. The campaign was driven by 15 Bachelor of International Tourism Management students working alongside 25 Public Relations students, in collaboration with the Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Air Negara (SPAN).

Supported by the Sustainable Tourism Impact Lab and guided by Dr Thanam Subramaniam and Dr G. Manickam, the initiative reflects Taylor’s commitment to multidisciplinary learning by uniting students from different academic backgrounds to address real-world challenges. The campaign seeks to raise awareness of SPAN’s Water Wise initiatives through innovative and engaging activities that bring sustainability conversations to the forefront of university life.

Two key activities anchor the campaign: a dynamic Speaker Corner and a poster competition, both aimed at increasing awareness of water sustainability among the Taylor’s University community. Tourism and public relations students led the campus-wide campaign launch by engaging their peers, encouraging participation, and highlighting the urgent need for water conservation in tourism destinations.

All Taylor’s students are invited to take part in the poster competition, with further details accessible through the [campaign link](#). Winners will be announced on 17 July 2025. This campaign not only promotes environmental responsibility but also empowers students to become proactive advocates for sustainable tourism practices. Through direct involvement and peer engagement, the We Are Water Wise Voyagers campaign demonstrates how academic learning can be transformed into meaningful action for a more sustainable future.



SPEAKER'S CORNER COMPETITION

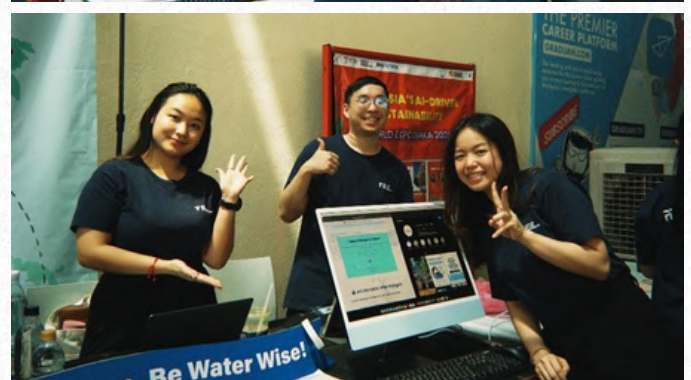
THEME

Every Drop Counts: Practising Responsible Water Usage While Exploring the World

POSTER COMPETITION

THEME

Sustainable Water Consumption and Conservation at Tourism Destinations



EMPOWERING LOCAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: INAP DESA @ SABAK BERNAM – YOUTH AND COMMUNITY TOURISM



On 21 June 2025, the Sustainable Tourism Impact Lab (STIL), in collaboration with Semarak Padi Homestay and JPKK Kampung Parit 2 Timur, Sabak Bernam, organised Inap Desa @ Sabak Bernam: Youth and Community Tourism—a pilot initiative designed to promote community-based rural tourism through student engagement and local participation. The programme brought together over 40 students and community members for a full-day experiential exchange, anchored in cultural immersion, grassroots learning, and intergenerational dialogue.

Held at the scenic Semarak Padi Homestay, the event highlighted how rural tourism can flourish through culturally rooted and community-driven activities. Students from Taylor's University had the opportunity to learn directly from villagers through storytelling sessions, traditional food preparation, and live demonstrations of local customs. These interactions created a space for mutual learning while affirming the importance of preserving local heritage through inclusive tourism practices. The event was officiated by the Ketua Kampung of Kampung Parit 2 Timur and a representative from SABDA, both of whom expressed strong support for future collaborations. Their presence underscored a shared commitment to developing sustainable tourism models that place community voices at the forefront.



Led by Mr. Nantha Gopal Muniandy and Dr. Nagathisen Katahenggam, this initiative supports broader state and national strategies under Visit Selangor 2025 and Visit Malaysia 2026, which aim to diversify Malaysia's tourism landscape beyond major urban centres. By spotlighting lesser-known destinations like Sabak Bernam, the programme seeks to encourage inclusive tourism that benefits rural communities across Selangor.



Ultimately, the Inap Desa pilot reflects a growing need to involve youth as active contributors to sustainable development. Through respectful engagement with local hosts, the event demonstrated how tourism education can be embedded within lived experiences.



