

Article

Can Tourism Social Entrepreneurship Organizations Contribute to the Development of Ecotourism and Local Communities: Understanding the Perception of Local Communities

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Abstract: The literature emphasizes that tourism social entrepreneurs play an important role in the adoption of sustainable strategies to achieve social, environmental, and community development. Yet, there is limited research that aims to understand the relationship between local communities and tourism social entrepreneurship empirically. Building around social exchange theory and Weber's theory of substantive and formal rationality, this study addresses the following research question: how do local communities perceive the role of tourism social entrepreneurship (TSE) in the development of ecotourism destinations? A total of 362 community employees of two ecotourism organizations in India participated in the survey. Analytically, this study validated the measurement model and tested hypotheses using structural equation modeling (SEM). The findings reveal that the economic benefits and environmental sustainability are the main influencing factors that are appreciated by the communities. However, we found variance in the community perceptions with regard to several factors being studied in the two TSEs we studied. This study recommends that in order to contribute to the development of ecotourism and local communities there is an urge to build strong ties among different stakeholders at the local level.

Keywords: ecosystem sustainability; tourism-based social entrepreneurship; ecotourism; local communities



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1. Introduction

The extant research in tourism highlights the importance of tourism social entrepreneurship (TSE) in promoting the social and economic development of local communities while contributing to the development of the tourism industry [1,2]. An increasing number of tourism NGOs undertake social entrepreneurship-related activities in order to promote community development. Importantly, social entrepreneurship organizations provide skills, expertise, and networking to local communities. Tourism-based social enterprises that operate in rural areas address the challenges of socio-economic and political concerns and environmental degradation [3]. Thus, the travel and tourism industry is considered as one of the key economic sectors in India today by providing a total employment of 6.36 million in the country [4]; and it is noted that a majority of the rural population in India depend on the tourism sector for their livelihoods after the agriculture sector [5]. Daniele and Quezada [6] propose that tourism social entrepreneurs use market-based mechanisms to provide benefits in terms of promoting livelihoods to local communities and sharing the understanding of business models among the stakeholders. It is, therefore, proven that TSE businesses are pursuing a dual mission to achieve economic sustainability and environmental conservation as an important contributor to economic and social development for local communities [7–9]. In a similar vein, with reference to the tourism industry, the ecotourism initiative is, for instance, considered as an alternative approach to rural

development in terms of its contribution to environmental conservation [10], its providing of economic benefits to the rural population [11], and its preventing of rural to urban migration. In other words, ecotourism initiatives can help to achieve at least two objectives: (i) the creation of employment in rural communities and (ii) the conservation of social and environmental sustainability.

However, the stakeholders' involvement is a necessary precondition for the promotion of the tourism industry as well as for the economic development of the local areas [1,2]. The initiatives taken by tourism social entrepreneurs are considered to be successful only when the key stakeholders (governments, local NGOs, local residents, and tourists) are involved in the tourism development process. Communities, especially, as key stakeholders, should participate in and contribute to the development of the tourism sector. However, it is noted that community perceptions are considered as a main element for supporting the tourism enterprises or community-based tourism organizations [12,13]. Most of the tourism studies believed that communities may support tourism organizations based on their positive and negative perceptions [14]. Accordingly, it is important to understand the perceptions of the local communities in order to assess the role that the tourism social entrepreneurs play in the development of tourism destinations. In this regard, some tourism studies made an effort to assess community perceptions based on social and economic components as tools for measuring community involvement in tourism development [15–17]. However, the limited TSE literature empirically finds out the link between TSE and community participation and inadequately focuses on the ecotourism destinations [18,19]. In particular, the extant literature to that effect is largely focused on a qualitative and conceptual understanding of TSE's role in tourism community development. A quantitative assessment of the community perceptions of tourism social enterprise's ecotourism development and their influence factors in the support for TSE has still not been investigated thoroughly. Given this knowledge gap, we propose to address two specific research questions: (i) to assess the local community perceptions of TSE influencing factors and their support for the ecotourism development in India and (ii) to assess how the economic benefits, socio-cultural benefits, quality-of-life satisfaction, and environmental suitability predict community support for TSE.

