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Sustainable Tourism Development and Heritage Preservation in Ayodhya: Challenges and Opportunities in the Post-Ram Mandir Era

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Abstract

The rapid growth of religious tourism in Ayodhya following the development of the Ram Mandir has created significant opportunities for economic development while simultaneously raising concerns regarding environmental sustainability and heritage conservation. The present study aimed to assess sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation in Ayodhya and to examine stakeholder perceptions regarding sustainability management practices, environmental protection, community participation, and tourism-related

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challenges. A descriptive cross-sectional research design employing a mixed-method approach was adopted. Primary data were collected from 1,000 respondents, including tourists, pilgrims, local residents, business owners, hotel operators, transport providers, and tourism stakeholders through a structured questionnaire and interviews. Stratified random sampling was used to ensure adequate representation of different stakeholder groups. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, regression analysis, factor analysis, Cronbach's Alpha, and KMO and Bartlett's tests.

The findings revealed moderate agreement regarding the implementation of sustainability practices in Ayodhya. Sustainability practices improving long-term destination attractiveness (Mean = 3.88), infrastructure development respecting cultural identity (Mean = 3.85), and effective heritage preservation (Mean = 3.82) emerged as the most positively perceived dimensions. In contrast, waste management systems (Mean = 3.55) and green transportation initiatives (Mean = 3.50) received comparatively lower evaluations. Environmental and social challenges such as traffic congestion (Mean = 4.45), pressure on infrastructure (Mean = 4.30), overcrowding (Mean = 4.25), and sanitation-related concerns (Mean = 4.20) were identified as major issues associated with increasing tourist arrivals. Correlation analysis demonstrated significant positive relationships among tourist motivation, economic development, and sustainability ($p < 0.01$). The regression model explained 52% of the variance in the dependent variable ($R^2 = 0.52$), while reliability and validity analyses confirmed the robustness of the research instrument.

The study concludes that sustainable tourism development in Ayodhya requires a balanced approach integrating heritage conservation, environmental management, community participation, and responsible tourism planning. Strengthening sustainability initiatives will be essential for preserving the city's cultural identity and ensuring long-term tourism competitiveness in the post-Ram Mandir era.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism Development, Heritage Preservation, Religious Tourism, Ayodhya, Ram Mandir, Environmental Sustainability, Community Participation, Cultural Heritage Conservation.

Introduction

Sustainable tourism has emerged as a central concern in tourism planning and destination management due to the increasing pressure that tourism activities place on environmental,

cultural, and social resources. The concept of sustainable tourism emphasizes the responsible use of resources while ensuring that tourism development contributes to economic prosperity, environmental protection, and the well-being of local communities (Bramwell & Lane, 1993). As destinations experience rapid growth in visitor arrivals, the challenge of maintaining a balance between tourism development and resource conservation has become increasingly important. Sustainable tourism therefore seeks to minimize negative impacts while maximizing long-term benefits for both present and future generations (Sharpley, 2000).

Religious tourism is one of the fastest-growing segments of the global tourism industry and plays a significant role in promoting cultural exchange, heritage appreciation, and local economic development (Collins-Kreiner, 2020). Pilgrimage destinations attract large numbers of visitors whose travel decisions are influenced by spiritual beliefs, cultural values, and religious obligations. Although such destinations generate employment opportunities, business growth, and infrastructure development, they often face challenges related to overcrowding, waste generation, environmental degradation, and pressure on heritage resources (Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009). Consequently, sustainable tourism practices have become essential for preserving the authenticity and cultural significance of religious destinations.

Ayodhya, one of the most revered cities in India, has gained unprecedented attention following the construction and consecration of the Ram Mandir at Ram Janmabhoomi. The city has witnessed a substantial increase in tourist arrivals, resulting in rapid expansion of transportation facilities, accommodation infrastructure, commercial establishments, and public services. While these developments have strengthened the local economy, they have simultaneously created concerns regarding environmental management, heritage conservation, crowd control, and the preservation of Ayodhya's spiritual character. Sustainable tourism planning is therefore necessary to ensure that economic benefits are achieved without compromising the city's cultural and environmental resources.

Heritage preservation forms an integral component of sustainable tourism because cultural monuments, religious sites, traditions, and local identity constitute the core attractions of pilgrimage destinations (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000). Effective conservation strategies help maintain the authenticity of heritage assets while supporting tourism growth and community development. In rapidly developing destinations such as Ayodhya, the protection of cultural heritage must be integrated with tourism planning to prevent the adverse effects of commercialization and uncontrolled urban expansion.

