

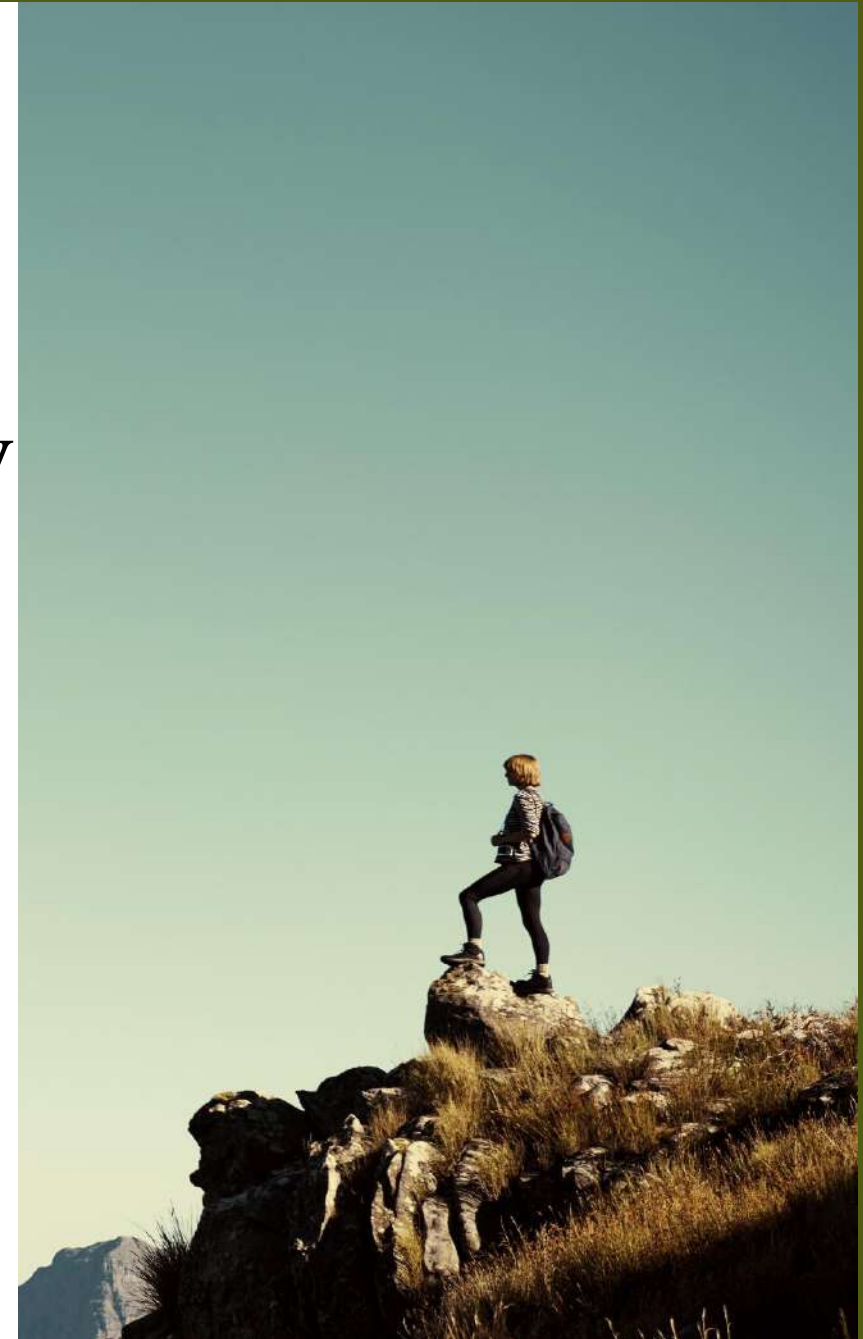


THE PERCEPTIVE DUALITY OF SUSTAINABILITY: EVALUATION OF SERVICE QUALITY FROM EMPLOYEE AND TOURIST PERSPECTIVES IN A COMMUNITY-BASED ECOTOURISM DESTINATION

