

Factors Influencing the Adoption of Regenerative Tourism Frameworks Among Hospitality Students in Post-Disaster Geographical Regions

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Abstract

The concept of regenerative tourism has gained significance in the wake of a disaster situation, where regenerating the ecosystem, communities, and socio-economic development can be promoted. The role of hospitality students as future practitioners cannot be underestimated in the context of implementing a regenerative tourism framework, but the factors that affect its implementation by these students are less understood. The current study focuses on understanding the factors affecting hospitality students' intention to implement regenerative tourism in the quake-hit areas of Kutch region, Gujarat, India. A cross-sectional study using structured questionnaires based on the Theory of Planned Behavior framework was administered to 250 undergraduate and postgraduate students. Knowledge, attitudes, intention to behave, and institutional support were assessed and subjected to pilot testing, followed by reliability analysis through Cronbach's alpha coefficient ($\alpha = 0.83$). Descriptive and SEM analyses were done on the data collected. Findings showed that knowledge had positive influence on attitude ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.001$) and intention ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < 0.001$). Attitude was identified to be the most influential factor towards intention ($\beta = 0.51$, $p < 0.001$) while institutional support played a significant role ($\beta = 0.28$, $p < 0.001$). This implies the importance of a collective approach which includes awareness, perceptions, and educational influence towards achieving regeneration of tourism frameworks. There are implications for incorporating regenerative tourism modules in hospitality courses, experiential learning, and policymaking concerning tourism recovery from disasters. This study presents a theoretical framework to enhance the development of educational initiatives for engaging students in sustainable tourism practices.

Keywords: Regenerative Tourism, Post-Disaster Recovery, Hospitality Education, Student Behavior, Theory of Planned Behavior, Curriculum Design, Structural Equation Modeling.

Introduction

Regenerative tourism is a new idea that not only ensures sustainable tourism but also contributes to the restoration of ecology and society in the region by rejuvenating and improving it. Regenerative tourism in the post-disaster geographical region becomes necessary as it helps rebuild livelihoods in addition to the environment. Hospitality education is important to understand how to promote regenerative tourism in such geographical regions since students studying tourism will become future tourism industry professionals.

The future tourism professionals can adopt the practices that would lead to responsible tourism in the post-disaster region when they learn about regenerative tourism during their study of tourism courses. While the importance of sustainable tourism is acknowledged, there is not much awareness regarding the variables influencing the implementation of regenerative tourism practices among students in such regions experiencing disasters.

Current literature concentrates mainly on sustainable tourism adoption in a general sense or industry-driven sustainability efforts without exploring the specific variables affecting individuals' behavioral intentions and engagement with regenerative practices. The lack of understanding of these aspects creates difficulties in promoting the principles of regeneration within hospitality courses.

In light of the above, the proposed research is designed to identify key determinants of regenerative tourism models adoption among hospitality students studying in areas affected by disasters. Specifically, the objectives are to: (i) identify how individual-level awareness, attitudes, and experiences related to disasters affect students' intentions to adopt a new model of tourism; (ii) analyze the effect of institutions and academic course content on regenerative tourism adoption among hospitality students; and (iii) design a conceptual framework that would promote regenerative tourism adoption.

This study is structured as follows: In Section I, regenerative tourism, its application in post-disaster scenarios, and the aim of the study are described. Section II discusses the literature review about tourism approaches, hospitality education, and post-disaster learning. The methods section (Section III) covers research design, sample size, data collection, and analysis. Section IV provides findings through descriptive statistics and hypothesis tests. The discussion section (Section V) explains the findings, contrasts them with existing literature, and identifies educational and policy implications. The conclusion of this paper is presented in Section VI.