Against this backdrop, the present study examines sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation in Ayodhya during the post-Ram Mandir era. The study evaluates stakeholder perceptions regarding sustainability management practices, environmental conservation, cultural heritage protection, community participation, and responsible tourism development. By identifying key challenges and opportunities, the study aims to provide insights for policymakers and tourism planners seeking to achieve balanced and sustainable tourism growth in one of India's most important religious destinations.

Research Methodology

This study was conducted to assess sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, particularly in the context of the rapid tourism growth witnessed after the development of the Ram Mandir. A descriptive cross-sectional research design was adopted, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder perceptions regarding sustainability and heritage conservation.

The study area included major religious and tourism destinations such as Ram Janmabhoomi, Ram Mandir, Hanuman Garhi, Kanak Bhawan, Ram Ki Paidi, and other important pilgrimage sites within Ayodhya. These locations were selected because they represent the core tourism attractions of the city and have experienced substantial visitor growth in recent years.

The target population comprised tourists, pilgrims, local residents, hotel operators, shopkeepers, transport providers, and tourism-related stakeholders. A total of 1,000 respondents were selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure representation from different groups directly or indirectly associated with tourism activities. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire supported by personal interactions and interviews wherever necessary.

The questionnaire included statements related to environmental conservation, heritage preservation, sustainability management practices, community participation, tourism infrastructure, and responsible tourism development. Responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). In addition to primary data, secondary information was gathered from published research articles, government reports, tourism policy documents, books, and official tourism statistics.

The collected data were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistical measures such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard

deviation were used to summarize respondent perceptions. Pearson correlation analysis was applied to examine relationships among the major study variables, while regression analysis was used to assess the influence of tourism-related factors on development outcomes. The reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, and construct validity was assessed through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. These statistical procedures ensured the reliability, validity, and overall robustness of the study findings.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents included in the study. The sample consisted predominantly of male respondents (60%), while female participants accounted for 38% of the total sample. A considerable proportion of respondents belonged to the younger age groups, with 40% falling within the 18–30 years category and 30% within the 31–40 years category. In terms of marital status, half of the respondents were single, whereas married individuals constituted a substantial share of the study population. Regarding educational attainment, undergraduate degree holders represented the largest group, indicating a relatively well-educated respondent base. Occupationally, private-sector employees formed the highest proportion, followed by individuals engaged in self-employment and business activities. The income distribution showed that the majority of respondents were concentrated in the lower and middle-income categories. Overall, the demographic composition reflects the participation of diverse stakeholder groups associated with tourism activities in Ayodhya, providing a broad perspective on issues related to sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	600	60.0
	Female	380	38.0
	Other	20	2.0
Age Group	18–30 Years	400	40.0
	31–40 Years	300	30.0
	41–50 Years	200	20.0

	Above 50 Years	100	10.0
Marital Status	Single	500	50.0
	Married	400	40.0
	Divorced	50	5.0
	Widowed	50	5.0
Educational Qualification	No Formal Education	100	10.0
	Secondary Education	250	25.0
	Undergraduate Degree	350	35.0
	Postgraduate Degree	200	20.0
	Doctorate/Professional	100	10.0
Occupation	Student	180	18.0
	Government Employee	160	16.0
	Private Employee	260	26.0
	Self-employed/Business	220	22.0
	Retired	80	8.0
	Other	100	10.0
Monthly Income	Below ₹25,000	300	30.0
	₹25,001–50,000	300	30.0
	₹50,001–1,00,000	250	25.0
	Above ₹1,00,000	150	15.0

Sustainability Management Practices in Ayodhya

Table 2 presents respondents' perceptions regarding sustainability management practices in Ayodhya. The highest mean score was recorded for **sustainability practices improving long-term attractiveness** (M = 3.88, SD = 0.86), indicating that respondents recognize the importance of sustainability for the future development of the destination. This was followed by **infrastructure development respecting cultural identity** (M = 3.85, SD = 0.88) and **effective preservation of cultural heritage** (M = 3.82, SD = 0.92), reflecting positive perceptions toward heritage conservation efforts. Respondents also moderately agreed that **government policies support sustainable tourism** (M = 3.78) and that tourism helps balance **economic growth and environmental protection** (M = 3.75). Lower mean scores were observed for **waste management systems** (M = 3.55) and **green transportation initiatives**

