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**The Relationship between Sustainable Tourism Practices and Labor Law
Compliance in The Gambia's Tourism Sector**

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Dedication

First and foremost, I express my gratitude to the Almighty Allah, whose Grace and Mercy provided me the strength to complete not only this research but also to successfully navigate through the entire program. I dedicate this thesis to Him.

I also dedicate this work to my family, who supported me through the challenging times of intense study. My family has been pivotal in my journey; my parents, in particular, encouraged me to work diligently and value education, emphasizing that the future is a treasure that must be secured through careful planning today.

Abstract

This comparative study examines the connection between sustainable tourism practices and labor law compliance in the Gambia tourism industry. Because tourism is an important pillar of Gambia's economy, this research will help understand how business enterprises in the region integrate sustainable practices after their respective labor laws. Ordinal Regression Analysis (PLUM) is used to detect perceptions of both employees and entrepreneurs regarding the effectiveness of continuous tourism initiative and compliance with labor regulations.

The results show evidence that there is considerable dissatisfaction from both sustainable tourism initiatives or measures and from labor law compliance. More specifically, as such, 39.4% of respondents disagree with the perception of or disagree that tourism businesses follow local labor laws, call for important wages, work status and significant interval in the protection of employees' rights. Not only this, moreover, 62.8% of the respondents also expressed their dissatisfaction regarding the range of sustainable tourism practices put into operation within the region. This proves that the tourism industry in the Gambia has not effectively balanced the environment, social and economic interests within themselves but rather resource-deprived and momentary in occurrence.

The negative correlation identified in the study indicates that sustainable tourism practices have a relation with labor law compliance. For this reason, businesses usually prefer either stability in the environment or social efforts at the cost of one or the other. The conflict shows that a stakeholder faces a challenge in applying permanent practices and adherence to labor rules by the tourism sector.

The research reveals that while public-private initiatives and training programs are crucial for betterment, stricter enforcement and monitoring of compliance with labor laws are necessary from the findings. The study advocates to have more robust regulatory frameworks and continuous oversight that would ensure that sustainable tourism initiatives do not come at the cost of workers' rights. Well, this research offers great pieces of advice for potential policymakers, business owners, and stakeholders in The Gambia's tourism sector to create a framework for a more sustainable and labor-compliant industry.

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Introduction

Background of the Study

Tourism is seen as an engine of economic growth, particularly in developing countries, where the other sectors may be weak or dependent on volatile foreign markets. Tourism has long been a pillar of the Gambian economy, creating jobs, foreign exchange, and investment in community infrastructure. In relation to tourism, there are not only economic arguments but also cultural, environmental, and social equity ones. Which is why so many nations— The Gambia included— have made tourism a central pillar of their development strategies. The industry faces numerous structural and operational challenges that could threaten its sustainability. The two big issues are there aren't enough enforced and observed labor laws, and there aren't enough sustainable tourism practices being implemented.

The Gambia is typical of many developing countries, with an undeveloped tourism industry that is poorly institutionalized, lacks resources, and is often not regulated. Companies in this industry tend to exploit workers and damage the environment for immediate gains. Although the global tourism agenda has increasingly focused on sustainability, which includes not just environmental but also social and economic responsibility, many tourism businesses in The Gambia struggle to apply such values. This is because they lack financial resources, with little government support, weak infrastructure, and only sporadic enforcement of environmental and labor standards (Hussain et al., 2024; Rathore, 2017). One compliance challenge is particularly complex: labor laws. There are laws on the books in The Gambia guaranteeing fair wages, safe working conditions, and protection of workers' rights. But in many countries such laws are poorly enforced, especially in industries such as tourism where workers are often seasonal, informal, or employed on a casual contract. Companies can't afford to be lawful. Many might comply if they could, but typically they are under ferocious pressure to cut costs—if not by consumers or opponents, then by their own investors. In addition, many workers are not educated enough or have not had access to legal resources, so they do not know what rights they have (Elshaer, 2019).

This results in poor labor conditions in the tourism industry, and weak or nonexistent enforcement. Meanwhile, the concept of sustainable tourism is also gaining traction worldwide. Sustainable tourism is tourism that doesn't just exploit local people and nature; it seeks to preserve and enhance opportunities for the tourists of today and all of the future. This involves fostering sustainable practices, empowering local communities, and protecting cultural heritage. Sustainable tourism practices in The Gambia are not yet common, and most enterprises have not committed to this model. One reason is that sustainable development typically involves planning for the long term and making some up-front investments, which small or underfunded tourism businesses may not be able to do. Neither has the regulatory and policy framework been supportive enough to encourage or mandate sustainable practices, contributing to the distance between global norms and local practices. We are going to examine the two related problems: compliance with labor law and commitment to sustainable tourism practices. It's not just to see how much tourism companies comply with labor laws or become sustainable. Rather, the study seeks to see if there is a connection between the two—whether companies that are more committed to sustainability are also more likely to abide by labor laws, and vice versa. The rationale for this approach is that for something to be truly sustainable, it needs to be holistic. But it can't just be environmental; it has to be social justice, too, protecting workers' rights. If sustainable tourism is not to be a marketing phenomenon, it has to involve a more general commitment to ethical business practices.

Accordingly, three main research questions have been posited to the study. First, What is the current level of labor law compliance in The Gambia's tourism sector? Second, What is the extent of adoption of sustainable tourism practices by businesses in The Gambia's tourism industry? And third, How are sustainable tourism practices related to labor law compliance in The Gambia's tourism sector? These are not merely academic questions; they are of direct interest to policymakers, tourism operators, and development partners. It would be useful to know how these factors relate, perhaps to determine regulatory approaches that worked better or worse or to find examples of resiliency or vulnerability, which could then illuminate ways to address both labor and environmental issues in tourism.

The research proposes addressing this gap in policy and literature. There has been much debate on one hand about sustainability in tourism, and on the other hand about compliance with labor laws, but there are very few studies of the intersection of the two, especially in developing countries. The Gambia is a striking example, since its economy relies on tourism and there are ample displays of both labor and environmental exploitation. This case study of the Gambian tourism industry thus helps us better understand the complex relationship between sustainability, social justice and business practices in the real world. In addition, it offers lessons that can shape future regulations and development strategies to avoid the threats of tourism expansion, namely exploitation of workers and environmental devastation. The results of this study can be useful for various stakeholders.

The findings also point to the need for policies that are more synergistic, combining labor standards with sustainability objectives, they suggest. The research might also help tourism business owners and managers by showing how being more sustainable can make them not just more environmentally friendly, but also more resilient, legally protected, and operationally exceptional. For scholars it represents another addition to the initial literature on the ethics of tourism, sustainable development, and labor rights, especially in the under-researched African context.

In order to examine these questions, this paper uses primary data gathered from 94 individuals employed in The Gambia's tourism sector, in hotels, tour companies and other hospitality services. Here we have both employees and employers represented, providing a richer texture of insights on attitudes and behaviors toward compliance with labor laws and sustainability. The research is quantitative, using an ordinal regression model to examine the relationship between the two variables. This is appropriate because the responses from the ordered surveys are at the ordinal level—people rated their perceptions, so you can order them, but you can't assume the intervals between them are equal. The results are from The Gambia only, and the researchers don't seek to extrapolate the results to other nations or areas. But this particularity enables an in-depth and contextual analysis of the possibilities and problems facing tourism in The Gambia. Conceptually it is also focused on two related areas: compliance with labor laws and sustainable tourism. While these could provide context for future studies, the research does not address larger matters such as global tourism patterns, macroeconomic policy, or trends across industries.

This narrative is organized in a bit more traditional way to unfold as the research itself did. After this introduction, Chapter Two is a literature review of other studies on labor law and tourism sustainability, and the intersection thereof. It reveals theoretical underpinnings and practical voids that this research seeks to fill. Chapter Three describes how, covering the research design, data collection instruments, sampling methods, and statistical analysis techniques. Chapter four contains the results, including descriptive statistics and the output from the ordinal regression model. Chapter Five examines these findings in the context of relevant literature and highlights the implications for policy and practice. Chapter Six concludes the study by distilling its principal findings, discussing its limitations, and making recommendations for future research and policy. In short, this study seeks to investigate a key but often neglected dimension of tourism development: the interplay between sustainability and labour law adherence. Using this conjunction as a point of exploration, the research hopes to begin to create a better, more ethical, more sustainable and more inclusive vision of tourism, one that rewards not just the environment and the economy, but the people who are engaged in cultivating it.

CHAPTER 1 International Context of Sustainable Tourism and Labor Law Compliance

1. Definition and Key Concepts

This chapter intends to contextualise the research in terms of previous studies, whilst identifying knowledge gaps that may be directly relevant to-the analysis. Sustainable tourism is sustainable practices in & of the tourism industry (Global Sustainable Council) this is an aspiration to recognize all impacts of tourism, both positive and negative. Its objective is to reduce the adverse effects and enhance the beneficial ones (Global Sustainable Tourism Council, n.d.).

Contemporary studies provide a nuanced image of sustainable tourism as being capable of spurring economic and social development but also generating severe environmental and governance challenges. For example, Li et al. (2024) investigate the case of Guilin, China where tourism has resulted in economic development but also resulted in environmental deterioration and social friction. Their implications for sustainable tourism is that there should be an all-encompassing approach to define and assess sustainable tourism including recognizing economic viability along with the development of infrastructure. They also advocate for consensus approaches such as community-based tourism and public-private partnerships. In this way, there is broader agreement in the current literature on balancing priorities in definitions of sustainability. Stojanović et al. (2024) draw on conceptions addressing the relational notion of natural and sociocultural capital to shed further light on the multi-faceted and interwoven realities of tourism satisfaction in spaces like the Kraljevac Nature Reserve. They dedicate sections of their paper distinguishing between sustainability as a central element not simply economically or ecologically driven but as cultural heritage related to the health of communities—oftentimes overlooked aspects in policy-making.

This multidimensionality is further complemented through the work of Desembrianita et al. (2024) with respect to Indonesia's super-priority destinations. They argue that ecotourism can support both conservation and economic functions if appropriately marketed, if stakeholders

engage, and if tourists are educated. The findings argue against a position that asserts nature must be sacrificed for economic returns and vice versa, if touristic practices are contextually considered and there is overall intentionality about the processes involved. On a policy level, Ilieva et al. (2024) reported on the European Union's Green Deal that shapes sustainable tourism, promotes eco-entrepreneurship, and insists on preserving cultural heritage. They characterize government policy as a key driver of responsible tourism that allows the intersection of environmental outcomes with social and economic outcomes. This coincided with Geng et al. (2024) who recognised this trend in their bibliometric analysis which showed increased interdisciplinarity and influence of European institutions in tourism eco entrepreneurship. They both highlight the growing momentum toward more integrated and policy driven approaches, with the caveat of a noteworthy research gap, particularly in respect of Africa. This geographic imbalance is particularly pronounced if you take into account the work of Rasoolimanesh et al. (2020), which identifies that a majority of studies focused on sustainable tourism indicators (STIs) focus on the Global North, while contradictorily, researchers fail to make explicit links between the results of their work and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The systematic review raised other related queries, such as limited participation from stakeholders – particularly tourists - as well as a reliance on objective evaluation methods, which implies a lack of emphasis on subjective evaluation methods and local contexts/realities. Marinello et al. (2021) continue this discussion by detailing the difficulties in determining sustainability, and calling for indicators which relate to the local opportunities and challenges regarding the environment, economy and society of each destination, rather than applying borrowed tools, as The Gambia would benefit from a context-based approach. Streimikiene et al. (2021) extend the discussion of sustainable tourism development and competitiveness for each destination within sustainable tourism development. Their review concludes the need to consider trade-offs among the three pillars of sustainability (economic, environmental, and social) while acting on changes in consumer preferences and technology. They also acknowledge new challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which will make planning for sustainability nimbleness more difficult and clarify how fragile tourism systems can be, in the world. Finally, a two-decade review of the literature has identified three pillars underpinning the sustainability of tourism events: social, economic, and environmental. This is a systematic review, and yet the literature is still dominated by narrow agendas with waste, local community response, and event impact on destination image. The narrow focus reflects a lack of empirical research about the relationship between sustainability practices and value. Some focus should be placed on how

sustainability practices inform strategic positioning and provide a competitive advantage in the event industry. Identifying these gaps serves to not only map limitations to past research, but also provide a solid agenda for sustainable event management (Zamzuri et al., 2023).

2. Sustainable tourism and environmental social economic priorities

Existing literature reveals both the promise and paradoxes of tourism as a vehicle for achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Tourism is widely touted as a driver of inclusive economic development, poverty alleviation, and natural conservation, but there seems to be academic reticence on how precisely these goals can be achieved. Rajani and Boluk (2024) interrogate the role of tourism in respect of the SDG framework, and state that tourism's transformative capacities are constrained by structural challenges which include: inequitable power relationships within and between countries and states; a lack of popular understanding of the SDGs; and; a dominance of neoliberalism in decision-making at all scales. Nevertheless, they contend that a shared governance approach and partnerships across multiple sectors have potential to unlock tourism's development potential. A more context-specific critique is offered by Maxim (2024), who looked especially into urban destinations. This criticism notes the never-ending gap between rhetoric sustainability discourses and the actual implementation of sustainability policies. Maxim highlights the inconsistent interpretations of sustainability coupled with weak technology uptake and disruptive effects of the sharing economy as significant barriers to sustainable tourism in cities. Maxim highlights that workforce development and proactive climate adaptation are both in need of attention (such issues are generally unexplored within tourism plans). Environment remains the focus for Baloch et al. (2023), who suggest a framework for sustainable ecotourism that can be replicated through other environmentally responsible tourism. Results reaffirmed the belief that tourism adds to employee social wellbeing and infrastructure, but if tourism benefits do not, in total, lead to a positive contribution towards a healthy environment, they create stressors, and, the opposite is true: additional (negative) contributing impacts that can mean the tourism approach is not sufficiently managed in a holistic manner.

Baloch et al. (2023) also invited the generation of truly supportive policy frameworks to ensure environmental integrity was not lost and intersectorial communication and coalitions were established to substantiate mutual healthy, social and environmental benefits strengthening Rajani and Boluk's earlier points to emphasize the importance of formal efforts

at the more basic level of governance. Richardson (2021) emphasizes the dual nature of tourism in developing areas with culture and biodiversity, simultaneously enabling local livelihoods and conservation, and posing challenges to sustainability through its use of carbon-intensive infrastructure, namely in the context of mass tourism. On the one hand, the world needs to travel and make a living, while on the other tourism should be ecologically sustainable. Regarding some of the alternative models that have emerged in tourism (ecotourism, community-based tourism) Richardson notes that the implementation of alternative models has been mixed, particularly due to a lack of coordinated planning and a shared vision for the long-term. For the most part, these authors reveal a recurring tension at the intersection of tourism and sustainability: the dichotomy of economic aspirations and environmental limits, and between short-term growth and long-term resilience. There is some degree of agreement regarding tourism's contribution to the SDGs, however there is less agreement on the routes to be taken to get there which highlights the need for integrated, place-based and participatory approaches to governance in tourism.