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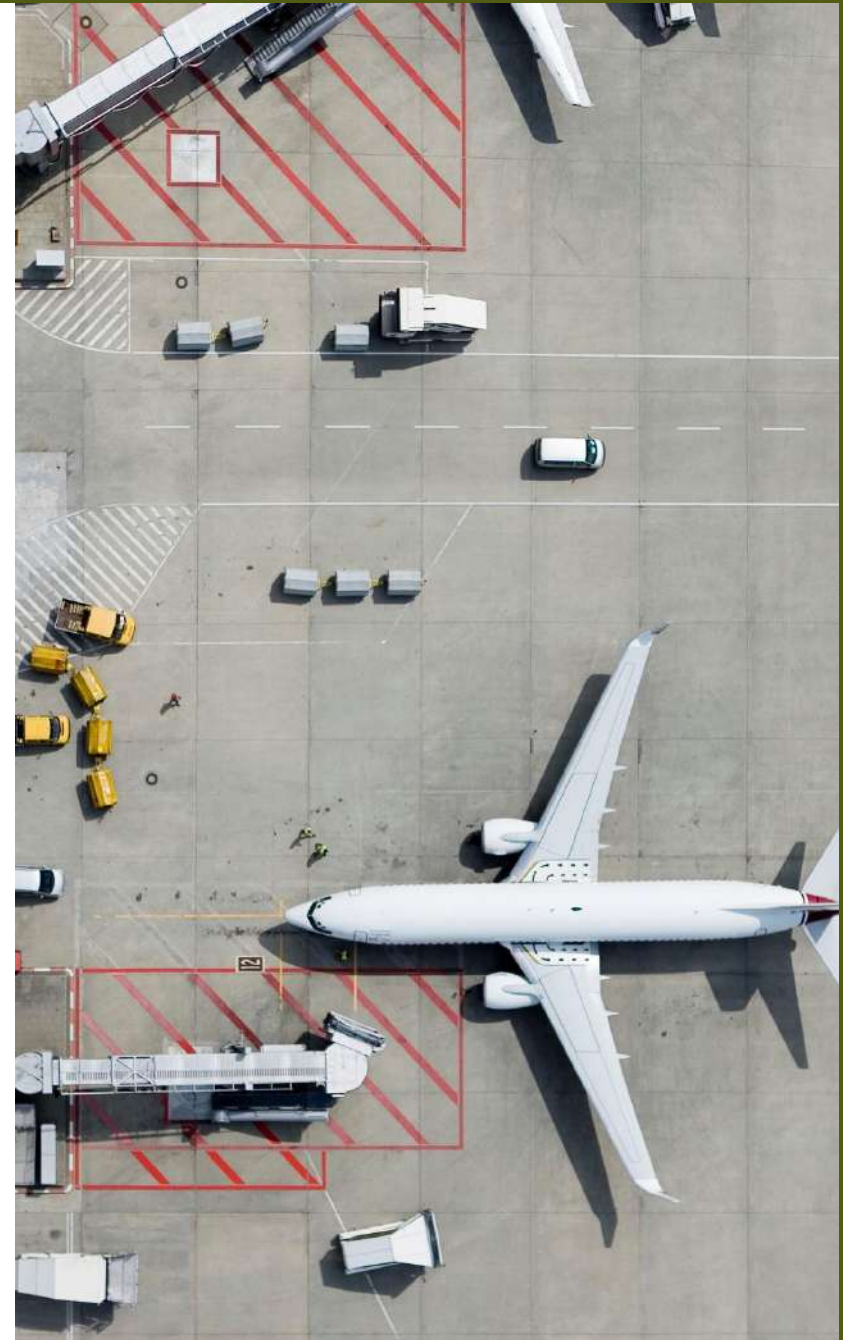
Introduction

- Perceptive Duality of Sustainability
- Community-Based Ecotourism in Fiji
- Whether employees and tourists perceive sustainable practices, differently?



Overview of Literature

- Scant Literature in this area.
- Dedeoglu and Demirer (2015) between customers, managers and employees.
- Other Studies are between tourist expectations and reality.
- Tsang and Qu (2000): tourist perceptions of service quality are lower than expectations.



Overview of Literature

- Loizos and Lycourgos (2005) find a gap between expectations and perceptions of service quality provided by Hotels in Cyprus.
- Zakaria et al. (2009) found a 24.7% variation between tourists' expectations and perceptions of service quality in Malaysia.
- In Fiji, community-based ecotourism creates jobs and income for local communities (Kanemasu, 2015; Hall & Higham, 2005).



Significance of Study

- Existing literature - valuable insights into the role of community-based ecotourism in sustainable tourism development and its positive impacts on the economic conditions, environment, and cultural preservation.
- However, research is still needed on the credibility of the sustainability of community-based ecotourism destinations to assess whether we are meeting tourist expectations.