PUBLICATIONS



01

The action-attitude gap to pro-environmental sustainability in nature-based destinations: A qualitative study using the stakeholder theory

<https://doi.org/10.37741/t.73.2.1>



05

Social Engagement Strategies in the Metaverse: Fostering Customer Loyalty in Tourism and Hospitality

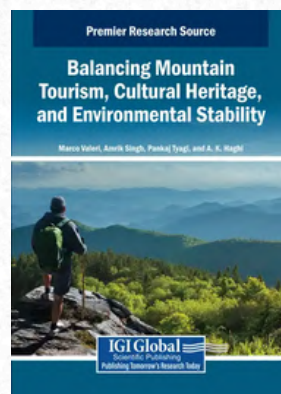
<https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83662-586-520251009>



02

What Motivates Tourists to Take Wildlife Selfies? Evidence from Wildlife Tourist Attractions in India

<https://doi.org/10.34624/rtd.v48i0.35141>



06

A Theoretical Inquiry into Residents' Support for Sustainable Cultural Heritage Tourism in Qufu, China

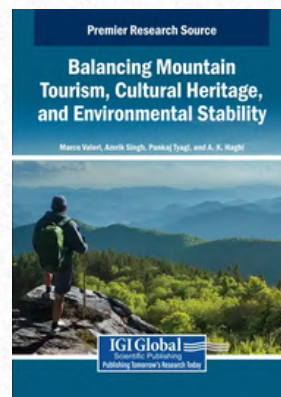
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03

Guest-Centric AI: A Theoretical Inquiry of Guest Experiences on the Integration of AI Chatbots among Luxury Guest Accommodations

<https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83662-582-720251015>



07

Thangka Paintings and Sikkim's Heritage: Art as a Pillar of Cultural Identity in Tourism

<https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-8764-1.ch035>



04

Linking Green Technologies and Sustainable Infrastructure for Transformative Events and Festivals in Malaysia

<http://doi.org/10.1079/9781836990185.0017>



08

Pro-Environmental Behavioural Intention Towards Ecotourism: Integration of the Theory of Planned Behaviour and Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14724049.2025.2509648>

PUBLICATIONS



09

Place Attachment Mediating Perceived Destination Competitiveness and Visitors' Intention in Ethnic Enclave Tourism Destination in Brickfields, Malaysia

<https://doi.org/10.47836/pjssh.33.2.20>



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Challenges and Opportunities of Ghost Kitchens With Reference to Expansions and Expectations

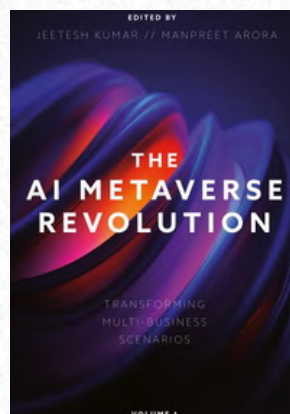
<http://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3373-0432-8.ch012>



10

Online Travel Reviews and Tourist Destination Choices: An Extension of the Information Adoption Model

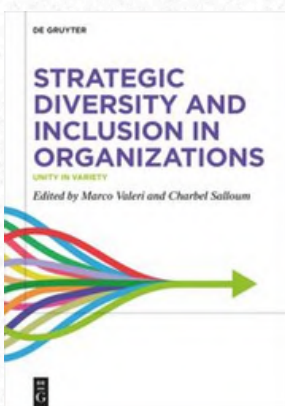
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14

AI and Robotics Awareness: Effects on Hotel Employee Turnover

<https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83662-582-720251012>



11

Embracing digital transformation to foster inclusive and equitable work environments

<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111673707-012>



15

Anthropomorphism of Service Robots in the Hospitality Industry: A Conceptual Framework from Consumers' Perspectives

<https://doi.org/10.1201/9781003485599>



12

Charting the course of the nursing professional identity: a qualitative descriptive study on the identity of nurses working in care for older adults

<https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.16506>



16

Be Smart, but Not Humanless? Prioritizing the Improvement of Service Attributes in Smart Hotels Based on an Online Reviews-Driven Method

<https://doi.org/10.3390/su17094036>

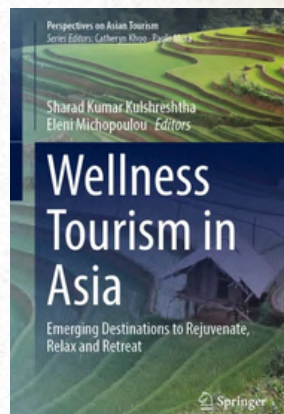
PUBLICATIONS



17

Exploring SERVQUAL Dimensions and Their Influence on Tourist Satisfaction in Virtual Tourist Experiences: A Proposed Framework