Literature Review

Regenerative Tourism Frameworks

Regenerative tourism goes beyond the principles of sustainable or responsible tourism to include active restoration of ecological systems and rejuvenation of communities as well as social and economic revival of areas affected by disasters (Spalazzi & Mariotti, 2024; Korstanje, 2025). In contrast to sustainable tourism, where the main focus is on reducing the negative impact on ecosystems and societies, regenerative tourism involves creating positive effects through tourist-related actions and achieving greater adaptability and resilience (Novais et al., 2024; Althobaiti & Abulibdeh, 2026). The core elements of regenerative tourism are ecosystem integrity, community resilience, and socio-economic revival of the affected areas through participation of local people and preserving their cultural heritage (Chan et al., 2022; Lin et al., 2018). Examples of how a regenerative approach to tourism can be implemented include rebuilding Christchurch after an earthquake in New Zealand and the Cammino nelle Terre Mutate in Italy (Faisal et al., 2020; Amore & Hall, 2022).

Hospitality Education and Student Mindsets

Hospitality education is an integral factor in developing the right mindset and skills needed in the process of implementing regenerative tourism. Integrating curriculum, experiencing learning, and engaging with communities can influence students' commitment to adopting sustainable behaviors (O'Connor et al., 2025; Uddin et al., 2026). Previous literature shows that experiential learning in post-disaster situations contributes greatly to awareness and willingness to interact with new forms of tourism initiatives (Tucker et al., 2017; Belhaj & Rastvorova, 2025). Additionally, encouraging students to think critically and solve problems using specific classes prepares them for practical issues in disaster-prone areas (Antara et al., 2016; Messori & Volo, 2025).

Post-Disaster Geographies and Learning

Regions affected by disasters have certain characteristics, such as disruptions in infrastructure, socio-economic vulnerability, and ecological uncertainty (Boyd et al., 2023; Hu & Xu, 2022). Exposure to these areas influences views on resilience, risk management, and adaptability (Harnadi & Padilla, 2025; Chen et al., 2025). Contextualized education, which considers geography as part of learning, facilitates cognitive and affective learning processes. Post-disaster education is essential for cultivating resilient tourism professionals who can implement regenerative approaches, assist in recovery efforts, and ensure community involvement (Oliver-Esteban & Romero-Calcerrada, 2026; Wei et al., 2024).

Theoretical Underpinnings

In this research, the model used will be based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which assumes that behaviour is determined by key psychological determinants. In this study, the framework is adapted to focus specifically on Knowledge, Attitude, and Institutional Support to predict behavioral intentions within a post-disaster educational context. In sustainable and regenerative tourism studies, TPB has been effectively used to predict the intention for adoption both on individual and organizational levels (Spalazzi & Mariotti, 2024; Althobaiti & Abulibdeh, 2026). Using TPB in combination with contextual factors related to disasters, including exposure, involvement in curriculum, and institutional support, will lead to a better assessment of determinants.

Research Gap

Regenerative tourism has received attention from academic researchers in the context of post-disaster settings, but there has been no exploration in the use of regenerative tourism approaches by hospitality students who will be the future practitioners of these initiatives. The bulk of previous literature has centered on the destination-level tourism recovery process or the adoption of regenerative approaches by tourists or tourism enterprises. Little attention has been paid to the role played by students and their individual-level factors, including attitude, knowledge, disaster experience, and experiential learning, in their acceptance of applying regenerative tourism approaches in their practical application. Previous studies have explored the importance of curriculum and experiential learning, but they lack an integrative framework that would include all these elements together, along with the disaster scenario, to help in developing relevant educational policies.

