

RESEARCH ARTICLE



A Review of Rural Tourism Development in the Context of Social Exchange Theory Application

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Article Info:

Received 18 March 2024

Revised 9 July 2024

Accepted 16 July 2024

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This paper was presented at
International Conference on
Responsible Tourism and
Hospitality (ICRTH) 2023

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Abstract

Rural tourism promotes sustainable development through economic, socio-cultural, and environmental means. To embrace rural tourism development, communities need to thoroughly evaluate the benefits and drawbacks associated with such changes. The challenges of this process entail assessing the consequences of the decision made in response to the social interactions occurring within the community. This study conducts a systematic review to identify research gaps in the application of Social Exchange Theory (SET), focusing on how attitudes, networking, and participation influence community decisions towards rural tourism. The findings reveal that these factors significantly shape local communities' perspectives and involvement in tourism development. Concluding with a conceptual framework grounded in SET, the paper provides insights into how attitudes, networking, and participation can drive sustainable rural tourism and facilitate cultural heritage conservation.

Keywords: social exchange theory, social behaviour, rural tourism



1. Introduction

Implementation of planned activities in a specific area demonstrates the success of rural tourism development. This plan is the result of community decision-making that aims to implement changes in their respective areas. The decision-making process necessitates a community evaluation to determine whether they received the maximum benefits and the minimum cost that they invested in the changes. We can understand social behaviour as an exchange of goods, thereby clarifying the relationships between behavioural psychology, economics, influence dynamics, and small group structure [1]. In social exchanges, communication and interaction frequency are important variables, and justice distributions play a role in a group's stability. Factors such as reinforcement, satisfaction, and cost influence the rate of emission for learned behaviours, thereby influencing the likelihood of producing certain behaviours. This is because the perception of social behaviours as exchanges based on competence is a valuable resource, and an individual may seek help from others who are similarly incompetent. For example, in a group setting, individuals seek reinforcement, exchange resources, and show regard. Based on these [1] studies, we can view social behaviours as an exchange where individuals aim to maximise their rewards and minimise their costs. This implies that the value and cost of what individuals give and receive influence their behaviour in exchange. Individuals also strive for balance in exchange for potential costs and rewards.

In rural tourism, SET aims to elucidate individual attitudes towards tourism and evaluate the effect of tourism on both individuals and their communities. This assessment is dependent on the level of support shown for tourism development [2]. SET, which involves interaction between two or more individuals, effectively clarifies the resident's attitudes towards tourism. This exchange does not solely depend on material possessions but also includes cognitive and affective elements [1] and [3]. This review paper, drawing from previous studies, aims to explore how the sustaining tourism aspects of economics, environment, and socio-culture can influence the local community's perspective on rural tourism development [4]. Additionally, this paper significantly contributes to the identification of gaps and the application of SET in rural tourism development. The paper concludes with a conceptual

framework that illustrates the community's application of SET and its potential to conserve cultural heritage.

2. Methodology

Systematic reviews are rigorous and identify the answers that focus on research questions and knowledge gaps for future research activities, besides synthesis reviews that are usually referred to from the systematic review process to use for mapping the research activity, identifying the gaps in the literature, and disseminating research findings [5]. Based on [6] studies, there are techniques that help to generate multiple studies either in quantitative or qualitative ways, which consist of four basic steps: search, appraisal, synthesis, and analysis (SALSA). The framework of SALSA is a methodology to determine the search protocols that a systematic literature review should follow [6-7]. However, based on [6], SALSA steps have been added into two steps, which are: The protocol is to define the research scope, which is located at the initial step, and reporting results for stating the procedure followed and communicating the results to the public, which is the last step to ensure that the research is conducted in a systematic, transparent manner and the results are effectively communicated scientifically. According to [6], PSALSAR is a sightforward, more accessible and systematic strategy for doing systematic review work. Additionally, based on PSALSAR steps (protocol, search, appraisal synthesis, analysis and report) demonstrate how the method's application may be used to identify research gaps in the social exchange theory's application. Figure 1 shows the explanation of each particular of PSALSAR step that were used in this review of prior studies.

