

**Moritz Neuens-Pohlmann**

**Residents' Attitudes and Support towards Sustainable  
Tourism Development in a Mature Mass Tourism**

**Destination:**

The Case of the Algarve



UNIVERSITY OF ALGARVE  
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS

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**M. Sc. in Management**

**This dissertation was carried out under the supervision of:**

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**Work Authorship Declaration**

I declare to be the author of this work, which is unique and unprecedented. Authors and works consulted are properly cited in the text and are in the list of references included.

Moritz Neuens-Pohlmann

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## **ABSTRACT**

A widely appraised solution for negative environmental and societal impacts caused by tourism is the concept of sustainable tourism development (STD). Tourism spots that could profit particularly from corresponding development are mass tourism destinations that have reached a matured developmental stage where the full spectrum of the potential adverse effects of tourism have surfaced and must be addressed. Two of the most important determinants for successful planning and implementation of STD in a destination are the knowledge about its residents' attitudes towards STD and their level of support for it. While previous research pointed towards the existence of direct relationships among latter dimensions, the present study aims at empirically establishing the factors affecting residents' attitudes and support in a matured tourist destination towards STD. Emphasis will be made on how these factors affect the reactions of the population in this specific destination type. Further, it is also intended to uncover statistically the possible correlation between the two factors. The matured destination selected as a study site for the survey was the Portuguese region of the Algarve. In the descriptive analysis, we can see that survey results showed that the Algarve residents exhibited strong positive attitudes towards STD particularly in terms of environmental concerns, and a strong tendency to support STD. The Pearson R analysis is utilized on the data obtained to ascertain if it could deliver clear evidence on the correlation of residents' attitudes and support towards STD. This will entail the confirmation of all eight hypotheses derived from the literature research. In conclusion, the current work presents a detailed discussion of the study's results and its potential theoretical and managerial implications based on previous researches on the topic. It also provides an assessment of the study's limitations and proposals for future research on the matter.

**Keywords:** mass tourism, social exchange theory, sustainable tourism development, residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism development, residents' support for sustainable tourism development, Algarve.

## RESUMO

Uma solução amplamente estimada para os impactos ambientais e sociais negativos causados pelo turismo é o conceito de desenvolvimento turístico sustentável (DTS). Os pontos turísticos que poderiam lucrar particularmente com o desenvolvimento correspondente são os destinos de turismo de massa que atingiram um estágio de desenvolvimento maturado, onde todo o espectro dos potenciais efeitos adversos do turismo emergiu e deve ser tratado. Dois dos determinantes mais importantes para o planejamento e implementação bem-sucedidos de DTS em um destino são o conhecimento sobre as atitudes de seus residentes em relação a DTS e o nível de apoio à ele. Enquanto pesquisas anteriores apontavam para a existência de relações diretas entre as últimas dimensões, o presente estudo visa estabelecer empiricamente os fatores que afetam as atitudes e o apoio dos residentes em um destino turístico maturado em relação às DTS. Será dada ênfase à forma como esses fatores afetam as reações da população neste tipo específico de destino. Além disso, também se pretende descobrir estatisticamente a possível correlação entre os dois fatores. O destino maturado escolhido como local de estudo para o inquérito foi a região portuguesa do Algarve. Na análise descritiva, podemos verificar que os resultados do inquérito revelaram que os residentes no Algarve exibiam fortes atitudes positivas em relação às DTS, nomeadamente no que se refere às questões ambientais, e uma forte tendência para apoiar as DTS. A análise de Pearson R é usada nos dados obtidos para verificar se ela poderia fornecer evidências claras sobre a correlação das atitudes dos residentes e o apoio às DTS. Isso implicará na confirmação de todas as oito hipóteses derivadas da pesquisa bibliográfica. Em conclusão, o presente trabalho apresenta uma discussão detalhada dos resultados do estudo e suas potenciais implicações teóricas e gerenciais com base em pesquisas anteriores sobre o tema. Também fornece uma avaliação das limitações do estudo e propostas para pesquisas futuras sobre o assunto.

**Palavras-chave:** turismo de massas, teoria do intercâmbio social, desenvolvimento turístico sustentável, atitudes dos residentes em relação ao desenvolvimento turístico sustentável, apoio dos residentes ao desenvolvimento turístico sustentável, Algarve.

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## ABBREVIATIONS LIST

<b>TALC</b>	Tourism Area Lifecycle
<b>SET</b>	Social Exchange Theory
<b>NEP</b>	New Environmental Paradigm
<b>ST</b>	Stakeholder Theory
<b>SUS-TAS</b>	Sustainable Tourism Attitude Scale
<b>INI</b>	Individual Net Income
<b>PSC</b>	Perceived Social Costs
<b>PES</b>	Perceived Economic Benefits
<b>ES</b>	Environmental Sustainability
<b>MCP</b>	Maximizing Community Participation
<b>SSTD</b>	Support towards Sustainable Tourism Development
<b>ANOVA</b>	One-way Analysis of Variance

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

"Tourism contains the seed of its own destruction: tourism can kill tourism, destroying the very attraction which visitors come to a location to experience" (Glasson, Godfrey & Goodey, 1995, p.7)".

This statement adequately summarizes that tourism has turned into a global phenomenon which brought less favorable impact on the destination's environment, social and economic conditions amidst the huge tourism revenue and rapid developments (Smallman & Moore, 2010). These impacts often lead to a decline in the relevance and integrity of the environmental and social structures of matured mass tourism destinations. Studies (Gursoy et al., 2010; Sirakaya et al., 2010) observed that these destinations were characterized with rapid development but poor planning to cope with large tourist traffic resulting to immense pressure on cultural and environmental resources. Against this backdrop, tourism literature is filled with studies that explicitly point out and examine the negative results of tourism development (Biagi et al., 2019; Shakouri et al., 2017; Woo et al., 2018; Zhao & Min Li, 2018). In order to mitigate tourism's adverse effects on a broad spectrum of tourism destinations and their communities, it has become incrementally a common practice over the past decades to recommend and adopt alternative concepts such as ecotourism, green tourism and community-based tourism (Sharpley, 2000; Mbaiwa, 2003; Aktas, Derimel & Duman, 2015; ). These approaches can be generally seen as different facets, trends and paradigm shifts in tourism development known as sustainable tourism (Lee & Jan, 2019; Sirakaya-Turk et al., 2008). Despite sustainability being a global trend in the tourism industry and the field of tourism research, the adoption of these paradigm shifts and alternative tourism concepts come at a later stage when environmental, cultural and social degradation or decline are more pronounced and complex to manage as pointed out by Butler's (1980) TALC model (Choi & Sirakay, 2005; Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001). Mass tourism destinations are certainly faced with the environmental, cultural and social problems resulting from the sudden tourism boom without the proper planning (Sörensson, 2014). This makes them hypothetically the main beneficiaries of the sustainable tourism development strategies and measures which help bring a balance

between economic growth and environmental, social and cultural preservation (Kişi, 2019; Zlatař Gamberožić & Tonković, 2016; Sörensson, 2014; Budeanu, 2005).

It is a common consensus among scholars and policymakers that sustainable tourism development is a powerful tool to circumvent issues arising from the modern tourism economy and the dynamics of destination life cycles. It puts destination developers ahead of the various challenges concerning the design of adequate strategic frameworks for sustainable tourism. The success in implementation is done through the constant monitoring of the sustainable tourism indicators, effective management thereof especially in identifying suitable and ideal location for various developments (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Sharpley, 2000). A dimension that has become one of the most important subjects of examination in this context is the evaluation of the destination's stakeholders' participation in the development and their reactions to it (Leo Theuns, 2002; Prayag et al., 2010; Sirakaya-Turk & Gursoy, 2013). Recent studies (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Uysal et al., 2016; Woosnam, 2012; Yu et al., 2011) have explicitly pointed out the cruciality of involving community residents in creating sustainable framework and policies resulting to long-term favorable outcomes and a higher probability of being achieved. The balance is achieved when residents' needs, wants and attitudes are considered during the planning and implementation process (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Uysal et al., 2016; Woosnam, 2012; Yu et al., 2011). Nevertheless, to establish the truth of these findings, a detailed overview of the residents' attitudes towards tourism and their corresponding level of support based on the attitudes identified, is necessary. Research on measuring residents' attitudes and support towards sustainable tourism and its implication on development should not be treated as a novel subject, but a continuing effort to support the effective conceptualization and execution of sustainable tourism development practices (Hsu et al., 2020). Various studies underlying a general tourism context have pointed towards the existence of a relationship between the residents' attitudes and their level of support for tourism (Choi & Murray, 2010; Dyer et al., 2007; Gursoy et al., 2002; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Jamal & Getz, 1995). As earlier mentioned, residents' attitudes and their level of support towards sustainable tourism development are critical success determinants of the development processes. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to

establish the possible correlation between these two factors. The latter is particularly important to mass tourism destinations as every destination could benefit from the consolidation of the environmental, socio-cultural, and economic concerns in the sustainable tourism development plan. This means that the residents' attitudes and support for sustainable tourism are already integrated into the entire plan.