Methodology

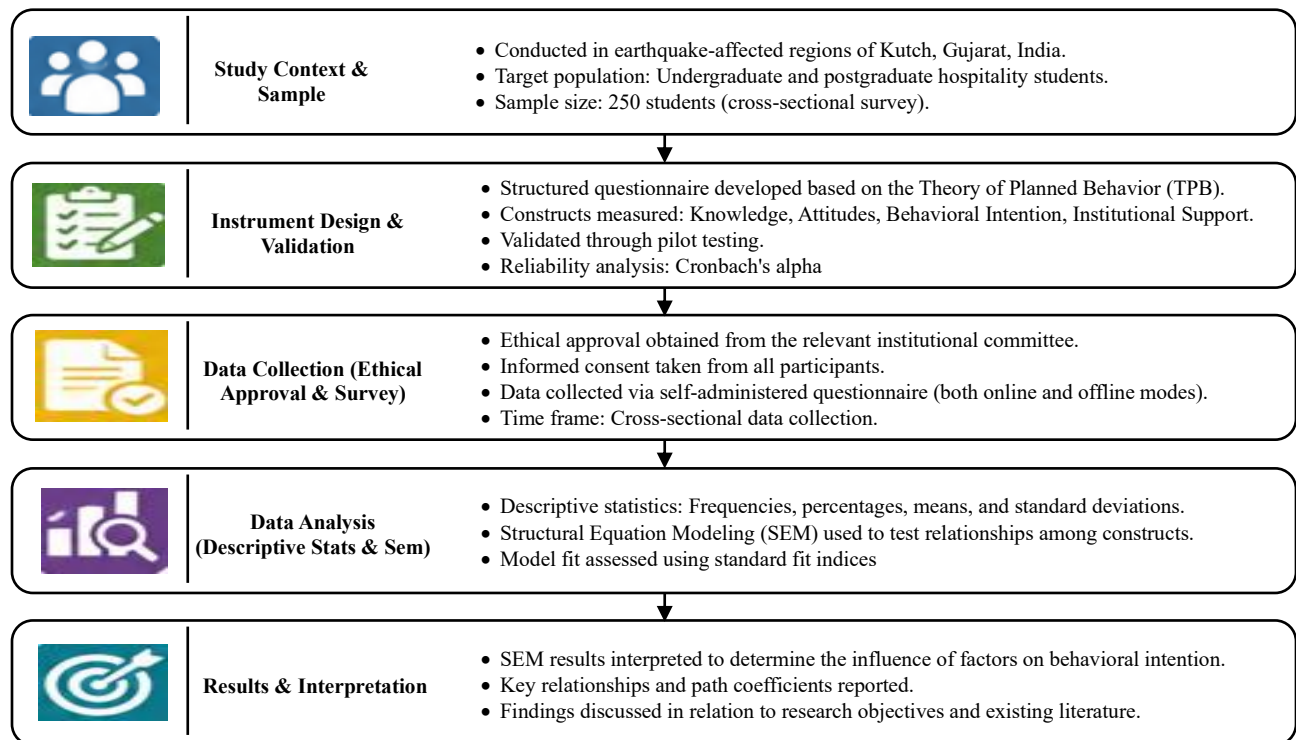


Fig. 1: Research Methodology Flowchart

The methodology used in conducting the research can be depicted in fig. 1. It starts with the study context and sample (students taking hospitality courses after disaster), then moves to instrument development (questionnaire following the theory of planned behaviour). After that, the process of data gathering with its approval from the ethical review board and survey administration takes place. Data analysis processes follow and include descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha, and Structural Equation Modelling.

Research Design

This research utilizes a quantitative research design in order to investigate various variables that affect the decision-making process by which hospitality students adopt regenerative tourism models in areas struck by disasters. This study makes use of the cross-sectional survey method in order to determine various behavioral aspects like attitudes, knowledge, perception of behavior, and institutional effects within the same period of time. In accordance with a science and technical orientation, quantitative behavioral modeling was conducted in this study.

Context and Sample

The survey was carried out in the earthquake affected areas of Kutch, Gujarat, India, which suffered from significant effects due to the tremor that occurred in 2001. The subjects for the survey were made up of students undertaking courses in hospitality and tourism at regional universities. Stratified random sampling was utilized in order to have adequate representation within the different categories. The sample size for this study totaled to 250 students (n=250) whereby 60% were undergraduates while 40% were postgraduates.

Instruments

Data collection was done through a structured questionnaire that was developed on the basis of the theory of planned behavior (TPB) and prior studies concerning sustainable and regenerative tourism (Spalazzi & Mariotti, 2024; Althobaiti & Abulibdeh, 2026). Data collected involved:

- Items on knowledge and awareness regarding regenerative tourism (5-point Likert scale).
- Statements on attitude and perceptions towards practicing regenerative tourism (5-point Likert scale).
- Questions on behavioral intentions for the use of regenerative tourism.
- Measures of institutional support, including exposure to curriculum and experience-based learning.