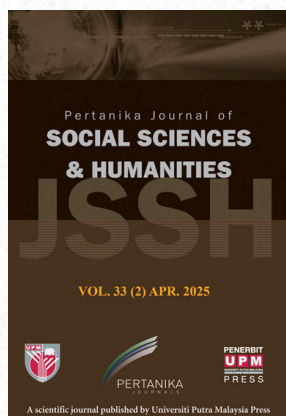
<https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83662-586-520251014>



21

Wellness and Health Tourism in Malaysia: Current Barriers and Recommendations

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-96-2867-4_9



18

The Influencing Factors of Sustainable Agriculture Tourism in the Farmhouses of Hainan, China

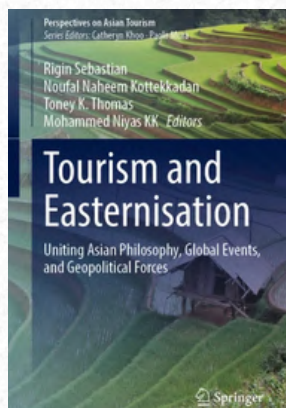
<https://doi.org/10.47836/pjssh.33.S1.04>



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Demystifying Opportunities and Risk for Businesses: A Qualitative Enquiry

<https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83662-582-720251018>



19

Shaping Destinations, Captivating the World: Global Events as Tools for Place-Making and Branding in Asia

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-96-4124-6_4



23

Sustainable Festivals: Balancing Cultural Celebrations with Eco-Conscious Practices

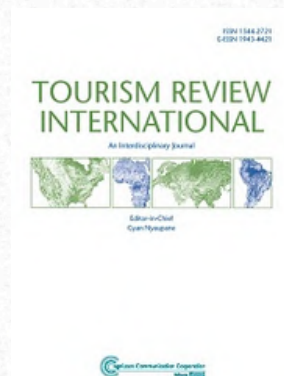
<https://doi.org/10.1079/9781836990185.0016>



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Phase-specific pandemic survival strategies: Insights from tour operators

<https://doi.org/10.1177/14673584251347612>



24

Online Travel Reviews and Tourist Destination Choices: An Extension of the Information Adoption Model

<https://doi.org/10.3727/194344225X17315216888907>

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY DR. JEETESH KUMAR AT THE 27TH INTERNATIONAL TOURISM AND RURAL SPACE (TARS) CONFERENCE

On 29 May 2025, Dr. Jeetesh Kumar, from the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Events and the Cluster for Research and Innovation in Tourism (CRiT) at Taylor's University, Malaysia, was invited as a Keynote Speaker at the 27th International Tourism and Rural Space (TARS) International Conference, jointly organised by the Romanian Academy and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Romania. The conference was held in a hybrid format at the National Agency for Mountain Areas – ANZM, Vatra Dornei, Romania.

The TARS Conference is a distinguished platform that brings together policymakers, researchers, industry leaders, and academics to explore sustainable practices and innovation in tourism and rural development. This year's edition focused on the dynamic interplay between technology, rural revitalisation, and tourism resilience in a post-pandemic world.

Dr. Jeetesh delivered a keynote presentation titled: "Revolutionising the Hospitality Industry: The Role of AI in Enhancing Customer Experience and Driving Operational Efficiency."

In his talk, he examined the transformative role of artificial intelligence in reshaping the global hospitality industry—from smart service delivery and predictive analytics to operational automation and hyper-personalised guest experiences. He emphasised how AI technologies are not only enhancing customer satisfaction but also enabling data-driven decisions that improve sustainability and competitiveness, particularly in rural and emerging destinations. His insights highlighted the urgent need for hospitality leaders and rural tourism stakeholders to embrace digital innovation while ensuring ethical and human-centred approaches. The session sparked engaging dialogue and was well received by scholars, government officials, and tourism professionals in attendance.

TOURISM AND RURAL SPACE
27th International Conference
29-31 May 2025
Vatra Dornei

Keynote Speakers
2025
Thursday, 29 May
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (Bucharest Time)
National Agency for Mountain Areas - ANZM
Audio Mopso
Chairs: Mohammad Shalpurani (Uzbekistan), Cristina Emanuela DASCĂLU (Romania)
[Connect online](#)

Gül Erkol Bayram
Associate Professor & Vice Dean,
Faculty of Tourism, Sinop...

Marco Valeri
Associate Professor, Faculty of
Economics, Nicolaus Copernicus...

Fergus MacLaren
President Emeritus, International
Cultural Tourism Committee of...