In order to answer our research questions, we collected data among the community members who are employed by two social entrepreneurship organizations in India, namely Kabani and Mangalajodi. The scales, which were recently identified and developed by tourism scholars to measure community perceptions of the TSE influencing factors, such as the economic benefits, socio-cultural attributes, quality-of-life satisfaction, environmental sustainability, and the support for TSE, tested the reliability and validity.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Framework

SET has emerged from the sociology literature and it has been adopted in order to understand the interactions between different stakeholders [20]. In other words, SET has been used in a number of tourism-based studies to understand the relationships between tourism operators and local communities [14]. SET allows us to understand the local community/resident attitudes towards tourism development as an exchange of resources among the individuals and groups; with this interaction there is a mutual gain among the individuals and groups [14,21]. Thus, tourism scholars adopted SET to understand the relationships between tourists, local communities, and the tourism social entrepreneurship organizations [22]. Furthermore, this theory has also been used to capture the ways in which communities support tourism development [12,23,24]. Under these circumstances, residents believe that higher the exchange of resources or benefits from tourism, the greater the likelihood that tourism impacts are viewed positively by the local communities [25,26]. In other words, local communities are more willing to support tourism development when positive perceptions of tourism impacts outweigh the negative perceptions [14]. Thus, SET forms the foundation for assessing resident perceptions of tourism social enter-

prises and their role in promoting local community development and ecotourism destination development. Furthermore, it results in influencing local community support for tourism development [27].

However, a growing body of the literature argues that SET can only focus on the economic influencing factors of community attitudes towards tourism development [23]. Scholars also argued that SET is more aligned with economic exchange, thus treating resident perceptions of tourism as being predominantly based upon the financial benefits received through tourism [28]. This is problematic because measuring the benefits in terms of solely economic factors, and not including the non-economic factors of benefits in terms of community perceptions towards values, beliefs, morals, etc., can also affect their perceptions [29]. Scholars therefore applied an alternative theory to understand the economic and non-economic influencing factors of community attitudes towards tourism development [25]. Latkova and Vogt [30] suggest that a possible solution would be the “application of social exchange theory in conjunction with another theory as the combination might provide a better insight into residents’ perception towards tourism development”. One such theory that holds promise in realigning social exchange theory and bridging the aforementioned divide is Weber’s theory of formal and substantive rationality (WTFSR) [14].

2.2. Weber’s Theory of Formal and Substantive Rationality (WTFSR)

WTFSR was developed by Max Weber [31]. It was adopted to explain a person’s motivational factors behind participation in different forms of non-economic activities [29]. Weber developed his idea based on the conviction that rationality manifests itself in two ways: (1) formal rationality and (2) substantive rationality. In other words, WTFSR argues that instead of treating human rationality as being influenced only by economic gain, there is also a rationality for economic activity as both formal (economic) and substantive (non-economic) [32,33]. According to formal rationality, the economic choices are impacted by the direct relations between “means” and “ends” that focus on profit-maximization and economic benefits. With reference to substantive rationality, it is the value-rational or non-market action, which includes values, beliefs, morals, emotional solidarity, ideological motivations, trust, and power that has great potential for resident perceptions toward tourism. With this dual rationality, “weber provides a format that allows for formal, that is, market and economic elements as well as the less quantifiable (substantive), that is, value and belief-oriented elements of decision-making/risk assessment” [14]. It is therefore understood that Weber’s theory can provide non-economic reasons for community perceptions towards tourism development. Thus, by combining SET and WTFSR, this study aims to assess local community perceptions of the tourism social entrepreneur influencing factors and their support for ecotourism development.

3. Community Perception of Tourism Social Entrepreneurship

Local community perception of tourism development is an important issue that has accumulated considerable interest among the tourism scholars [6,34]. Based on SET, communities support tourism development because they are getting socio-economic empowerment [35]. However, Lee and Jan [36] proposed in their research that there is a need for enhanced support by the communities that in turn will result in greater tourism development. The literature earlier agreed that community perception is being influenced by a few key factors towards tourism development [37]. Those key determining factors are the financial benefits [38,39], the supplying of infrastructure and knowledge [2], environmental sustainability [40], and community involvement [13].

In addition, sustainability indicators measured by TSE are the key for community engagement [41]. Dahles et al. [7] provide a framework that argues that the TSE-inclusive business model adopts development strategies to provide mutual benefits to all stakeholders. Based on the findings of Aquino et al. [8], communities are the most important stakeholders in the TSE business development as they interact directly with the tourists

and provide them with memorable experiences so that they visit again. Thus, communities with positive perceptions will end up becoming major stakeholders in the TSE planning and development process [42].