3. Barriers to sustainable tourism in developing countries

Jayasinghe et al. (2024) offer a systematic review that critically reviews the integration of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) strategies into sustainable tourism practices. Drawing on knowledge from diverse fields—tourism management, disaster risk science, environmental studies, and sustainable development—their review identifies recurring themes, practical gaps, and evolving best practices. Rather than a reactive stance, the study underlines the proactive posture of DRR in cultivating resilience in tourism, namely through predisaster preparation, risk assessment, stakeholder coordination, and institutional capacity building. A holistic approach is most necessary in the developing world, where infrastructure vulnerability and weak institutional coordination exacerbate socio-economic losses from natural disasters. The authors again emphasize that building resilience must be built into regular tourism operation—not just be left to the time of emergencies. Notably, the study calls for the use of measurable indicators to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of DRR interventions in minimizing environmental footprint and enhancing system resilience. The challenges of poor inter-agency coordination and fragmented governance were highlighted as fundamental barriers to effective implementation. Finally, the research provided a critical assessment of current practices as well as practical advice for policymakers and industry

actors, which are committed to addressing environmental responsibility and disaster preparedness through tourism regulation. Li et al. (2024) conduct a systematic bibliometric and qualitative investigation on sustainable tourist behavior, assessing 331 papers. They note that the literature highly emphasizes individuals' sustainable behaviors, and they identify the traditional blind spot in the field of waste management and sustainable design. These gaps are not hypothetical; they are a very tangible break between theoretical progress and practice, especially within developing countries where infrastructural deficit, scale, and technical constraints all place serious limits on the feasibility of even basic sustainable initiatives. For instance, the literature will have much to say about green building design or waste sorting, but these are to a large extent aspirational in poor contexts. This gap between theory and practice calls into question the relevance of sustainability approaches in divergent socioeconomic environments. By advocating for subsequent investigation to consider the dynamic nature of sustainable conduct as well as context drivers, authors implicitly highlight the need for greater grounded, broad, and malleable theory. Practical remedies such as market segmentation and technology uptake are proposed, but these depend on overcoming the structural barriers set out—barriers which existing tourism literature is prone to sidestep. In the same vein, Reindrawati et al. (2022) indicated the environmental impact of tourism in South Africa and National Park in Indonesia by identifying complex links among protective areas in these two countries. The researchers concluded ten severe risks of biodiversity and ecosystem from the qualitative content analysis of 31 articles, covering topics from loss of biodiversity and invasive species to the impact of climate change and poaching. These are compounded by spontaneous tourism, which, in countries with poor enforcement systems, easily becomes permanent damage. The study also highlights region-specific problems: Indonesia's national parks suffer from invasive species, infrastructure development, and changing visitor behavior, while South Africa's national parks are facing water shortages, disease, and fire. In addition, the age and infrastructure of the national parks play a determining role in the extent of these problems. The older parks are more susceptible to invasive species, and those with less well-defined boundaries are more prone to poaching. Furthermore, savannah ecosystems are most vulnerable to loss of biodiversity due to tourism operations. Their findings, and the Life Cycle Model for sustainable active national park tourism, show how close it is between selling tourism and selling long-term environmental sustainability. Their findings are critical to understanding how tourism can save or ruin local ecosystems depending on what policies and regulations are in place.

4. Labor rights and tourism and ILO conventions and sustainable tourism

Ionandis et al. (2021) note that the precarity of work on much of the supply side of tourism severely undermines the UN's goals for sustainable tourism, and see this as a central decent work challenge. In spite of the increasing nature of these issues, labor vulnerabilities in tourism continue to be relatively neglected in academic and policy discourse. The account of their enquiry provides a critical examination of the technological and organisational limitations that thwart such production of holistic indicators for capturing Decent Work in tourism. They emphasize recognising the significance of empowering the grass roots workers and their decision making through a humanly approach, if implemented in practice would contribute towards better labour standards in sustainable tourism. Such is the view of Bianchi and de Man (2021) who critically examine the UN World Tourism Organization's "Tourism for 2030" programme. They mark the agenda within a Marxian political economy and in doing so find the rethoric of inclusiveness and sustained growth (particularly under SDG8 work and economic growth) to be inefficient in addressing structural inequalities and social justice questions that runs through the industry. They argue that the striving for growth and competition works against the principles of decent work which "implies a fundamental 'going-in-two-directions-type of motion'" of neo-liberal understandings of sustainability. In this regard, Wang and Cheung (2024) provide a systematic review of the changing discourse of decent work in tourism and hospitality sectors, contextualizing their review in both temporal and sectoral contexts. Rather than presenting a meta-analysis of previous works, they trace the evolution of engagement, beginning with the early conceptual explorations and leading to contemporary concerns regarding implementation. They identify the COVID-19 pandemic as a key inflection point in establishing a new baseline to rethink the demands and expectations of employees and workers in tourism and hospitality. Through their enquiry, they locate ongoing labor challenges such as inadequate wages, insecure work, a lack of opportunity for work-life balance, and an unstable work environment as hurdles to achieving decent work. Using a PRISMA framework, they organize three clusters of literature by theme: labor rights, gender equality, sustainability, and job quality, highlighting the complex and multifaceted aspects of decent work. They distinguish three periods of academic engagement: conceptualization (1999-2008), benchmarking (2009-2018), and implementation (2019-present). Their review provides additional evidence for why interdisciplinary approaches are needed and sustained academic engagements; failure to attend to different disciplinary perspectives would ignore the political and social complexities related to labor relations in

tourism and hospitality. Chatzopoulou (2024) explores how working mobility in the tourism sector stands out with broad socio-economic mobility, using Greece as a case study to illustrate these complexities. By accepting the judgment of tourism as an important economic column, which generates employment for women, youth and migrants, the study at the same time reveals the underlying contradictions in such employment - where the opportunity at the same time as exploitation. During the surface of financial contributions, there are frequent problems related to uncertain functional conditions, limited health and widespread presence of security and informal labor. The analysis exposes structural inequalities in the workforce, and emphasizes how the margins -especially women, young people, migrants and informal workers -are marginalized from the sector. These challenges are complicated by involuntary or unstable employment, limited access to entrepreneurship roads and disturbed patterns of gender-based violence and harassment. What emerges is a work scenario where legal and political security often lags behind workers' living realities. In response, the study evaluates the scope and efficiency of the EU and the national legislative structure, which aims to promote justice, security and stability in the labor markets in the tourism markets, ask whether these measures really meet the weakest needs.

5. Gender Inequality in Tourism Employment

Bolukoglu and Gozukucuk (2024) critically examine the tourism development and the patterns of gender inequality in the European labor market using data from 27 EU member states for the period of 2008–2019. Their results reveal the complexity of sectoral growth and gender inequality, including that employment growth in tourism-related activities is associated with a decline in gender gaps in employment and unemployment rates. But they highlight enduring structural distortions in labor markets, like entrenched gender norms and inequality of power, as obstacles that prevent tourism from being a complete vehicle for women's empowerment. The article questions the taken-for-granted notion of 'equity-in-tourism growth' and places it as a context where gender progress is contingent and uneven. Addressing the female-related inequality in the hospitality industry specifically in the cooking department, Türkmendağ and Karaman (2024) used a sample of students in Turkey to touch upon the topic of the gender gap and identify its roots. The study results represent the following areas: the presence and the role of institutional and cultural systems in job discrimination, especially the bias of managers, the issue of impossible-to-achieve advancement, and continuous overtime. Moreover, the respondents' narrative comments in the

study also expand the context of the topic by exemplifying situations like wage inequality, workplace harassment, and male "sphere of power" being commonplace. Thus, the points in these two research works are well in line with the need for explicit gender-based bias solutions, reforms in the organizational structure, and the removal of such barriers in the culinary tourism sector as it becomes apparent that the more women in the industry, the more geographical, and social justice the job market obtains.

Eaborating on the discoveries made Claudio-Quiroga et al. (2022) explore how the COVID-19 pandemic has shaped the employment scenario in the Spain hospitality as we as made a special point of elucidating the factors that repel woman from the sector. They demonstrate the recovery of the 'shocks' of Covid-19 that happened in Spain tourism industry form the job market data of 2002-2020. The research confirms that the pandemic caused a persistent change in employment, driven by changes that were more pronounced in the female labor force, and the most severe changes intensified only made the initial gender inequality in the sector become worse. This disproportional burden is the central challenge to achieving sustainable tourism in Spain, because the pandemic's negative consequences not only complicate the existing growth vs sustainability delicate trade-off but also make it even more difficult to solve. With the aim of addressing these challenges, the authors put forward a list of strategies that are aimed at diminishing gender gaps and increasing equality in the tourism economy of Spain. Their findings bring out the broader importance of gender equality in tourism, indicating the urgency for specific policy and structural reforms that can reduce deeply rooted gender biases in the industry. Kimbu et al. (2024) examine the link between gender, entrepreneurship, and social policy influences on how inclusive the tourism sector becomes. Their findings highlight the importance of an enabling policy infrastructure that not only provides the opportunity for entrepreneurship but also integrates social policies designed to dismantle systemic gender inequities. Their illustration of the three interacting domains-gender and entrepreneurship, gender and social policy, and entrepreneurship and social policy-reveals the various obstacles women encounter in the tourism sector in terms of work and business. They argue that integrating social policy into research on gender and tourism entrepreneurship is not a matter of luxury, but a critical necessity if one has the intention of engaging practices of inclusiveness and confronting deeply ingrained social prejudice. Building upon the discussion, Akahome (2022) highlights the persistent burden of gender and disability in community-based tourism in Africa is the one which has been continued. Her study identifies how structural impediments such as the shortcomings of educational

deprivation, low training access, leadership alienation, and the recurrent of gender-based violence cycle hinder the self-expression of people with disabilities and women. The author suggests that through these examples of systemic failures, the local community tourism sectors should be empowered through gender-sensitive tourism policies that include women with disabilities in the programs of community tourism

CHAPTER 2 Sustainable Tourism and Labor Law Compliance in The Gambia

1. Sustainable Tourism in The Gambia

This chapter explores the case of sustainable tourism in The Gambia by examining its current practices, challenges, and overlap with workers' rights. For quite some time now, The Gambia, known as "The Smiling Coast of Africa" , has made tourism a major part of its economy. Its rich culture, welcoming people, and diverse ecosystems attract thousands of visitors mainly from Europe. Sustainable tourism in The Gambia has attracted more interest, as the government and other tourism actors recognize the importance of protecting the livelihoods of communities in the country while supporting the economic development of the sector. Although the potential is significant for sustainable tourism in The Gambia, many stakeholders are materially challenged, staff is underpaid, development is limited by environmental policy, and action to guarantee labor rights lacks a path forward to do so. Promoting sustainability in tourism means improving the sustainability of natural resources while limiting the negative effect it can have on the environment. Although sustainability is often defined primarily in how it affects the environment, it also relates to secure employment procedures for fair working hours, fair wages, peer policies, and the inclusion of local communities. Gijanto (2024) examines the intricate relationship between tourism and heritage considerations in the Senegambia region, and to what extent these are politically or culturally driven. Senegalese diaspora focused heritage efforts, including the contested refurbishment of the Slave House on Goree Island, show how history becomes instrumentalized for today's tourist agenda, even if the counter narratives contradict academic history. Another notable effort to make a connection with the diaspora is the African Renaissance Monument, a signifier among many recent attempts to produce a visual connection with African heritage in Dakar. The impact of Roots and the story of Kunta Kinte are key in the development of heritage tourism, especially in the creation of slave trade memorials in The Gambia. But under previous regimes, that wished to identify more broadly as an African, Afrodiasporic or global country, sites such as these were erased. Gijanto demonstrates how local heritage efforts, global tourism mega-interests, and diaspora reparative expectations further complexify the politics of memorialization and redevelopment. Expanding on this, Greik-Martin (2020) critically interrogates the process by which historical memory is constructed

and challenged in Jufureh where UNESCO heritage status and representations (fictional, and notably via Roots) erode the line between cultural veracity and mediated fable. The research focuses on UNESCO World Heritage complexes dedicated to the transatlantic slave trade. He demonstrates how Roots makes “strange places,” spaces that fiction and history can meld, disorienting those who enter. Real and imagined narratives get mixed up (as his field study of 12 members found in 2015), making visitors’ experience complex. His findings reveal that visitors were often confused by the landscape (fictional locations versus actual historical sites), and tourists who knew Roots, tended to read the landscape as a form of cultural media. Davidson and Sahali (2015) examine the role of the architecture of FDI in Gambia’s tourism sector in shaping an equitable form of regional development, and find that the foreign owned hotels pay better and create more jobs but they reproduce power relations at the managerial level and labour precarisation.. Their research, based on surveys with hotel chain chiefs and their analysis of tourism stakeholders’ plans, shows that foreign investment mainly goes towards the development of large high-end hotel facilities. These hotels, all of which pay better and offer more training, are also all major users of seasonal workers and foreign managers. That said, foreign hotel owners are very involved in local initiatives for social and environmental responsibility. Their analysis revealed that models are two-edged swords for both alleviating poverty and promoting tourism development in The Gambia.

2. Stakeholders’ Perceptions and tourism development and sustainability The Gambia

Drammeh (2024) argues that Halal tourism can be seen as potential source of economic growth in The Gambia given the cultural basis of The Gambia. The article reveals a disconnect between stakeholder interest and shifts in infrastructure or policy required to harmonize tourism with Halal. A literature review and self-administered questionnaire aimed at tourism operations managers, Islamic organizations and tourism agencies in the study. Using a qualitative approach This study highlights the potential of halal tourism in The Gambia and has great social and cultural assets to attract Muslim tourists. Stakeholders demonstrate awareness of the concept of halal tourism. and express a willingness to improve tourism products to comply with Halal requirements. This study highlights the potential of halal tourism. This is part of product improvement and wider product expansion efforts in the country. One of the key areas of indentation of the journey that is being trodden by tourism has been discussed in Kaefer (2022) in the article that has the spotlight on the role of Adama Bah, who is a tourism industry figure in The Gambia and has a working experience of over 40

years. He was also listed in the hotel industry and as he worked as the Deputy General Manager responsible for operations and human resources, Bah played a major role in the enhancement of tourism in The Gambia. During the same period, he was also listed as a Gambian coordinator for the Travel Foundation, UK, from 2006 to 2013. Bah's career demonstrates the way that personal leadership can shape policy and sustainability initiatives. Nevertheless, Kaefer (2022) queries whether systemic change can be precipitated by personal successes without structural change in the governance of Gambian tourism. For the utter commitment, he was honored with an Honorary Doctorate by Leeds Beckett University in 2019. His work as a forerunner for sustainable tourism, not only in The Gambia but also on the international level, is a good example of the potential for a shift to a sustainable style of tourism development in The Gambia. Ibol and Amina (2024) show that this style of community-based tourism such as that present at Pirang Forest Park provides a platform for achieving economic and environmental benefits. But their results also sound alarm bells about regulatory loopholes and the potential for the environment to be degraded through unregulated visitor behaviour. According to their results of the study, the local community is the one that is in charge of the park planning and management, by the means of birdwatching as the main way for visitors to visit the park. Their estimates show that ecotourism not only improves people's living conditions and brings new jobs to the area but it has also a positive impact on the environment. Nonetheless, it also exposes the park to some threats such as nonlicensed resource extraction and inappropriate environmental practices. The study therefore recommends the usage of flag species and the deployment of basic facilities as means to promote the park. This way, sustainability and conservation efforts could be boosted. Stanford (2022) investigates the making of the Ninki Nanka Trail, a mainly grass-roots organization in The Gambia. This set of discussions looks at metamorphosis procedures with the cooperation between different organizations, and most importantly, the lead of the Ninki Nanka Foundation in a work of love without profit is specifically examined in this part of the research. It stresses collaborative or co-creating with an interpretation plan for the track, which would require the stakeholders' input, especially the local community. The research is also about the problems and possibilities that occurred during the building of the trail, and how the initiative still has the power to change the way people come to the country for the better thus offering some helpful lessons for the community. Similarly, in their study titled "THE EFFECT OF GREEN INNOVATION STRATEGIES ON HOTEL PERFORMANCE IN THE GAMBIA," Krubally et al. (2021) disclosed that the sustainability of hotels can be accessed by green innovation strategies. The quest for a more sustainable

future, which has been enhanced by green innovations to be eco-friendly, is growing in the tourism business. More research shows that the lack of the tourism sector of The Gambia is due to their rejection of the bio-technological solutions that have been implemented. Consequently, they sum in their conclusions that green innovation indeed drives environmental sustainability as it tends to streamline hotel operations through the reduction of waste, cost savings opportunity, and better environmental outcomes. This work, also, seeks to link green innovation programs between the various tourism ventures and the hotel's administration so as they stand to benefit from the model of sustainability.