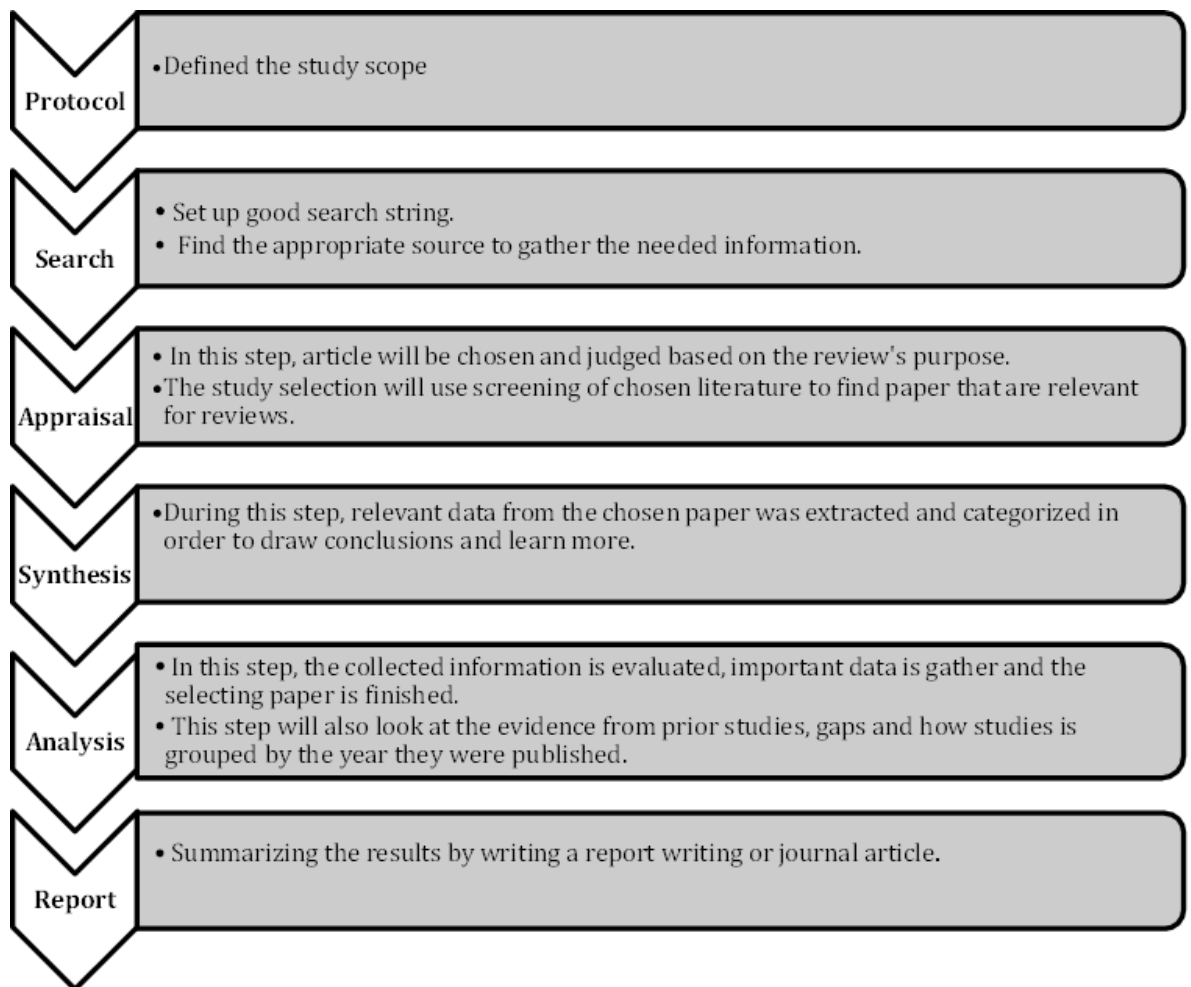


Figure 1. The steps of PSALSAR [6].