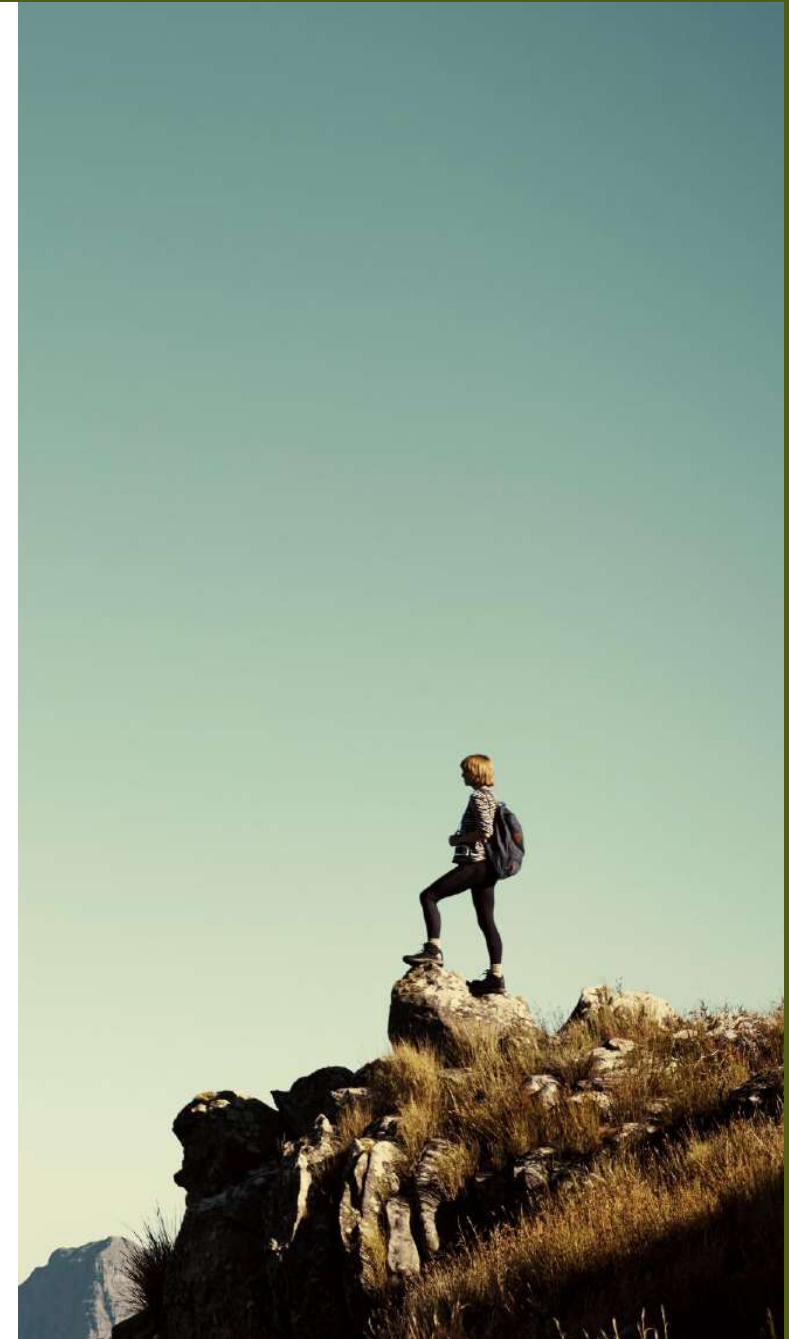
Methodology

- SERVQUAL model was utilized for this study (Parasuraman, 1988; Kamal et al., 2018).
- The same structured questionnaire was provided to both tourists visiting the site and employees.