The validity of the measurement instrument was checked through expert review and pilot study conducted among 20 hospitality students. Reliability of the measurement scale was validated with Cronbach's Alpha equal to 0.83.

Table 1: 5-Point Likert Scale for Measuring Adoption of Regenerative Tourism Frameworks

Construct	Item Description	Scale (1–5)
Knowledge	I am aware of the principles of regenerative tourism.	1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree
	I understand how regenerative tourism contributes to post-disaster recovery.	1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree
Attitude	I believe adopting regenerative tourism practices is important for community well-being.	1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree
	I feel positive about integrating regenerative tourism concepts into hospitality practice.	1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree
Behavioural Intention	I intend to implement regenerative tourism principles in my future professional activities.	1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree
	I am willing to participate in courses or workshops on regenerative tourism.	1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree
Institutional Support	My institution provides adequate curriculum coverage on sustainability and regenerative tourism.	1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree
	I have access to experiential learning opportunities (e.g., field visits, simulations) related to regenerative tourism.	1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Table 1 shows the 5-point Likert scale used for assessing the hospitality students' level of knowledge, attitude, behavioral intention, and institutional backing for regenerative tourism frameworks. The scale runs from 1, which represents Strongly Disagree, to 5, which indicates Strongly Agree.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were computed for all constructs; that is, Knowledge, Attitude, Behavioural Intention, and Institutional Support. Table 2 presents the summary results on mean, standard deviation, and reliability (Cronbach's alpha) for all constructs.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Study Constructs

Construct	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Cronbach's α
Knowledge	4.12	0.61	0.84
Attitude	4.28	0.58	0.87
Behavioural Intention	4.05	0.65	0.85
Institutional Support	3.92	0.70	0.82

Table 2 provides the descriptive analysis and internal consistency measures for each variable constructed using a 5-point Likert scale. Values that exceed 4.0 for the mean measures represent generally positive responses from the respondents, while values exceeding 0.80 for the Cronbach's alpha measure show highly reliable scales.

Hypothesis Testing

Structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis was conducted to test the proposed relationships between the variables. The path coefficients, standard errors, t-values, and significance level of each hypothesis are shown in table 3.

Table 3: Hypothesis Testing Using SEM

Hypothesis	Path	Std. Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Supported?
H1	Knowledge $\rightarrow$ Attitude	0.42	6.18	<0.001	Yes
H2	Knowledge $\rightarrow$ Behavioural Intention	0.36	5.05	<0.001	Yes
H3	Attitude $\rightarrow$ Behavioural Intention	0.51	7.44	<0.001	Yes
H4	Institutional Support $\rightarrow$ Behavioural Intention	0.28	4.12	<0.001	Yes

The standardized path coefficients and the significance of the hypothesized relationships are provided in table 3 below. All paths were statistically significant at the $p < 0.001$ level. This supports the impact of knowledge, attitude, and institutional support on students' intentions to behave.

Fig. 2 below is the SEM path diagram that displays the standard regression coefficients for the relationships between constructs. Arrows depict the direction of the relationships, and all the relationships are statistically significant. Fig. 2 depicts the structural model hypothesis. The positive relationship between Knowledge and Attitude ($\beta = 0.42$) and Behavioural Intention ($\beta = 0.36$) exists. In addition, Attitude ($\beta = 0.51$) and Institutional Support ($\beta = 0.28$) significantly affect Behavioural Intention.