3. Labor Rights and Compliance with International and Local Labor Laws in the Gambian Tourism Sector

De Man and Lagendijk (2021) critically examine the status of The Gambia as the flagship sex tourism destination country, with the gargantuan issue of child sex tourism (CST). To them, poor governance and lack of enforcement have facilitated CST to thrive in the country, where it has become a haven for abusers. The issue gained international prominence during the late 1990s, particularly when several Asian countries began cracking down on CST. Teenage girls between 14-17 years old make up the majority of victims, although there has been a troubling increase in male victims too. Such children are typically recruited from underprivileged families under the pretext of sponsorship and care (de Man & Bah, 2014). Consequently, The Gambia instituted the "Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Tourism" in 2004. Coordinated by the Child Protection Alliance (CPA) and Gambian Tourism Authority, this scheme was drawn from a system of voluntary compliance to one enjoined by law, where a breach of the code hindered business from being awarded operating permits. A multi-sectoral working group was established to transform global norms to the Gambian context to facilitate enforcement. Currently, compliance with this code is obligatory for the key tourism stakeholders, a significant step towards CST counteraction through enforceable regulatory action (de Man & Bah, 2014). Christian (2017) critically analyzes the function of private governance mechanisms, including certification labels and industry initiatives, as drivers of labor improvements in global tourism value chains, specifically targeting countries of the Global South. His study identifies major weaknesses of such mechanisms, highlighting that they are mostly employed by tourism operators as branding devices rather than meaningful attempts to assist tourism workers. In addition, these efforts overlook urgent issues, such as precarious work, gendered work segregation, and

emotional work demands of workers, with loose protections only. Christian advocates for a more democratic governance that prioritizes workers' rights and empowerment, highlighting the need for labor-first approaches to construct a more equitable tourism economy.

4. The situation of women, youth, and other vulnerable groups, referencing ILO findings and relevant studies

Omotosho and Abatan (2024) investigate The Gambia's NAFA program implementation and its effects on women and young people through targeted social protection. The Barrow administration introduced the program which distributed cash support to at-risk families during the economic strain of the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors employ a descriptive research approach to evaluate program achievement by using focus group information which shows the successful outreach to marginalized groups as well as the major obstacles preventing complete program implementation. The research confirms program sustainability requires policy changes that support its long-term impact for women and young program recipients. Chakravarty et al. (2017) discuss the challenges of youth and female labor market participation in Sub-Saharan Africa. They note that even as this region experiences a high female labor force participation rate, most jobs taken by women are precarious, low-paying ones. Their paper also finds unemployment rates among youth significantly higher compared to adults, while the binding constraints for females in joining the labor market are far greater in comparison to the males. They review interventions that target improved employment outcomes for youth and young women. They identify areas of research and policy gaps that are to be taken into consideration when supporting gender-informed approaches in youth employment. Their paper sets out to help policymakers and researchers develop better opportunities within the labor market for young women. Papadakis et al. (2020) describe the implications of precarious work for youth in the particular case of Greece and more broadly the European Union. They mention the rise of short-term, part-time, and low-wage work, especially among the young, initiated by the financial crisis and most recently by the COVID19 pandemic. These forms of precarious work have significant long-term implications, especially for the life courses and social exposure of the young. They use secondary quantitative data to investigate the connection between social vulnerability and vulnerable employment, with a specific focus on Greece. Their research also investigates the adverse effects of precarious work on the future of young people and discusses potential policy reactions, emphasizing the urgent need for change in the area of labor market policies.

Kluwe and colleagues (2019) conducted a meta-analysis of 113 impact assessments of global youth employment programs to assess their effectiveness in improving labor market outcomes for youth. Their study shows that one-third of the impact estimates show positive and significant results. Although the overall effect size was small, with only modest improvements in employment and income outcomes. Their analysis shows that these programs are more successful in middle- and low-income countries. In high-income countries, their study also reveals that the success of these programs is affected by design and delivery factors, such as the integration of multiple services. and follow-up is individual rather than specific type of intervention. Elder and Kring (2016) consider the gender differences in young people's transitions in the labor market, that is, the challenges that young women face in 32 developing nations. The study reveals that it is a serious disadvantage to be female and young while seeking employment, as young women have lower rates of employment participation, higher rates of unemployment, and greater informal employment compared to young men. They identify a number of key causes, including early marriage, traditional roles that prompt women to undertake additional unpaid work, and reduced access to resources. These lead to a enduring disparity between men and women in job outcomes. Parenthood makes it worse, tending to drive young men into work and cut options for young women. Rantanen et al. (2020) take into account the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Decent Work Agenda. It started twenty years ago to address challenges resulting from globalization. The study emphasizes the major principles of the Decent Work agenda and takes into account how it is being put into practice in the world through Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) in two-thirds of the ILO member countries. Their research indicates that the agenda has performed satisfactorily on most fronts but is still facing challenges in addressing work health and integrating vulnerable sectors such as women and youths into the workforce. Though there has been progress in the achievement of the Decent Work targets and harmonization with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), they call for more specific plans for strengthening occupational health services and enhancing national stakeholder engagement.

5. Informal Economy’s Impact on Labor Rights

Sallah and Williams (2016) analyze the various roles of the informal economy critically in sub-Saharan Africa. Using Gambia as a case study. Surveying 500 participants, their study explores competing approaches to the informal economy. It has various forms of work as a remnant of the pre-capitalist system-Products of late capitalism Alternatives from the formal economy or as an extension of formal economy. Their findings highlight that no single representative can fully capture the complexity of the role of the informal economy. But they argue that a multidimensional approach is needed to understand the diverse contributions to livelihoods and economic development in the region. This nuanced approach provides important insights into the interactions between informal work and the wider economic and social system in The Gambia. In his work, Evans (2022) analyzes the phenomenon of informal trade between The Gambia and Casamance, Senegal, and how it is historically rooted alongside the overarching themes of environmental deterioration and insecurity. In his findings, Evans mentions how informal trade has existed even before colonial times, and continued after independence, with agricultural and foresting products from Casamance being sent over to Gambia, and other goods in return. As the Casamance rebellion took place, these underlying issues traded natural resources and arms worsened the international conflict as well. Although, post-conflict, illegal deforestation fueled by the international market is still present, this results in social and environmental issues. Evans states that history has proven that informal trade in the borderland region is, and has always been, intricately linked to global and local insecurities. Mbaye and Gueye (2018) study the West African labor market and note significant issues like high levels of informality, self-employment, and underemployment. The majority of jobs in this region are informal, with the employees earning scanty wages, typically beneath the poverty line, and receiving no social protection or working in hazardous environments. The study reveals the proposed policies that provide specific, targeted training for small business support as well as use of business incubators and accelerators to overcome these challenges. They also support the idea of the creation of small-to-medium scale industrial parks to promote more light manufacturing and agricultural processing to create jobs in these labor-abundant sectors. Their findings are part of the work of the African Development Bank in safeguarding and enclose development in Africa.

The study of Basu et al. (2016), explored the informal trading within West Africa, mainly focusing on activities regarding exponents' performances and how occupational and environmental health risks were usually neglected. Activities that, even though little considered, were indeed very important. It included various economic activities presented with a case study on artisanal and small-scale gold mining, aggregate mining, gasoline trade, farming, and electronic waste recycling. These industries show the immense extent of the informal sector, while the poor documentation of working conditions and lack of data is an indication of inadequate policies aimed at labor rights and appropriate working conditions. Anyigba et al. (2020) discuss how the economic globalization affects workers in developing economies-both positively by expanding opportunities but also negatively in increasing informal economic activities and fragmenting traditional forms of employment. Their study finds that globalization enhances both cross-border trade and financial integrations, which would have positive impacts on informal sector workers. Whereas for some, globalization opens up new markets, others experience losses of jobs, worsening working conditions, and declining profits. The results suggest a positive correlation between cross-border trade and the growth of economic informality but note a decline in labor employment within informal services. This indicates that policy interventions in export promotion, import substitution industrialization, and increased social protection are all necessary to protect workers' rights and develop sustainable employment in vulnerable informal economies. The informal economy involves workers in economic activities that are not regulated by the state or formal labor markets. It is a major contributor to economies worldwide and is of immense importance for most developing and emerging nations. In this informal sector, men and women have their respective problems; it is the differential access to satisfactory wages, social security, and job security. The situation is even worse in countries with large-scale growth of informal employment, such as most emerging countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Due to the absence of legal protection, as accorded to workers in the formal sectors, labor rights of these employees in the informal sector are infringed on, including working conditions and benefits entitlement [WIEGO], n.d.). Recent surveys carried out in countries like Zambia, Zimbabwe, and the Philippines show that informal employment size differs widely between regions. Moreover, a high percentage of labor force employment is realized to be informal in most countries in Africa and Asia. Some of these countries, like South Africa,

Zambia, and Uganda, do report high levels of informal employment. Here, workers are often exposed to poor working conditions and lack protection under the labor rights. The informal economy is also influencing CSR. With increased consciousness regarding labor rights and ethical concerns, companies are encouraged to expand their CSR strategy by including workers of the informal sector. However, without any legal recognition or due policies in this regard, economic opportunities and equal labor rights still elude the worker in the informal sector. Organizations like WIEGO go a long way in advocating for such workers through building local capacity, expanding research on the informal economy, and pushing for policy changes which protect the rights of workers in this sector. WIEGO, n.d.

6. The impact of foreign investments on labor rights and sustainable development

History and tourism Genuine community involvement in the decisionmaking process, from the grassroots level to the national, is critical to achieving sustainable development and economic diversity, as well as environmental conservation for the people of The Gambia Davidson and Sahli (2014) investigate the varied effects of foreign direct investment (FDI) in The Gambia’s hotel sector, revealing how the flow of money from foreign investors into tourism can be both a blessing and a curse for sustainable development. Their empirical research demonstrates that FDI is generally oriented to 5 Star hotels, which create more employment, higher wage and more formal training, while these hotels have worse gender inclusiveness and suffer more from seasonality, with respect to local ownership. However, paradoxically, their study observes little difference between foreign and domestic hotels in the area of local food purchasing or community-supportative philanthropy. In fact, there is evidence that some foreign-owned investments have better environmental and social impacts, so the quality of investment is important, not just source of it, in determining sustainable development outcomes. This differentiated stance muddles a binary interpretation of FDI as good or bad. In the same way, Trinh (2022) offers a conceptual approach to comprehend the FDI’s environmental fallout within the green economy initiative. Using bibliometric tools—such as VOSviewer and CiteSpace, which map the terrain of scholarly knowledge—the study traces the contours of the very large and very interdisciplinary field that links foreign direct investment to environmental emissions. On the one hand, FDI is said to deliver a host of economic benefits; on the other, it might be contributing to the very ecological degradation that FDI’s advocates are supposedly offsetting through philanthropy and other means. Trinh’s

study is the first to examine this contradiction in such a comprehensive way. In keeping with this thematic concern, Al-Nimer et al. (2022) provide a longitudinal bibliometric review that lines out the evolution of academic discourse surrounding foreign direct investment and environmental sustainability over the span of two decades. Their analysis pulls out a number of important trends, not the least of which is the increased convergence between foreign direct investment studies and sustainability-related themes. This isn't just happening at the level of individual publications; studies using a bibliometric approach to analyze these kinds of things have increasingly found that there's a clustering happening both conceptually and at the level of research hubs. Xie and Zhang (2023) add empirical depth to the discussion by measuring the environmental impact of FDI using haze pollution (PM2.5 exposure) as a proxy in several countries. Their econometric analysis supports the Pollution Haven Hypothesis, thereby suggesting that FDI worsens air pollution problem except in cases where environmental controls have been promoted. On the other hand, the study demonstrates a corrective role for environmental regulations: in jurisdictions with strict standards, the FDI-based adverse effects on air quality flatten over time. Such results imply that policy frameworks are not simply reactive; they can play a key role in aligning foreign investments with sustainable development goals. Lastly, Moloji (2024) extends the debate by examining the relationship between Official Development Assistance (ODA), FDI, and economic growth in Africa. Through panel causality analysis, the study contradicts previous expectations by revealing the absence of any direct causal relationship between FDI and growth or ODA and FDIs, at the same time confirming bidirectional causality between ODM and growth. These findings highlight the multifarious and situationally contingent role played by foreign capital in development, further calling for a deeper conceptualization of aid and investment dynamics within African economies. Baum (2013) analyzes the placement of women in the global hotel, catering, and tourism industry — a very growing industry with a very high rate of female workers participating in it, in which women occupy 55.5% of jobs in the world and as much as 70% of jobs in certain regions. His evidence illustrates structural and cultural restrictions, e.g., occupational segregation, earnings differentials, and limited career mobility, that as a combination close off gender equity in the profession. Specific mention is made to how informality impacts and various application of gender policies region-wise. To this end, Baum emphasizes workforce development, targeted training, and emerging HR practices as the necessary components to accelerate women's roles and offer a platform for collective intervention by governments, employers, and labor unions.

Moreover, Lee et al. (2015) placed great focus on international tourism as a strategy of economic development for Small Island Developing States through reverting to a case study of Seychelles. They demonstrate how foreign investment and local employment are triggered by transnational corporate-owned all-inclusive and luxury accommodation which enhances external market dependency. Their work highlights how international tourism creates unstable conditions for many workers, and most notably migrant workers used in low-skill, low-wage employment. This is reflective of the institutional fragility of tourism employment and contributes to broader criticisms of inequality in global capitalism. Finally, Sun et al. (2022) discuss the effects of the pandemic on tourism employment in 132 countries, demonstrating the manner in which the COVID-19 pandemic increased such inequalities. The authors discover that female tourism employees experienced a reduction in employment by 9.6%, whereas youth encountered an even higher percentage at 10.1%. Gender pay differentials persist, with women earning 23% less than men in the sector. Low-income nations were also the most severely affected, illustrating how uneven policy reactions exacerbated income disparities. The study highlights the role of the pandemic in exacerbating global and domestic inequalities, particularly in susceptible tourism economies. Research conducted by Santos (2023) investigates how Portugal's tourism sector performs from a social sustainability perspective through an analysis of key labor problems which include excessive work hours and uncompetitive pay rates as well as gender-based salary gaps and insufficient labor protection measures. The author examines "Quadros do Pessoal" employment information from 2010 to 2020 to show how tourism labor conditions differ between various regions of Portugal and the entire nation. The industry's expansion does not eliminate the enduring deficiencies in work standards which disproportionately affect female employees through substantial wage disparities and unstable working conditions. persistent structural issues that have been uncovered through the research hinder the attainment of work targets of SDG 8 thereby necessitating the right policy measures. The research shows how better legislation needs to define wage equity in conjunction with work place safety for purposes of developing social sustainability and enhancing business competitiveness. Ioannides et al. (2021) emphasize this viewpoint by condemning labor-related issues as a continuing absence in sustainable tourism studies. Even though SDG 8 promotes decent work and economic growth for all, the authors suggest that tourism governance is often shaped by global business interests which neglect worker's rights. The letter calls to attention the instability of tourism

jobs and of places dominated by global corporations, where profit over labor always comes first. Their report suggests that a people-first approach to sustainability is the way forward, where labor rights, decent wages, and sustainable training come first. They follow up on the argument by suggesting that sustainability should be regarded as a process which is a continuous evolution, one that must be re-adapted time and again as stakeholders want to be interacted with in an active manner.