(M = 3.50), suggesting that these areas require greater attention. Overall, the findings indicate moderate satisfaction with current sustainability practices, while highlighting the need for stronger environmental management and sustainable tourism initiatives in Ayodhya. (figure 1,2,3)

Table 2. Sustainability Management Practices Analysis

S.No	Sustainability Indicator	Mean	SD
1	Sustainable tourism practices are effectively implemented in Ayodhya	3.72	0.96
2	Environmental conservation is prioritized in tourism projects	3.68	0.98
3	Waste management systems are adequate for tourist inflow	3.55	1.05
4	Authorities are preserving cultural heritage effectively	3.82	0.92
5	Hotels follow environmentally sustainable practices	3.60	1.00
6	Public awareness regarding sustainability is increasing	3.70	0.90
7	Green transportation initiatives are encouraged	3.50	1.08
8	Tourism balances economic growth and environmental protection	3.75	0.94
9	Local community participates in sustainability initiatives	3.65	0.97
10	Religious tourism activities are environmentally responsible	3.72	0.93
11	Government policies support sustainable tourism	3.78	0.91
12	Infrastructure development respects cultural identity	3.85	0.88
13	Hotels adopt eco-friendly measures	3.62	0.99
14	Tourism growth is managed responsibly for future generations	3.70	0.95
15	Sustainability practices improve long-term attractiveness	3.88	0.86

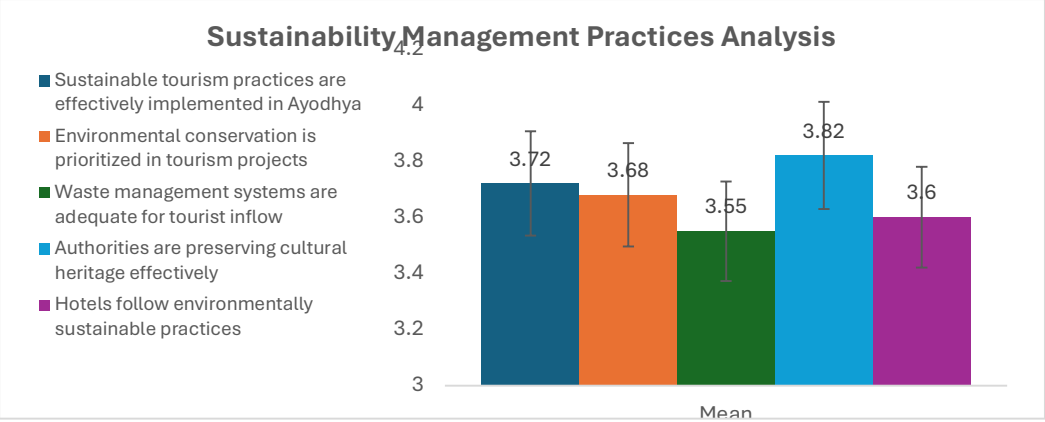

Figure 1: Sustainability Management Practices Analysis (question 1-5)

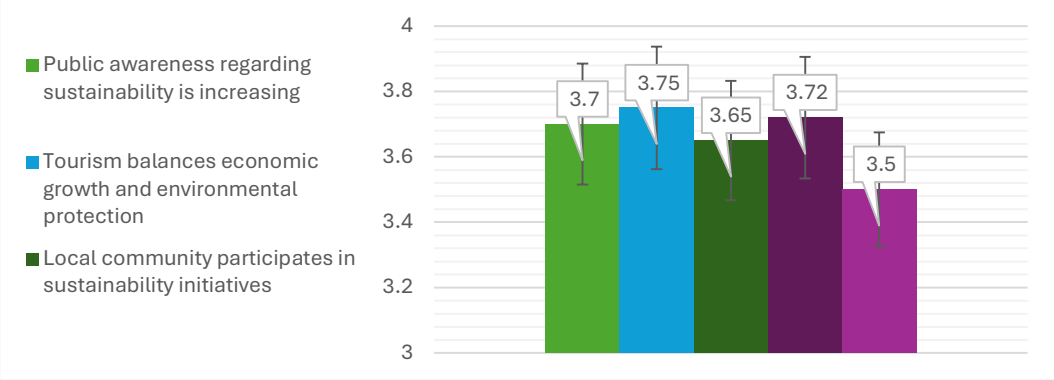

Figure 2: Sustainability Management Practices Analysis (question 6-10)