- Convenience sampling (employees): 18 employees volunteered to participate.
- On-site intercept based on convenience sampling was also used to select tourists: 39 tourists volunteered to participate.



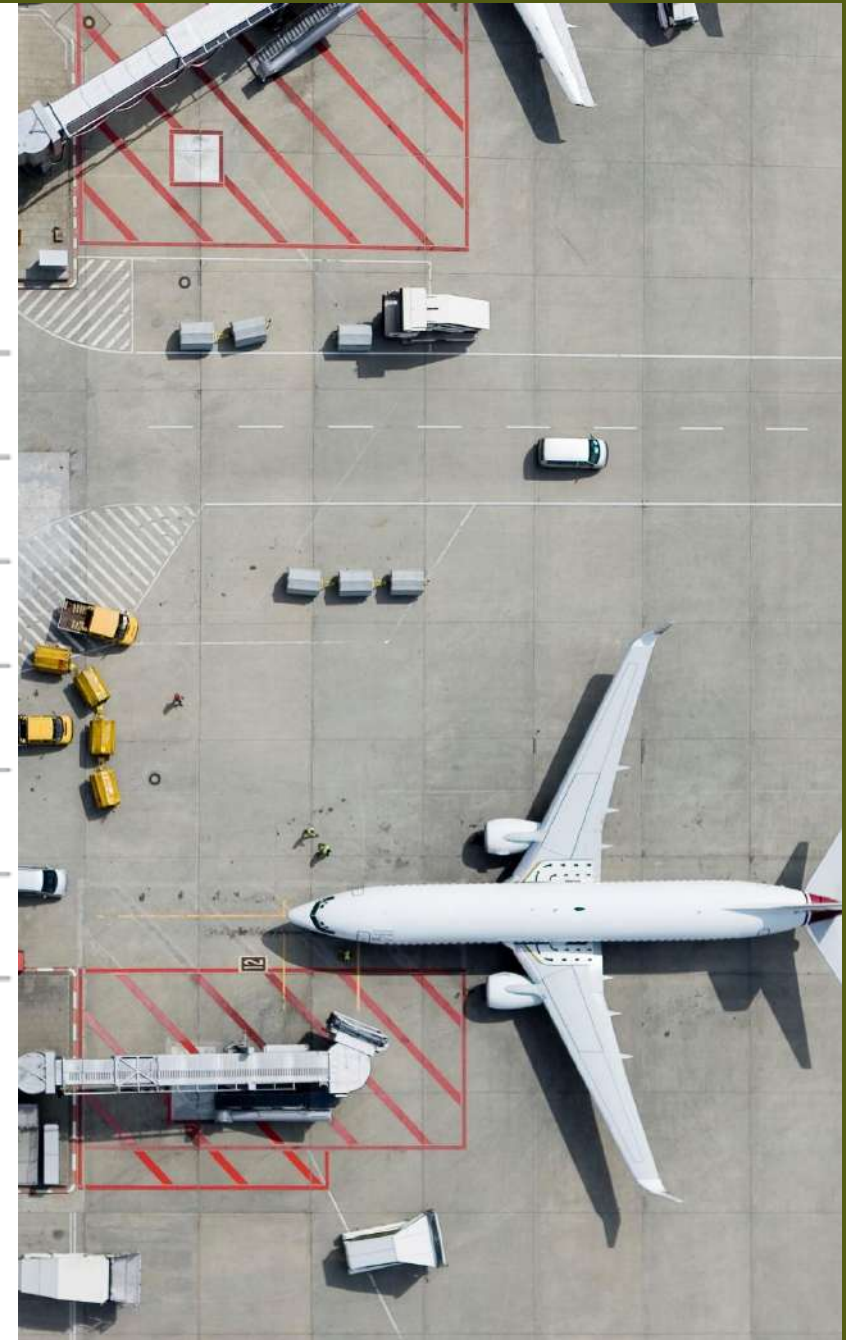
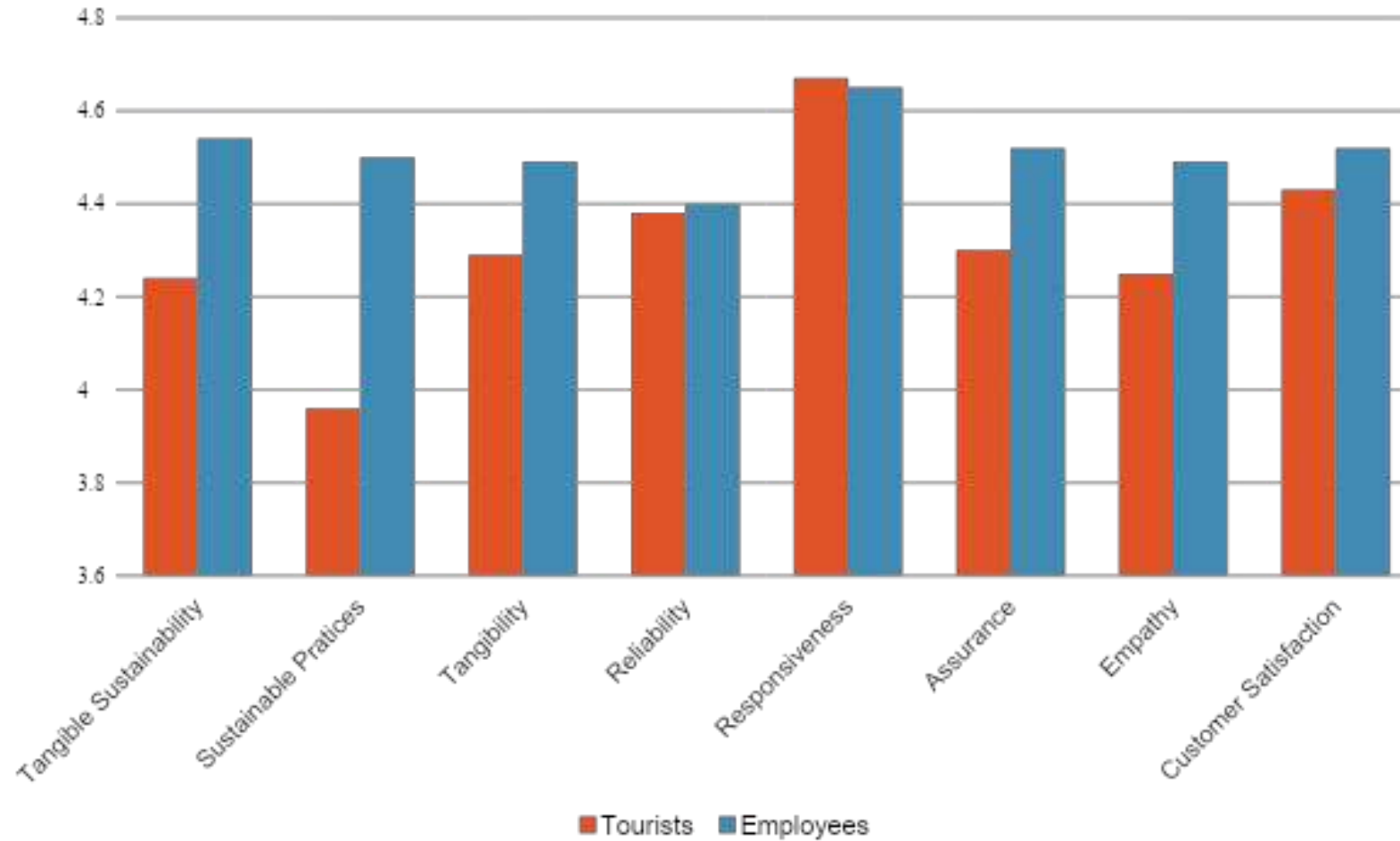
Methodology