7. Definition of STIs and their role in monitoring and managing sustainable tourism practices.

Blancas et al. (2016) provide a multi-dimensional framework for the measurement of tourism sustainability, distinguishing between fixed factors that capture the strengths and weaknesses of the destination and dynamic factors that track its development over time. Their approach, based on a sustainable tourism assessment chart and empirically tested in leading European destinations, is a practical guide to the application of composite indicators to policy and planning applications. Unlike simply tracking performance, their method allows for ongoing assessment and strategic adjustment. Agyeiwaah et al. (2017) emphasize the need to reimagine sustainable tourist behaviors at the level of an enterprise. They lament the prevalence of conceptual sustainability measures as being a cause of misinformation and policy stagnation in tourism. By defining a concentrated model through seven basic topics—spanning areas like creating jobs until conserving energy and being mindful of society—they demand an action-and-situation-specific process. The model calls for restoring lucidity while inducing substantial steps regarding outcomes in the form of sustainability. Font et al. (2021) explain how the European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS) has been employed as a lens to examine the effect of sustainable tourism indicators on destination competitiveness. The research clarifies that although the destination management organizations (DMOs) have engaged with ETIS and adapted it according to their contexts, the expected policy reforms by the European Commission remain far from materialization. This action-learning lag testifies to the durability of top-down indicator systems in providing systemic change, especially in intricate governance systems. Through their work Kristjánsdóttir et al. (2018) explain how integrated sustainability indicators for tourism (ISIT) function under complicated policy situations. The review conducted by the authors establishes different research methods while underlining how interdisciplinary methods are essential for sustainability evaluation in tourism. The ISIT framework connects tourism impacts to wider economic and social

systems as well as ecological systems so that multi-level policy development and strategic planning align their efforts. The investigation demonstrates an unusual pattern toward tool development instead of refining current frameworks while operationalizing indicators. When traditional methods divide environmental effects from social and economic consequences it becomes difficult to grasp the overall impact of tourism activities. The recent review of models demonstrates that tourism functions as a dynamic system which requires open governance structures together with interested stakeholders and adaptable management to handle sustainability transformations. The research work transforms sustainability into an ongoing dynamic process which demonstrates the essential need for policy frameworks to adapt to new conditions while protecting long-term sustainability objectives of reproductive viability and system resilience. Carmody and Fortuin (2019) critically analyze how the advent of the "sharing economy" in Cape Town, by way of ride-sharing services, re-makes employment strategies and labor relations. Their narrative reveals how digital platforms drive the informalization and casualization of work by subjecting workers to tax without granting them the privileges of formal employment. This model represents a new form of "virtual capital"—one that derives value from assets it doesn't own and labor it does not directly control—thus illustrating an increased embedding of precarious labor under the guise of innovation. In a similar vein, Freihat et al. (2024) refer to the linkage between Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and green organizational practices within Jordan in relation to Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and Green Supply Chain Management (GSCM) functions. Their study highlights that effective development towards sustainability, in particular, for SDG 8 (economic growth and decent work), SDG 12 (sustainable consumption and production), and SDG 13 (climate action), rests on collective effort between regulatory authorities and companies. Their research underlines the process through which regulation encourages or discourages green conduct and makes theoretical contributions to legal and environmental perspectives of business sustainability. It further points out problems of implementation and calls for remedies specific to contexts as well as further research into effective alternatives.

8. Explore the role of effective governance in promoting sustainable tourism and labor rights.

The concept of private meta-governance has emerged as a strategic response to the fragmentation of global governance for sustainability, specifically in areas such as fair labor, organic agriculture, and sustainable tourism. Derkx and Glasbergen (2014) show that voluntary standards-hence coordinated by UN-backed alliances and non-state actors-are not just filling regulatory gaps left by states but, in fact, have increasingly been harmonizing competing or overlapping certification schemes. An outstanding example of how meta-governance can improve coherence, legitimacy, and stakeholder engagement for global value chains can be found in the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). State-independent governance, when effectively structured, can strengthen sustainability outcomes beyond which a state-based system would deliver all categorical enabling factors such as stakeholder coordination, institutional legitimacy. Employee Share Ownership (ESO) is an even greater break from traditional governance approaches in that it reconfigures those models under the lens of “shared capitalism.” ESO asserts its place within decision-making, rather than just a symbolic gesture; it has the effect of redistribution and directly incorporates stakeholder interests into decision-making structures. By allowing employees to become active shareholders, this model encourages transparency, long-term sustainability, and corporate accountability, thus ultimately challenging the dominant capitalist discourse and opening space for more inclusive and democratic forms of economic participation. But in seamless implementation, the overriding structural constraints must be demystified, for which Ashby and Sedef’s five-step guide serves as a practical roadmap across sectors. The instrumentality of Government Policies is another hub through which sustainable development is pursued, with much attention to Foreign Direct Investments (FDI). As discussed by Sitepu and Tampubolon (2024), good fiscal incentives, regulatory clarity, and institutional reform can stimulate both investor confidence and inclusive growth. Some comparative evidence from South Korea and Singapore indicates that open governance systems centered on stakeholder engagement and human capital investment can offset systemic vulnerabilities such as corruption and infrastructure deficit. The lessons give credence to forward-thinking policy

design, anchored in open consultation and long-term planning, for maximizing contributions from FDI to national development strategies.

9. The significance of involving various stakeholders (government, businesses, workers) in decision-making processes

In the last few years, the governance of Europe has incorporated a clear shift towards participatory decision-making which reflects the increasing public demand for democracy. The Netherlands, in particular, has been at the forefront of "Interactive Decision Making", a strategy designed to incorporate citizens and civil society into the local policymaking processes. This model goes far beyond mere consultation; its aims include the recovery of public faith in elected leaders while safeguarding that no societal input is left unheard. Additionally, it strives to enhance decision-making by soliciting diverse perspectives and trust in public institutions. Edelenbos and Klijn (2006) analyze six cases and demonstrate how participatory models are reliant on the soft aspects of process management such as facilitation and adherence to democratic principles. Their conclusions show that while democratic interactivity can improve legitimacy and efficiency, as suggested by other researchers, those advantages are always context dependent and not guaranteed. In tandem with other areas of corporate governance, there is a more or less discernable parallel. Stakeholders are being incorporated, in some form or another, at different tiers of decision-making within organizations (Spitzeck and Hansen, 2010). Nevertheless, in their empirical study of 46 firms, there is a clear deficit in most of the stakeholder engagement processes—too many of them are functioning at a nominal level; their participation is more ceremonial than real. This imbalance illustrates a significant issue, how to devise stakeholder governance models that escape tokenism and can meaningfully influence decisions regarding strategy and innovations. Their findings call for shifts in the participation frameworks aimed at not just soliciting feedback from stakeholders, but actively including those perspectives into the firm's primary framework of decision-making. In the public sector, Rowley (2011) discussed the challenges associated with e-government projects, which necessitate participation from a wide range of actors. Rowley introduces the Stakeholder Benefits Analysis Tool (SBAT) developed systematically captures stakeholder alignment with outcomes via stakeholder role mapping. This tool provides a heuristic for measuring the level of inclusiveness and strategic fit of e-government programs and initiatives, thus serving policymakers who seek to enhance

collaborative digital governance for scoped digital governance collaboration. As Bingham, Nabatchi, and O’Leary (2005) explain, participatory and networked models signified a shift in governance as opposed to vertical hierarchically organized frameworks. Their emphasis on the idea that citizens are expected to participate actively when using public decisions, is indicative of moving away from the inflexible forms of governance usually described in bureaucratic organisations, and is indicative of creating more adaptable and accountable governance forms . These frameworks enable active citizens to reshape administrative processes and develop accountability regimes from partly a legislative and partly a judicial standpoint. Together with other frameworks, they argue for the need to integrate the participatory nature into public administration from the curriculum through into the practice at the level of institutions. As noted by Reed (2008), environmental governance adds further depth to the conversation. He asserts that partitioned mastery decision making requires an integrating strategy that is both adaptive and engaging for all stakeholder knowledge systems. Well-designed participation enhances decision quality by creating trust, learning, and legitimization. Reed notes the importance of knowledgeable guides from the beginning, along with clearly articulated goals, to help unfold the multi-layered complexities of socio-ecological systems. His scholarship is a call to use participatory processes not as add-ons, but as essential components of balanced and effective environmental governance.

10. Integration of Sustainable Tourism and Labor Rights

Research into sustainable tourism has come a long way, but theoretical connectivity between tourism, ethics, and justice remains undeveloped—especially at the destination scale. Structural social injustices against poor, indigenous, and marginalized communities are systematically omitted in tourism planning and policy. Jamal and Camargo (2013) fill this gap by examining Quintana Roo, Mexico, as a representative case in which tourism development has consciously excluded host Mayan communities. Their study reveals the ways in which current practices exacerbate both distributive and procedural injustices, reinforcing economic inequalities and excluding indigenous voices from the decision-making table. Grounded in Rawlsian and Fainstein's care and justice philosophies, the authors provide a normative prescription for ethical tourism based on equity and inclusion. In addition to providing a counter-narrative to the prevailing consumerist regime, it poses challenges to tourism systems aimed at empowering and defending marginal communities.

Similarly, Robinson et al. (2019) lament the tourism sector's failure to bring the social space—workers' happiness—into practice and discussion on sustainability. Scaffolded by Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8), which demands "decent work and economic growth," their study analyzes 14 tourism reports rigorously to account for how employment organizations come to naturalize capitalist inequalities. There are still precarious jobs and arrangements, hierarchical job security, and danger-ridden labor conditions, the very conception of sustainability being defeated. Their findings invite a redefinition of the sustainability triad to put labor rights in the foreground, compelling policymakers and stakeholders towards adopting sustainability standards that meaningfully address workforce precariousness and social equity. Winchenbach et al. (2021) push the case for socially embedded sustainability a step further by placing workplace dignity central to sustainable tourism work. Despite being a foundation of decent work, dignity has been under-researched in tourism scholarship. Their paper identifies the specific processes in tourism work that shape or compromise workers' sense of identity, value, and stability. By introducing a multi-level psychosocial model, they highlight how individual, organizational, and policy contexts intersect to shape perceptions of dignity in the workplace. They reframe the SDGs not just as policy results but as moral imperatives, advancing dignity-based work initiatives as a critical pathway to sustainable tourism development. Lastly, Rydzik and Kissoon (2024) discuss the disruptive impacts of intelligent automation and digital surveillance on tourism labor, focusing on low-wage workers. Drawing on theories of surveillance capitalism and techno-solutionism, they argue that unchecked technological adoption has the potential to worsen working conditions, reduce human agency, and increase managerial control. Their analysis warns that in the absence of digital policy and legal safeguards for everyone, automation can erode labor rights and push tourism even further away from the decent work-for-all vision in SDG 8. By exposing the disconnects between innovation discourse and workers' realities, the study underscores the need to inject moral governance and norms into the technology shift in tourism. There is almost universal agreement that tourism in its broadest sense is a taking off or a thrusting driving forward factor of development, at least in the case of the least developed countries (LDC) which are beginning to realize its potential for social and economic sustainability. Nevertheless, the increase in the number of foreign visitors does not guarantee additional development benefits for all. Rather, the addition of tourism into a country's

national development plans can be subjected to more detailed analysis about its integration into the system. In Sharpley's (2013) review of The Gambia, tourism's development role is critically assessed and he notes that the deeper structural and systemic problems (most of the LDCs suffering from sub systemic issues) poses challenges to its efficacy as a development tool. Equally, the comment by Eaton points out how the tourism function is quite simply still shackled by the same set of underlying factors that is the mark of underdevelopment. This in turn implies that this one sector cannot be responsible for resolving all development issues. If you try to address all problems within one single sector set, while there are alternatives, there's a risk of deepening the problem. There is reasonable scope for further policy intervention for harnessing the potential that tourism provides. The Gambia's tourism value chain analysis Mitchell and Faal conducted in 2007 makes a claim on how tourism is capable of driving pro poor growth (sustainable growth that simultaneously alleviates poverty) through value. Their research shows that nearly 14 percent of the total expenditure by tourists is received by the poor, a number that was higher than expectations. This is mainly due to the local linkages and the strong cooperation among development agencies and actors of civil society. The research supports a claim on the contribution of tourism to pro-poor growth through the following craft markets and supply of food produced locally, employment of unskilled labor in hotels, guiding services, and taxi driving. It exemplifies how in some cases with appropriate support, intensive intervention tourism can create new possibilities for employment for poor and marginalized groups position them in the socio-economic structure. Regardless of its benefits, the role of foreign direct investment (FDI) is rather intricate in the context of fostering sustainable tourism outcomes. Fortanier and van Wijk (2010) studied the dynamics of hotel employment in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Mozambique, and found that foreign owned hotels do create employment, but they do not cultivate local human capital development. These hotels do not invest in skills training; instead, they employ people trained by local companies, thereby reversing the intended knowledge transfer process. This trend poses an acute problem for LDC policymakers trying to harness FDI within the context of sustainable development, especially those concerned with capacity building as well as enduring enhancements to the structure of the labor market. Additional evidence from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2015) further substantiates the value of sustainable tourism for advancement in wage brackets. Some countries like Ghana and Kenya have witnessed tourism driven projects improving both the payment and working rights for employees, particularly in the hospitality industry. They have helped foster socially positive disparities and have enhanced the diversification of the economy by developing the