3. Results

3.1. Findings from PSALSAR Steps

Table 1 shows the summary outcomes after using the PSALSAR steps to review the implementation social exchange theory from the prior study, and it was divided into the three dimensions, which consist of attitude (benefit-cost in economic, socio-cultural, and environmental), network, and participant.

Table 1. Summary of the implementation of SET in prior study.

Title	Dimension	Methodology	Findings
Residents' Attitudes Towards Tourism and Perceived Personal Benefits in Rural Community [8]	Attitude	Quantitative	Engaging in the residents' attitudes towardstourism and the personal benefits with the tourism development.
Resident Attitudes Towards Sustainable Community Tourism [9].	Attitude	Quantitative	Examine resident attitudes towards sustainable community tourism development using social exchange theory as a conceptual framework. It was an analysis of the effects of long-term planning, full community participation, and environmental sustainability on residents' attitudes towards tourism development and thepositive or negative impacts.
Residents' Attitudes Towards Existing and Future Tourism Development in Rural Communities [10].	Attitude	Quantitative	A study that examined residents' attitudes towards existing and future tourism development in several rural areas with different stages of tourism and economic development based on the adaptation model by Perdue, Long, and Allen.
Residents' perceptions toward the "Chinese Tourists' Wave" inHong Kong: An Exploratory Study [11].	Attitude	Qualitative	Similar studies with Özel & Kozak (2016) [12], which point up the perception of these three conventional dimensions were identified and discuss the residents' perceptions toward the impact of the 'Chinese tourist' wave' phenomenon in Hong Kong.
An exploratory study of resident perceptions toward the tourism industryin Cappadocia: A social exchange theory approach [12].	Attitude	Qualitative	Attitude: According to the three main impact dimensions that an in-depth interview determined, economic benefits are an exchange of socio-cultural and environmental impact, and the perception of economics is more significant than the cost or negative impact.
The affecting tourism development attitudes are based on the social exchange theory and the social network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attitude ● Network ● Participant 	Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A study that points out the cost-benefits of tourism in the economy, socio-culture and physical environment. ● By using social network theory (SNT) for further findings in network and structural processes of

Title	Dimension	Methodology	Findings
theory [13].			<p>behaviors and attitudes of actors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participations focus on the cognition, affection and action tendency to identify the local community attitude towards participating based on the attitude and network from the findings
The role of trust in building rural tourism micro firm network engagement: A multi-case study [14]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Network 	Qualitative	<p>The focus is to determine the role of trust in building rural tourism micro firm network engagement based on three case environments in Ireland, Canada and the USA. This study focuses on the understanding of how trust is built in interactions and relationships which also adapts the studies based on Blau (1964).</p>
Support of marijuana tourism in Colorado: A residents' perspective using social exchange theory [15].	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attitude/ Perspective 	Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The paper uses SET to analyze how Colorado residents' perceptions of the effects of the development affect their support for marijuana tourism. ● According to SET, people conduct cost-benefits analyses when making decisions, and the perceived advantages and benefits they associate with marijuana tourism have an impact on their support for it.
Incorporating Emotion into Social Exchange: Considering Distinct Resident Groups' Attitudes Towards Ethnic Neighbourhood Tourism in Osaka, Japan [16].	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attitude 	Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The study aims are to examine the influence individuals' emotions towards their ethnic counterparts within a community can have on residents' attitudes towards ethnic neighbourhood tourism within the Korean neighbourhood of Ikuno, Osaka, Japan. ● As the highlight of study, consider the importance of considering emotions and social exchange among the local community when examining residents' attitudes towards tourism development.
Tourism Development Through Communities' Support: Rural Communities' Perspective [17].	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attitude 	Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tourism Development Through Communities' Support: Rural Communities' Perspective [39].
Residents' Attitudes Towards Tourism, Cost-Benefit Attitudes and Support for Tourism: A Pre-Development Perspective [18].	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attitude 	Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Residents' Attitudes Towards Tourism, Cost-Benefit Attitudes and Support for Tourism: A Pre-Development Perspective [40].