- Dimensions studied:
 1. Tangible Sustainability
 2. Sustainable Practices
 3. Tangibility
 4. Reliability
 5. Responsiveness
 6. Assurance
 7. Empathy
 8. Customer Satisfaction

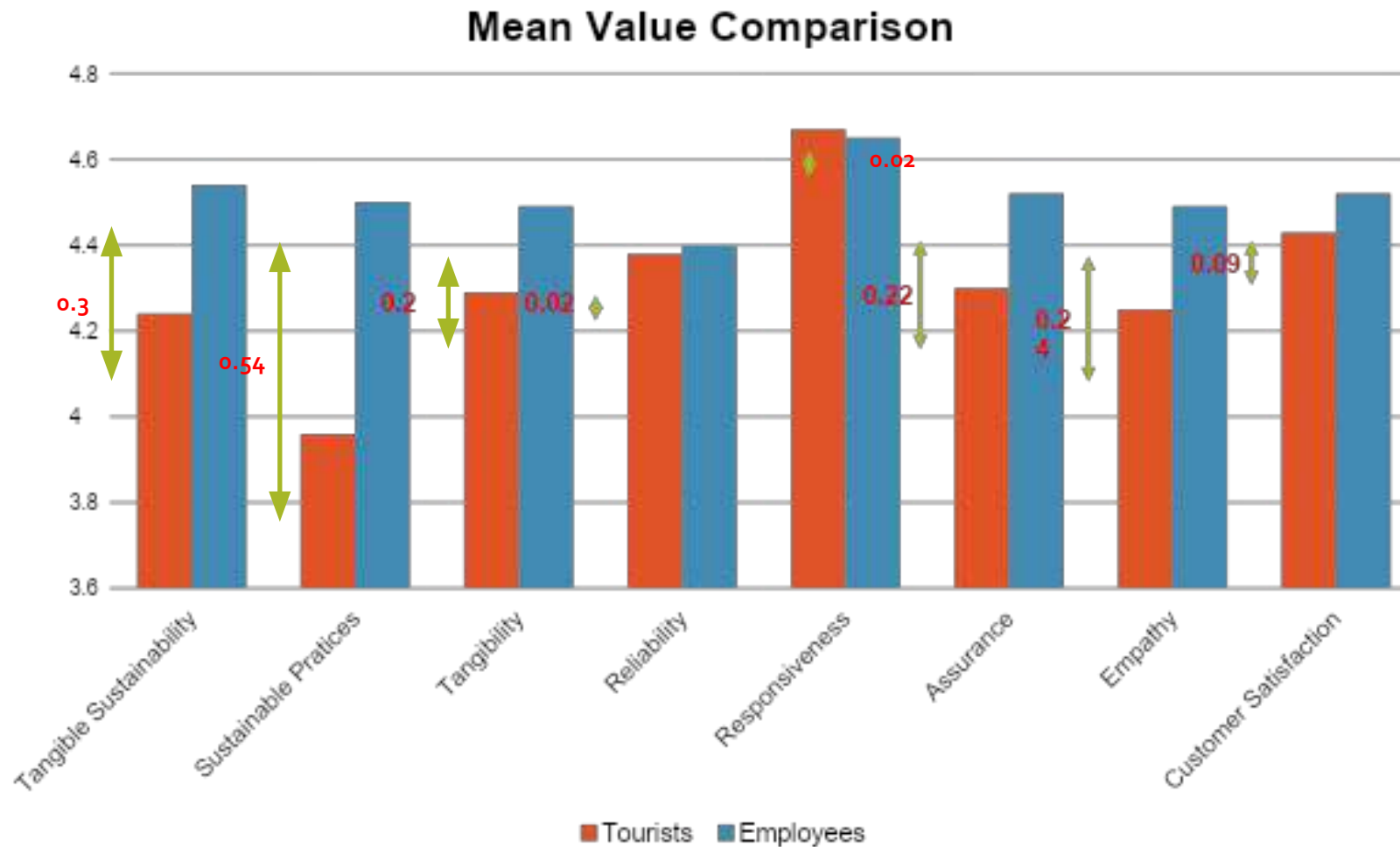


Results

Mean Value Comparison



Results



Discussion

- Sustainable Practices show the highest level of difference between Employee and Tourist Perceptions.
- Followed by Tangible Sustainability, Empathy, Assurance and Tangibility.
- Both Sustainable factors with the highest difference.