economically inactive regions. The Gambia's emphasis on eco and cultural tourism shows a pronounced shift towards community-centric tourism models. These models seek to mitigate the social impact of tourism through responsible employment practices in development, as an alternative to exploitative or short-sighted tourism investment. Likewise, policy on sustainable tourism has also been adopted by Rwanda and other nations in Africa to formalize, as well as reduce, casual labor usage. Non-enforcement of labor regulations remains a formidable barrier to achieving these outcomes nonetheless. Collectively, these case studies illustrate best practice and failure in applying sustainable tourism as a development strategy and the need for more integrated policies of sustainable development, multi-level governance, and proactive tourism planning based on investment in communities and workers' rights. This connection between sustainable tourism practices and labour outcomes highlights the necessity of anchoring such projects in theoretically well-informed bases clarifying how stakeholder relations configure long-term development Organizations operate in the exchange of stakeholders management frameworks that promote the interest of shareholders and satisfy stakeholders examined by the impact of the organization. Establishing workable compromises and healthy relationships with stakeholders involves tensions between economic profit expectations and societal obligations outlined in Friedman's (1970) shareholder model or Freeman's (1984) stakeholder model. In tourism engaged with rural contexts, stakeholder processes specify practices that support long-term human and local sustainability. Nicolaidis (2015) findings emphasize those organizations with robust stakeholder management systems develop stronger relationships with local communities and non-market actors that are based on trust, therefore increasing the sustainability resilience for the organization. Nicolaidis's (2015) expertise demonstrates stakeholder theory is normative and not merely a management system: "it is a normative theory to guide sustainability, especially since all sustainability is interconnected with the systems that affect society". MacKenzie and Gannon (2019) broaden the theoretical framework by using a comparative case studies approach to examine a focus on sustainable tourism in Costa Rica and the United Kingdom. Their inter-disciplinary approach combines archival research, oral history, and industry publications to elaborate on how historical and contextual factors shape sustainability outcomes. By differentiating "top-down" government-led programs to promote sustainability and "bottom-up" community-driven programs to advocate for sustainability, they create a model for developing sustainable tourism in developing destinations based on how mature tourism markets react. The notion of inclusive participation is also reflected in stakeholder theory in tourism planning. The literature provides four primary stakeholder types of tourism: current and future visitors;

present and future host communities. Participants in those categories as stakeholders shape what sustainable development looks like in tourism, and all have a vested interest in the way planning and implementation processes outcomes impact their stake. Byrd (2007) finds enough compelling evidence to assert that collaborative stakeholder engagement is vital to the integrity of sustainable tourism models, not simply a nicety. From the operational perspective, more valuable insights can be gleaned through Pérez and del Bosque's (2014) investigation of sustainability reporting in the Spanish hotel sector. They analyzed firm disclosures of sustainability-related information through Sustainable Development (SD) and Stakeholder Relations Management (SRM). They provided a broad alignment with SD-SRM, with specific omissions in relation to suppliers and imbalances and inequities between stakeholders. Thus, sustainability performance can be improved through improved equity and comprehensiveness in the reporting. Nguyen et al. (2019) build on this and use stakeholder theory with SNA and ANT to provide a dynamic model of cooperation at the destination level. Their "tourismscape" framework is located in a wider conversation about the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals (particularly SDG 17) and provides a critical lens for viewing how inter-stakeholder networking can facilitate sustainable development. Furthermore, thematizing stakeholder roles, the scholarship depicts tourism networks as proactive elements of change in sustainable governance for destinations

11. Why these theories are relevant to understanding the unique challenges and opportunities in The Gambia.

The World Bank acts as a leading international actor shaping education policy pathways in developing countries such as The Gambia. Controversies surrounding the role of the Bank have raised reflection, especially in terms of its narrow framing of education as effectively an instrument of the economy, and therefore a means to an end. For the World Bank, the role of education in contributing to social development in terms of equity and justice is not valued in the same way as economic growth, to the extent that some of its most important policy issues, including gender, as we have witnessed in The Gambia, become marginal. In the case of The Gambia, the narrowed frame of a monetized approach excludes important issues, including entrenched gender inequalities in education, which economic statistics alone cannot resolve. Both Manion and Menashy (2012) called for a capabilities approach to address these structural inequalities, and to broaden the purpose of education beyond that of human capital. The capabilities approach highlights the potential of education to enhance agency and social justice, and is especially relevant for The Gambia where gender differences in education remain despite policy reform. Education is not only conceived for individual work, but as a means to include and emancipate people. Economic participation is another area where gendered constraints are observable. Della Giusta and Phillips (2006) use early 2000s case study data from The Gambia to demonstrate how women's enterprises face durable structural and social constraints. The convergence of financial constraints and the double burden of economic productive work and domestic duties precludes growth and sustainability. More importantly, their research indicates that women's entrepreneurship is constitutive of multifaceted livelihoods—rather than conceptually separated between survival or growth. This conceptual duality means that gender-sensitive policy responses should acknowledge and react to these nuanced realities rather than impose generic economic responses. Manion (2012) also illustrates this disjunction between policy rhetoric and realities on the ground in her review of the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) in The Gambia. Although gender equity is represented as an equitable development goal, competing ideologies—human capital theory and human rights and capabilities—complicate implementation of international policy.

These ideological tensions are inherent and embedded in donor rhetoric and bureaucratic work on the ground and attenuate or confront the intent of the gender reforms. Educational outcomes at the local level are, therefore, also the result of competing agendas and sociocultural realities. Likewise, the report by UNDP.GM of conflict between global education policy direction and action at a national level reveals how sometimes donor power can end up reinforcing inequality despite efforts to bring about equity. Unification of global agendas and national vulnerability can lead to incongruity between prioritization, further complicating equity of education access in The Gambia. Shell-Duncan and Herniund (2006) present a second perspective on behavior change regarding female genital cutting (FGC) taking place within Senegal and The Gambia. As per their findings, abandoning FGC should not be viewed as a single or linear choice, but rather a multi-layered, transformational process bounded by the negotiation and negotiation between the stakeholders involved and the changing community circumstances. Individual-level theoretical models, while providing some insight, were unable to account for the social construct in which FGC decision making happens or the interplay of the stakeholders involved. Although they provide some utility, these models—particularly the "stages of change" model—only assist in determining individual readiness. The stages of change model cannot adequately capture the continuously evolving, interdependent pathways of decision making at the community level. The study argues for their models to be refined and proposed that these models be moving into a service delivery model that could be quantitatively measured and potentially scalable to a community-wide level for public health interventions. In a similar examination of systemic change, Rivera et al. (2020) examine the DRM framework for The Gambia in light of rapidly evolving global climate change under circumstances of unprecedented challenges. While Africa experiences fewer disasters than other regions, its population is forced into socio-economic vulnerability, especially when risk reduction logic is lacking. As The Gambia is in the process of political decentralization and a shift in development path, the authors identified many key issues keeping the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) from achieving its goal of disaster risk reduction. The authors position action research in the form of survey, based interviews and interrogations to uncover organisation inefficiencies and create a new DRR framework according to national goals. The need for transformational governance and

administrative responsiveness to increase disaster preparedness and disaster can according to their findings be characterized as urgent. Davidheiser (2005) provides a cultural perspective on conflict resolution in The Gambia and examines mediation practices situated within local cultural traditions. His longitudinal research suggests that mediation practices vary widely based on the prevailing social norms, individual preference, and contextual constraints. Although Gambian mediators typically held similar cultural positions, the methods they adopted showed enormous variation, suggesting that standard, cross-culturally applicable mediation models are indeed counterproductive. His work provides an example of how cultural and situational factors intersect to determine the types of conflict resolution practices at play and indicates the risk of over-simplifying or universalizing peacemaking practices. His research support grounded, culturally appropriate approaches that recognize the complex realities of local systems of conflict management. Finally, the debate on the topic of sustainable tourism (ST) continues to labour around opportunities for long-term socio-economic and environmental benefits from ST. A consistent challenge impacting the practice of ST is the lack of stakeholder engagement, which obstructs effective action with respect to sustainability principles and further marginalizes stakeholder engagement limits impacts of tourism development. A UK case study by Waligo et al. (2013) is an important model of improving stakeholder participation in sustainable tourism through "multi-stakeholder involvement management," MSIM. Alongside offering stakeholder view, the article outlines a flexible, three-tiered design that encourages all stakeholders to participate and yet become part of an official system of linking and responsibility. The six-step process begins with some contextual foundations and moves through involvement capacity building, strategic relationship managing, and implementing something that can be measure. It is also showcases adaptive engagement methodology through a "hand holding" process and flexibility/participatory inclusion. While contributing an understanding of the operational complexities with sustainable tourism governance, the study goes beyond description and provides advice, for balancing stakeholder goals and improving project sustainability. Environmental sustainability in tourism is also about walking the talk in terms of legal frameworks which is a topic treated in depth by Khater et al. (2024). Their study critiques the enforcement gap in environmental law by examining regulatory environments in Egypt, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia through a mixed-methods study. Their article highlights that while legislation is available to combat the environmental impacts of tourism, enforcement is often weak, and there are socio-economic inequalities embedded in the process. They argue for integrated policy design that includes regulatory instruments, financial measures, and public-

private partnerships for sustainability. Their conceptualization of legal reform serves not as a solution in of itself, but as part of a larger governance ecosystem that ensures community participation and institutional accounts in a way that promotes collaborative, territorial governance. In climate adaptation, Bagagnan et al. (2019) apply Protection Motivation Theory to account for farmers' decision-making in The Gambia's Central River Region. Based on a sample of 283 farmers, and structural equation modeling, they investigate how perceived climate risks affect adoption behavior. Results show that adoption of techniques such as water conservation are heavily influenced by a range of psychological contributors including perceived severity and self-efficacy; however, capital cost and climate shocks constrain adoption behaviors. Their analysis goes beyond individual choices and indicates structural constraints that impede or enhance resilience to climate impacts. The policies suggested in their study are focused not on awareness, but economic support options for expanding access to adaptive technology—making it clear that climate vulnerability is structural in rural contexts. Cassidy (2010) provides another conceptual model in a related, yet distinctly different, socio-political space. She examined the nature of local agency among people living with HIV, and in relation to global health programs in The Gambia. Their study employed a grounded theory methodology. They examined how participants used international HIV support programs in conjunction with their specific national sites of governance. They built their interpretation of agency based on the notion of “biological citizenship,” which illustrated how individuals accessed health resources by weaving the stories of their lives and their needs and then aligning them with the expectations of various institutions. They were able to describe in detail not only how support systems actually operated (as systems of practice) but also how beneficiaries themselves acted as agents in their support experience while navigating global systems of protocol on one hand, and local discourses of empowerment on the other. This study provides an example of how international development frameworks are complexly interpreted through local and regional political and cultural lenses.

12. Knowledge Gaps and Research Opportunities

Research efforts about sustainable tourism alongside labor rights and socio-economic development progress in The Gambia as well as other developing countries have not filled all necessary gaps. Worker perspectives about the tourism sector in The Gambia represent a noteworthy research inadequacy. Although Mitchell and Faal (2007) investigated the economic effects of tourism on poverty reduction and employment they did not deeply examine the way workers experience earning wages and working conditions as well as their job security and workforce treatment in the tourism sector. Fortanier and van Wijk (2010) demonstrate the job creation impact of foreign-owned hotels yet provide no insight into the lasting advantages that develop from these new positions for Gambia's residents. Their research fails to understand how local staff judge the training opportunities, professional advancement programs and fair treatment within foreign commercial hotels versus locally managed hotels. Our comprehension of sustainable livelihoods in tourism-based employment remains restricted due to this lack of understanding. There is a need for research to explore the extent of labor rights enforcement in The Gambia tourism industry. For example with the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2015) presenting that there is progress in sustainable development in Ghana and Kenya for labor change but it does not show up how these programs were and are improving worker wages or rights in The Gambia (if at all). Therefore, the low labor laws enforcement in many other African countries needs more researches on the benefit and effects of sustainable tourism practices to labour or being it as theoretical ideas unassisted by practical applications. Most studies focus on economic and policy elements of sustainable tourism development yet researchers have paid insufficient attention to the influence of community stakeholders on labor policies. Nicolaides (2015) highlights the need for stakeholder involvement in sustainability initiatives although very few studies focus on assessing the impact of worker unions plus local NGOs and advocacy groups on tourism sector labor rights. The investigation of this research gap would enhance understanding regarding how well bottom-up methods perform in establishing equitable workplace conditions. Research is needed in several key areas to further explore sustainable tourism and labor rights in The Gambia because knowledge gaps have been identified. The tourism industry needs future research to understand workers' perceptions of their labor rights.

Most economic research has concentrated on job creation but leaves unclear how workers understand their wage levels, job security status and career progression chances along with how labor laws are enforced. Qualitative research methods such as interviews and focus groups with tourism workers can reveal if sustainable tourism policies effectively improve labor conditions or exist only on paper without real enforcement. Implementing a worker-centered strategy would enable identification of primary employee issues related to fair treatment along with promotion opportunities and workplace rights (Fortanier & van Wijk, 2010). Other relevant areas of interest for future studies are the effects of digital technologies on sustainable tourism and labor rights. While digitization is taking over different industries around the world, its effect is yet to be reported on tourism employment in developing countries like The Gambia. Future studies could also examine how digital pay systems are going to impact pay transparency and equal pay within this industry. In addition, research might investigate the role of online platforms and social media in empowering workers to have their voices heard regarding labor violations and holding employers accountable. Another important factor is how Artificial Intelligence and automation are influencing tourism-dependent economies, where higher levels of digitalization could displace or create jobs that require digital literacy. These insights would provide a more detailed view of how technological advances influence the labour conditions of tourism and sustainable employment until 2024. The third issue that warrants more research is a comparative analysis of foreign-owned versus locally owned tourism enterprises in The Gambia. Expanding the work of Fortanier and van Wijk (2010), further research could also determine whether foreign-owned hotels and enterprises offer better remuneration, career development prospects, and respect for workers' rights than their local counterparts. It would also be important to determine whether FDI in tourism contributes to the inequalities of labor markets or offers benefits to workers, especially local ones, on issues such as training, treatment of employees, and ethical standards of labor. These differences would be important in understanding policy decisions and promoting decent work in all forms of enterprises in tourism. Finally, the implications of climate change for tourism employment need to be researched more. In cases where climate change erodes traditional livelihoods based on agriculture in The Gambia, more people might engage in tourism as an alternative livelihood strategy (Bagagnan et al., 2019). However, little research is done on how shifts in labour due to climate change affect tourism employment conditions-for instance, whether workers entering this sector from agriculture face increased vulnerability to job insecurity or even labour exploitation. This means that future research should address whether the strategies of adaptation to climate change support

workers in shifting into tourism-related jobs, getting a decent wage, continuous employment, and sufficient training. The addressing of this gap would yield the necessary data for policymakers to develop more inclusive and sustainable labor policies in response to the workforce shift brought about by climate change. Through unraveling these avenues for future research, scholars and policymakers have a more integral idea of labor rights, digital transformations, stakeholder collaborations in future in the tropical tourism section of The Gambia. Those investigations will be vital to develop more workable sustainable tourism policies, to better the protections of workers and prevent economic growth from populating these inequalities. Both the existing literature indicate that sustainable tourism can act as a promising policy lever with tangible impact towards economic development and labor rights in developing economies like that of The Gambia (Mitchell & Faal 2007). However, more research is still needed to close the large gaps that remain available. Most studies focus on macro levels second order consequences and job creation but very few take deeper dives into the issues around work, labour standards and sustainability within a tourism sector. The paper attempt to address these lacunas with a worker-centered view of labor rights in the tourism sector of The Gambia. Tourism and Development: most research on tourism / development highlights its economic gains at macro level with a lot of emphasis on foreign investment and finance flow literature, (Mitchell & Faal, 2007). Their research has tended to ignore, though, either explicitly or implicitly the viewpoints on tourism workers as well namely fair wages, job security, workplace protections etc. Fortanier and van Wijk (2010) showed that although foreign-owned hotels in sub-Saharan Africa create jobs they fail to make significant investments in local workforce training by retaining skilled labor at the macro level which in turn reinforces human capital rather than develop it through utilizing already existing domestic hotels employees. Ultimately, the research will bring together economic growth and the true and direct working context in which tourism operates in The Gambia by centering on workers' experience. Global organisations lobby for fair labor practices but enforcement is weak in many developing countries (like The Gambia). WTTC (2024) also stated that the visit of sustainable tourism projects in Ghana is having a positive effect on wage equality with workplace conditions yet The Gambia has largely unexplored enforcement of its labor law. Just as examples, Fortanier and van Wijk (2010) observed that tourism-sector jobs in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Mozambique generally did not provide structured trainings resulting in working conditions in many places being downright exploitative. This is very relevant to The Gambia being one of the most tourism dependent states in West Africa, examine both whether there are policy gaps that actually impede the implementation of labor protections