The purpose of the present study is to contribute to the existing body of research by applying quantitative evaluation of the results of measuring residents' attitudes and support for sustainable tourism development in a mature mass tourism destination. This is done to gain an in-depth perspective of the characteristics of the destination's residents. The study further aspires to examine the survey data obtained to establish the correlation between residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism development and their support for the same.

The empirical data required for the study goals of this work were gathered from Algarve, Portugal's oldest and most popular "sun, sand and sea" destination. Studies (Do Valle et al., 2012; INE, 2019) mention that Algarve is the country's main tourist region and has since experienced tremendous growth in tourism capacity and infrastructure development.

The succeeding chapter will present a review of the existing literature on the topic to identify the various findings which will support the theoretical context in which the present dissertation is embedded. This will include the more recent findings on sustainable tourism developments. In Chapter 3, the methodology adopted by the study including the description of the study site, the sampling and data collection process, the survey instrument and measure as well as the applied method of data analysis will be discussed and presented. This is followed by a detailed analysis of the survey results in Chapter 4 and a subsequent discussion on the findings and insights established in Chapter 5. Afterward, Chapter 6 will conclude the work by examining the theoretical and practical implications of the present study as well as its limitations and potential directions for future research.

## **CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Sustainable tourism development has been one of the most widely explored concepts in the tourism industry as a whole (Sharpley, 2000). As derived from the term itself it involves two areas of sustainability which are "sustainable tourism" and "sustainable development". Whether both concepts and principles could have intermarried continues to be a matter of discussion and further studies by researchers and practitioners in the field of tourism (Sharpley, 2000). The reality on the ground, specifically in developing countries anchored on tourism as the main generator of foreign revenues and economic growth, is that tourism has brought environmental and social ills to their destinations (Clayton, 2002). The need therefore to apply the principles resulting from the discussions on sustainable tourism is apparent and requires actual resolutions in the areas of concern (Clayton, 2002). For short, they need to clarify whether the principles of sustainable development are truly applicable to the tourism industry continue to an ongoing subject of research and discussion (Sharpley, 2000; Esparon; 2013). Therefore, it will be difficult to discuss sustainable tourism without laying down the goal and objective of sustainable development which aims to ensure that the present generation meets their needs without compromising or endangering the ability of the future generations to also satisfy their needs (Esparon, 2013). The simpler way to define sustainable development is to look at it as a form of development that considers the objectives and concept of sustainability (Sharpley; 2000).

Sustainable development, therefore, is a continuous process that aims to reconcile the abilities of both generations (present and future) to obtain their goals which may not necessarily mean "growth" if the need to conserve, preserve and protect is deemed a priority (Sharpley, 2000; Esparon; 2013). Sustainable tourism development, on the other hand, is a process that requires the agreement of all tourism stakeholders (of which the residents' are only one of the components) to achieve a tourism-specific common goal that will meet all their needs together as a whole (Sharpley, 2000; Esparon; 2013). Sustainable tourism development is a concept that is difficult to achieve because the economic growth that it brings leads to serious

ecological problems concerning the environment and the socio-cultural factors (Sharpley, 2000; Esparon, 2013).

The importance of this study cannot be set aside because the correlation between the residents' attitudes and their support for sustainable tourism will already be a good reference for those who will intend to explore the attitudes and support of other stakeholders in the tourism industry to get a whole picture of the possible conflicts in goals and prioritization relative to their concerns and needs. More importantly, this study will also serve as a reminder to tourism planners and developers alike that the residents are the recipients of both the benefits and the trade-offs which affect the quality of their lives (Sharply, 2000; Esparon, 2013).

## **2.1 Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Residents' Attitudes towards Tourism**

From the standpoint of social psychology, attitude is defined as the response derived from the evaluation of an idea, behavior, or object along with the measure of being favorable or unfavorable based on past experiences (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000). This is important stress in establishing later the correlation between the residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism in a destination and their support for such kind of planning and development. In this context, residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism shape their intentions to behave in a particular manner regarding the development and planning thereof (Peters et al., 2018).

Over the last decade, researches examining residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism have proliferated (Diedrich & Garcia-Buades, 2009; McGehee & Andereck, 2004). A growing number of conceptual theories and model frameworks have emerged linking the residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism with the existing local conditions pertaining to the socio-economic, cultural, spatial, demographic, and other aspects of the destinations concerned (Draper et al., 2011; Choi & Murray, 2010; Dyer et al 2007; Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Teye et al., 2002). The common denominator in the majority of the structural framework models is the use of the Social Exchange Theory (SET) as a major theoretical foundation for their work. The

main assumption of the SET as a theory for tourism research is that individuals' and groups' reactions on tourism interactions are determined by the economic consideration of balancing the intrinsic cost vis-à-vis the benefits of the situation. While costs almost certainly occur for the residents' side, their respective attitudes towards tourism can nevertheless be positive under the premise that their perceived level of service and empowerment are satisfactory. Thus, cost and benefit equilibrium is maintained (Ap, 1992; Cavus & Tanrisevdi, 2003). John Ap (1992) was the first to venture into using the social exchange process model in the tourism setting to contribute to the evolution of the modern social exchange theory (SET). As a result of this application, it was established that the perceived benefits of tourism development were influenced by the intentions to extend strong support towards the said development. Perceived costs, on the other hand, were impliedly linked with the intentions of extending low support for the same. Inspired by Ap's (1992) findings, subsequent works in the area of sustainable tourism used SET as a key foundation in order to explore the direct correlation between sustainability aspects and the residents' attitudes towards tourism (Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Gursoy et al., 2002; Jurowski et al., 1997). Subsequent studies (Dyer et al., 2007b; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Gursoy et al., 2002) applying structural equation modeling, have since then deepened the scope involving sustainable tourism by exploring the relationship between the destination's socio-economic as well as environmental factors and the residents' willingness to actively support and engage in tourism development. This was explored when examining residents' attitudes toward tourism development. An initial work that focused on the interplay of perceived costs and benefits affecting residents supporting tourism development, was Gursoy et al's (2002) "Residents' Attitudes: A structural modeling approach". In response to the limitations of latter studies' resulting models, Gursoy and Rutherford (2004) added further the dimension of a positive correlation between the socio-economic and cultural impacts of tourism with the support for tourism development in their structural model. They also established a negative correlation between the residents' perceived costs of the socio-cultural impact of tourism development on their support for the same. Later, Dyer et al. (2007b) came up with the conclusion corresponding to Gursoy and Rutherford's (2004) findings. His study established that tourism's negative impact on

the socio-economic and cultural factors also resulted to a negative intention of supporting the said development. Past structural models using SET distinctly mapped out residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism and their support for such kind of development. Analogous to Gursoy et al.'s (2002) and Gursoy and Rutherford's (2004) results, similar correlations were also established exhibiting that perceived costs of sustainable tourism negatively correlated with the support for its development (Martinez-Gonzalez et al., 2017). The perceived benefits of sustainable tourism, on the other hand, exhibited positive support for the development (Lee, 2013).

In conclusion, it could therefore be stated that literature provides strong evidence on the positive correlation between the residents' perceived benefits of sustainable tourism and their support for the said development and a negative correlation between the perceived costs of such a development and their support for it. The present study, therefore, presents the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** *Residents' perceived benefits of sustainable tourism positively correlated with their support for its development.*

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** Residents' perceived costs of sustainable tourism negatively correlated with their support for its development.