3.1. Community Perceptions of TSE Influencing Factors and Support for Tourism Development

3.1.1. Community Economic Benefits from Ecotourism

Aquino et al. [8] note that tourism social entrepreneurship's primary motivational factor is to generate significant and sustainable outcomes for local communities. These outcomes are identified as local-community employment creation, increased income levels, and the collection of funds for environmental educational programmers. However, the benefits provided by ecotourism may go beyond the economic outcomes for local communities. For instance, Scheyvens [43] argues that ecotourism may provide more benefits along with empowerment, including economic empowerment and social and political empowerment. She also emphasizes that economic empowerment is a more significant factor for community support for TSE ecotourism development as tourism social entrepreneurs design their strategies in order to protect the environmental conservation and the creation of income for local communities [44]. Lee and Jan [13] note that in some developing countries community perceptions may vary due to the economic benefits that they get from tourism. Most approaches taken by tourism social entrepreneurs for tourism development aim to provide some sort of benefits to local communities. Apart from providing financial opportunities, social enterprises in ecotourism promote the conservation of the environment that the communities depend on. Based on this understanding, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: *Community perception of the economic benefits from ecotourism is a significant predictor of support for tourism social enterprises.*

3.1.2. Socio-Cultural Attributes

Other than economic benefits, tourism social enterprises support social and cultural benefits. For example, TSEs develop social harmony [45], provide skills [46], and support communities in starting their own ventures [47]. Some studies define the primary goal of tourism-based social enterprises as being the protection of both natural and cultural resources [48] and the development of cultural activities [49]. Overall, tourism social entrepreneurs consider creating and developing tourism destinations in order to preserve local cultures and heritage. Social development occurs when tourism-related activities strengthen local community relationships that in turn bring harmony within the community [50]. Mosedale and Voll [51] state that tourism social enterprises can bring communities together and encourage tourism and community development projects, such as community centers, local museums, and local markets [10]. The harmony within the community promotes resources, such as the sharing of information among communities, collective identity, and trust [14]. Based on this theoretical foundation the following hypothesis is designed for testing:

H2: *Socio-cultural attributes are significant predictors of the community support for tourism social enterprises.*

3.1.3. Quality-of-Life Satisfaction

As far as the quality-of-life satisfaction among the communities is concerned, it is proven that tourism has significantly improved the standard of living of local communities [13,16,52]. In line with this, TSEs, in recent times, have adopted creative ideas and policies to improve tourism development to encourage the quality of life and the well-being of communities [8]. TSE strategies can improve the lives of local employees through providing better income, increasing employment opportunities, poverty reduction, better quality of life, and education. However, the increased income of local employees was the most commonly mentioned factor to support tourism development [17]. Yet, Gannon et al. [27] argue

that community support for tourism development is not just based on economic exchange but is also due to the facilities, such as roads, parks, recreational activities, and cultural attractions available to local residents. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: *Quality-of-life satisfaction is a significant predictor of local community support for tourism social enterprises.*

3.1.4. Environmental Sustainability

In the process of developing tourism destinations, TSEs are committed to creating value for local communities without jeopardizing the environment and to contributing to sustainable regional development [53]. It is believed that along with socio and economic development, TSE introduces initiatives for environmental conservation [7,20]. When it comes to conflict between economic development, social development, and environmental sustainability, TSEs tend to give higher priority to environmental sustainability because that resolves the social issues as well as the ecological conservation [44]. Sakata and Prideaux [19] note that TSEs invest their financial returns to educate communities to conserve the environment. Many environmental nonprofit organizations, including the World Wide Fund for Nature and organizations such as the International Ecotourism Society, have come up with many ecotourism projects in developing and underdeveloped countries as enterprises based on the conservation approach. For example, the Indian environmental society agency has a number of projects for ecotourism and conservation in wildlife protected areas [12].

Furthermore, TSEs encourage local communities to contribute to environmental conservation [9]. However, some studies, for instance that of Peredo and Wurzelmann [20], highlight that social enterprises have been widely advocated as a means of ensuring environmental well-being along with the social and economic development of the local communities. Based on this theoretical foundation, the following hypothesis is put forward for testing:

H4: *Environmental sustainability is a significant predictor of community support for social enterprises.*

4. Methodology

4.1. Study Areas

In order to understand the local community's perception of tourism social entrepreneurs and their contributions, this study draws on a data collection from the community employees of the Kabani and Mangalajodi ecotourism organizations in India. The first organization, the Kabani ecotourism organization, is located in Thrikkaipetta village in the Wayanad district of Kerala. The Kabani ecotourism organization was founded in the year 2005 by two young entrepreneurs with the help and guidance from committed local communities. Kabani Eco-Tourism manages a host of family networks, which have a positive impact on the communities in the villages. Tourism revenues are shared among the service providers (guides, taxi drivers, etc.), administrators, and a village-development fund monitored by a village committee.