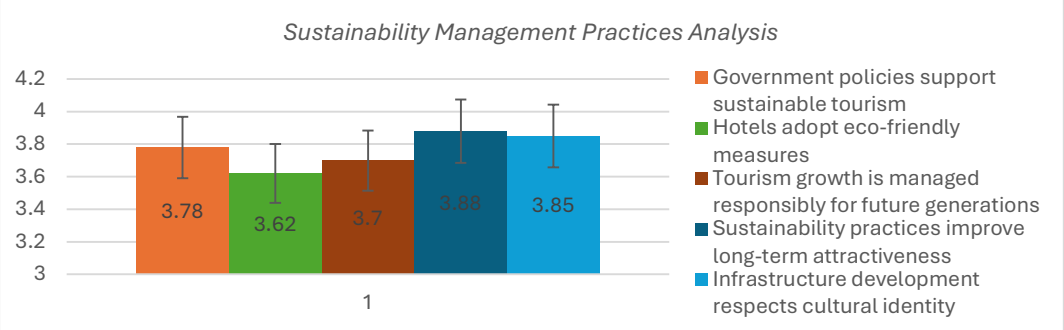

Figure 3: Sustainability Management Practices Analysis (question 11-15)

Major Dimensions of Sustainable Tourism Development

Table 3 presents a summary of the major sustainability dimensions associated with tourism development in Ayodhya. Among the indicators, **Policy Implementation** recorded the highest mean score (M = 3.75, SD = 0.95), indicating that respondents generally perceive government policies and sustainability initiatives as supportive of sustainable tourism development. This

was followed by **Community Awareness** (M = 3.70, SD = 0.90), suggesting a moderate level of public awareness regarding sustainability and environmental responsibility. **Environmental Protection** (M = 3.60, SD = 1.02) and **Waste Management** (M = 3.55, SD = 1.05) received comparatively lower mean scores, reflecting concerns about the effectiveness of environmental conservation measures and waste disposal systems. Overall, the findings indicate that while sustainability efforts are being recognized in Ayodhya, greater emphasis is required on environmental management and waste control to ensure long-term sustainable tourism development.(figure 4)

Table 3. Summary of Sustainable Tourism Dimensions

Sustainability Indicators

Indicator	Mean	Std. Deviation
Environmental Protection	3.60	1.02
Waste Management	3.55	1.05
Policy Implementation	3.75	0.95
Community Awareness	3.70	0.90

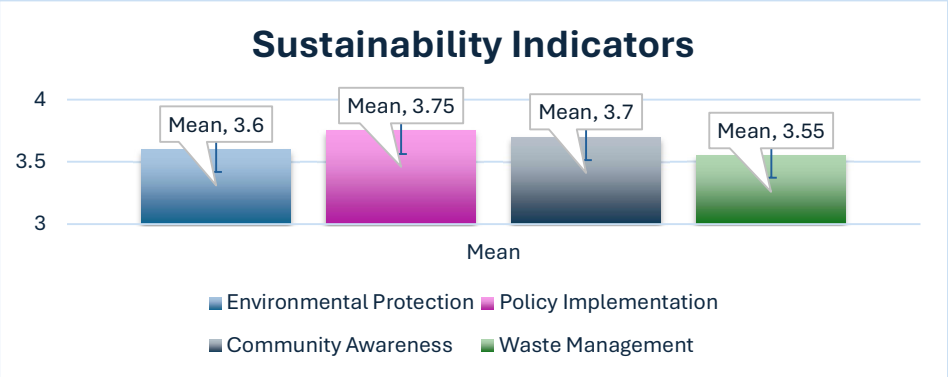

Figure 4: Sustainability Indicators

Environmental and Social Challenges Associated with Tourism Growth

Table 4 presents respondents' perceptions regarding the environmental and social challenges associated with tourism growth in Ayodhya. The highest mean score was recorded for **traffic congestion due to tourist arrivals** (M = 4.45, SD = 0.70), followed by the view that **proper**

tourism planning is necessary (M = 4.40, SD = 0.72). Respondents also strongly agreed that tourism growth has increased **pressure on infrastructure** (M = 4.30), contributed to **overcrowding affecting visitor experience** (M = 4.25), and placed additional demands on **public transportation** (M = 4.22) and **sanitation systems** (M = 4.20). Moderate to high agreement was observed regarding challenges related to accommodation capacity, environmental cleanliness, commercialization, increased cost of living, and pressure on public utilities. The lowest mean score was recorded for **noise pollution** (M = 4.00, SD = 0.88), although respondents still acknowledged it as a concern. Overall, the findings indicate that while tourism has generated substantial benefits for Ayodhya, it has also created significant environmental and social pressures, highlighting the need for effective planning and sustainable management strategies.