Table 1 provides a comprehensive summary of the studies conducted, revealing that a total of four studies have addressed the three dimensions of attitude, network, and participation. However, it is significant that studies [8-12], and [15-16] have mostly focused on the attitude component only. In addition, prior research has examined the relationship between attitude and participation [17-18] and [14] with a particular emphasis on exploring the network further. Based on the findings of the studies [13], it is evident that these findings support the possibility of adopting it into the existing framework. The main goal of this paper review is to look at the impact of social development during the rural tourism development and the importance of sustaining tourism among the rural tourism development through the cultural heritage conservation in the future. The study is going to concentrate on the perspective and participation of tourism in the current stage of the case study, illustrating the application of SET as discussed in references [1], [19], and [20]. The study [13] places a greater emphasis on social development and identifies how local communities express their complex social phenomena through their attitude perspective, networking and involvement in the development of rural tourism, even though the study is more quantitative based on the study [13]. However, using a qualitative study is a more appropriate approach and the proposed study utilised a qualitative method are more specifically in-depth interviews, to clarify the complex structure of social phenomena, as stated by reference [12].

3.2. The Evolution of SET

SET is a theoretical framework that examines the outcomes of interactions or relationships between two or more individuals. It focuses on the assessment of the costs and benefits that every individual obtains from the interaction. According to the source cited as [13], this theory is a theoretical framework that originated from [1] with an emphasis on the rationalisation of evaluating costs and rewards in social relationships. The SET is a prominent framework used to analyse social interaction and social structure. It focuses on the evaluation of key cost and benefit exchanges that occur during interactions [21]. The theoretical framework of SET emerged from the discipline of sociology, namely from the seminal work of [1]. In this paper titled "Social Behaviour as Exchange," [1] put forth the idea that social exchange involves the reciprocal exchange of activities [12]. According to the suggestion, individuals engage in decision-making regarding their social behaviour by assessing the maximum potential benefit they can obtain from their interaction and comparing it with the smallest cost that they may experience [1]. In a seminal work titled "Exchange and Power in Social Life," the authors of [19] further developed [1] concept and emphasised the significant role of social structure in determining social exchange. This is because social exchange takes place within a broader social context, specifically within a social network, where individuals have access to resources that are contingent upon their capacity to engage in exchange relationships. Moreover, the study [20], titled "Social Exchange Theory," concentrates on the influence of social networks rather than the idea of social exchanges. The paper emphasises their discovery that individuals with influence in a social network possess the ability to leverage power dynamics and interdependencies among network participants in their actions. Figure 2 shows the significant contributions made by these three sociologists to the development of SET.