The second organization is the Mangalajodi ecotourism organization, founded in 2009, which is located in Mangalajodi village in Odisha. It is known for Asia's largest estuarine ecosystem, hosting migratory birds from all over the world. Mangalajodi ecotourism organization primarily aims at protecting and developing the area as a bird paradise while also providing economic sustenance to the local communities who once earned their livelihood from hunting migratory birds. Mangalajodi ecotourism is supporting the community, the culture, and conservation efforts. However, the local village residents used to be involved in the poaching of birds for their livelihoods and selling them in the local market in the past. The increased poaching activities resulted in biodiversity degradation and a threat to the wider environment. As a result, some of the local community members took initiatives to start conserving the biodiversity through ecotourism activities at Mangalajodi. As time passed, this initiative has become sustainable with the involvement of different

stakeholders, such as local communities, NGOs, the Indian Grameen service (IGS), the RBS Foundation, government authorities, travel operators, and tourists. The transition was not easy but continuous efforts, through awareness and support from different agencies, have proven effective.

The two organizations mentioned above were selected for this study as both served ecotourism as a tool for sustainability and community-based social and economic development and also for attracting a larger amount of domestic and international tourists.

4.2. Research Instrument

This study adopts a quantitative approach. The questionnaire was constructed by using multiple items and constructs adapted from the extant literature. The scales were adopted based on sustainable development, community-based tourism, and ecotourism research that measured community perceptions of the economic benefits, socio-cultural attributes, quality-of-life satisfaction, environmental sustainability, and the support for TSE under TSE organizations. In order to bring more insights to this paper, the study also used archival data from both the organizations. We collected twelve reports and twenty-five documents with regard to the growth, performance, and achievements of both the organizations. A convenience-sampling pilot test of the questionnaire was conducted in the field study of the Kabani organization in late April 2019. A total of 20 valid questionnaires were collected and analyzed. The final questionnaire is comprised of two sections. The first section deals with the community member's demographic background, such as age, sex, educational background, income levels, etc. The second section represents the statements on the following four variables.

Community economic benefits: This variable consisted of six items. It was based on the findings of [14,54] and revised according to the perspectives of community-based tourism.

Socio-cultural attributes: This variable consisted of six items. It was based on the findings of [49,55] and revised according to the community-based destinations.

Quality-of-life satisfaction: This variable consisted of six items and was based on the findings of [13,18] and revised according to residence perspectives of the CBT destinations.

Environmental Sustainability: This variable consisted of six items and was based on the findings of [17,56] and revised using the CBT destinations.

Support for TSE: This variable consisted of four items and was based on the findings of [24] and revised using residence support for tourism organizations.

All these variables are measured by using a point Likert scale ranging from 1–5, whereby 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree

4.3. Data Collection

The questionnaire was used to collect the data from the community members who are also employees of both the Kabani and the Mangalajodi organizations. The first author collected data from both the organizations during May and July 2019. From 362 survey questionnaires, the authors derived not only knowledge about ecotourism social entrepreneurship organizations and their functioning in relation to community development, but also the sustainability of the ecotourism destinations. One local guide in each destination was hired to assist the language translation. The respondent-friendly assistants crosschecked questionnaires carefully to ensure the respondents had fully completed the questionnaire in order to achieve a high respondent rate. By the end of the field work, a total of 362 respondents had filled in the questionnaire (Kabani N-188; Mangalajodi N-174), which is an indication that almost all of the survey respondents of these two organizations had filled in the questionnaire. The researchers developed a set of questions which were useful in understanding the tourism social entrepreneurship interventions in community development and ecotourism destination development.

4.4. Sample

The demographic characteristics of the respondents were observed. As far as the gender category of the respondents is concerned, of the total of 362 respondents, 286 respondents belong to the male category (Kabani 73.4% and Mangalajodi 85.0%), whereas the remaining 76 respondents belong to the female category (Kabani 26.6% and Mangalajodi 15%). These data indicate that male participation is high in both of the ecotourism organizations. With reference to the age group, of the 362 respondents, 131 of them belong to the age category of 18–25 years old (Kabani 31.4% and Mangalajodi 41.5%); 144 respondents fall under the age category of 26–40 years old (Kabani 44.7% and Mangalajodi 34.0%); and the remaining 87 respondents belong to the age category of 41–60 years old (Kabani 44.7% and Mangalajodi 34.0%). Of the 362 respondents, 10.1% from Kabani and 8.7% from Mangalajodi had a university education and the remaining respondents had school, high school, or were uneducated. Only a few respondents had the highest annual income of INR 100,000 (Kabani 5.4% and Mangalajodi 0%); the remaining respondents had below INR 100,000 (nearly USD 1350). The demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents.