Table 4. Environmental and Social Challenges

Environmental and Social Challenges Analysis

S.No	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Tourism growth has increased pressure on infrastructure	4.30	0.78
2	Traffic congestion has increased due to tourist arrivals	4.45	0.70
3	Accommodation facilities face capacity challenges	4.18	0.82
4	Tourism has increased pressure on sanitation systems	4.20	0.80
5	Healthcare facilities experience additional burden	4.05	0.86
6	Tourist inflow has affected environmental cleanliness	4.12	0.84
7	Overcrowding negatively affects visitor experience	4.25	0.79

8	Hospitality sector requires modernization	4.15	0.83
9	Public transportation requires improvement	4.22	0.81
10	Noise pollution has increased	4.00	0.88
11	Cost of living has increasedafter tourism growth	4.05	0.88
12	Commercialization affects traditional environment	4.08	0.85
13	Local residents face tourism-related challenges	4.10	0.84
14	Tourism growth has pressured public utilities	4.18	0.82
15	Proper tourism planning is necessary	4.40	0.72

Community Impact of Tourism Development

Table 5 presents the community impacts associated with tourism development in Ayodhya. Among the identified factors, **Livelihood Opportunities** recorded the highest factor loading (0.81), indicating that tourism has made a significant contribution to employment generation and income opportunities for local residents. **Cultural Strengthening** also showed a strong factor loading (0.78), suggesting that tourism has helped promote and preserve the cultural and religious identity of the destination. Additionally, **Lifestyle Changes** exhibited a substantial factor loading (0.74), reflecting the influence of tourism on the social and economic lives of local communities. Overall, the findings suggest that tourism development has had a notable positive impact on community well-being by creating economic opportunities, reinforcing cultural values, and influencing local lifestyles.

Table 5. Community Impact of Tourism Development

Community Variable	Factor Loading
Livelihood Opportunities	0.81
Cultural Strengthening	0.78
Lifestyle Changes	0.74

Relationship Between Tourism Development and Sustainability

Table 6 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients among Tourist Motivation, Economic Development, and Sustainability. The results reveal a positive and statistically significant relationship between all study variables. Tourist Motivation showed a strong positive correlation with Economic Development (r = 0.68), indicating that increased tourist interest and visitation contribute substantially to economic growth in Ayodhya. Tourist Motivation also demonstrated a moderate positive correlation with Sustainability (r = 0.55), suggesting that tourism growth is associated with sustainability-related initiatives and destination management practices.

Similarly, Economic Development exhibited a positive correlation with Sustainability (r = 0.60), indicating that economic benefits generated through tourism can support sustainable development and heritage preservation efforts. Since all correlation coefficients were significant at the 0.01 level, the findings confirm that tourist motivation, economic development, and sustainability are closely interconnected. These results suggest that promoting tourist motivation can contribute not only to economic progress but also to the long-term sustainability of tourism development in Ayodhya.

Table 6. Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variables	Tourist Motivation	Economic Development	Sustainability
Tourist Motivation	1	0.68**	0.55**
Economic Development	0.68**	1	0.60**
Sustainability	0.55**	0.60**	1

Table 7 presents the regression model summary examining the relationship between the predictor variables and sustainable tourism development. The correlation coefficient (R = 0.72) indicates a strong positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The coefficient of determination (R^2 = 0.52) shows that **52% of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the model**, while the remaining 48% may be attributed to other factors not included in the analysis. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.51 further confirms the robustness of the model after adjusting for the number of predictors. The standard error of estimate (0.64) indicates an acceptable level of prediction accuracy. Overall, the results suggest that the selected variables provide a substantial explanation of sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation in Ayodhya.

Table 7. Regression Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error
0.72	0.52	0.51	0.64

Significance of the Regression Model

Table 8 presents the results of the ANOVA test used to assess the overall significance of the regression model. The analysis yielded an **F-value of 105.30** with a significance level of **p = 0.000**, which is well below the threshold of 0.05. This indicates that the regression model is statistically significant and provides a good fit for the data. The significant F-statistic confirms that the predictor variables collectively have a meaningful influence on the dependent variable and that the observed relationship is unlikely to have occurred by chance. Therefore, the regression model is considered suitable for explaining the factors influencing sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation in Ayodhya.