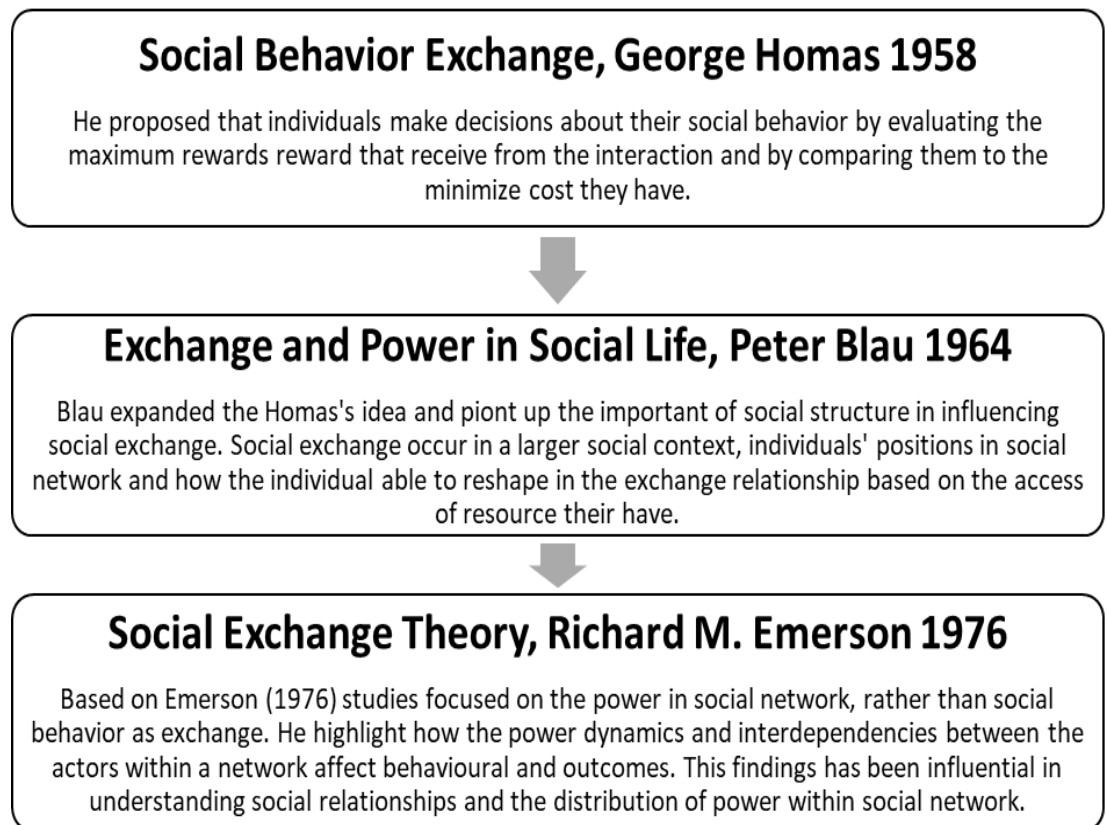


Figure 2. The evolution of SET.

SET has been applied in many fields since it is a valuable framework for understanding many aspects of human social behaviour. According to [22], SET has implications for various fields related to social psychology, such as [1] [23-24], sociology [2], and anthropology [25-26]. Besides, social exchange theory can also apply to more field areas nowadays, such as public healthcare [27], education [28], behaviour at the workplace [29], economic and business perspectives [30-32], and tourism [13], [21], and [16].

3.3. Social Exchange Behaviour and Attitude of Residents Towards Rural Tourism Development.

Attitude refers to an individual's subjective perspective or viewpoint towards a particular object, entity, or individual, which is assessed by considering the degree of positivity or negativity expressed. According to the findings of previous studies [33], three key features have been identified in the analysis of attitudes. These characteristics include: (1) a mental state that may be conscious or unconscious; (2) the presence of values, beliefs, or emotions; and (3) observable behaviors and actions. Returning to the studies, it is important to note that the behavior under consideration is typically evaluated based on a cost-benefit analysis of its impact on interactions or relationships. Originating from the person theory of economics, which holds that in an environment of unrestricted competition and open markets, people can reasonably assess and concentrate on obtaining the greatest possible benefit from an exchange [34], as cited in [13], According to SET, value judgements can influence attitudes towards benefit exchange from a tourism perspective. The effects of group strength on both tourism development values and attitudes have an impact on the evaluation of the value of tourism development [9]. Chang [13] cites the exchange behaviour school of SET as saying that social culture and environment are components of "tourism development attitudes" in the growth of a local tourism sector. Furthermore, the various dimensions of sustainable tourism, including economic, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects, are being examined to understand the perspective and attitude towards its existence in the designated study location [11]. Most studies indicate that the economic aspect holds greater prominence compared to socio-cultural and environmental factors [11] and [12]. The behavior under consideration is typically evaluated based on a cost-benefit analysis of its impact on interactions or relationships.