Item		Kabani N-188		Mangalajodi N-174	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	138	73.4	148	85.0
	Female	50	26.6	26	15.0
Age	18–25	59	31.4	72	41.5
	26–40	84	44.7	60	34.0
	41–60	45	23.9	42	24.5
Education Level	School	92	48.9	77	44.2
	High school	50	26.6	39	22.4
	University	19	10.1	15	8.7
	Uneducated	27	14.4	43	24.7
Annual Income (Indian Rupees)	10,000 to 25,000	45	23.9	65	37.3
	26,000 to 50,000	75	39.9	74	42.6
	51,000 to 75,000	45	23.9	20	11.5
	76,000 to 100,000	13	6.9	15	8.6
	Above 100,000	10	5.4	None	None

5. Results and Findings

5.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

A confirmatory factor analysis was performed by using SPSS AMOSS 24 to assess the validity of the research data. Reliability and validity (convergent and discriminant validity) and the model fit of the community's economic benefits, socio-cultural attributes, quality-of-life satisfaction, environmental sustainability, and support for the TSE scales were assessed and validated.

The Cronbach's alpha for all the construct variables were 0.787, 0.825, 0.856, 0.764, 0.724 for case study.1 (Kabani) variables and 0.721, 0.759, 0.742, 0.712, 0.706 for case study.2 (Mangalajodi) variables. All these scores are above 0.70 and suggested a good consistency [57,58]. The factor loading of all items is >0.60, and all factors reached a significant level of ($t > 1$, $p < 0.5$); the average variance extracted (AVE) is >0.50 and composite reliability (CR) is >0.70. The scores suggest good coherence [58]. The measurement fit model was assessed by using the model fit statistic from the CFA (model fits for case study.1 were GFI = 0.873, NNFA = 0.946, TLI = 0.898, CFI = 0.899, and RMSEA = 0.047; and model fits for case study.2 were GFI = 0.800, NNFA = 0.954, TLI = 0.878, CFI = 0.91, and RMSEA = 0.057). Thus, the measurement model indicates good construct validity and reliability [53]. Finally,

the Fornell and Larcker [58] criterion was used to check the discriminant validity of each variable. All the construct AVE scores were higher than the square correction between the other constructs. Therefore, we conclude that the discriminant validity is suitable for our research. Factor loading, AVE, and CR of both organizations' variables are shown in Table 2. Further, correlation and discriminant validity results of Kabani and Mangalajodi Organizations are shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Factor loading, AVE, and CR of both organizations' variables.

Scales	Case Study.1			Case Study.2		
	Factor Loading	AVE	CR	Factor Loading	AVE	CR
Community economic benefits						
1. TSE plays an important role in providing employment opportunities to the local communities.	0.82	0.76	0.85	0.72	0.69	0.78
2. TSE suggests the tourists purchase local products to support the local community.	0.77			0.75		
3. TSE is capable of creating enough employment opportunities around the year.	0.70			0.70		
4. TSE helps in developing the demand for the surrounding lands at ecotourism destination.	0.84			0.80		
5. TSE hires local staff and provides training to them as local guides.	0.86			0.85		
6. TSE suggests the tourists purchase local products to support the local community.	0.76			0.70		
Socio-cultural attributes						
7. TSE helps in preserving local culture and practices of the communities surrounding the ecotourism destination.	0.73	0.75	0.83	0.78	0.77	0.87
8. TSE involves local people in the decision-making process when it comes to cultural activities.	0.87			0.83		
9. TSE is taking precautions to preserve the culture of the communities at the ecotourism destinations.	0.71			0.74		
10. TSE is providing economic support to preserve the wildlife habitats.	0.80			0.83		
11. Development of the ecotourism destination may disturb the indigenous culture of your community?	0.73			0.70		
12. TSE encourages organization of cultural activities at the destinations with the involvement of the local people.	0.78			0.81		
Quality-of-life satisfaction						
13. There is improved road connectivity from the main cities to the ecotourism destination.	0.72	0.72	0.79	0.82	0.78	0.82
14. There is improved access to all the basic facilities, such as health centers and schools at the ecotourism destination.	0.67			0.72		
15. TSE is focusing on increasing facilities in the ecotourism destination.	0.72			0.77		
16. Increased employment opportunities at the ecotourism destination improved our living standards in terms of access to better health and education facilities.	0.66			0.70		
17. As a result of the presence of ecotourism, there have been educational opportunities at the destination.	0.82			0.88		
18. Development of the ecotourism destination may disturb the quality of life of your community.	0.70			0.73		

Table 2. Cont.