and what happens if inclusion is a proxy for sustainable employment? Technological progress is changing worldwide labor markets, but most of the existing research address those implications on tourism labor rights in The Gambia. Labor markets all around the world are being transformed by digital platforms, AI (or automation systems for they call it that) affected employment and social media activism, from wage transparency to collective bargaining and worker protections. While other branches have had the privilege of digitalization, the impact these innovations have on labor rights in The Gambia's tourism sector are yet to be fully mapped. Digital payment systems, AI-driven recruitment and online labor advocacy will be examined in this study on how tourism employment standards. One of the most immediate dangers for developing economies is climate change since it affects classic forms of employment such as agriculture. Bagagnan et al. (2019) showed that adaptation strategies were used by the farmers in Nigeria to manage climate change like water conservation techniques, otherwise farmers' struggle against climate related challenges. The tourism industry is frequently portrayed as a way out for the individuals displaced due climate change. In this study, we will test whether agricultural-to-tourism displaced workers encounter exploitative employment practices, job tenure or decent work opportunities. This study is also important, as it tries to address key knowledge gaps, providing important knowledge about the relationship between sustainable tourism and labor rights in The Gambia. The study's specific contributions will include: As a worker-centred view of labor conditions in the tourism industry with the result that economic benefits have to be matched by equitable employment conditions. Assessment of the effectiveness of sustainable tourism policy in enforcing labor rights, identifying enforcement barriers, and providing policy recommendations. Assessing the impact of digital platforms on employment practices, specifically, the investigation into the ways in which technology can either reinforce or weaken workers' protections and finally assessing the potential of climate change to drive employment-related migration and whether tourism could serve as a sustainable and equitable way out for displaced agricultural labor. In summary literature review section discusses academic views and gaps on sustainable tourism and labour rights in The Gambia, as well as my understanding of the issues. In The Gambia, many scholars, such as Mitchell and Faal (2007) as well as Fortanier and van Wijk (2010), see sustainable tourism as a means for development. In other words, literature is concerned with macro matters like employment and FDI. In other words, it is more to do with impact and not workers. The lack of enforcement of labor rights (WTTC, 2024) and the little attention we give to local stakeholders such as NGOs and unions' role in labor protection (Nicolaidis, 2015). It really troubles me as a student that

perspectives on wages, job security, digitalization and climate-driven labor shifts are absent. These gaps make it hard to tell whether or not the policies shaped towards sustainable tourism are actually an improvement or just in theory. This literature review takes a close look at these issues and makes the case for worker-centered research and other inclusive policies development urgently in The Gambia.

CHAPTER 3 Methodology

In this chapter the research design, data collection methods, sampling strategy, and statistical methodology utilised to explore the relationship between sustainable tourism practices and labour law compliance in The Gambia's tourism sector are presented. It explains the reason for implementing ordinal regression and the ethical considerations undertaken throughout the study.

This section explains how the research was conducted, how data was collected and how the relationship between sustainable tourism practices and labor law compliance in The Gambia tourism sector was analyzed. Using ordinal regression (PLUM), this study examines whether and how sustainable tourism practices affect labor law compliance. The ordinal regression is performed as the dependent variable (labor law compliance) is on an ordinal scale, which implies that the categories have a defined order but not equal spacing between them

1. Research Design and Sampling

Study Design: This research of a positivist method uses means, which in turn supposes that social topics objectively may be gauged through statistical means. It is quantitative in nature, and it also depends on numerical data. Data is used to analyze at the research question. A survey in The Gambia's tourism sector was conducted among business owners as well as employees to gather data on their views of labor law compliance and of sustainable tourism practices. The analysis was structured to protect a number of aspects of the tourism industry, including respondents, demographics (e.g., character in the tourism industry, years of experience, type of organization, perceptions of long-term tourism, labor law compliance, and the effects of these elements on the behavior of the environment. Both Likert-type size queries and multiple-choice probes are included in the analysis. The Likert-type proportion questions measure perceptions and attitudes on the subject of adherence to renewable tourism and labor regulation, with a magnitude of 1-5 ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

For instance. Q4: "Sustainable tourism focuses on balancing environmental, social, and economic priorities in the tourism sector." (Likert scale responses: Not Sure, Yes, No). Q5:

“How familiar are you with sustainable tourism practices?” (Likert scale responses: Very Familiar, Familiar, Slightly Familiar, Not Familiar)

2. Sampling Method

From a wide range of tourism businesses in The Gambia, including owners, directors, employees, and work workers from different nationalities, such as hotels, tour agencies, restaurants, Ministry of tourism and culture and tourism-related undertakings, 94 players were selected. To ensure the representativeness of the sample, the respondents were selected using the random sampling method. That support is intended to reduce bias and ensure that the positions and divergent types of organizations are adequately represented so as to ensure that they are adequately represented.

3. Data collection

Information was gathered using the study administration in order to provide information to a wide range of tourism workers. Demographic surveys (for the purpose of determining the respondent) as well as perceptions related to renewable tourism procedures and labour law compliance are included in the assessment.

Variables

The main variables used in the analysis are:

Q7 (Labor Law Compliance): The dependent variable records how businesses adhere to labor laws including fair wages and working conditions. The measurement occurs on an ordinal scale that includes these specific categories: Strongly Disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. Q6 (Sustainable Tourism Practices): The independent variable examines how businesses implement sustainable tourism practices. The measurement occurs on an ordinal scale using identical categorical groupings. Control Variables: This study incorporates control variables including: firm size (small, medium, large), years in operation (e.g., new vs. well-established businesses) and employee tenure (e.g., length of employment in the tourism sector). The inclusion of control variables allows the analysis to account for additional elements that may affect labor law compliance

4. The PLUM Model for Ordinal Regression

Through a quantitative research framework this study employs ordinal regression analysis to investigate how labor law adherence relates to sustainable tourism programs within The Gambia's tourism industry. Ordinal regression suits situations where the dependent variable displays intrinsic ordering without consistent intervals between categories (Minetos & Polyzos, 2010). Labor compliance evaluation uses an ordinal scale (e.g., "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree"), making this statistical method an appropriate analytical framework.

5. Data analysis

Descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, instrumentation and standard deviation were used to analyze the data gathered. In particular, the ordinal arrest development examination (PLUM) has been used to establish the link long-term tourism practices and respect for labour rights. The ordinal arrest development was chosen because of the conditional variables (Labour statute obedience) in an ordinal extent, together with the type that has a defined arrangement despite the fact that they have an equivalent distance between them.

Equation for the Model

The ordinal regression model is defined by the following equation:

$$P(Q7 \leq K) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{(\beta^0 + \beta_1 Q6 + \beta_2 \text{Control Variables})}}$$

Where:

- $P(Q7 \leq k)$ is the probability that the labor law compliance (Q7) falls at or below a certain category (e.g., "Agree" or "Strongly Agree").
- β_0 is the intercept (a constant that represents the baseline).

- β_1 is the coefficient for the independent variable Q6, representing how sustainable tourism practices affect labor law compliance.
- B2 represents any control variables (other factors that might influence the relationship).

Case Processing Summary Table 1 and 2 shows the number of respondents who chose each response option for Q7 (Compliance with Labor Laws) and Q6 (Sustainable Tourism).

Table 1: Labour Law Compliance in The Gambia’s Tourism Sector

Labour Law Compliance	Response Count	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree	12	12.8%
Disagree	25	26.6%
Neutral	23	24.5%
Agree	27	28.7%
Strongly Agree	7	7.4%

Source: Data collected by Modou Lamin Manneh, 2025

Table 2: Sustainable Tourism Practices in The Gambia's Tourism Sector

Sustainable Tourism Practices	Response Count	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree	39	41.5%
Disagree	20	21.3%
Neutral	29	30.9%
Agree	6	6.4%

Source: Data collected by Modou Lamin Manneh, 2025

Implications of the Findings

41.5% Strongly Disagree that tourism operators implement labor law compliance and 41.5% Strongly Disagree that sustainable tourism activities occur in The Gambia. These are sort of

separate distributions, but low compliance with labor laws might be related to low efforts of sustainability, which will be further explored in the regression model.

Model Fit Information

This Table 3 shows model fit. This is a comparison of the final model to the intercept only (baseline) model

Table 3: Model Fit Information for Tourism Data

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Intercept only	214.813	-	-	-
Final	0.000	214.813	3	<0.001

Source: Data collected by Modou Lamin Manneh, 2025

Interpretation

The Contribution/Chi-Square statistic of the final model is significant ($p < 0.001$). Thus, we can state an observed relationship exists between the independent variable (Q6) and dependent variable (Q7). The significance of the Chi-Square impact suggests that Q6 (sustainable tourism practices) as the independent variable is significantly related to the dependent variable Q7 (labor laws compliance).

Goodness-of-Fit

Table 4 Goodness-of-Fit tests examine whether or not the model fits the data well. The tests used are Pearson Chi-Square and Deviance.

Table 4: Goodness-of-Fit for Tourism Data in The Gambia

Test	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Pearson	0.000	9	1.000
Deviance	0.000	9	1.000

Source: Data collected by Modou Lamin Manneh, 2025

Interpretation

Pearson and Deviance tests produce a non-significant result ($p > 0.05$), which means that the model is not significantly different from what is observed and expected. Thus, the model is valid and provides good estimation.

Table 5 Pseudo R-Square Pseudo R-squared values assess how much of the dependent variable was explained by the model.

Table 5: Pseudo R-Square Values for Tourism Data in The Gambia

Measure	Value
Cox and snell	0.898
Nagelkerke	0.944
Mcfadden	0.756

Source: Data collected by Modou Lamin Manneh, 2025

Interpretation

The Nagelkerke value of 0.944 means that this model explains 94.4% of the variation of labor law compliance, which is a considerable relationship. In addition, the high McFadden R-squared of .756 indicates that this is a better fitting model than one without any predictors. Parameter Estimates This table provides the coefficients themselves and assesses whether or not the model parameters are statistically significant in relation to the overall null hypothesis, including the thresholds (cut points) and location (how much sustainable tourism impacts compliance).

Table 6: Parameter Estimates for Tourism Data in The Gambia

	Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Threshold [Q7 1]	=-53.772	848.482	.004	1	.949	-1716.766	1609.222
[Q7 2]	=-50.043	848.482	.003	1	.953	-1713.037	1612.950
[Q7 3]	=-21.725	760.864	.001	1	.977	-1512.991	1469.541
[Q7 4]	=-15.061	760.863	.000	1	.984	-1506.324	1476.203
Location [Q6=1]	-52.961	848.482	.004	1	.950	-1715.955	1610.033
[Q6=3]	-35.888	806.011	.002	1	.964	-1615.639	1543.864
[Q6=4]	-18.393	760.863	.001	1	.981	-1509.658	1472.872
[Q6=5]	0 ^a	.	.	0	.	.	.

Source: Data collected by Modou Lamin Manneh, 2025

The negative coefficients suggest that as levels of sustainable tourism practices increase, the probability that labor law compliance increases does not increase. Therefore, it appears that these companies focused on sustainability have less access to the resources necessary to operate effectively and, therefore, promote labor law compliance. For example, such findings occurred with like-minded developing countries where tourism-related legality, sustainability, and employment rights render compliance complicated (Lubogo et al., 2024). For instance, in Uganda, the tourism law is complicated for sustainable and compliant means; therefore, it makes sense that the effort for labor law compliance is lessened because these companies cannot afford to focus on revenue-generating efforts while simultaneously trying to be sustainable. This complicates financial and logistical variables.

6. Ethical Considerations

The study complies with ethical considerations regarding the safeguarding of participant rights and privacy. The researchers assured that informed consent was obtained from all participants in the study, confidentiality and anonymity through a non-identifying questionnaire, the option to withdraw without penalty at any time during the study, and security of the information related to the study. Any information gained is kept in an encrypted database that only the approved researchers can access. Therefore, throughout the study, privacy and security are preserved.

Finally in this section, I describe the research methodology used to assess the link between sustainable tourism practices and labor law compliance in The Gambia's tourism sector. For the investigation, the study adopts a quantitative approach using ordinal regression analysis to evaluate the impact of sustainable tourism practices on labor law compliance. The survey data comprised of the hotel owners, directors, staff, and tourism-related organizations and interviewees in The Gambia. This part of research process I can say was a Tuff one because as a student I really have to. I learned how to design the survey, how to ensure the reliability and validity of the data, which statistical treatments to apply (ordinal regression). This learning experience helped bring two extremes of my journey to the same level, the theory and application. Doing this process made me realise that it is not easy to do research in the tourism industry while considering the opinions of several parties.

CHAPTER 4 Results and Discussion

Findings from the study including descriptive statistics as well as ordinal regression results are presented in this chapter. It sheds light on the patterns of labor law compliance and sustainable tourism practices and explores the statistical relationship between both in the context of the tourism sector of The Gambia. It also discusses and contextualizes the findings in light of the literature and theoretical frameworks. Thematic analysis provides insights into the implications of the findings for labor law compliance and sustainable tourism practices in The Gambia and argue which emerging labour concerns merit further critical development in understanding the challenges facing the sector. In addition, personal reflections will be added to provide context of the research experience and its importance from that of the student researcher.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Tourism Data in The Gambia

A summary of the main conclusions drawn from the examination responses is set out below. The table includes the frequency and percentage of the questions, as well as the mean and standard deviation of the response. The information shows the circulation of replies to the crucial inspection question, the dissemination of information on the general approaches to the resilience of the tourism industry, and the respect for the rights of workers.