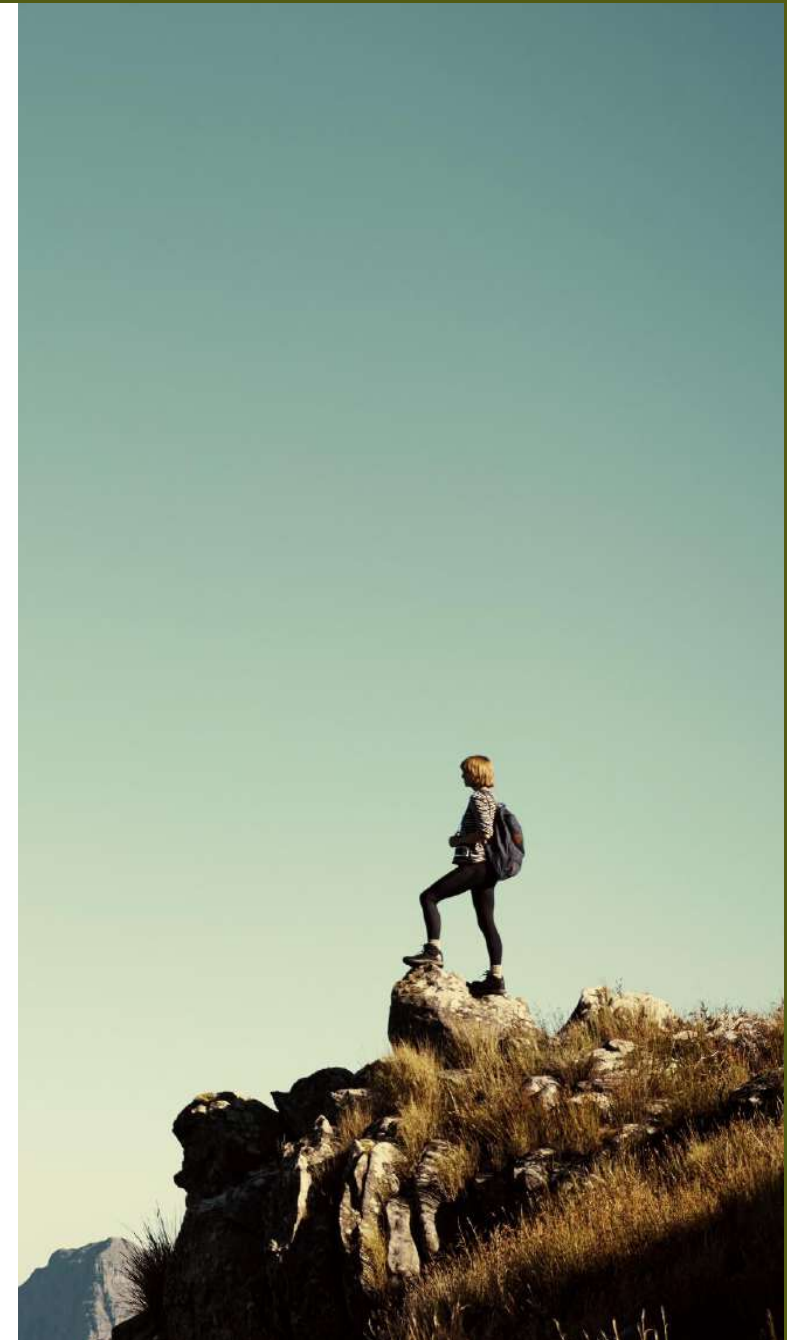
Discussion

		F	Sig.
Tangible Sustainability	Equal variances assumed	0.229	0.634
	Equal variances not assumed		
Sustainable Practices	Equal variances assumed	7.235	0.009
	Equal variances not assumed		
Tangibility	Equal variances assumed	3.114	0.083
	Equal variances not assumed		
Reliability	Equal variances assumed	0.162	0.689
	Equal variances not assumed		
Responsiveness	Equal variances assumed	0.909	0.344
	Equal variances not assumed		
Assurance	Equal variances assumed	0.123	0.727
	Equal variances not assumed		
Empathy	Equal variances assumed	0.066	0.798
	Equal variances not assumed		
Customer Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	2.03	0.159
	Equal variances not assumed		



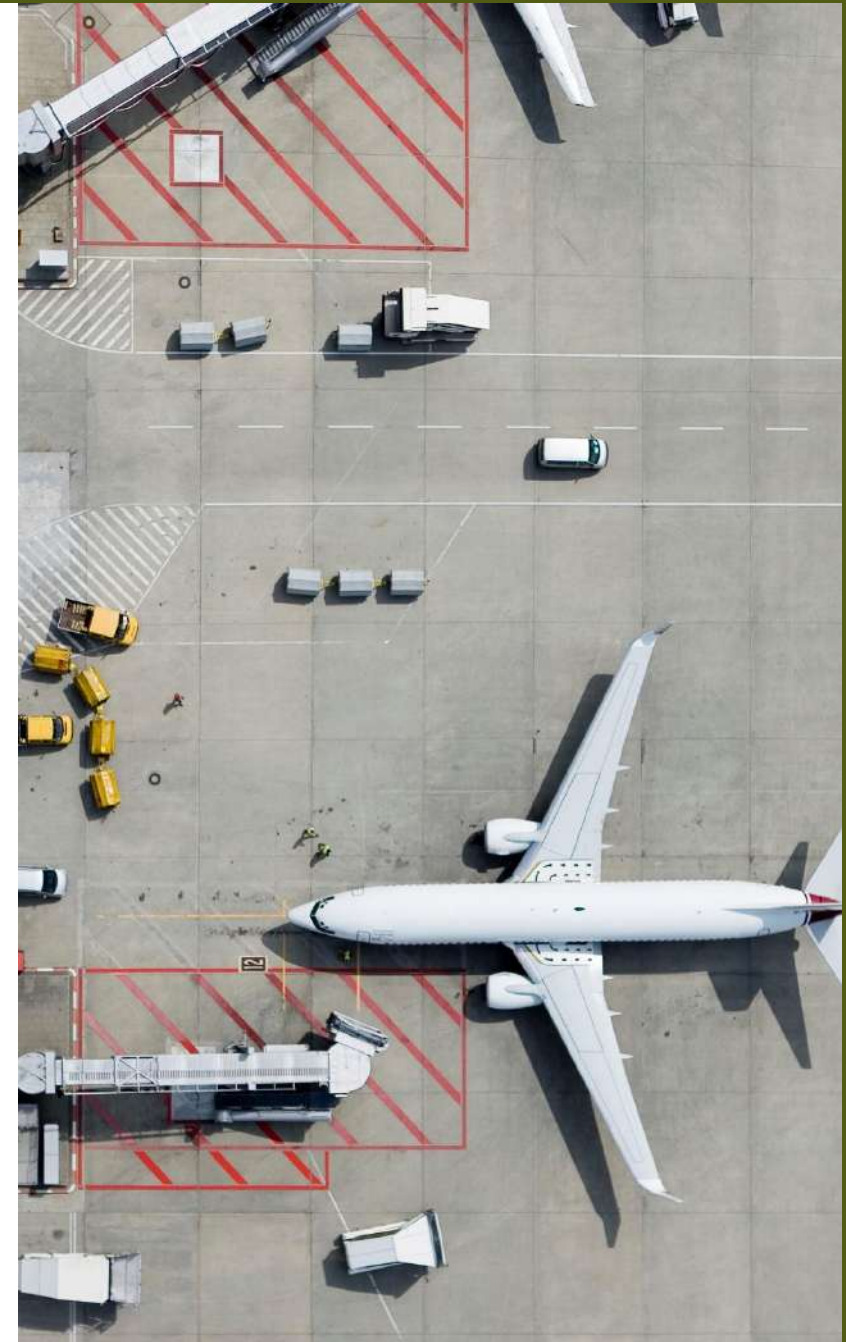
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Discussion

- Sustainable Practices (SP) is the only dimension that shows a significant difference between tourists' and employees' perceptions of service quality.
- This is also evident in the Means Difference.
- This finding may be linked to internal marketing, where employees are informed about the quality of the service, as it is a key determinant of their customer service. This result may also be linked to social desirability theory, where employees tend to over-report socially desirable behaviour. In this case, the sustainable practices.