Scales	Case Study.1			Case Study.2		
	Factor Loading	AVE	CR	Factor Loading	AVE	CR
Environmental sustainability						
19. TSE provides the employees with information, tips, and training on how to be more environmentally responsible at the ecotourism destination.	0.82	0.77	0.85	0.79	0.79	0.90
20. TSE is creating awareness of environment and natural resource protection for the local communities in the ecotourism destination.	0.84			0.82		
21. TSE supports local projects by donating a percentage of its profits to wildlife protection or social causes.	0.73			0.67		
22. TSE values and protects the diversity of nature in the ecotourism destinations.	0.88			0.85		
23. TSE is making necessary efforts to preserve and sustain the ecotourism destinations.	0.80			0.83		
24. Government authorities and TSE are making efforts to increase more green accommodation facilities in your village.	0.78			0.73		
Support for TSE						
25. I believe TSE actively encourages ecotourism development.	0.74	0.78	0.80	0.74	0.74	0.82
26. I support TSE strategies and want to see it become important in my community for ecotourism development.	0.79			0.82		
27. I support TSE rather than commercial entrepreneur organizations.	0.82			0.75		
28. Government and local authorities should support TSE for development of ecotourism.	0.71			0.70		

Note: AVE—Average variance extracted; and CR—Construct reliability. p value = 0.00.

Table 3. Correlation and Discriminant validity results of Kabani and Mangalajodi Organizations.

	Case Study.1					Case Study.2				
	CED	S-C Dev	Q of Life	ES	STSE	CED	S-C Dev	Q of Life	ES	STSE
Communities Economic Development	0.842					0.789				
Socio-cultural development	0.469	0.778				0.487	0.825			
Quality-of-life Satisfaction	0.374	0.626	0.733			0.362	0.437	0.795		
Environmental Sustainability	0.534	0.589	0.536	0.825		0.428	0.387	0.458	0.802	
Support for TSE	0.662	0.554	0.497	0.623	0.687	0.456	0.423	0.567	0.634	0.704
Cronbach's alpha (α -value)	0.787	0.825	0.856	0.764	0.724	0.721	0.759	0.742	0.712	0.706

Note: Square root of AVE in bold font are on the diagonal.

5.2. Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses were tested by using the structural equation model (SEM). Structural equation modeling is used to identify the nature of the relationship between constructs and variables [57]. Hypothesis one (H1): Community perception of the economic benefits from ecotourism is a significant predictor of support for tourism social enterprises and was supported by the SEM model (Table 3). Thus, TSE positively supports economic development of the local communities in both the cases (Kabani: $\beta = 0.54$, $p = 0.000$ and Mangalajodi $\beta = 0.42$, $p = 0.005$). Hypothesis two (H2): Socio-cultural attributes are significant predictors of the community support for tourism social enterprises. The SEM model did not support both organizations for hypothesis 2; thus, both TSE organizations nega-

tively support socio-cultural development for ecotourism destinations (Kabani: $\beta = 0.09$, $p = 0.469$ and Mangalajodi $\beta = 0.04$, $p = 0.347$). Hypothesis three (H3): Quality-of-life satisfaction is a significant predictor of the community support for tourism social enterprises. Thus, the SEM model positively supports the Kabani organization ($\beta = 0.12$, $p = 0.002$); however, the SEM model did not support the Mangalajodi organization ($\beta = 0.06$, $p = 0.412$). Hypothesis four (H4): Environmental sustainability is a significant predictor of the community support for social enterprises. The SEM model positively supports the environmental sustainability of the two case-study organizations (Kabani: $\beta = 0.46$, $p = 0.000$ Mangalajodi $\beta = 0.18$, $p = 0.067$). Hypothesized relationships between constructed variables and observed relationship of the two organizations through SEM are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Hypothesized relationships between constructed variables and observed relationship of the two organizations through SEM.

No.	Hypothesized Relationship	TSE Organizations	Std. Regression Coefficients	p-Value	Support for Relationship
H1:	Community economic benefits → Support for TSE	Kabani	0.54 *	0.000	YES
		Mangalajodi	0.42	0.005	YES
H2:	Socio-cultural attributes → Support for TSE	Kabani	0.09	0.469	NO
		Mangalajodi	0.04	0.347	NO
H3:	Quality-of-life satisfaction → Support for TSE	Kabani	0.12	0.002	YES
		Mangalajodi	0.06	0.412	NO
H4:	Environmental sustainability → Support for TSE	Kabani	0.46 *	0.000	YES
		Mangalajodi	0.26 *	0.005	YES

R^2 for Support for TSE = 0.014 for Kabani and 0.09 for Mangalajodi. * $p < 0.05$.