## **2.2 The New Environmental Paradigm ( NEP) and Residents' Attitudes Towards Environmental Sustainability**

The New Environmental Paradigm (NEP) was proclaimed by Dunlap and Van Liere (1978) as a framework of ideas to pass on criticism and establish an alternative to the predominant social paradigm of the 70s known as the "Utility Paradigm" (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005). Dunlap and Van Liere (1978, p. 10) considered the latter paradigm as fundamentally anti-ecological and needs to be replaced to avert catastrophes. NEP proponents stated that it was solely anthropocentric in its foundation and assumed that nature merely existed to be exploited by humans with the goal of achieving steady growth and maximum economic results (Barbour, 1973; Daly, 1973; Meadows et al.,

1972; Commoner, 1971). Therefore, they adopted a contrary view that brought indepth inquiry on the 20th-century status quo bringing to light new consensuses such as the right of humanity to cause the deterioration of the planet's natural balance, the neglect of limiting the growth of human societies, and humankind's supremacy over the entire of nature. From its adoption, the NEP especially the NEP Scale became a major concept in tourism researches involving the investigation of residents' attitudes towards environmental/ecological sustainability and environmental integrity (Dunlap et al., 2000). Based on existing studies, there are two prevalent opposing ideas that residents exhibited among a broad range of tendencies. The first is the belief that nature should be preserved and human interests should be subordinate to the need for environmental stability. The second is the notion that environmental deterioration resulting from developments serving human needs is justifiable based on the outcomes (Choi & Murray, 2010; Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Gursoy et al., 2010, 2002). These contending Man versus Nature ideas find their origin in Meadows et al.'s (1972) *Limits to Growth* work. They posited the collapse of the global economy in the 21st century if the environment's degradation remains unchecked and the natural resources are depleted (Howarth, 2012). Their proposals to avoid the collapse include the reduction of industrial use of natural resources as well as industrial pollution by 75%, population control through reproduction control or limit, and the distribution of goods to the poor people to improve quality of life (Howarth, 2012). These measures could not be achieved without the cooperation of men. The continuing attempts to reconcile the concepts of development and preservation greatly influenced major discussions in the 1980s among tourism practitioners (Swarbrooke, 1999). However, the tourism industry only came out with their proposals and strategies for environmentally sustainable developments through the World Travel and Tourism Council in 1995 as part of their Agenda 21 (Goodwin, 2016). Today, sustainable tourism continues to be a growing pursuit for the global tourism community and researchers alike. As expected, residents of mass tourist destinations hold either of the two opposing views earlier mentioned towards the right use of environmental resources and the conservation and protection of nature. These views ultimately shape their attitudes towards sustainable tourism in general and their level of support for it (Jones et al., 2000). Against this backdrop, literature provides

statistical evidence that residents with greater positive sustainability attitudes are likely to opine that the protection of the natural resources for tourism purposes leads to increased economic benefits for the destination's residents in general. This includes the increase in the individuals' perceived economic benefits and a decrease in the perceived social costs of tourism (Choi & Murray, 2010; Gursoy et al., 2002; Jamal & Getz, 1995). It can thus be said that the respective environmental attitudes of residents directly determine their individual level of support for sustainable tourism as environmental attitudes influence the perception of costs and benefits. Hence, these statements lead to the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 3 (H3):** *Residents' attitudes towards environmental sustainability correspond positively to their perceived economic benefits of sustainable tourism.*

**Hypothesis 4 (H4):** *Residents' attitudes towards environmental sustainability correspond negatively to their perceived social costs of sustainable tourism.*

**Hypothesis 5 (H5):** *Residents' attitudes towards environmental sustainability correspond positively to their support for sustainable tourism.*

### **2.3 Stakeholder Theory (ST) and Aspects of Sustainable Tourism**

Along with the Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the NEP, the Stakeholder Theory (ST) completes the triad of theoretical foundations upon which the majority of the contemporary studies on attitudes towards tourism rely (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005). The Stakeholder Theory originally forms a theory concerning the context of organizational management and is defined by the assumption that the purpose of a business entity is to create long term value not just for its shareholders or parties with monetary interest in it. Rather, it also considers parties surrounding it or related entities like customers, employees, suppliers and communities or the so-called "stakeholders" (Phillips, 2004).

Applying the Stakeholder Theory to the tourism context, the tourist destination can thus be seen as the central value-creating entity which interacts with a variety of

other parties or actors that depend on it, i.e. tourism businesses, support services, tourists, residents, the destinations ecosystems etc.. When contemplating sustainable tourism it stands out that its main properties correspond with the prime notions of ST. This is because it is a form of tourism which considers the current and future economic, social and environmental impacts on tourists, tourism businesses, local communities and the environment alike (Sharpley, 2000). Hence, several overlaps can be observed between ST and the core defining factors of sustainable tourism ultimately leading to the adoption of ST as a constant explanatory framework for sustainable tourism researches. In this light, a recent trend in tourism study particularly focuses on identifying and determining all crucial stakeholders of a destination and the creation of strategies to foster collaboration among them, in order to support and harmonize developmental processes and tourism planning (Byrd, 2007; Sautter & Leisen, 1999).

In examining sustainable tourism developments, residents of a tourist destination are frequently appraised as the stakeholder group that should be given extraordinary attention (Gursoy et al., 2010; Leo Theuns, 2002; Prayag et al., 2010). Latter evaluation stems naturally from the subject matter, as residents and especially their participation in developmental conceptualization and action can be seen as a key aspect and vital success determinant for sustainable tourism development (Hunter, 1997; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Uysal et al., 2016; Woosnam, 2012; Yu et al., 2011). As residents of a destination play a crucial role in sustainable tourism development, planners and implementers of development must encourage them to participate in the planning and management process to avoid possible conflicts (Byrd, 2007). The degree of their participation and involvement in tourism planning may be utilized as one of the reliable variables to measure or gauge the successful implementation of sustainable tourism in a destination (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Sirakaya et al., 200).

While researches exist on the correlation between the residents' attitudes and the support for sustainable tourism development, not many point out the correlation between the extent of *residents' participation* with their perceived economic benefits and their level of support (Nicholas et al., 2009). What was established in previous findings is the fact that residents acknowledged by planners and implementers and participated

in the planning process also perceived higher levels of economic benefits from sustainable tourism development (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Based on this observation on the impact of community participation in the sustainable tourism development process within the purview of the ST and SET, and the correlations posited in H1 to H5, the following hypotheses are added as additional assumptions for this study:

**Hypothesis 6 (H6):** *Residents' attitudes towards participation in sustainable tourism development positively correspond to their perceived economic benefits of the same.*

**Hypothesis 7 (H7):** *Residents' attitudes towards participation in sustainable tourism development negatively correspond to their perceived social costs of the same.*

**Hypothesis 8 (H8):** *Residents' attitudes towards community participation in sustainable tourism development positively correspond to their support for the said development.*

