

Driving Strategic Leadership towards Tourism Sustainability in Abu Dhabi



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Abstract: *Tourism organization in performing its tasks depends largely on the ability of leadership to carry out its functions in order to sustain its performance and competitiveness in the domestic and international markets. The aim of the research is to test the association among Strategic leadership (SL) toward tourism sustainability (economic, environmental, and social) in UAE tourism industry. A quantitative research approach has been conducted for the study and survey-based method has followed in the research and distribute questionnaire among employee to collect data. The questionnaire has developed into five point Likert scale and structured questionnaires were distributed among UAE tourism employees. This study finding has showed direct relationship influences among variables. SL influence positively on toward economic (EC), environmental (ENV), and social (SO). These relationships are supported according the result that shown in the hypotheses..*

Keywords: *strategic leadership, tourism sustainability, UAE.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of sustainable tourism focuses on several dimensions: economic, social and environmental dimensions. Because the tourism sector has interlinks with various economic sectors [1], the tourism sector is one of the most important components of economic and social development, and therefore it is a locomotive of sustainable development as a whole, because of the social and economic impacts this sector has; which contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals [2]–[7]. Thus, the tourism sector is considered the main and real engine supporting the concept of sustainable tourism; considering that the tourism sector creates sustainable development focusing on three dimensions: environmental resources (tourist attractions and nature reserves), community culture (exchange of cultures), in

addition to socioeconomics where these three dimensions forms the Trinity of Sustainable Development [8]–[11].

Strategic leadership is one of the most important means and approaches for both: integrating social responsibility and sustainability programs into the overall strategy of tourism business organizations and considering them as part of the organization's goals which are as important as economic goals [12]–[17], as well as for building sustainable organizations that work to apply the criteria and principles of sustainability, to monitor their indicators according to a strategic vision, plans and sustainable programs, to encourage various initiatives and applications in the activities and operations of the organization as an effective and influential system in global system and environment and in accordance with philosophy and thought of sustainability, which achieve economic balance Social and environmental resources to conserve and sustain resources [18]–[20]. The study aims to investigate the role of strategic leadership on sustainability among tourism institutions in UAE.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The organizations that desire to accomplish more significant levels of sustainability are staking on the potential steady worth that can be made for organizations by picking this way [13], [21], [22]. In such manner, the targets of the organization ought to be analyzed all the more cautiously, before an exchange on the business estimation of the sustainability [23]. The analysis of the company objectives is a central theme of the management research, and from a sustainability perspective, the question is to what extent organizations adopt environmental and social goals, and how they relate to sustainability and other company objectives. The connections between the environment and/or the social and financial goals can be corresponding, competitive or unessential [24], [25].

The strategic leadership and the sustainability of the organizations have recently met in a clear and visible manner through the development of senior supervisory group that capacity with company sustainability obligations. The strategic leadership study centers around a little gathering of administrators who assume full liability for the association [26]. It is generally alluded as "the theory of higher levels" [26]. "The corporate sustainability refers to as the integration of economic, environmental and social considerations by companies" [27]. The idea of sustainability includes organizations considering their environmental and social effects in accordance with their financial goals [28].

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More recently, the concepts of strategic the leadership and organizations sustainability have converged clearly leading to the emergence of TMT sustainability functions. It is often referred to as “Chief Sustainability Officers” [29], [30]. The first official comprehensive study of the existence of the functions of the sustainability is the Strand, (2013) study. This study identified 46 sustainability-related jobs from large Scandinavian and US companies that explicitly state or adopt relevant concepts and practices of sustainability, including corporate social responsibility (CSR) [20], [32].

This is evident in the jobs offered by these institutions, which are closely linked to the sustainability. On average, these specific jobs are ranked among the top ten in their own companies [30]. Based on the above, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Strategic leadership influence the economic pillar of sustainability in the UAE tourism institutions

H2: Strategic leadership influence the environmental pillar of sustainability in the UAE tourism institutions

H3: Strategic leadership influences the social pillar of sustainability in the UAE tourism institutions.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. Methods