6. Discussion and Conclusions

This study sought to contribute to the tourism literature by assessing community perceptions of tourism social enterprises and their role in promoting local community development and ecotourism destination development. As a theoretical base, the paper included SET and WTF SR to explain the multiple factors that would aid us in understanding community perceptions of the TSE role. The first question of this study is to assess the local community's perception of TSE influencing factors and their support for the ecotourism development in India. The results confirmed that TSE and its influencing factors, such as the community's economic benefits, socio-cultural attributes, quality-of-life satisfaction, and environmental sustainability were valid and reliable measures in two social enterprise organizations. Overall community perception towards TSE was supported by the majority of the hypotheses. The second goal of the study was to assess how the economic benefits, socio-cultural benefits, quality-of-life satisfaction, and environmental suitability predicts community support for TSE. With the propositions of SET and WTF SR theories, it is confirmed that there is a significant effect of community perception of the enterprises and their support for tourism development [13,26,59].

Early research argues that communities that have a positive impact by the tourism industry usually participate in tourism social enterprise developmental activities, while communities who have a negative impact by the same are less likely to participate and support tourism development [25,26]. Our data emphasized that the local communities are satisfied with the economic benefits being provided with the help of TSEs in the study area. Thus, the economic benefits are one of the influencing factors for the local communities to support TSEs. Furthermore, we also found that the local communities are also being benefited by the non-economic factors.

The results of the economic benefits, therefore, were found to be the best predictor for understanding the communities supporting the TSE organizations (Kabani: $\beta = 0.54$, $p = 0.000$ and Mangalajodi $\beta = 0.42$, $p = 0.005$). Early results also found that economic

benefits in the form of employment creation and an increase in income levels are the main predictors of communities supporting TSE [20,60]. Our results support this view. From the archival data it is understood that the local communities are encouraged by Kabani in creating new business opportunities, such as souvenir shops, campsites, homestay accommodation, and transport services. TSEs also offer different tourism packages for the tourists, including cottage staying, dormitory staying, day-packages, photographers' packages, etc., in order to support the local communities economically. This trend is also observed in the Mangalajodi ecotourism destination in Odisha. The Mangalajodi ecotourism trust helps local communities in creating employment opportunities, such as that of tour guide and boatman of the Chilka lake. Furthermore, women are employed as local chefs for the tourists. In addition, local communities are encouraged to establish handicraft shops. As a result, local communities are employed to produce the handicraft products.

Interestingly, the findings on community perceptions about socio-cultural attributes were not supported in the context of both the organizations (Kabani: $\beta = 0.09$, $p = 0.469$ and Mangalajodi $\beta = 0.04$, $p = 0.347$). Our findings support the growing literature that emphasizes that tourism enterprises hardly prioritize for socio-cultural attributes [13,46,61]. Furthermore, communities from both the organizations believe that increased tourism development had no impact on their cultural activities. Respondents emphasized that the TSE organizations hardly communicate information about cultural events, which as a result has impacted on the participation levels of the communities. Thus, the study found a negative influence of the TSE's role in promoting socio-cultural development.

However, our results indicated a mixed outcome when it came to the quality-of-life satisfaction construct. Community members acknowledged that the Kabani TSE has had a positive impact on their quality-of-life satisfaction ($\beta = 0.12$, $p = 0.002$), whereas the Mangalajodi TSE was claimed to have had a negative impact ($\beta = 0.06$, $p = 0.412$). Community members who are associated with the Kabani organization were satisfied with their quality of life and believed that the TSE had increased their environmental awareness, whereas community members from the Mangalajodi were not satisfied with their quality of life due to inadequate infrastructural development by the TSE.

Mainly, there is no proper water supply, and temporary shelters were arranged for the tourists in the ecotourism destinations. We also found that women tourists experienced safety concerns in the night times. Furthermore, issues such as open defecation on the roadsides in the entry areas of the wetland in Mangalajodi village also raised concerns. It created unhealthy situations for the tourists that visited Mangalajodi. Thus, it is proved that the TSE organization of the Mangalajodi destination has had a negative influence in improving the quality of life of the local communities.

Finally, environmental sustainability was found to have a positive influence on community member support for both the organizations (Kabani $\beta = 0.46$, $p = 0.000$, Mangalajodi $\beta = 0.26^*$, $p = 0.005$). Early research highlighted that the importance given to environmental sustainability varied significantly in different stages of the destination development [13,62]. As far as the environmental sustainability is concerned, the Mangalajodi organization is at a consolidation stage in which the communities are more concerned about the economic benefits. However, this organization provides the employees with information and training on how to be more environmentally responsible in the ecotourism destination, creating awareness of the environment and natural resource protection in the local communities. Furthermore, it supports local projects by donating a percentage of its profits to wildlife protection and protects the diversity of nature in the ecotourism destinations. On the other hand, the Kabani organization is making significant efforts in educating the local residents in environmental sustainability. Moreover, our data emphasize that Kabani is organizing various training camps to build awareness. Even the local communities are sensitive towards conserving the environment in the ecotourism destination.