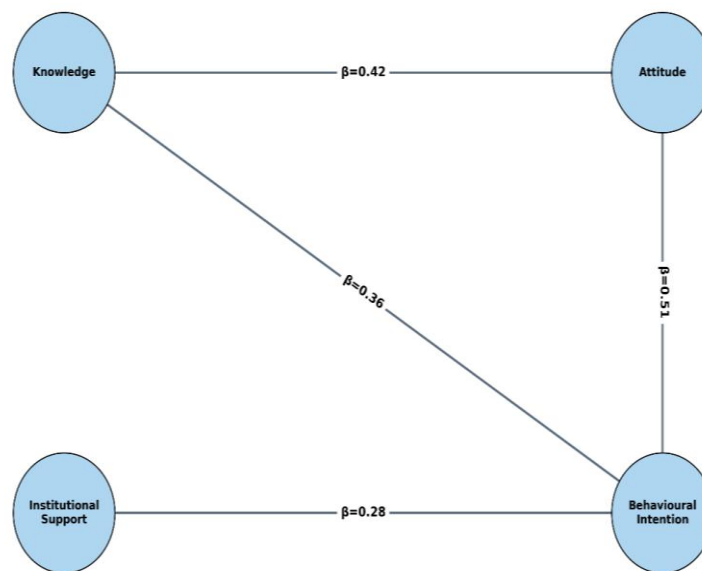


Fig. 2: SEM Path Model of Regenerative Tourism Adoption

Discussion

The results of this study showed that knowledge, attitude, and institutional support have significant effects on hospitality students' adoption of frameworks related to regenerative tourism in disaster-affected areas. Knowledge had a positive effect on attitude and behavioural intention, implying that students with knowledge of regenerative tourism practices will be more inclined towards such practices and implement them into reality. These results agree with prior literature, which focuses on the importance of awareness for promoting sustainable tourist behavior (Spalazzi & Mariotti, 2024; Althobaiti & Abulibdeh, 2026).

The attitude was the strongest predictor of behavioural intention, indicating the importance of student attitudes and motivations towards regenerative practices. As mentioned above, it can be explained by the Theory of Planned Behavior, according to which attitudes predict behavioral intentions. The result corresponds with previous research in this area, as it was found that positive attitudes towards tourism recovery increased students' involvement in reconstruction (Chan et al., 2022; Lin et al., 2018).

Educational institutional support was equally crucial in forming behavioural intentions, validating the role of academic environments in promoting adoption. While the specific impacts of field visits or simulations were not isolated as independent variables in the path model, overall institutional backing remains a strong predictor. This general finding aligns with prior literature emphasizing how educational interventions facilitate the preparation of students for sustainable and regenerative tourism frameworks (O'Connor et al., 2025; Uddin et al., 2026).

From the perspective of curriculum design, the findings imply that there is a need to include modules on regenerative tourism, sustainability, and disaster recovery as well as experiential learning activities such as field trips and simulation exercises for students in post-disaster settings. In terms of policy and disaster education initiatives, inclusion of regenerative tourism in disaster management policies at the national and regional levels will be helpful in developing an educated workforce ready to contribute to ecological regeneration and socio-economic recovery through tourism. Generally, the study highlights that interventions aimed at education and institutional support are vital in facilitating the translation of regenerative tourism concepts into practices.

Conclusion

This research highlights how knowledge, attitude, and institutional influence can make a great impact on hospitality students adopting the framework of regenerative tourism in the case of post-disaster areas. Knowledge was seen to positively influence attitude as well as behavioral intention, revealing that knowledge of the concept of regenerative tourism plays an important role in building commitment towards sustainability within the tourism sector. The factor of attitude has been identified as the best predictor of adoption intention. In addition, institutional influence such as through incorporation of relevant courses into the curriculum can increase behavioral intention among hospitality students to adopt the concept of regenerative tourism. Contribution of the study lies in the extension of TPB in the post-disaster hospitality education environment. The results of this study empirically prove the viability of TPB in predicting adoption intentions of regenerative tourism by future tourism professionals. In terms of practical implications, recommendations may be suggested for hospitality educators and decision-makers who are involved in training future generations of tourism managers and entrepreneurs. Implementation of comprehensive learning models involving dedicated modules on regenerative tourism will foster necessary competencies in students, creating a foundation for future integration of field experiences and simulations. In addition, inclusion of regenerative tourism components into disaster recovery planning efforts is critical for ensuring that tourism will serve the purpose of restoring the ecological balance, improving community resilience, and boosting socio-economic development. Potential areas for further research include replication of the study in multiple locations hit by disasters, longitudinal assessment to measure shifts in student adoption behaviour, and investigation into the influence of remote learning techniques on regenerative tourism education.

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