4. Discussion

4.1. Synthesis of Findings

In exchange social behaviour, Homans [1] stated that the maximum reward is assessed by comparing the minimum cost received between two or more individual interactions. Interaction between individuals is important to build social structure. So, in that interaction, social networking will result [19]. In social networking there will be negotiation and exchange resources in different of social structure. Moreover, according to previous research [19] which focus on the primarily of the exchange of benefits and the growth of value within social interactions. However, this approach may not fully address the intricate dynamics of social networks and their influence on attitudes towards tourist development [19]. In [14] study, which to analyse the significance of trust in fostering participation within rural tourist micro company networks across three different area of case study environments: Ireland, Canada and USA. The SET applies to examine the nature of member interactions on attitudes that contribute to the development of trust within the rural tourism business [14]. Additionally, in [14] findings are recognising the significant of network ties and exchanges in this context which indicate from the findings where the concepts of bonding, bridging and connecting in social interactions have significance for micro firms in rural tourism. These micro firms also often face limited access to broader social systems due to their isolated locations in the study finding of [14]. Besides, according to [35], the concept of SNT is extended back into the social comparison theory idea, it was claim that individuals may modify their attitudes and behaviours by engaging in evolution of social, with the aim of attaining peer acceptability, self-identity and group survival legitimacy. Based on, [36] which also cited on [13], SNT, originating in the 1970s was proposed as a framework for examining the arrangements and configuration of interpersonal connections within society. This theoretical perspective offers insights into the interdependent ties and behavioural phenomena observed in human societies [36]. The study utilised SNT to identify the networks of intelligence, friendship, and guidance; this approach was employed as per the findings of the referenced study [13].

The SET explores the concept of power across network structures, as emphasised by previous studies [20]. These studies show that power is dependent upon an individual's position in the network structures. The scholarly articles examine the origins and evolution of SET specifically highlighting the important contributions contributed by the authors [3], [37–40], and [19]. In [20], SET is identified as an original perspective within the fields of sociology and social psychology. This theory posits that social conduct may be understood as a dynamic process involving the exchange of resources that are considered valuable. This theory places significant emphasis on the role of perceived rewards and costs in shaping individuals' behaviour and decision-making processes [1]. Moreover, it is necessary to highlight the difference between economic and SET. Although economic exchange theory focuses on the exchange of goods and services for monetary value, social exchange theory offers a conceptual framework for comprehending social interactions and the flow of valuable resources [20]. Consequently, it can be inferred that social exchange theory presents a valuable perspective for examining social processes and structures [19]. In following the findings cited [13], it is essential to incorporate an assessment of benefit value based on the SET and the relationship orientation perspective of the SNT. Besides, understanding the impact of social network relationships on attitudes towards tourism development is crucial for an in-depth investigation. Additionally, [13] discusses the three dimensions of involvement with tourism development, specifically cognition, affection, and action tendency. These dimensions are applied to evaluate the local community's attitude towards participating in rural tourism development, taking into consideration the findings related to benefit cost (economic, socio-cultural, and environmental) and social network.

4.2. A Conceptual Framework of Rural Tourism in SET Application

The results in Table 1, which show attitude, networks and participation from the studies cited as [13], show a link with the evolution of SET, which is talked about in references [1],[19], and [20]. These dimensions help define the perspective and level of involvement of the local community in the development of rural tourism. According to the findings of the cited study [1], an individual's attitude is defined by taking into consideration the highest possible reward

and the lowest possible cost they have received. Within this theoretical framework, the measurement of attitude will be predicated upon an assessment of the cost-benefit analysis pertaining to the attitude of the local community, the network, and the level of engagement exhibited by the local community in the context of rural tourist development. To determine the viewpoint and engagement of local populations in the development of rural tourism, emphasis will be placed on the sustainable tourism dimension. This dimension encompasses economic, socio-cultural, and environmental factors [13]. In the area of network analysis, it is important to highlight the value of friendship, intelligence, and advice patterns to be able to identify the social structure of communities in the area which applied from the following studies [13]. This to understanding the concept of “Exchange and Power in Social Life” which was obtained from previous studies in [19]. Additionally, the participation dimension guide attention towards the cognition, affection, and action tendencies demonstrated by local communities’ participation as they react to the maximum rewards and minimum costs they faced and how the social structure happened during their current stage of development which reflect on the SET studies [20]. The framework employed in this study has been adopt and modified from a previous study [13]. This investigation is the only study that meets all three dimensions, as determined through the review of prior research in Table 1 and applied to reflect the evolution of SET. The conceptual framework is shown in figure 3, at the end of this outcome.