It is also observed that the role the TSEs play in promoting socio-cultural activities is contested by the communities. This study's findings suggest that the local communities at both the organizations believe that the TSEs are not putting in great efforts to promote

socio-cultural development. Finally, the quality-of-life satisfaction results vary between the two organizations we studied. The local communities at Kabani are satisfied with their living conditions due to the development strategies undertaken by the TSE, whereas the communities in the Mangalajodi destination are not satisfied with their quality of life due to a lack of government support and a lack of destination-development strategies. Therefore, the results showed a significant quality-of-life satisfaction in community perception towards the Kabani organization and an insignificant quality-of-life satisfaction in community perceptions towards the Mangalajodi organization.

In conclusion, as a whole TSE plays a significant role in promoting local community development and ecotourism destination development. However, literature to that effect has largely focused on the qualitative and conceptual understanding of TSE's role in tourism-community development. This article empirically assesses the community perceptions of tourism social entrepreneurship and its contributions (community economic benefits, socio-cultural attributes, quality of life, and environmental sustainability). This research demonstrated that the economic benefits and environmental sustainability are the main influencing factors for communities to encourage the TSE. However, while supporting the TSE, the communities are primarily concentrating on gaining economic benefits in the Indian rural context. Thus, to gain community support, government authorities and tourism organizations should provide financial support for TSEs to generate a sense of positivity and pride in the community members towards sustainable ecotourism development. Moreover, local authorities must create an awareness campaign about the environmental sustainability measures being taken by TSE towards preserving the local flora and fauna. These campaigns can be used as a platform to increase community support for TSE. There is also need for the local administrative authorities and the TSE managers to pay closer attention in providing adequate infrastructure for ecotourism development while designing ecotourism development strategies. In fact, it requires a greater involvement of the local communities in order to build local infrastructure and address safety concerns.

The study findings also seek the attention of both the organizations in taking initiatives in order to promote socio-cultural development at the ecotourism destinations. Both the organizations need to make efforts to organize indigenous festivals and exhibitions in a frequent manner. While organizing these events, they must ensure that the local communities are well-informed about the events and also take the necessary measures for promoting their participation in the socio-cultural events. These kinds of efforts at the ecotourism destinations will not only attract more tourists but also promote local culture and indigenous practices. Besides, these kinds of events also indirectly promote their livelihoods. The hypothesis proved that there is a lack of relationship between socio-cultural development and community support for TSE in these two organizations.

Before proceeding to the limitations, the study highlights that the findings have practical implications for those within the tourism industry looking for strategies to increase community perceptions/attitudes towards ecotourism development. In particular, the positive perception of the community support for TSE's role in ecotourism development may encourage and produce a sustainable ecotourism economy in the Indian context. As community support for the TSE role in ecotourism development is found to be positive, there is a need for stronger tie-ups among different stakeholders, and their concerted efforts are essential for the development of the ecotourism destinations. Results from the study also highlight a more positive relationship between the local communities at the ecotourism destinations and the TSEs. This indicates the continued importance of examining and assessing local community perceptions of TSE's role in facilitating the economic and non-economic benefits of ecotourism destinations.

7. Research Limitations and Future Research

Although this study assessed the community perceptions of the role of tourism social enterprises in contributing to ecotourism development and the influence factors of support for TSE, it suffers from a number of limitations. Firstly, community perception was mea-

sured based on four factors (the economic benefits, socio-cultural attributes, quality-of-life satisfaction, and environmental sustainability) in this paper. However, several other influencing factors could be investigated in future studies. For instance, Kummitha [63] suggests that political stability issues related to TSE may also influence community participation and stakeholder collaboration. Hence, further research could focus on the stakeholders' involvement in TSE based on qualitative approaches to better elucidate community support for TSE. Secondly, the study is also limited in assessing local community perceptions based on the data only being from two TSEs of two ecotourism destinations in India. In order to generalize the results, future studies should be conducted within and across the developed and developing contexts and also in different types of tourism destinations. Lastly, this study has not focused on the tourist perceptions of visiting the TSE destination. Hence, future research should also focus on assessing the tourist perception of tourism social entrepreneurship organizations and their influencing factors in attracting tourists to visit their destinations. The study also suggests that future research should investigate TSE motivational factors for supporting communities in developing countries where the economic benefits are lacking to support community development.

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