## **2.4 Measuring Sustainable Tourism Development Based on Residents' Attitudes and Support**

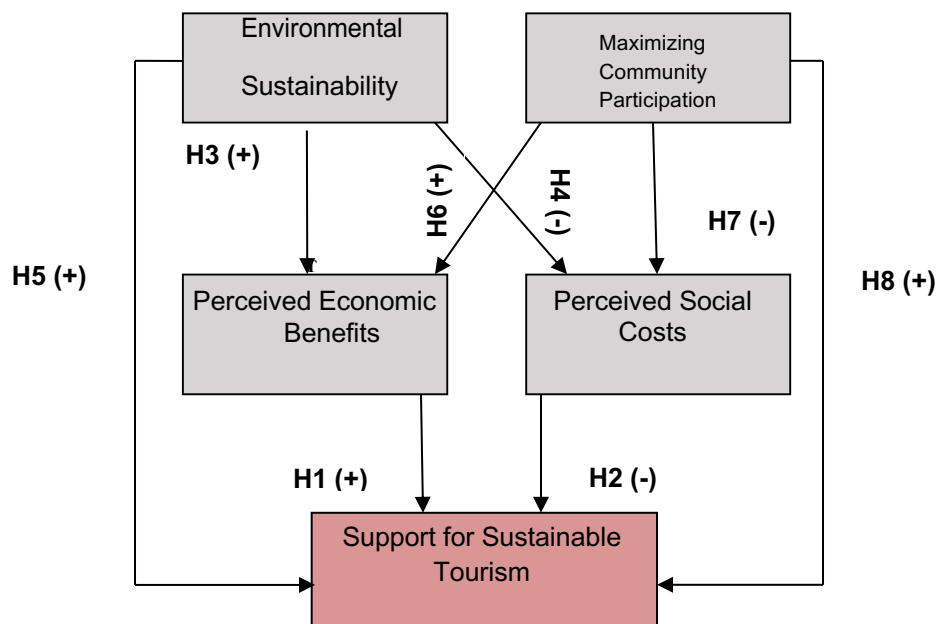
Contemporary tourism researches have spawned a variety of scales that specifically aim towards the empirical capture of host community stakeholder' attitudes concerning sustainable tourism development and its implications (Ap & Crompton, 1998; Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Lankford & Howard, 1994). However, it is the Sustainable Tourism Attitude Scale (SUS-TAS) proposed by Choi and Sirakaya (2005) that is considered the most appraised research instrument for gauging stakeholders' attitudes. For this reason, this study would like to find out if SUS-TAS from the standpoint of the Stakeholder Theory could establish the premise that host community residents are the primary or the focal point of any participative tourism planning and management forum. The attempt is to narrow down the focus from community stakeholders to just the residents to confirm the findings of various researches (Hsu et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2015; Sirakaya-Turk & Gursoy, 2013) that the latter is the most critical development

success determinant of participative tourism planning, management, and economic action. More importantly, it is intended to align with the focus of this present study which is the correlation between the residents' attitudes and their level of support for sustainable tourism. Derived from a variety of key literature on sustainability, SUS-TAS theoretical construct further focuses on thoroughly capturing major sustainable tourism principles based on the new environmental paradigm (NEP) and merge them with the economic, social, and psychological considerations of the social exchange theory (Ap, 1992). Also to be integrated are the Stakeholder Theory's key theoretical determinants shaping the residents' attitudes to create a scale that will serve as a reliable measure or gauge in examining residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism. The SUS-TAS dimensions in distinguishing residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism development identify seven (7) individual constructs, namely: perceived social costs, environmental sustainability, long-term planning, perceived economic benefits, community- centered economy, ensuring visitor satisfaction, and maximizing community participation (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005). This makes SUS-TAS capable of producing higher levels of analytical details and predictions concerning the residents' degree of acceptance and collective demands towards domains of sustainable tourism. Another advantage of using SUS-TAS as a measuring instrument is the fact that its robustness, psychometrical soundness, and predictive validity have already been proven and tested in a wide range of geographically, culturally, and contextually heterogeneous settings (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2015; Sirakaya-Turk & Gursoy, 2013; Yuet et al., 2011). It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that SUS-TAS is fit for universal application in a broad range of study contexts to analyze local populations' characteristics, including this present work. Previous researches have focused mostly on residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism (Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Gursoy et al., 2002; Jurowski et al., 1997) and less detail on the empiric evaluation of residents' support for sustainable tourism development. As a result, available literature has not yet yielded any scales on the matter which claim general validity and applicability across a broad variety of contexts as in the case of SUS-TAS (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Sirakaya-Turk et al., 2007; Ribiero et al., 2016; Hsu et al., 2020). Existing studies (Eslami et al., 2018; Hsu et al., 2019; Jun, 2016; Kitnuntaviwat

& Tang, 2008; Lee, 2013; Nicholas et al., 2009; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; Styliadis et al., 2014) have so far examined the dimension of residents' support for sustainable tourism concerning the economic and social impacts of sustainable tourism development. These works, however, do not come up with a generally accepted measure of residents' support levels mainly because the constructs were merely an elaboration of the main study purpose by the individual authors or group of authors. One aspect that is nevertheless evident among these studies, is that they partially exhibit continuity by the means of measuring residents' support for sustainable tourism development through constructs that have been adapted from the support indicators proposed by Nicholas et al. (2009) as part of their study examining residents' in St. Lucia (Eslami et al., 2018; Hsu et al., 2019; Lee, 2013). The aforementioned constructs are characterized by the property of measuring residents' support for sustainable tourism development through evaluating the respective individuals' intention to support a set of six aspects that can be seen as vital domains of successful sustainable tourism development (Lee, 2013). The variables considered by the measure consist of: 1) raising community-based tourism activities; 2) cultivating local participation in tourism development and planning development efforts; 3) fostering cultural exchanges and interaction between the tourists and locals; 4) supporting unity for tourism planning and development cooperation; 5) implementing environmental regulations and guidelines and 6) the promotion of conservation efforts and corresponding educational activities (Lee, 2013; Nicholas et al., 2009).

As a result of integrating the Stakeholder and Social Exchange theories in conjunction with the results of previous studies and researches mentioned (Lee, 2013; Nicholas et al., 2009) on the relationship between residents' attitudes toward sustainable tourism development and their support towards the same, present study sets up a research model consisting of two dimensions. The two-dimensional research model will incorporate the empirical evaluation of four main sustainable attitude variables of SUS-TAS, namely: environmental sustainability, perceived economic benefits, heightened community participation, and perceived social costs. These variables are believed to be directly relevant to the present work's hypotheses with the assessment of residents' level of support for sustainable tourism development by a set of indicators borrowed

from Lee (2013). The reason for this direct reference to the said studies (Lee, 2013; Nicholas et al., 2009) is because their studies involve destinations that have wetland attractions (Cigu Wetland) and heritage sites (Pitons at Saint Lucia) which are both present in this study's chosen site which is Algarve, Portugal (Vaz et al., 2012; Do Valle et al., 2011). This establishes the relevance of the findings and the referencing of the indicators. More importantly, both works explore the different factors affecting residents' support for sustainable tourism developments which is what this present study attempts to establish in correlation with their attitudes and the earlier identified variables. As a contributing work, it is expected that this dissertation's findings will either confirm or negate or elaborate and qualify the givens established by the aforementioned reference studies.



**Figure 1. Proposed Research Model of the Study**

## CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Study Site

The Algarve is a region located in the southernmost part of continental Portugal extending all along the country's 150 km long south coast (Do Valle et al, 2011) and enclosed by the Atlantic Ocean in the West as well as the Spanish border and the Gulf of Cadiz in the east. The region constitutes 5.6% of the total area of the Portuguese mainland (INE, 2010), expanding over an area of about 5,000 square kilometers which is divided into 16 municipalities that are home to over 450,000 permanent inhabitants (INE, 2011). The region's capital is Fara (Cruz, 2014; INE, 2019). The Algarve is well-known and acclaimed for its distinct mild climate all year-round and vast selection of different beaches responsible for the region's sun, sand and sea tourism. However, Algarve also offers other attractions in the form of historical, cultural and architectural heritage sites as well as rich culinary traditions and rural landscapes which draw visitors to the region (Do Valle et al., 2012; Pinto et al., 2016).



Figure 2. Map of the Algarve region (Source: Own adaption of Creative Commons Wikimedia)

The rise of several tourist amenities led to an increase in number of visitors and dynamic growth in the region since its establishment as an international tourist destination in the early 60s. This paved the way to Algarve's present status as the main

tourism hub in the region boasting of infrastructures and developments accommodating around 4.2 million tourists (both national and international) in 2018 (Do Valle et al., 2012; INE, 2019; Oliveira, 2018). Nevertheless, Algarve's success story also showed significant downsides for the region. The entire region lacks healthy economic diversification and is therefore almost solely dependent on tourism as a source of income rendering the local economy non-resilient towards fluctuations in the tourism market and industry as a whole (Romão et al., 2016; Videira et al., 2006). Due to the fact that Algarve's thriving tourism industry became the driving point of prosperity in the region, the integrity and authenticity of the tourism product's focal points namely environment, culture and community consequently became potentially at stake. This can be attributed to the extent and quality of previous tourism developments made (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Oliveira, 2018). As evident from literature Butler's Tourism Area Lifecycle Model (1980), the Algarve is insinuated to have reached the status of a mature destination dwelling in a period of stagnation (Pinto et al., 2016; Vargas-Sanchez et al., 2015). The growing negative environmental, social, cultural and economic impacts of tourism in the Algarve and the likelihood of stagnation were evident in the region in the late 90s (Romão et al., 2016). Subsequent undertakings to consolidate the regions condition and rejuvenate it as a tourist destination have not yet yielded sufficient results mostly for the reasons of major drawbacks caused by the 2008 economic crisis which had a major impact on the Algarve's tourism industry. As a result of the crisis, the region is still partially in the process of recovery in 2020 (Romão et al., 2016). Against this backdrop, the Algarve represents the ideal study setting in order to examine the relationship among residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism development and their level of support for it, to further contribute to the existing body of knowledge.