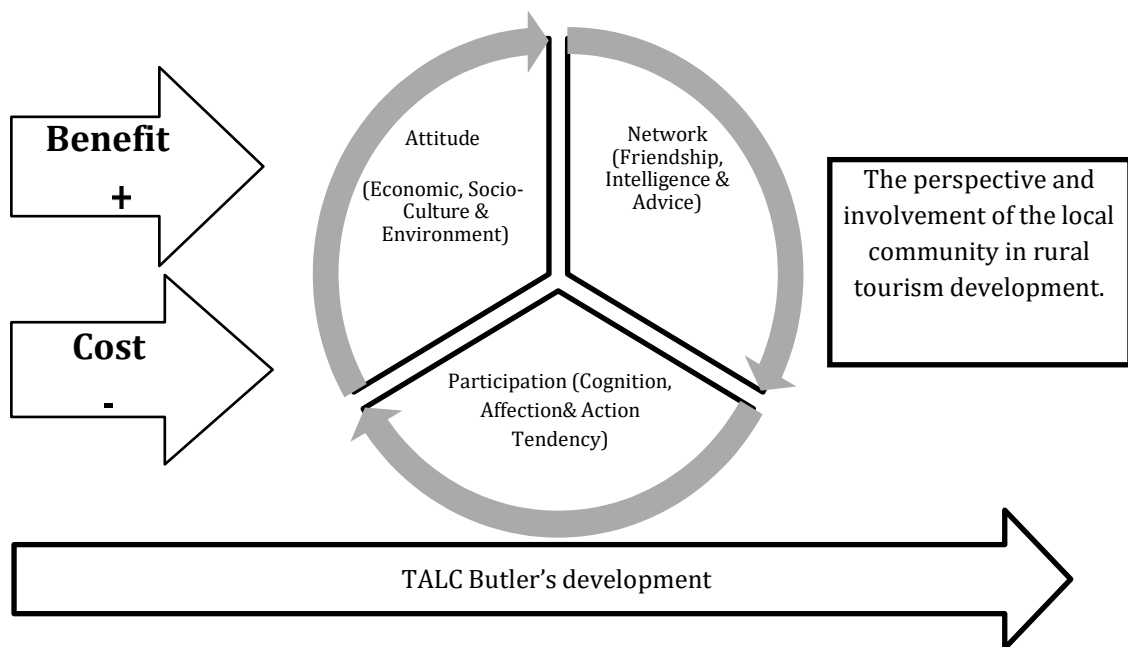


Figure 3. Conceptual framework, adopted and modified [5]

5. Conclusions

This study has explored the application of SET in the context of rural tourism development, underlining its relevance not just within tourism but across various disciplines in social studies. SET provides a robust framework for understanding the perspectives and behaviours of local communities towards tourism initiatives, emphasizing the need to balance perceived rewards and costs. The review has highlighted that successful rural tourism development hinges on positive community attitudes and comprehensive engagement, validated through trust and strong network ties. SET proves useful in evaluating the effectiveness of these community dynamics, contributing significantly to the advancement of social development within the tourism sector.

This study successfully identifies key gaps in the existing literature and proposes a conceptual framework that encapsulates attitudes, networks, and participation in rural tourism. This

framework is pivotal in assessing the current state and future potential of rural tourism through a sustainability lens, encompassing economic, socio-cultural, and environmental factors. Furthermore, implementing SET allows for a nuanced understanding of the sustainability aspects of tourism. Evaluating community networks and participation is crucial, as rural tourism not only promotes social and economic benefits but also plays a significant role in heritage conservation.

Future research should expand on these findings, employing mixed method approaches and considering diverse rural contexts to enhance generalizability. Policymakers and practitioners are encouraged to leverage this framework to foster sustainable tourism practices that are inclusive and culturally sensitive, ensuring long-term benefits for rural communities.

Author Contributions

GOA: Writing-Original Draft Preparation, Conceptualization and Review, Methodology, Data Reviewing Analysis; **RAR:** Conceptualization, Writing -Review & Editing, Supervision; **ARM:** Supervision.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts to declare.

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