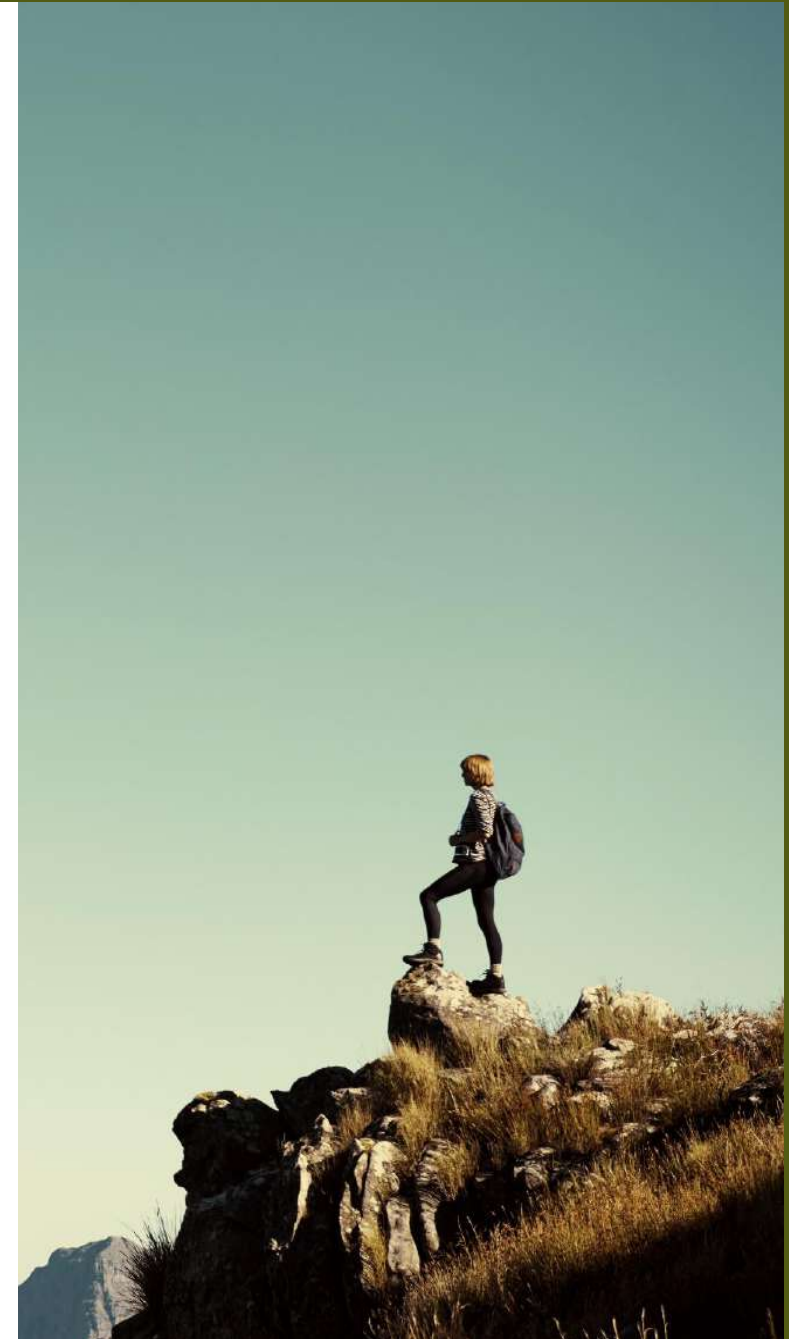
Implications

- Awareness of sustainability in business operations by governance bodies.
- The need to improve for tourists' revisit intentions.
- Policy formulations, awareness campaigns by the government and legislative bodies.