Quantitative approach tracked for questionnaire investigation and get feedback instantly. Methods of the research depend on the questionnaire or interview procedures to collect information regarding the problem and context of the study field. For testing the hypotheses, a survey questionnaire is designed to collect data. This study survey consists of two parts with questions focused on the flowing contents: strategic leadership, and tourism sustainability (Economic pillar, environmental pillar, and social pillar). Brynard & Hanekom (1997)[33] argue that quantitative methods tend to be more suitable when the need to assign figures and direct an investigation towards the realization of a universal truth. In this concept, to test the reliability and validity, hypothesis testing of the measurement variables quantitative methods can be used [34]. This research applies a survey-based methodology for gathering data, which has many advantages that mainly suitable for this study. Information about respondents’ beliefs, motives and attitudes provides by an effective survey design in the study field in the case of research, measure the perceptions of organization employees. At first, prepared questionnaire sample was showed to the authorities to get permission. The authority reviewed the questionnaire and give us feedback to collect data from the employee. The data collected into four steps; first steps have taken 45 days to get 100 valid questionnaire form the employees. Accordingly, four steps together collected 355 valid questionnaires after distributing 500 questionnaires. Consequently, PLS (Partial Least Square) was used to analyze this study in order to find out the result for support the hypothesis and outcomes.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

A. Respondents' profile

The researchers distributed 500 questionnaires for the employees on the tourism institutions. The valid questionnaires returned are 355 (71%) out of 500. The responding sample (n = 355) consisted of 59.2% male and

40.8% female. The majority of the participants of employees range from 30 to 39 years old. As Table 1 presents that 29 % of the respondents were aged less than 30 years, 22.3 % from 40 to 49 years. Surprisingly, the highest nationality for those employees is international (more than 98.3%). Close to 81.6% of the employees hold a bachelor degree and most of the remaining 11% hold a postgraduate degree (master & PhD). Only 7.3% were holding Senior High School. For work experience, 24.5% have work experience from 11 to 15 years, 21.4% are less than 5 years, 20% are 5-10 years' experience, and 18.6% are from 16 to 20 years' experience.

Table 1: Respondents' Profile

		Frequency	Valid Percent (%)
Gender	Male	210	59.2
	Female	145	40.8
Age	less than 30	103	29.0
	30-39	148	41.7
	40-49	79	22.3
	50-59	25	7
Nationality	UAE	6	1.7
	Others	349	98.3
Experience	less than 5	76	21.4
	5-10	71	20.
	11-15	87	24.5
	16-20	66	18.6
Education	above 20	55	15.5
	Secondary school	26	7.3
	Bachelor	290	81.6
	Master	23	6.5
Total	PhD	16	4.5
		355	

B. Model assessment

Structured equation modelling was implemented for this study via Smart PLS. The measurement model assessed by construct reliability and construct validity (convergent and discriminant validity). According to the results in table 2, the construct reliability is fulfilled, (Cronbach's alpha and Composite reliability (CR) Values are above 0.7) [35] [36]. Furthermore, indicator reliability achieved, as factor loading values are above the recommended value (0.5) (see Fig. 2) [37] [38].

Table 2: Constructs reliability and validity

Variables	Mean	ST. D	Cronbach Alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted
Economic pillar (EC)	3.531	0.435	0.924	0.941	0.730
Environment Pillar (ENV)	3.482	0.567	0.862	0.893	0.518
Strategic leadership (SL)	3.327	0.767	0.896	0.920	0.659
Social Pillar (SO)	3.496	0.982	0.921	0.933	0.583

As shown in table 2, convergent validity was fulfilled, as the average variance extracted (AVE) values were above 0.5 [38]. Furthermore, discriminant validity is fulfilled. According to Fornell-Larcker criterion values in table 3, the bolded AVEs are higher than the correlations among variables [39].

Table 3: Discriminant validity

		EC	ENV	SL	SO
Economic pillar	EC	0.855			
Environment Pillar	ENV	0.662	0.720		
Strategic leadership	SL	0.598	0.561	0.812	
Social Pillar	SO	0.719	0.635	0.488	0.763

Hypotheses test

Figure 2 show the results of the causal connections among study constructs as extracted from Smart PLS3 according to the criteria of [37].