Table 8. ANOVA for Regression Model

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	432.18	2	216.09	105.30	0.000
Residual	397.42	997	0.39		

Total	829.60	999			

Reliability Analysis of the Research Instrument

Table 9 presents the reliability analysis of the study constructs using Cronbach's Alpha. The results show excellent internal consistency for all variables. **Tourist Motivation** recorded a Cronbach's Alpha value of **0.914**, indicating excellent reliability, while **Economic Development** achieved a value of **0.887**, reflecting high reliability. Similarly, the **Sustainability** construct demonstrated strong internal consistency with an alpha value of **0.861**. The overall scale recorded a Cronbach's Alpha of **0.923**, which exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.70. These findings confirm that the questionnaire items were reliable and consistently measured the intended constructs, thereby supporting the credibility and accuracy of the study results.

Table 9. Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's Alpha)

Construct	Cronbach Alpha
Tourist Motivation	0.914
Economic Development	0.887
Sustainability	0.861
Overall Scale	0.923

Validity Assessment of the Measurement Scale

Table 10 presents the results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The KMO value of 0.82 exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.60, indicating that the sample size is adequate for factor analysis. In addition, Bartlett's Test was found to be statistically significant ($p = 0.000$), confirming that the variables are sufficiently correlated to justify factor analysis. These results demonstrate that the dataset is appropriate for examining the underlying dimensions of sustainable tourism and heritage preservation and support the validity of the measurement scale used in the study.

Table 10. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Test	Value
KMO	0.82
Bartlett's Test	0.000

Factor Analysis of Sustainable Tourism and Heritage Preservation Variables

Table 11 presents the factor loadings of key sustainability variables extracted through factor analysis. **Environmental Protection** recorded the highest factor loading (**0.77**), indicating that it is the most influential component of sustainable tourism development in Ayodhya. This was followed by **Waste Management** (**0.74**) and **Policy Support** (**0.71**), both of which also contributed substantially to the sustainability construct. The relatively high factor loadings suggest that these variables are strongly associated with sustainable tourism and heritage preservation. The findings highlight the importance of environmental conservation measures, effective waste management systems, and supportive government policies in promoting sustainable tourism development and safeguarding Ayodhya's cultural and religious heritage.

Table 11. Rotated Component Matrix

Sustainability Variable	Factor Loading
Environmental Protection	0.77
Waste Management	0.74
Policy Support	0.71

Discussion

The present study examined sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation in Ayodhya in the post-Ram Mandir era. The findings indicate that respondents generally perceived sustainability initiatives positively, particularly in relation to long-term destination attractiveness, infrastructure development, and heritage conservation. Sustainability practices improving long-term attractiveness recorded the highest mean score (M = 3.88), followed by infrastructure development respecting cultural identity (M = 3.85) and effective heritage preservation (M = 3.82). These findings support the principles of sustainable tourism proposed

by Bramwell and Lane (1993), who emphasized that tourism development should balance economic growth with environmental and cultural conservation. Similarly, Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000) argued that successful heritage destinations require careful integration of conservation strategies with tourism planning to maintain authenticity and long-term viability.

The study further revealed moderate agreement regarding environmental protection, community participation, and sustainability management practices. Respondents acknowledged the presence of sustainability efforts; however, lower scores for waste management (M = 3.55) and green transportation initiatives (M = 3.50) indicate areas requiring greater attention. These findings are consistent with the observations of Gössling et al. (2012), who highlighted waste generation, transportation impacts, and environmental pressures as major challenges faced by rapidly growing tourism destinations. Sharpley (2000) similarly noted that tourism development often creates environmental concerns unless supported by effective management and regulatory frameworks.

Environmental and social challenges emerged as significant concerns in the present study. Traffic congestion (M = 4.45), pressure on infrastructure (M = 4.30), overcrowding (M = 4.25), and increasing demands on sanitation systems (M = 4.20) were identified as the most prominent issues associated with tourism growth. These findings correspond with those of Collins-Kreiner (2020), who observed that popular pilgrimage destinations frequently experience overcrowding, congestion, and infrastructure stress due to increasing visitor numbers. Timothy and Nyaupane (2009) also reported that rapid tourism expansion can create pressure on local resources and public services if not managed through sustainable planning approaches.