### **3.2 Survey Instrument and Measure**

In order to test the dissertation's hypotheses, a survey instrument was established based on literature review. To measure residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism in terms of the dimensions immediately relevant for the studies goals, four factors containing a total of 28 variables were adopted from the original 44-

item SUS-TAS by Choi and Sirakaya (2005) gauging residents' sentiments concerning perceived social costs, perceived economic benefits, environmental sustainability and maximizing community participation. The items under visitors' satisfaction, community-centered economy, and long-term planning were not included because they were not the main focal points of this study, thus the reduction to just 28 variables. The four factors earlier mentioned, however, are the anchors of the two-dimensional model of this study and are therefore indispensable. Furthermore, six variables in one construct were borrowed from Lee et al. (2013) in order to measure residents' support towards sustainable tourism development. Again, the variables taken from the Lee (2013) study were those specifically pointing to the factor of support, thereby excluding those which are not support-related variables. The variables taken from both Choi and Sirakaya (2005) as well as the ones from Lee et al. (2013) were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). The survey's final construct was designed to capture general socio-demographic characteristics and comprised of the variables like gender, age, length of residency, education, employment, individual net income (INI), and current marital status. Demographics were included with the aim of enabling detailed profiling of the respondents. Due to the fact that the measures adopted from previous research were solely available in English language the questionnaire was initially designed in English (see Appendix 1) and then translated to Portuguese (see Appendix 2) by an accredited translator. Adapting an approach commended by Brislin (1970), the Portuguese variables were translated back to English by a native Portuguese speaker and the result reviewed by two tourism scholars both fluent in Portuguese and English in order to cut out semantic errors that would lead to differences in meaning among the original scales and the Portuguese questionnaire intended for use.

### **3.3 Sampling and Data Collection**

Present study employed a quantitative approach in order gauge residents' attitudes and support levels. In order to be adequate for the statistical procedure target sample size was calculated based on adopting the most conservative estimate for a

sample proportion ( $p=0.5$ ), a 95% level of confidence and a maximum sampling error of 5% (Christopher Westland, 2010). As a result, the target sample size was determined to reach 384. The sampling was undertaken over the period of May 2020 to June 2020 in three of the Algarve's most popular municipalities namely; Albufeira, Loule and Portimão (Pinto et al.,2016).The study was originally intended to begin in early 2020 and be performed over a longer period of time. However, because of the outbreak of the global SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic and the resulting state of emergency in Portugal, the dates were adjusted when conditions were more permissible. Questionnaires were administered face-to-face to residents at least 18 years of age. Questionnaire administration was conducted by a total of 6 individuals including the author ( consistent enumeration of individuals involved is included in appendix. In order to gain participants for the study, people were approached randomly in public spaces such as streets, parks, terraces, cafes etc. but also among houses and offices.<sup>1</sup> If a questionnaire was filled out incompletely, it was discarded as missing data can create a significant bias in statistical results (Hair et al.,2014). A total number of 220 questionnaires were administered of which ultimately 207 were found to contain no missing data or errors therefore remaining for subsequent statistical analysis. Due to the aggravating circumstances under which the study was performed, the actual sample size only reached 53.91% of the pre-calculated target sample size.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The IBM SPSS 25 statistics software was used in order to capture and analyze the data gained by the survey. As a first step, descriptive analysis was undertaken to evaluate the samples characteristics followed by a reliability test applied to measure the internal consistency of the factors and construct regarding residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism and their support for sustainable tourism. As a mean of investigating present studies research hypotheses Pearson correlation analysis was undertaken in order to explore the relations among the grand means of the attitude and support variables (PSC, PEB, ES, MCP, SSTD). Ultimately, differences among the

socio-demographic characteristics were examined by an independent sample Kruskal-Wallis-Test.

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1 The author would like to highlight that over the course of conducting the survey, all necessary due diligence in terms of hygiene measures and social distance was applied in order to ensure the safety of respondents and interviewers alike , as well as to ensure observance of research ethics.

## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 Sample Characteristics

In addition to this descriptive report the demographic characteristics such as gender, age, length of residency in the Algarve, education, employment, individual net income and current marital status are summarized in Table 1 on the following page. The sample comprises of slightly more males (56.5%) than females (43.5%). In terms of age, the majority of the sample belongs to the age group of 45-55(23.2%) very closely followed by the age group of 25-34(20.8%). The variable 'length of residency' exhibited 73% of the sample lived in the Algarve for at least 10 years. Almost half of the respondents (46.4%) lived in the Algarve for a period even longer than 16years. Regarding the respondents' overall education level, the sample exhibits a consistency that rather leans towards non-academic qualification (basic education, secondary education and professional education) versus academic qualification (bachelor's degree, master's degree and doctorate).A total of 57.4% of the sample possesses an on-academic background while 42.5 at least hold or engage in a bachelor's degree. The majority of the samples shows that (58%) belongs to the working population while 35.3% of the respondents that work engage in a profession that is directly or indirectly associated with tourism. Latter occurrence is consistent with the previous assessment that tourism is a major contributor towards the Algarve regions 'economic prosperity (Romão et al.,2016;Videira et al.,2006). To complete the socio-demographic profile earlier identified, the samples also showed predominant range of individual net income per year between 15.001and 35.000€ which is consistent with the OECD (2020) estimate of Portugal's median income which 22.000\$ or 18.915.60€.. This speaks a lot of the economic status of the residents of the host destination concomitant to the sustainability of the tourism industry. Lastly, samples show that the current civil status of respondents consists mostly (53.1%) of married people, 40.1% are single and 6.8% used to have a partner but are divorced or widowed. This factor explores the angle that support for sustainable tourism stems from the economic benefits derived from it, which is normally gauged in terms of the existence of a family to support or none, which in turn affects the decision-making (Khalid et al., 2019).

**Table 1. Demographic Background Characteristics of the Sample**

<b>Variables (n=27)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	117	56.5%
Female	90	43.5%
Total	207	100%
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	32	15.5%
25-34	43	20.8%
35-44	32	15.5%
45-54	48	23.2%
55-64	37	17.9%
65 and older	15	7.2%
<b>Length of Residency</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1-3 years	19	9.2%
4-6 years	14	6.8%
7-9 years	23	11.1%
10-15 years	55	26.6%
More than 16 years	96	46.4%
<b>Education</b>		
Basic Education	9	4.3%
Secondary Education	58	28%
Professional Education	52	25.1%
Bachelor's Degree	58	28%
Master's Degree	25	12.1%
Doctorate	5	2.4%
<b>Employment</b>		
Tourism-related	73	35.3%
Non tourism-related	47	22.7%

Homemaker	14	6.8%
Student	40	19.3%
Currently Unemployed	9	4.3%
Retired	24	11.6%
<b>Individual Net Income</b>		
Under 15,000 €	77	37.2%
15,001-35,000€	87	42%
35,001-55,000€	34	16.4%
55,001-75,000€	8	3.9%
75,001-100,000€	1	0.5%
More than 100,000€	n/a	n/a
<b>Current Civil Status</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Single	83	40.1%
Married/In-a-relationship	110	53.1%
Divorced/Widowed	14	6.8%

## 4.2 Reliability Test

Assuming a statistics context, the term of reliability means the general consistency of the adopted measure and the internal consistency estimates of reliability. The most famous and common reliability coefficient used in order to gauge internal consistency is Tau-equivalent reliability ( $\rho_T$ ), more commonly referred to as Cronbach's Alpha. Applying Cronbach's Alpha to a scale, its coefficient can take a value in a range between 0 and 1 where 0 would signal complete inconsistency within the measure and a high level of error, while a value of 1 would imply no error and high consistency among variables. Within literature, the common threshold that is recommended in order to consider a measure acceptable in terms of internal consistency of its gauged dimensions and therefore sufficiently reliable is a value of  $\alpha \geq .70$  (Streiner, 2003). A reliability test was conducted for the four constructs of the SUS-TAS measuring

residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism development (PSC,PEB,ES,MCP) as well as the construct measuring residents ' support towards sustainable tourism development (SSTD) which were adopted by the present study. The results of the reliability test range from .684 to .822 (see Table 2 in the succeeding page). Except for the alpha value of the construct labeled "Maximizing Community Participation" , all of the measures' values are above the critical threshold of  $\alpha \geq .70$ . The measures of the PSC, PEB, ES and SSTD factors can therefore be considered sufficiently reliable to allow their use. Regarding the lower alpha value of MCP (.684) it can be said that statistics literature proposes that values .60 while not ideal in terms of internal consistency, can still be considered acceptable to adopt. The latter applies especially for measures with a low number of items (Streiner, 2003).

**Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha reliability of variables**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
<b>Residents' Attitudes towards Sustainable Tourism Development</b>		
Perceived Social Costs (PSC)	8	.822
Perceived Economic Benefits (PEB)	7	.774
Environmental Sustainability (ES)	9	.772
Maximizing Community Participation (MCP)	4	.684
<b>Residents' Support towards Sustainable Tourism Development</b>	6	.797

### 4.3 Descriptive Analysis

The respondents' perceptions in terms of the four SUS-TAS factors which are relevant for present works' hypotheses were all measured on 5-point Likert type scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). As outlined in Table 3 (see following page), the factor grand mean of Environmental Sustainability is the highest ( $M = 4.27$ ), followed by Perceived Economic Benefits in rank two ( $M = 4.1$ ), Maximized Community Participation in rank three ( $M = 3.84$ ) and Perceived Social Costs in the last rank ( $M = 2.1$ ).

The means of the PSC variables are all very closely distributed around a value of  $M = 2$  (disagreement) indicating that the respondents overall feel weak social costs from tourism. The only variables that seem to deviate mildly from disagreement are the ones concerning tourists' negative impact on the environment (PSC5;  $M=2.27$ ) and not feeling comfortable in tourism businesses (PSC8;  $M =2.25$ ).

In terms of Perceived Economic benefits, it can be said that the respondents seem to perceive the economic impact of tourism on their community as very positive with all of the PEB factor's variables exhibiting means of  $M \approx 4$ . Particularly agreed upon are the economic benefits for the community (PEB3;  $M= 4.25$ ) and the fact that tourism creates new markets for local products (PEB5;  $M =4.27$ ).

As previously mentioned, respondents showed a strong agreement towards environmental sustainability statements indicating that they exhibit a strong positive stance towards environmental conservation and its importance for the community. All means of the factor lie over a value of  $M = 4$  while the variable concerning the importance of conducting environmental protection for the future generations is particularly agreed upon (ES8;  $M = 4.37$ ).

Finally, determinants of Maximized Community Participation are also thoroughly assessed positively by the study's participants with all means of the factor reaching an approximate of  $M = 4$ (agreement). Further, the variable that is clearly agreed upon mostly by the sample is the one concerning the opportunity of participating in tourism development decisions (MCP3;  $M = 4.17$ ). Thus, it is reasonable to state that the

respondents appear to have strong positive sentiments toward the benefits of community participation particularly the potential of each and every member of the community to participate in the process.

**Table 3. Descriptive Analysis of the SUS-TAS Factors**

	<b>Mean<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Perceived Social Costs (PSC)</b>	<b>2.1<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>.599</b>
I often feel irritated because of tourism in my community (PSC1)	1.91	.855
Tourists in my community disrupt my quality of life (PSC2)	1.99	.750
My community is overcrowded because of tourism development (PSC3)	2.21	.825
Community recreational resources are overused by tourists (PSC4)	2.17	.993
I believe the quality of the environment in my community has deteriorated because of tourists (PSC5)	2.27	.978
Tourism is growing too fast	2.08	.858
My quality of life has deteriorated because of tourism (PSC7)	1.92	.827
I do not feel comfortable or welcome in local tourism businesses (PSC8)	2.25	1.062
<b>Perceived Economic Benefits (PEB)</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>.493</b>
I believe tourism is a strong economic contributor to my community (PEB1)	4.13	.586
Tourism benefits other industries in communities (PEB2)	4.06	.701
I believe tourism is good for communities' economies (PEB3)	4.25	.809
Tourism diversifies the local economy (PEB4)	3.97	.934
Tourism creates new markets for local products (PEB5)	4.27	.802
I like tourism because it brings new income to communities (PEB6)	4.03	.727
Tourism generates substantial tax revenues for the local government (PEB7)	4.06	.694
<b>Environmental Sustainability (ES)</b>	<b>4.27</b>	<b>.384</b>
The diversity of nature must be valued and protected (ES1)	4.4	.572
Tourism must protect the tourism businesses environment (ES2)	4.03	.818
Proper tourism development requires that wildlife and natural habitats be protected at all times (ES3)	4.21	.720
Community environment must be protected now and for the future	4.26	.613

(ES4)		
Tourism development must promote positive environmental ethics among all parties with a stake in tourism (ES5)	4.2	.561
Tourism must be developed in harmony with the natural and cultural environment (ES6)	4.43	.551
I think tourism developers should strengthen efforts for environmental conservation (ES7)	4.31	.558
I think tourism must improve the environment for future generations (ES8)	4.37	.601
Regulatory environmental standards are needed to reduce the negative impacts of tourism development (ES9)	4.05	.811
<b>Maximized Community Participation (MCP)</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>.589</b>
Tourism decisions must be made by all in communities regardless of a person's background (MCP1)	3.82	.906
Full participation in tourism decision making by everyone in the community is a must for successful tourism development (MCP2)	3.56	.856
Communities' residents should have an opportunity to be involved in tourism development (MCP3)	4.17	.734
Sometimes, it is acceptable to exclude a community's resident from tourism development decisions (MCP4)	3.86	.781

Residents' support for sustainable tourism development was also measured on a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Following this paragraph, Table 4 shows the SSTD variables means as well as the cumulatively calculated grand mean for the SSTD construct. The data obtained from the survey show that the respondents exhibit clear support towards sustainable tourism development in terms of the individual variables assessed through the support construct adopted by present study. The grand mean of the construct (M = 4.25) indicates overall agreement towards it. Thus, it can be assumed that the respondents are likely to support measures of sustainable tourism development. Five of the constructs' variables exhibit a clear mean of M 4 with the only exception being the variable regarding cultural exchange with tourists (M =3.99).

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<sup>3</sup> Factor Grand Mean used for subsequent correlation analysis

<sup>4</sup> Each item was evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree

**Table 4. Descriptive Analysis of the SSTD Construct**

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Support for Sustainable Tourism Development (SSTD)</b>	<b>4.25</b>	<b>.568</b>
I support the development of community-based tourism initiatives (SSTD1)	4.28	.875
I support local participation in tourism planning and development (SSTD2)	4.16	.771
I support cultural exchanges between local residents and visitors (SSTD3)	3.99	.990
I support cooperation and unity in tourism planning and development (SSTD4)	4.19	.795
I support regulatory environmental standards to reduce the negative impacts of tourism (SSTD5)	4.31	.752

#### **4.4 Correlation of SUS-TAS Factors and SSTD Construct**

In order to test the proposed hypotheses of this study, the statistical test of Pearson R Correlation was applied to the data in order to measure the potential correlations between the different factors gauging the residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism development and the construct concerning their support for the same. Within a Pearson R test the resulting absolute correlation values between two observed pairs of variables can theoretically take on values ranging from -1 to 1 while a positive value is associated with a positive correlation among two variables and vice versa. The correlations obtained through the analysis are usually contemplated against a significance level of  $p = 0,01$  or  $p = 0,05$ . The smaller the  $p$  value under which the uncovered correlation is still significant, the more likely is a rightly rejection of the null hypotheses (Samuels, 2015). As Table 5 shows do all positive and negative correlations that were revealed by the conducted Pearson R test exhibit significance at the level of  $p = 0.01$  and are therefore highly significant. The data suggest that all of the thesis' hypotheses are supported (See Table 7.). The correlation table also affirms the earlier

observation in Section 4.3 (on SUS-TAS factors) that the residents' strongest agreement was in the area of environmental sustainability which was interrelated to their agreement towards maximizing community participation as a matter of support for sustainable tourism development. The overall results of the SSTD construct likewise affirm the support for the said development endeavor. These findings are important in the sense that they confirm Sirakaya-Turk's (2007) recommendation that SUS-TAS must be utilized as an independent variable to predict other related variables to establish its predictive validity (Ribeiro et al., 2018). Secondly, it confirms Ribeiro et al.'s (2018) findings on the use of SUS-TAS perceived costs and benefits as precursors to residents' support for sustainable tourism development.