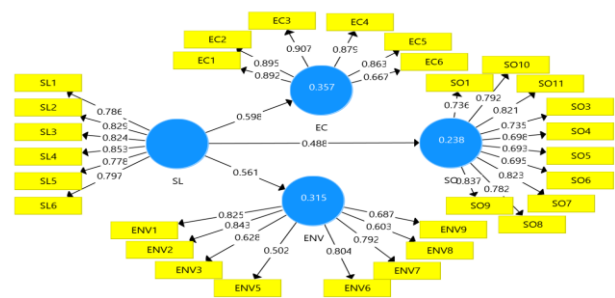


Figure (1) Structural Model Assessment

1) Hypotheses Tests

The outcomes in table 4 revealed that, three direct hypotheses are supported. SL predicts EC, ENV, and SO. Subsequently, H1, H2, and H3 are bolstered with ($B=0.598$, $t=15.110$, $P<0.001$), ($B=0.561$, $t=16.395$, $P<0.001$), and ($B=0.488$, $t=10.740$, $P<0.001$) individually. SL is clarifying 35.7%, 31.5%, and 23.8% of the difference in EC, ENV, SO separately. The R^2 esteems accomplished a worthy degree of illustrative power as prescribed by Cohen (1988) and Chin (1998). What's more, the consequence of f^2 as Table 4 shows, that all association with large impact sizes. Besides, Table 4 demonstrates that every one of the estimations of Q^2 more prominent than zero show that there is a sufficient prescient significance for the proposed model [37], [40].

Table 5: Hypotheses Tests

Hypothesis	Relations	Beta	Error	t	P		R^2	f^2	Q^2
H1	SL -> EC	0.598	0.040	15.110	0.000	Supported	0.357	0.556	0.240
H2	SL -> ENV	0.561	0.034	16.395	0.000	Supported	0.315	0.459	0.147
H3	SL -> SO	0.488	0.045	10.740	0.000	Supported	0.238	0.313	0.123

Key: SL: Strategic leadership, EC: Economic Pillar, ENV: Environmental Pillar, SO: Social Pillar

V DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study contributes to the tourism sustainability through investigating for the influence of SL, on sustainability in the UAE tourism sector. This study linked as prior investigation between strategic leadership toward tourism sustainability. The direct influences of strategic leadership are to tourism sustainability dimensions. The variable's validity and reliability were greatly acceptable as was mentioned prior in the result. The current study is consisting with prior work that leadership increase the tourism sustainability among tourism organizations. Waldman et al., (2006) place that there is an absence of research on administrative factors legitimately pertinent to sustainability activities [41]. Bertels et al., (2010) [42] recommend that as opposed to concentrating on long-term organizational execution, as has to a great extent been the situation in earlier research, academics ought to look at administrative propensities toward utilizing sustainability values in their decision making, since administrators are to a great extent liable for association sustainability usage [43], [44]. In light of Robert Strand, (2014), this investigation proposes that strategic leadership has a direct effect on sustainability dimensions.

Tourism sustainability dimensions correlates directly SL. Hence, improved SL will result in better EC, ENV, and SO, which in turn increase tourism sustainability activities. The recognition of the relationship between SL and tourism

sustainability help the UAE tourism's management to implement proper plans to develop SL behaviours within the tourism institutions. Founded on the proposed model, this study progresses the thoughtful of the role played by SL, in the tourism sustainability dimensions at tourism organizations, UAE, and highpoints applicable implications for management. The study found that SL positively affect tourism sustainability dimensions among employees within the tourism institutions in the United Arab Emirates, this is supported by previous studies [29], [45]–[48]. It is explained by the fact that, the official drivers for tourism sustainability are supposed to originate from the nationwide corporate scheme, and leadership is essential to successful tourism sustainability practice [48], [49]. In order to enhance SL, tourism management can create projects and activities to form self-confidence and belief between the followers. Workers who belief the leaders' vision and love their jobs are willing to be engaged on organization's activities [13], [15], [28], [50]–[54]. Additionally, tourism management should good example the essential organisational standards to help employees to learn and disguise and to have feeling of involvement and accomplishment in the tourism sustainability practices. Role modelling at the management level helps to gain respect and trust from the employees. SL is a desirable supervisor behaviour which positively improves employees to participate in tourism sustainability activities [55].

VI CONCLUSION

By way of conclusion, the main objective of this study was to deepen our understanding of the relationship between strategic leadership, and tourism sustainability in the Abu Dhabi. The perspectives of social exchange theory were applied to further develop our understanding of the link between the study variables. The findings highlighted that deploy in strategic leadership toward sustainability pillars in a deep concerning relationship. It is concluded that this study can be implemented in the organizational system and prosperity in order to access long term future success. Therefore, large-scale, tourism organization based studies are recommended to substantiate our findings. Future studies with samples drawn from branches within the country are recommended. This sampling approach would include employee from multiple cultures in the country and would enable researchers to investigate the impact of tourism sustainability.

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