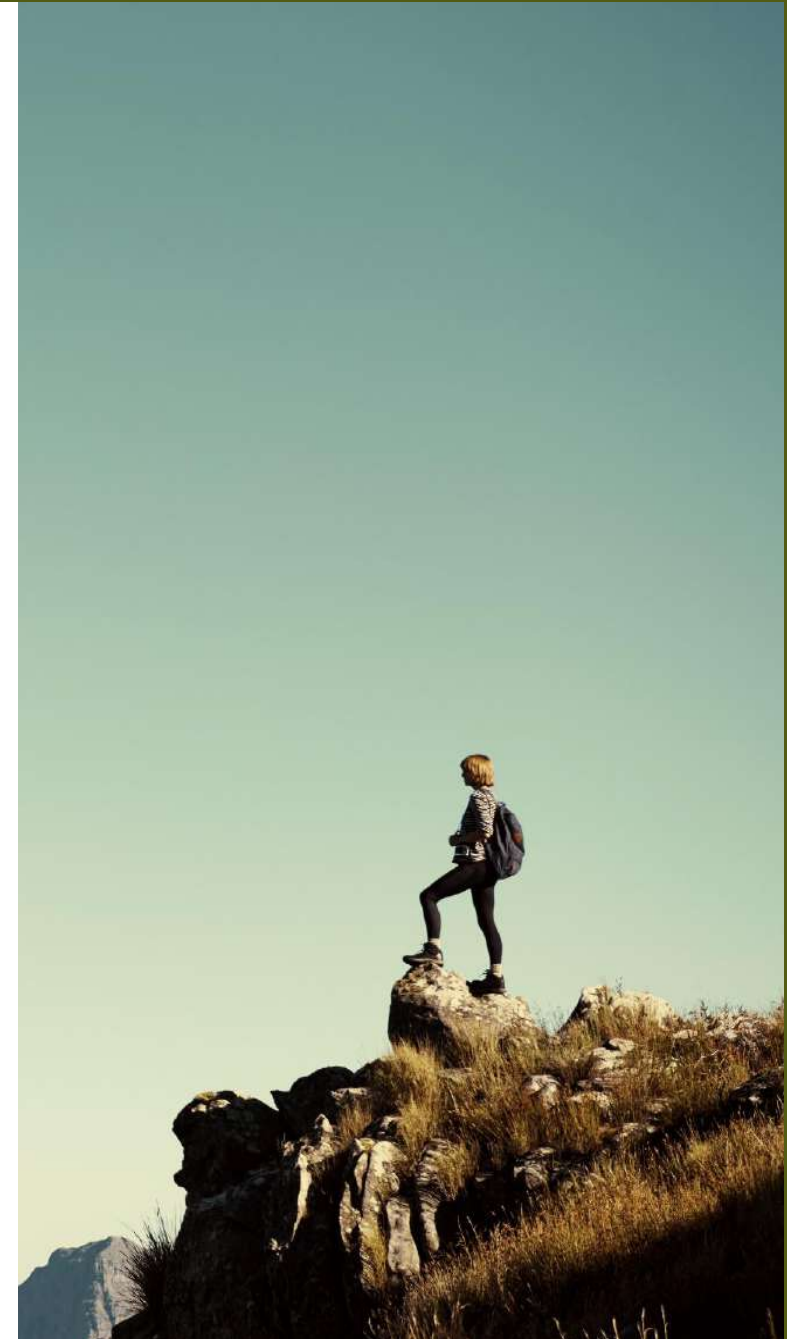
Two-Key Takeaways

- To be mindful of ethnocentrism when assessing our own business capabilities and quality. Failure to do so may lead to a lack of revisit intentions among tourists, especially when the core dimensions of ecotourism, sustainability, are absent from the equation.



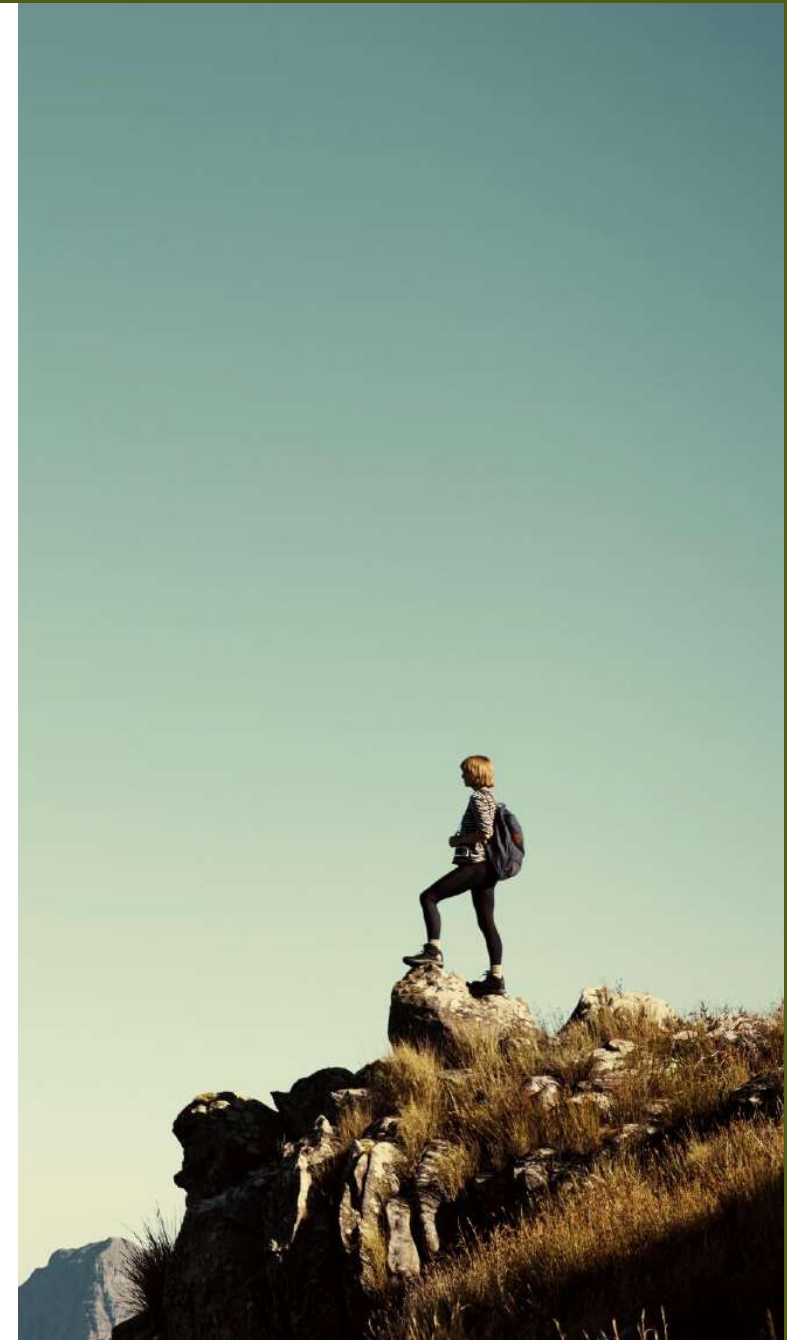
Two-Key Takeaways

- The need for awareness of tourism impacts and what sustainability means. The results and prior studies indicate that our understanding of the level of sustainability is not consistent with tourist expectations or the reality of sustainability as a global practice. These can be addressed through online short courses delivered by practitioners and trainers.



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**THANK
YOU!**