Question	Response Options	Frequency (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q1: What is your role in the tourism sector?	Business Owner, Manager, Employee, Other	Business Owner: 12.8%, Manager: 28.7%, Employee: 53.2%, Other: 5.3%	-	-
Q2: How many years have you worked in the tourism sector?	1-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, 10+ years	1-2 years: 19.1%, 3-5 years: 32.9%, 6-10 years: 25.5%, 10+ years: 22.5%	-	-

		years: 22.3%		
Q3: What type of tourism establishment do you work in?	Hotel, Tour Agency, Restaurant, Other	Hotel: 38.3%, Tour Agency: 27.7%, Restaurant: 20.2%, Other: 13.8%	-	-
Q4: Sustainable tourism focuses on balancing environmental, social, and economic priorities in the tourism sector.	Not Sure, Yes, No	Not Sure: 16.0%, Yes: 60.6%, No: 23.4%	3.99	0.664
Q5: How familiar are you with sustainable tourism practices?	Very Familiar, Familiar, Slightly Familiar, Not Familiar	Very Familiar: 28.7%, Familiar: 35.1%, Slightly Familiar: 24.5%, Not Familiar: 11.7%	3.45	1.179
Q6: Do you think sustainable tourism is effectively implemented in The Gambia's tourism sector?	Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree: 2.1%, Agree: 12.8%, Neutral: 20.2%, Disagree: 42.6%, Strongly Disagree: 22.3%	2.61	1.446
Q7: Tourism businesses in The Gambia comply with local labor laws (e.g., fair wages, working conditions).	Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree: 3.2%, Agree: 8.5%, Neutral: 13.8%, Disagree: 35.1%, Strongly Disagree: 39.4%	2.91	1.17
Q8: Workers in the tourism sector are adequately trained to	Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree,	Strongly Agree: 2.1%, Agree: 9.6%, Neutral: 17.0%,	2.74	1.182

understand their labor rights.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree: 33.0%, Strongly Disagree: 38.3%		
Q9: Do gender inequalities exist in employment practices within The Gambia's tourism sector?	Yes, No, Not Sure	Yes: 57.4%, No: 35.1%, Not Sure: 7.5%	1.69	0.892
Q10: Sustainable tourism initiatives promote better wages and working conditions for employees.	Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree: 3.2%, Agree: 11.7%, Neutral: 19.1%, Disagree: 33.0%, Strongly Disagree: 33.0%	3.67	0.885
Q11: Tourism businesses engaged in sustainable practices are more likely to respect workers' rights.	Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree: 8.5%, Agree: 35.1%, Neutral: 19.1%, Disagree: 23.4%, Strongly Disagree: 13.8%	3.47	0.888
Q12: Sustainable tourism contributes to reducing seasonal and unstable work in The Gambia's tourism sector.	Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree: 4.3%, Agree: 18.1%, Neutral: 23.4%, Disagree: 28.7%, Strongly Disagree: 25.5%	3.91	0.785

Source: Data collected by Modou Lamin Manneh, 2025

1. Possible Limitations and Explanations

Q1 to Q3 (Demographics and Professional Positions)

Q1 infers that the majority of survey respondents are employees within the tourism realm (53.2%). 28.7% assert they are managers and a mere 12.8% are business owners. Q2 implies that there is a relative spread of tenure across the board. It's worth noting that 32.9% have 3-5 years of employment, but 19.1% have 1-2 years, and 22.3% have 10+ years. Q3 shows that most people who responded work in a hotel (38.3%), work for a tour agency (27.7%), or work in a restaurant (20.2%). A few work in other tourism-related endeavors (13.8%).

Q4 to Q5 (Familiarity with Sustainable Tourism)

Q4 reveals that most respondents are familiar with sustainable tourism. 60.6% agree that sustainable tourism is the balancing of environmental, socio-cultural, and economical concerns. However, a large gate of people (23.4%) disagree and 16.0% are on the fence. Q5 indicates that respondents are aware of sustainable tourism to some extent. 28.7% are very aware; 35.1% are aware, and 24.5% are somewhat aware. Only 11.7% are unaware, meaning that the majority of respondents at least have some awareness of what sustainable tourism is.

Q6 to Q8 (Feelings about Tourism Implementation and Labor Rights)

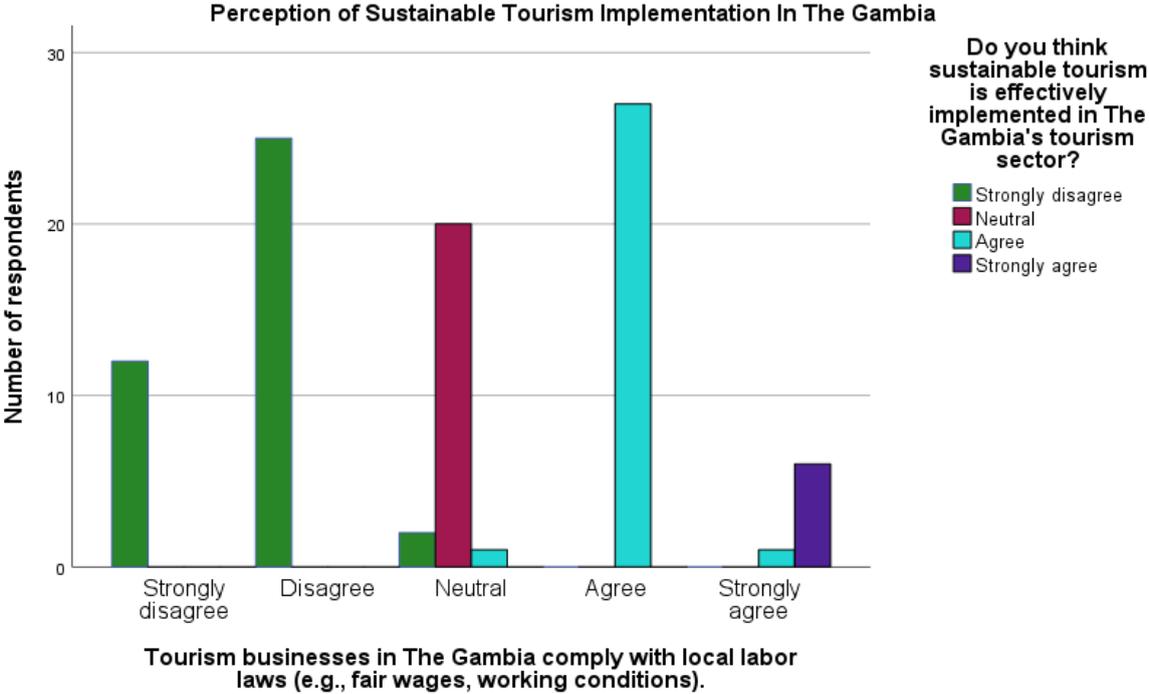
Q6 reflects that many feel that sustainable tourism is NOT practiced. 42.6% disagree and 22.3% strongly disagree that sustainable tourism is practiced, while only 14.9% agree and 3.8% that it IS practiced. This shows a large amount of skepticism in regard to its practice. Q7 suggests that people feel that tourism-related labor laws are NOT followed. 39.4% strongly disagree and 35.1% disagree, meaning that there are issues with wages and working conditions. Q8 supports this finding as well as 38.3% strongly disagree and 33.0% disagree that workers are trained to understand their labor rights, meaning that there is no education about labor rights. Q9 to Q12 (Labor Rights, Gender Equality, and Sustainable Tourism Impact): Q9 indicates that there is gender inequity in the tourism industry as 57.4% of respondents believe that gender inequities exist with regard to hiring. Q10 provides a somewhat negative impression of sustainable tourism increasing pay and job benefits as 3.2% strongly agree and 11.7% agree with the proposition, but 33.0% disagree and 33.0% strongly disagree with the proposition. Q11 suggests a somewhat positive correlation; however, 35.1%

feel that businesses that engage in sustainable efforts are more likely to champion the rights of their employees. Yet 23.4% disagree, meaning that while a good amount of respondents correlate the two, it's not universally acknowledged. Q12 takes a somewhat neutral stance in affirming that sustainable tourism decreases seasonal and unstable employment, as 18.1% agree it does while 28.7% disagree and 25.5% strongly disagree, indicating that many are not convinced that it seeks to solve this problem within the industry.

2. Descriptive Statistics: Labor Law Compliance & Sustainable

Figure 1: Labor Law Compliance (Q7) in The Gambia’s Tourism Sector

The below-clustered bar chart shows reactions to whether or not labor laws are followed in tourism-related businesses in The Gambia.



Source: Data collected by Modou Lamin Manneh, 2025

Findings from the Figure

The following reactions are received about whether or not labor laws are followed:

12.8% of respondents strongly disagree that labor laws are followed in tourism-related businesses in The Gambia. 26.6% disagree, meaning a total of 39.4% of respondents are displeased with law compliance efforts. 24.5% of respondents were neutral. Totaling 36.1% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that compliance is achieved with 28.7% agreeing and 7.4% agreeing strongly.

Interpretation of Results

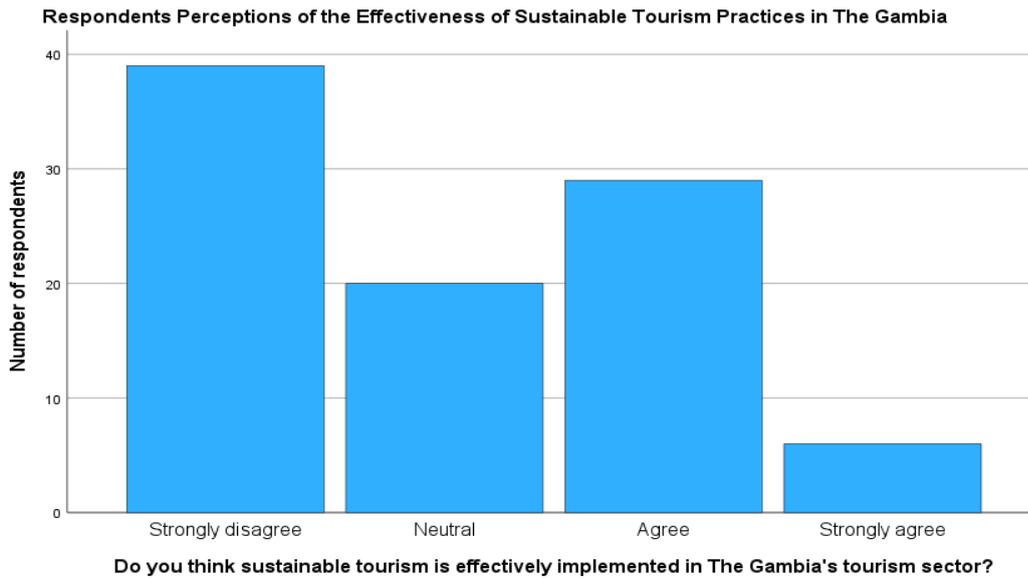
The results show that there is an overwhelmingly unhappy operation regarding labor law compliance. When asked if the tourism sector operates in compliance with labor laws, 39.4% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree. Therefore, this indicates that they acknowledge that there is a problem regarding compliance with labor laws within the tourism sector. However, 36.1% of respondents say that the sector operates in compliance with labor laws; therefore, there is an almost slightly less than majority agree that the sector complies with such law.

Implications

This means that there's a problem with employment compliance with labor laws in the tourism sector of The Gambia. With nearly 40% of people dissatisfied, it's clear that the tourism sector must change its employment practices to comply with the basics of sustainable tourism social components, relative to fair wages, employment rights and equity, and ethical practices industry-wide. The perception versus reality of compliance here shows that more attention needs to be focused on this within the tourism sector.

Figure 2: Sustainable Tourism Practices (Q6) in The Gambia’s Tourism Sector

The bar chart below presents the distribution of responses regarding the implementation of sustainable tourism practices in tourism businesses in The Gambia.



Source: Data collected by Modou Lamin Manneh, 2025

The subsequent is the survey results relating to whether there are sustainable tourism practices in tourism businesses in The Gambia: 41.5% strongly disagree there are sustainable tourism practices; 21.3% disagree there are sustainable tourism practices; 30.9% are neutral as to whether sustainable tourism practices exist; 6.4% agree that there are sustainable tourism practices; 0.0% strongly agree that there are sustainable tourism practices.

Interpretation

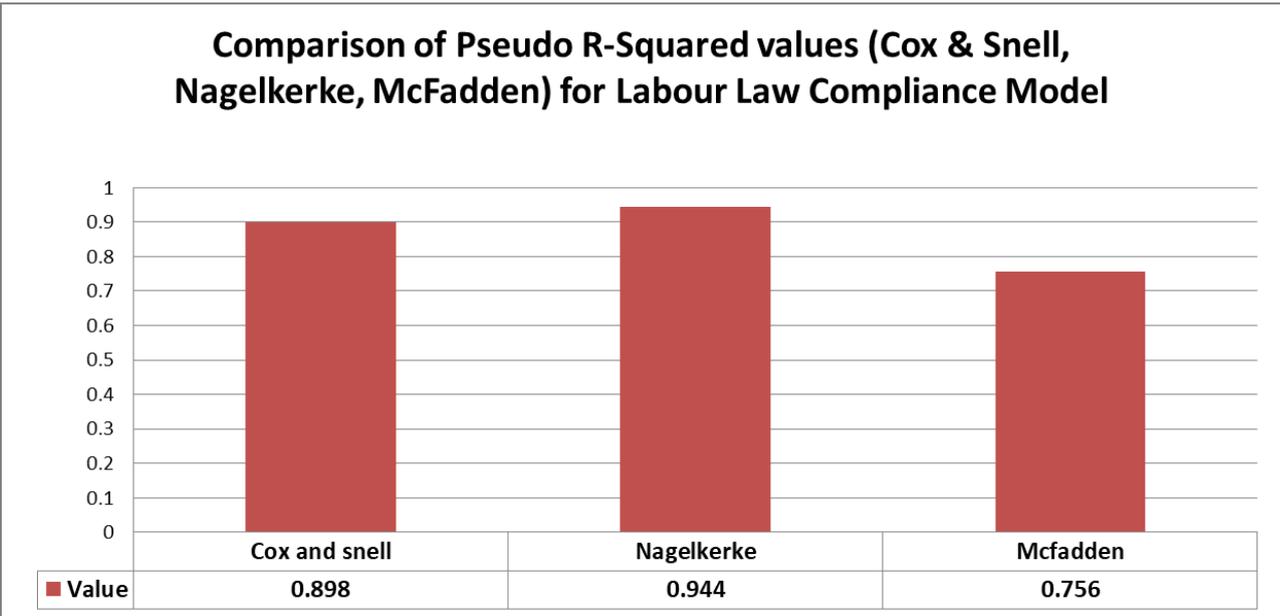
The results indicate a significant level of dissatisfaction with sustainable tourism practices in The Gambia's tourism sector. With almost two-thirds of the respondents (62.8%) strongly disagreeing or disagreeing, it reflects that the sustainable tourism practices have not been implemented on such a large scale. In addition, the neutral component at 30.9% suggests that either an appropriate number are on the fence or, at the very least, neutral to any such changes made. Yet, with only 6.4% agreeing that efforts have been undertaken, it further illuminates the deficiencies of the sector.

Implications

Ultimately, these results indicate that The Gambia's tourist industry still needs to improve on implementing sustainable tourism intentions. If greater than 60% of individuals are not met by this consideration, this means that tourism providers still have much more to offer to ensure that sustainable effort intentions are implemented. Ultimately, this could come from additional training sessions, policy implementations, and monitoring related to ensuring that the tourist industry is on a path toward sustainable tourism efforts.

3. Model Fit: Regression Summary

Figure 3: Comparison of Pseudo R-squared Values for Ordinal Regression on Labor Law Compliance in The Gambia's Tourism Sector



Source: Data collected by Modou Lamin Manneh, 2025

Interpretation of Findings: The Pseudo R-squared values present information regarding how well the proposed regression model could feasibly fit to predict changes in compliance with labor law (dependent variable). The closer to 1 the value, the better the fit. Thus, comparison of the three Pseudo R-squared values suggests that:

- **Cox and Snell (0.898):** The Cox and Snell R-squared value implies that 89.8% of the change in compliance with labor law is accounted for by this model. Thus, the

independent variables (sustainable tourism practices and control variables) play a strong role in determining changes in compliance with labor law.