The factor analysis results demonstrated that environmental protection (0.77), waste management (0.74), and policy support (0.71) were the most important dimensions of sustainable tourism development. This finding supports the work of Buckley (2012), who emphasized that environmental management and policy interventions are fundamental pillars of sustainable tourism. Furthermore, the strong factor loading for policy support highlights the importance of government involvement in achieving sustainability goals.

The correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships among tourist motivation, economic development, and sustainability. The positive association between economic development and sustainability (r = 0.60) suggests that tourism-generated economic benefits can support conservation initiatives and sustainable destination management. Similar

conclusions were reported by Rasoolimanesh et al. (2017), who found that sustainable tourism practices contribute to both community development and destination competitiveness.

Overall, the findings indicate that Ayodhya has made considerable progress toward sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation. However, challenges related to environmental management, transportation, overcrowding, and community engagement remain important concerns. Addressing these issues through integrated planning, stronger policy implementation, and stakeholder participation will be essential for ensuring the long-term sustainability of Ayodhya as a major religious tourism destination.

Conclusion

The present study examined sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation in Ayodhya during the post-Ram Mandir era. The findings indicate that the rapid growth of religious tourism has created significant opportunities for economic development while simultaneously generating important sustainability challenges. Respondents generally expressed positive perceptions regarding sustainability initiatives, particularly in relation to infrastructure development, heritage preservation, government support, and the long-term attractiveness of the destination. The results suggest that tourism development in Ayodhya has contributed not only to improved facilities and economic opportunities but also to increased awareness of the importance of protecting cultural and religious heritage.

The study further revealed that heritage preservation remains one of the strongest aspects of tourism development in Ayodhya. Respondents acknowledged efforts to maintain the city's cultural identity while expanding tourism infrastructure. The findings also indicate that sustainability practices are increasingly being integrated into tourism planning, reflecting a growing recognition of the need to balance development with conservation. However, environmental protection measures, waste management systems, and community participation received comparatively lower evaluations, suggesting that these areas require additional attention and investment.

Environmental and social challenges emerged as important concerns associated with the increasing number of visitors. Traffic congestion, overcrowding, pressure on infrastructure, sanitation demands, and the commercialization of tourism activities were identified as key issues affecting the destination. These findings highlight the complexity of managing a rapidly expanding pilgrimage center where economic growth must be balanced with environmental

protection and cultural preservation. The factor analysis further demonstrated that environmental protection, waste management, and policy support are critical components of sustainable tourism development, emphasizing the importance of integrated planning and effective governance.

The positive correlations observed among tourist motivation, economic development, and sustainability indicate that these dimensions are closely interconnected. Tourism growth can generate substantial economic benefits while simultaneously supporting conservation and sustainability initiatives when managed effectively. Therefore, achieving long-term sustainability in Ayodhya will require coordinated efforts among government agencies, tourism stakeholders, local communities, and conservation authorities.

Overall, the study concludes that Ayodhya possesses strong potential to serve as a model for sustainable religious tourism in India. Continued emphasis on heritage conservation, environmental management, community involvement, and responsible tourism policies will be essential for preserving the city's religious significance and cultural identity while ensuring that future tourism development remains sustainable, inclusive, and beneficial for all stakeholders.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to respondents associated with tourism activities in Ayodhya and reflects perceptions collected during a specific period. The findings may therefore not fully represent changing attitudes over time or be directly generalizable to other religious tourism destinations.

Future Scope of the Study

Future research may undertake comparative studies between Ayodhya and other major pilgrimage destinations such as Varanasi, Mathura, Tirupati, and Shirdi to better understand sustainable tourism practices across different religious contexts. Longitudinal studies may also be conducted to examine how sustainability perceptions and tourism impacts evolve over time as visitor numbers continue to increase. Further investigations can explore the role of smart tourism technologies, digital visitor management systems, green transportation initiatives, and sustainable infrastructure in supporting destination management. Researchers may additionally focus on community participation, visitor satisfaction, carrying capacity assessment, environmental monitoring, and heritage conservation strategies to develop a more comprehensive understanding of sustainable religious tourism. The application of advanced analytical techniques such as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and mediation analysis may

also provide deeper insights into the relationships among tourism growth, sustainability, heritage preservation, and community development.

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