Jeetesh Kumar
Head of Research, Faculty of Social
Sciences and Leisure Manage...



TOURISM & RURAL SPACE
TARS 27th International Conference

CONFERENCE BOOKLET

29-31 MAY 2025
Vatra Dornei, Romania

Romanian Academy
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

GÜL ERKOL BAYRAM
Associate Professor, Sinop University, Turkey

MARCO VALERI
Associate Professor, Nicolaus Copernicus University, Italy

FERGUS MACLAREN
President Emeritus, ITC of ICOMOS, Canada

JEETESH KUMAR
Head of Research, CRiT, Malaysia

DIPLOMA
This is to certify that
DR. JEETESH KUMAR
made the keynote-speaker presentation with the title
Revolutionizing the Hospitality Industry: The Role of AI in Enhancing Customer Experience and Driving Operational Efficiency
at the 27th Edition of the International Conference on
TOURISM AND RURAL SPACE
IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT
held in a hybrid format between the 29th and 31st of May 2025
and made an important contribution to this academic event.

DIRECTOR
Gheorghe Zane Institute For Economic and Social Research,
Romanian Academy - Branch of Iasi
Dr. Eugen BUIZĂ

GENERAL DIRECTOR
National Agency For Mountain Areas - Vatra Dornei,
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
Gheorghe HIRLĂU

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SESSION BY DR. JEETESH KUMAR AT SYMBIOSIS INSTITUTE OF HEALTH SCIENCES (SIHS), PUNE

On 9 June 2025, Dr. Jeetesh Kumar, from the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Events and the Cluster for Research and Innovation in Tourism (CRiT) at Taylor's University, Malaysia, was invited as a Distinguished Speaker for the Induction Programme of the MBA (Hospital & Healthcare Management) Batch 2025–2027 at the Symbiosis Institute of Health Sciences (SIHS), Pune. The session was held from 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM (IST) in Classroom No. 6, 5th Floor, at the SIHS campus in Lavale, Pune, and conducted in online format to reach a wider student audience across regions.

Dr. Jeetesh delivered a talk on “An Overview of Medical Tourism,” offering students an in-depth look at the evolution and growth of the medical tourism sector. His session explored how healthcare, hospitality, and international travel intersect to create integrated ecosystems that are not only patient-centric but also economically and culturally significant. He discussed emerging trends such as digital health facilitation, accreditation and trust-building, cross-border policy considerations, and the shifting motivations of medical travellers. Through real-world examples and global case references, Dr. Jeetesh highlighted the importance of service quality, destination competitiveness, and collaborative care models in sustaining growth in this sector. The session also underscored the role of future healthcare leaders in understanding the broader business environment and cultivating interdisciplinary thinking, especially in light of increasing demand for accessible, affordable, and high-quality medical care across borders.



Malaysia's Position in Medical Tourism

Malaysia's medical tourism market – welcomed 152 million international patients in the first quarter of 2025, according to the MHTC, putting it well on track to meet the goal of generating US\$2.7 billion by 2030. [source]

Affordability – Medical procedures in Malaysia are significantly more affordable, typically 30–60% less than in Western countries, offering significant savings without compromising on quality. For instance, a knee replacement surgery costs approximately USD 7,000–8,000 in Malaysia, compared to USD 15,500–16,500 in Singapore. [source]

Quality Care – Joint Commission International (JCI)-accredited healthcare facilities equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. Notable institutions include:

- Prince Court Medical Centre:** Recognized among the world's top ten hospitals for medical tourists.
- Sunway Medical Centre:** Awarded International Hospital of the Year by International Medical Travel Journal (IMTJ), 'Hospital of the Year' in Malaysia at the Healthcare Asia Awards.
- KPJ Sabah Specialist Hospital:** Won two major awards in the recently concluded Healthcare Asia Awards, particularly for Health Promotion Initiative of the Year – Malaysia for its improved access to private healthcare through GP satellite clinics on the East Coast of Sabah, and Employee Engagement of the Year.



How Medical Tourism Drives Hospitality + Tourism



SIHS, a constituent of Symbiosis International (Deemed University), was ranked No. 1 by Career 360° and named “Business School of the Year” by Academic Insights 2024, known for its strong industry-academic interface, practice-led curriculum, and advanced facilities at the Symbiosis University Hospital and Research Centre (SUHRC).



GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY!



TAYLOR'S

IMPACT LAB
Sustainable Tourism

Supports Sustainable Development Goals



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