**Table 5. Correlations of SUS-TAS Factors and SSTD Construct**

*Correlations*

		PSCmean	PEBmean	ESmean	MCPmean	SSTDmean
PSCmean	Pearson Correlation	1	-,723**	-,406**	-,458**	-,728**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000	,000
	N	207	207	207	207	207
PEBmean	Pearson Correlation	-,723**	1	,421**	,375**	,704**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,000	,000
	N	207	207	207	207	207
ESmean	Pearson Correlation	-,406**	,421**	1	,189**	,480**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000		,006	,000
	N	207	207	207	207	207
MCPmean	Pearson Correlation	-,458**	,375**	,189**	1	,450**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,006		,000
	N	207	207	207	207	207
SSTDmean	Pearson Correlation	-,728**	,704**	,480**	,450**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	,000	
	N	207	207	207	207	207

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 6. Summary of Hypotheses test**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Correlation Hypothesis</b>	<b>Result</b>
H1	Perceived Economic Benefits +-(+)--+ Support for Sustainable Tourism	Support
H2	Perceived Social Costs +-(-)--+ Support for Sustainable Tourism	Support
H3	Environmental Sustainability +-(+)--+ Perceived Economic Benefits	Support
H4	Environmental Sustainability +-(-)--+ Perceived Social Costs	Support
H5	Environmental Sustainability +-(+)--+	Support
H6	Maximizing Community Participation +-(+)--+ Perceived Economic Benefits	Support
H7	Maximizing Community Participation +-(-)--+ Perceived Social Costs	Support
H8	Maximizing Community Participation +-(+)--+ Support for Sustainable Tourism	Support

#### **4.5 Differences in Socio-demographic Properties**

Most commonly an independent sample t-test is conducted in order to compare the means of two independent groups so as to examine whether statistically significant differences exist between them. Nevertheless, can the independent sample t-test only compare two groups therefore excluding its use in order to examine present study's data. In order to alternatively compare the means of more than two groups with each other, one-way analysis of variance ANOVA is the most frequently used method to in order to determine differences. However, do examined variables of the survey include ordinal-scaled instances thus violating the requirements of applying ANOVA (Hair et al., 2014). If the assumptions of ANOVA are not met by the data, the rank-based Kruskal-Wallis test is recommended as an alternative. Therefore, an independent sample Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine potential differences among groups regarding the level of support for sustainable tourism development. The test's critical p-value for statistical significance of differences and thus rejecting the null-hypothesis was set to be the common standard of  $p = 0.05$ . As Table 7 shows (see next page), do statistically significant differences appear to exist among respondents with different lengths of residency, different educational levels and different professions.

**Table 7. Differences among groups - results of Kruskal Wallis Test**

<b>Variables (n = 207)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>SSTD</b>	
		Mean Rank	p
<b>Gender</b> Male Female	117 90	100,04 109,15	0,273
<b>Age</b> 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65 or older	32 43 32 48 37 15	116 110,71 107,45 83,98 107,76 106,06	0,178
<b>Length of residency</b> 1-3 Years 4-6 Years 7-9 Years 10-15 Years More than 16 Years	19 14 23 55 96	132,74 145,21 132,74 95 90,57	0,001
<b>Education</b> Basic Education Secondary Education Professional Education Bachelor's Degree Master's Degree Doctorate	9 58 52 58 25 5	79,94 80,83 89,82 127,22 128,16 173,5	0,001
<b>Employment</b> Tourism related job Non tourism related job Home-maker Student Currently unemployed Retired	73 47 14 40 9 24	105,19 79,15 107,14 125,49 113,17 107,96	0,016
<b>Individual net income</b> Under 15.000€ 15.001-35.000€ 35.001-55.000€ 55.001-75.000€ 75.001-100.000€ More than 100.000€	77 87 34 8 1 n/a	109,38 93,46 109,47 137,25 154,4 n/a	0,14
<b>Current marital status</b> Single Married / In a relationship Divorced / Widowed	83 110 14	112,19 101,27 76,89	0,093

## Chapter 5. Discussion & Conclusion

The matter of residents attitudes towards sustainable tourism development has so far been examined in a wide variety of destination contexts and with a broad range of study purposes (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Gidebo., 2019; Hsu et al., Ribeiro et al., 2018; Sirakaya-Turk et al., 2008; Sirakaya-Turk & Gursoy,2013;Yu et al.,2011; Zhang et al.,2015). However, to date, there have been very limited ones focusing on the correlation of residents' attitudes with their level of support for sustainable tourism development especially for mature mass tourism destinations (Hsu et al.,2019; Lee, 2013). As a result, the present dissertation's aim is to contribute to this particular focus and add findings that may either be complementary or an elaboration of the previous results especially as the project site is a mass tourism destination located in Portugal.

In terms of the four sustainable development SUS-TAS attitude factors explored in the study, the Algarve residents appear to have a positive assessment of the impact of tourism in their region. They perceive that tourism brings great benefits to their community at the same time sensing a rather weak negative influence of tourism in their personal social lives and on the integrity of their communities. While the fact that negative tourism impacts are perceived as negligible by the populace of a mature tourism destination, still overtime the effects of deterioration become apparent. Paradoxically, the observation finds its credibility in the Social Exchange Theory and the fact that attitudes toward tourism reflect intrinsic cost and benefits considerations (Ap, 1992). The Algarve residents perceive a high extent of economic benefits that come along with tourism, thus leading them to perceive the negative social impact as less severe which is consistent with the findings of the previous works (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005;Gursoy et al.,2010, 2002; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). This similar finding may additionally be viewed based on Algarve's high dependency on tourism as its main driver of economic prosperity which is reflected in the present study through the participation of respondents who are mostly employed in tourism-related jobs or activities. A further finding in this present study is the fact that Algarve residents have one of the most positive stances toward environmental sustainability on a long-term basis. The aforementioned result is consistent with the outcomes of similar studies in

different destination contexts (Nicholas et al., 2009; Hsu et al., 2019; Eslami et al., 2018; Lee, 2013). A corresponding evaluation of the study participants' reactions on the negative environmental impacts of tourism in the Algarve, suggest that this is consistent with the findings of previous studies (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Gursoy et al., 2002; Jamal & Getz,1995).pointing out residents' awareness on the importance of environmental preservation and protection. Specifically, residents of economically successful tourism destinations understand the importance of the environment as a resource upon which the integrity of the destination's attractions is anchored. Therefore their immediate economic benefits depend upon how they will proactively support environmental conservation measures (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Gursoy et al., 2002; Jamal & Getz,1995).

The final outcome of present study in terms of residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism development was that the study's respondents showed a high extent of agreement towards the importance and necessity of community participation in tourism development. This finding corresponds with the assumptions of the Stakeholder Theory applied to a tourism context which point out the cruciality of recognition and inclusion of all destination's stakeholders, particularly residents in the developmental process (Gursoy et al., 2010; Hunter, 1997; Leo Theuns, 2002; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Prayag et al.,2010; Uysal et al., 2016; Yu et al., 2011). The result is also consistent with the findings of previous works that continually showcased and agreed on the importance of community participation as a dimension of tourism development apart from the resulting samples and the study settings.

A further dimension that was measured within this dissertation's research undertaking was the Algarve residents' support towards sustainable tourism. It could be established that the respondents in this study exhibited overwhelming in-depth support for sustainable tourism based on their agreement on six determining aspects of sustainable tourism development which were proposed as measures by Lee (2013) in his study.