- **Nagelkerke (0.944):** The measure of 0.944 provided by the Nagelkerke R-squared value is the highest of all three estimators, which suggests that 94.4% of the change in the dependent variable is accounted for by the proposed model. This acts as much encouragement for the inclusion of predictors into the model (sustainable tourism practices and control variables).
- **McFadden (0.756):** The McFadden R-squared value of 0.756 indicates that 75.6% of the variation in labor law compliance is explained by the model. R slightly lower than Cox and Snell and Nagelkerke, processed score provides a strong idea that the model also fits the data well.

Fit

A comparison of Pseudo R-squared values indicates an excellent fit. Most noteworthy is the Nagelkerke value at .944, meaning that this model explains compliance with labor laws in The Gambia tourism sector very well. Such an excellent fit warrants attention to the independent variables most tested. In this case, the independent variable is the sustainable tourism efforts.

Thus, the relatively high Pseudo R-squared values champion this model as powerful in measuring what blends and influences compliance with labor laws in The Gambia relative to sustainable tourism

4. Regression Findings: The Effect of Sustainable Tourism Practices on Compliance

Figure 4: Predicted Probability Plot for Labor Law Compliance in The Gambia's Tourism Sector

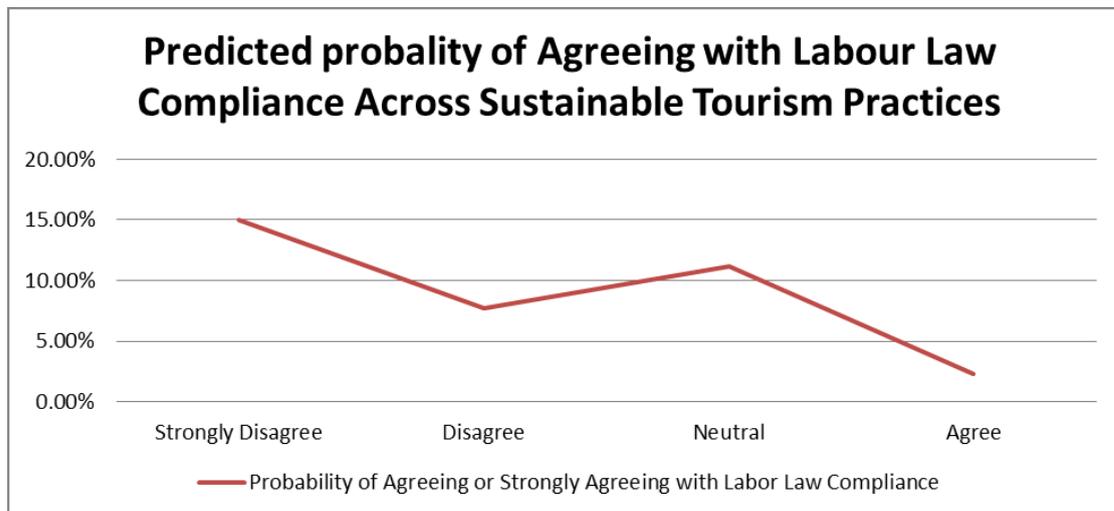
Based on the predicted probability plot, we can see that a relationship exists between Sustainable Tourism Practices (Q6) and Labor Law Compliance (Q7) as determined by ordinal regression.

<i>Sustainable Tourism Practices (Q6)</i>	<i>Response Count</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>Estimated Agree+Strongly Agree Probability</i>
<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>41.50%</i>	<i>36.1% × 0.415 = 14.98%</i>
<i>Disagree</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>21.30%</i>	<i>36.1% × 0.213 = 7.69%</i>
<i>Neutral</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>30.90%</i>	<i>36.1% × 0.309 = 11.15%</i>
<i>Agree</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>6.40%</i>	<i>36.1% × 0.064 = 2.31%</i>

Source: Data collected by Modou Lamin Manneh, 2025

Predicted Probability of Agreeing with Labor Law Compliance across Sustainable Tourism Practices

A predicted probability plot was created to assess the relationship between Sustainable Tourism Practices (Q6) and Labor Law Compliance (Q7).



Source: Data collected by Modou Lamin Manneh, 2025

The graph demonstrates what happens to the likelihood of labor law compliance based upon sustainable tourism practices. The more sustainable tourism practices are adopted, the less likely they are to say they comply with labor laws—the negative coefficients suggest that the more effort on sustainability, the more unlikely they feel to comply with labor laws.

INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

RELEVANCE OF DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Labor Law Compliance is fairly low. Only 7.4% of respondents strongly agree that they comply with labor laws. 41.5% of respondents strongly disagree that labor laws are in play. Sustainable Tourism Practices are weakly extended. 41.5% of respondents strongly disagree that businesses adopt sustainable tourism practices.

RELEVANCE OF REGRESSION FINDINGS

The model fits well. (Chi Square $p < 0.001$). Sustainable Tourism Practices do not greatly predict Labor Law Compliance. (Negative Coefficient Values).

Implications: Businesses operate on a budget, and it's not feasible to become sustainable at the same time as adhering to labor laws. This means that even if there's an intention to become sustainable, it doesn't necessarily mean that this translates to better adherence to labor laws, as other budgetary factors come into play.

Final thoughts: This study determined whether sustainable tourism meant better compliance with labor laws for the Gambian tourism industry through an ordinal regression of opinions from employees and business owners within the industry. The study shows statistically and meaningfully significant reasons as to why sustainability and compliance with labor laws at the same time are not feasible for the industry. The final analysis discusses these results in comparison to the literature, with recommendations for policy and practical implications.

In summary the overall section presents the findings of my analysis of labor law compliance and sustainable tourism practices in The Gambia's tourism sector. The findings were quite revealing and somewhat unexpected. I discovered that a whopping 39.4% of respondents disagreed with the claim that labor laws are being adhered to in the sector (Figure 1), and 62.8% were unhappy with the uptake of sustainable tourism's practices (Figure 2). The model fit well (Figure 3), but from a regression perspective, the adoption of sustainable tourism practices does not evidence the prediction of compliance with labor laws. As a student, it was interesting to witness how funding problems and other practical problems in the industry affect legal compliance and sustainability. This gap between intention and reality shows what

a complex sector we live in. Incorporating more integrated solutions for sustainable tourism and labour laws compliance was the need of the hour, and as a student, I understood the challenges that tourism operators face to keep both the aspects. The Results section details the results of the project pertaining to labor law compliance and sustainable tourism efforts in The Gambia's tourism sector. The Results section contains four subsections thereafter.

5. Compliance with Labor Laws in The Gambia's Tourism Sector

The findings indicate a high level of negativity concerning The Gambia's tourism sector regarding compliance with labor laws, as 39.4% of the sample disagrees with compliance with labor laws. Only 36.1% agree or strongly agree that they are compliant with labor laws for their businesses. This trend is expected when comparing similar findings in developing nations where tourism is not necessarily a consistent revenue stream for many, which would help ensure compliance.

For example, in The Gambia, the access to quasi-financial organizations indicates that both employers and employees understand and acknowledge the need for compliance, yet the ability to comply is not there. Elshaer (2019) states that developing countries have lower than expected salaries, shorter durations of labor availability, and an excessive reliance on tipping for supplementary income, making compliance perennially difficult. At the same time, Elshaer (2019) calls these factors loopholes that deny compliance, where employers blatantly fail to comply, suggesting that these businesses clearly have an idea of what would be compliant, but effort is weak in implementation.

6. Sustainable Tourism Practices and The Issues Thereof

In addition, it seemed like the participants were not happy with sustainable tourism practices in The Gambia, as 62.8% strongly disagreed/disagreed with sustainable tourism practices being taken. Such results are not uncommon worldwide, for sustainable tourism is inadequately practiced in developing nations due to the lack of funds and appropriate infrastructures (Hussain et al., 2024). However, it was not found that maybe operators felt that sustainable practices would not bring them revenue down the line, seen as small operators

focus on short-term revenue for small businesses instead of long-term revenue which correlates with community and ecological stabilization and impact (Rathore, 2017).

Yet this neutral category (30.9%) from the survey responses, despite the difficulties, suggests that some respondents might be aware of sustainable efforts—as incrementally developed nationally and internationally—but not enough exists or in an established sense. Thus, workshops, grants, and stronger governmental initiatives to champion sustainable tourism efforts would greatly benefit this industry. Moreover, it recognizes those tourism providers who would attempt to comply with sustainable endeavors but are restricted in what they can do—either needing to make ends meet or not knowing how best to integrate sustainable efforts into their operations. Similar concerns are noted by Hussain et al. (2024), who note that exclusions such as a lack of government interest, limited funding, and lacking public-private partnerships emerge as most significant in developing countries, as these sectors have a hard time becoming sustainable without first becoming profitable.

7. The Relationship between Sustainable Tourism Practices and Labor Law Compliance

One of the most interesting things to come out of this project is the negative relationship between sustainable tourism practices and labor law compliance. Through regression analyses, it was found that as sustainable tourism practices reported increased, the likelihood of reporting high labor law compliance decreased. In other words, the more sustainable these businesses feel they're doing, the less likely they feel to comply with regulations—at least, on a relative scale. This could mean that with so much focus on environmental sustainability, the social sustainability component—including compliance with labor law—is rendered moot. This finding supports parallel studies done with similarly developing nations. For example, Welford et al. report that many firms in developing nations fail to accomplish either environmental or social objectives with meager resources (1999). Therefore, this is a situation of failure to accomplish goals where the costs associated with sustainable tourism practices and benefits place intentions on the backburner when it comes to labor law compliance. Perhaps the exertion to be sustainable costs businesses money and manpower that distracts them from exerting compliance efforts with labor law. This may mean that labor law compliance comes secondary to other efforts determined to champion green efforts which

require an investment of money either through costs for environmental efforts/certifications or renovations.

In addition, this negative relationship may suggest that firms are not able to grow sustainable tourism efforts to the level needed to comply with employment regulations. As noted in similar circumstances related to regulations contained in Uganda's tourism law (Welford et al., 1999), this suggests that firms are incapable of such sustainable, legally mandated endeavors at this time due to structural, financial, and managerial shortcomings.

8. Policy and Practice Implications

The findings have important implications for policymakers in The Gambia and others within the tourism field. First, there needs to be better regulation enforcement and support for tourism operators to comply better with labor regulations. This means surprise inspections, small and medium enterprise (SME) capacity-building, and more defined regulations that serve as the intended guidance for labor law compliance. Furthermore, greater compliance for sustainable tourism is achieved with a comprehensive approach. While finances are an issue for tourism operators, government intervention can help encourage these operators to adhere to sustainable tourism efforts as well as those that are labor related. For instance, new partnerships, financial incentives for those operators who comply with non-labor related mutually exclusive regulations, and improved quality of training to raise awareness of the benefits of sustainable tourism can help relieve sustainable complaint rates as well as labor rates. The Gambia tourism sector will experience a more comprehensive sustainable tourism approach that blends environmental, social, and economic components. By placing an emphasis on sustainable development practices from the environmental and social side, The Gambia's policymakers will be able to create a more unified system where business accountability extends from labor rights to environmental sustainability.

9. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

There are several limitations to this study. First, while 94 respondents were randomly selected, this response rate may not fully capture the entire tourism industry in The Gambia. Future studies should have a wider response rate for small to large businesses (i.e., small boutiques to larger resorts) to better assess the issues at hand. Furthermore, responses from governmental agencies and regulatory organizations would better determine compliance with

enforcement of sustainability and labor laws. Future studies should include these other perspectives. In addition, a longitudinal study would assess compliance and tourism sustainability efforts as time progresses, which could be beneficial as the international tourism industry fluctuates and The Gambia seeks to establish its sustainability efforts. Qualitative research beyond this quantitative assessment through interviews or focus groups with tourism stakeholders could reveal why certain entities do not comply or pursue sustainability for reasons beyond just this quantitative assessment.

Finally the analysis interprets the results to contextualize the results within the scope of the tourism industry in The Gambia. The fact that sustainable tourism practices do not correlate with labor law compliance was very interesting to me and as a student, I found it fascinating due to practicality. In the results it was found that labor law compliance is low and sustainable tourism practices are weak. Aside from this, the results also indicate systemic issues. An example of this is financial constraints and lack of infrastructure. Through the discussion, I understood what tourism businesses are facing and how they mean well with sustainability but often prioritize financial survival over the long-term. Thinking about these issues made me aware of the realities happening in tourism industries in developing nations which changed my take on the policies I would recommended for the same sector.

Conclusion

This concluding chapter presents the study's findings and further discusses the extent of sustainable tourism in The Gambia in compliance with labor law. It summarizes the implications for policy and practice, identifies limitations, and discusses future research directions. The study also involves a short personal commentary documenting the researcher's learning experience and growth during their investigation.

This study explored the relationship between sustainable tourism efforts and labor law compliance in The Gambia's tourism sector and decided that the tourism destination struggles to operate sustainably as well as within the projected legal confines. Through analyzing researcher and participant perspectives, it was found that the efforts of labor law compliance and sustainable tourism were ineffective in Gambian tourism. Ultimately, The Gambia's tourism industry engages in labor law compliance to a limited extent as many businesses still struggle to comply with these non-financial requirements, let alone additional resources. The same goes for sustainable tourism efforts; many struggle to comply, and even more are not satisfied with the sustainable efforts being made. Thus, a negative relationship between sustainable tourism and labor law compliance was found, as many businesses/institutions tend to comply more with environmental sustainable efforts than socio-cultural sustainable efforts such as labor law compliance. The policy and practice implications of this research are extensive. For policymakers, better enforcement is needed alongside clearer expectations and guidance for businesses to comply with labor law expectations. Furthermore, better integration of sustainable tourism with environmental and socioeconomic needs will help ensure novelty in this burgeoning and rapidly growing field. This integration comes from stronger public-private partnerships, fiscal sponsorships, and funding for sustainable tourism and labor compliance training programs for businesses. For the tourism sector, the importance of the need to balance environmental and social sustainability is paramount. Businesses should be required to implement these practices, which simultaneously create greater labor law compliance and sustainable tourism viability.

This comes through better training, fiscal support, and the awareness of the benefits of sustainable development initiatives. Yet, the study has its limitations. Subsequent research should expand the sample beyond just the hotel sector and include different tourism operators and perspectives from governmental and regulatory organizations engaged in the process. Also, a longitudinal and qualitative approach would better deduce, over time, the connection between sustainable tourism and compliance with labor laws and assess obstacles or chances for enhancements in either field.

Ultimately, these findings reveal that there needs to be a more integrated approach to sustainable tourism development in The Gambia where both dimensions of sustainability are favored. Should these findings challenge the realities of tourism businesses, politicians might do well to establish the direction of a sustainable feasible tourism business that provides equity to the environment and humans engaged in this industry for better, long-term, sustainable future growth.

To sum up, the study conclusion provides a summary of the main findings of the study on The Gambia tourism labour laws' compliance versus sustainable tourism. It highlights the problems faced in The Gambia. The study reveals that through evaluated labour sustainability and environmental sustainability practices, the sector does not possess the capacity to implement both. Looking at the findings, I see that it is complicated to be both sustainable and comply with the law in The Gambia, a developing country, as businesses often do not have the money or structure to be able to afford it. The conclusion calls for better policy enforcement and support to businesses but also reflects the need for an integrated approach to tourism development that will foster environmental as well as social sustainability. Looking back at this study, I feel that it provides a critical understanding of the present state of tourism in The Gambia, and I hope this will be utilized in the future enhancement of the development of tourism as well as its law.

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