Mentioned outcome could have been anticipated based on the result of this work's correlation analysis which aspired to determine direct relationships among four factors of residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism development (PSC, PEB, ES, MCP) and their level of support towards it. The survey data indicated that various direct positive and negative correlations exist among attitudes and support. It can therefore be assumed that the expression of residents' support toward sustainable tourism development can be anticipated by the means knowledge about their attitudes toward it and vice-versa. All of present work's hypotheses with regards the correlation between attitudes and support for sustainable tourism were supported by the resulting data (See Table 6.). This result also corroborates with the assumptions of previous which stated that residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism and their level of support should exhibit significant interrelations between them (Choi & Sirakaya,2005; Dyer et al.,2007a; Gursoy et al., 2002 ;Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Lee, 2013; Martinez Gonzalez et al., 2017; Nicholas et al., 2009; Sirakaya-Turk & Gursoy, 2013). As a result of the statistical analysis of differences among groups within this work's sample, it was further shown, that significant differences in terms of the respective level of support for sustainable tourism development exist with regard individual length of residency, education level and employment. The differences lie particularly in the level or extent of the impact of sustainable tourism individually and on their families.

## **5.1 Theoretical and Managerial Implications**

In terms of theoretical implications, the results of this study shows that a direct correlation between residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism development and their level of support for it do exists on a statistically significant level. An important notion stemming from this is the assumption that residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism development exhibit the potential to act as a limited predictor for residents' support towards such development and vice-versa. This statement has yet to be seen under the premise that in order to gauge residents' attitudes and derive predictions about their level of support, a valid measuring instrument with strong predictive properties is used. A corresponding instrument nevertheless appears to be

available for tourism researchers in form of SUS-TAS and its individual factors grasping onto different determinant dimensions of sustainable tourism development. Additionally, the consideration of the detailed expression observed by present work can lead to further insights on the theoretical level. As of the time of sampling, an important dimension to be considered in future studies would be that of the implication of COVID-19 on tourism and tourist destinations. This may have an imperative impact on the residents' attitudes and support for sustainable tourism in the sense that their dependency on tourism as an industry may greatly affect the economic status of the destinations and the communities therein over a long-term and indeterminable period (Sultana et al., 2020). It will also definitely have serious implications on the findings of previous works which were conducted during an unperturbed season of global tourism.

There were two correlations with the highest significance present in the study. First were those in the form of substantial positive correlation between the residents' perceived economic benefits and their level of support for sustainable tourism development. The second were those that exhibited a strong negative correlation between the residents' perceived social costs and their level of support for sustainable tourism. This is why the component on individual net income and the current civil status was relevant to the study because the outcome leading to the correlations were influenced by these two factors. These two correlation statements point toward the assumption that the cost-benefit considerations as part of SET - which play a major part for the theoretical foundation of examining community residents' attitudes in a tourism context - are just as well conferrable towards the contemplation of community residents' level of support for sustainable tourism development.

Additionally, the strong positive residents' attitudes towards environmental sustainability and their level of support can also be seen in the light of SET as a determining concept for support towards sustainable tourism development. This is due to the fact that the thorough appreciation of environmental sustainability as a necessary dimension of sustainable tourism development is likely to be affected by residents' intrinsic cost-benefit balances. Environmental sustainability is widely accepted among tourist destination's populace as an integral part of their tourism product. They

understand that the integrity of the local environment and ecosystems directly affects the destination's attractiveness and success. Hence, the understanding that this is indirectly affecting the residents' individually perceived benefits which play the major role for residents' levels of support for sustainable tourism development.

A similar assumption can be made in terms of ST as an explanatory framework for the positive correlation between maximizing community participation with support for sustainable tourism development. This premise points towards the importance of ST's key assertions regarding the importance of stakeholder recognition and participation in explaining and predicting support for sustainable tourism development.

A final theoretical implication that resulted from present work's findings is the notion that certain demographic factors appear to stand in connection with residents' level of support towards sustainable tourism development. However, due to the fact that this statement is made based on the results of Kruskal-Wallis analysis, the assumed implication has to be seen critically as the applied mean of analysis only leads to outcomes with limited validity.

Present study demonstrates level of support towards sustainable tourism development in the Algarve. The findings of this work suggest clear implications for managers and tourism planners of this respective location.. The first indication that was established was that the support towards sustainable tourism among the Algarve residents appears to be generally high. It is therefore expected that if sustainable tourism development is considered with the aim of preventing further stagnation in the region, the inhabitants will take a positive view of the process leading to a decrease in implementation hurdles. However, as earlier mentioned, this may change in the light of the effects of COVID-19 on tourist destinations solely dependent on tourism for their industry and lack diversification (Sultana et al., 2020). Further, the findings of this study nevertheless imply that hypothetical development programs for the Algarve need to ensure positive economic outcomes for all residents', the active prevention of strong social impacts and a clear focus on long-term environmental protection and corresponding regulatory frameworks. This includes as well as the establishment of distinct participation channels that must be accessible for each and every resident of the

region. It must also be considered concerning the effect of tourism holiday forcibly due to COVID-19 on the environmental health of the destination which must be taken into account during the planning.

## **5.2 Study Limitations and Future Research**

As with any particular type of research, present study is subject to certain limitations and shortcomings in terms of scope and applied methodology. Nevertheless, these limitations should be mainly seen as an opportunity for future research which can follow up and elaborate on the results obtained by this work.

Regarding the random sampling method employed by the survey it can be said that it holds the potential to create biased outcomes as it does not realistically reflect the actual general demographic composition of an examined population. A more appropriate approach towards sampling for future studies should be quota sampling which supports the acquisition of a sample distribution that is equivalent to the actual population's distribution in terms of factors such as gender and age (Hairet al.2014).

A further limitation concerning the study's sample was its size. In order to reach a 95% confidence level for the survey results, a target sample size of 384 was computed. Due to the COVID19 situation in Portugal the final sample size of the study only reached 53.91% of the target sample causing study results to exhibit limited validity. Studies leading to the examination of further research questions related to residents' attitudes and support towards sustainable tourism development in the Algarve as well as a review of the present study under normal circumstances are therefore required to obtain appropriate samples in terms of size and composition. This would require revisiting the study site minus the pandemic.

Additionally, as the study only used cross sectional data, it could not reflect comprehensively the long-term changes which may occur on the Algarve residents' attitudes and support level. This is especially important to consider in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic which greatly affected the economic situations of tourist

destinations dependent mainly on tourism for their revenues (Sultana et al., 2020). Future studies should therefore consider an extended time frame to observe potential developmental processes of residents' attitudes and support towards sustainable tourism development. They should consider the changes in the attitudes and support of the residents towards sustainable tourism after having gone through the COVID-19 impact which surfaced the danger of the lack of diversification of industries in the region.

In terms of the adopted method of data analysis, one may argue that simple Pearson R analysis isn't able to sufficiently grasp on the expression and significance of relationships among residents' attitudes and support levels. While chosen methodology was sufficient for the immediate aims of this thesis, the present matter should be revisited under the application of advanced statistical techniques such as Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) which is the most commonly used analysis method among previous works concerning residents' attitudes and support towards sustainable tourism development (Ribeiro et al.,2018).

The Kruskal-Wallis analysis of the data generated by present study exhibited initial indications of the fact that relationships among sample groups and support for sustainable tourism development exist. Future research should therefore focus in depth and with more appropriate methodology on mentioned correlation as they can contribute greatly to the relevance of the topic.

While residents' certainly represent one of the most important stakeholder groups of a tourist destination, the sustainable tourism theory in conjunction with the Stakeholder theory highlights the need and importance of considering the other stakeholder groups in the process. It should therefore be recommended that future researches on the subject (attitudes and support towards sustainable tourism development in the Algarve ) also focus on other groups comprising the region's entire tourism ecosystem such as the tourists, the government agencies or entities and the various tourism businesses and support services.

The findings of this study will also be especially helpful for future studies involving COVID-19 pandemic and tourism planning and development. The reason for

this as earlier mentioned is the fact that the residents' perception and attitudes towards tourism as an industry may change in the light of the effects of COVID-19 on tourist destinations. This is particularly true for areas that are solely dependent on tourism for their industry and lack diversification (Sultana et al., 2020). Again, it must be considered in future studies that the goal of environmental preservation and rejuvenation is already achieved during the COVID-19 period due to the forced tourism holiday.

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## APPENDIX - Questionnaires