

The importance of social acceptance in the tourism industry, ethical management and regulatory opportunities

Megi Surmanidze

PHD Student

Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University,

Rostom Beridze

Professor

Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University

Abstract

Social acceptability is a set of attitudes, moods, and beliefs that influence the course of social interactions, the process of rational exchange of information, and the quality of communication and relationships.

Social acceptance in the tourism industry is a key factor that can drive both social and economic benefits, contribute to the business development process, and increase tourist satisfaction and numbers.

Irrational manifestations of xenophobic, homophobic, racist, or other attitudes in society begin with the realization of social acceptance. All of the above hinders healthy communication and social ties between stakeholders in tourism as a social institution and negatively affects the economic performance of tourism businesses.

This article will examine the impacts and importance of social acceptance and related processes on tourism relationships and the industry, examine the importance of social acceptance for the tourism industry, the role of social acceptance in tourist satisfaction, revenue growth for facilities, and overall satisfaction.

The article analyzes the circumstances that determine the form of social acceptance, the constituent aspects of social relations in the form of social interaction, social exchange theory, and social distance. Also, the most important factors and means of regulating them in ethical management.

The article defines the relationship between social acceptance and ethical management, which is an effective way to eliminate shortcomings in social relations in tourism business facilities.

Keywords: tourism industry, social acceptance, ethical management, regulation.

Introduction

Tourism is the world's largest economic and social institution in the business industry, playing an important role in bringing people together, exchanging information, and strengthening connections. The quality and flow of social relations in tourism, the analysis of the aspect of social acceptance, and the factors hindering it are important. To make it possible to optimize social relationships between tourists and residents, employees and tourists, and other parties.

Social acceptance is a process in which people form attitudes and behaviors toward others in communication, and toward tourists in practice. Xenophobic, aggressive, and unfriendly attitudes are common. Which are largely due to their distinct religious, cultural, ethnic and other characteristics.

Social acceptance is significantly related to intercultural communication, as it is a process of intercultural communication, which deeply explores attitudes between people of different backgrounds, cultures, ethnic groups, races, and other backgrounds.

Current situation: Social acceptance is an influential factor in the tourism industry, social acceptance has not been studied in depth from a scientific point of view. In scientific sources, we come across studies on social interaction, social exchange theory, and social distance, which confirm the importance

of social relationships in the management and development of business processes, Social acceptance involves the process of interaction, information exchange, and, like interaction, it also includes individual factors that influence people's attitudes toward each other in relationships. E.g.: ethnic origin, religious beliefs, different cultures, skin color, etc. The article analyzes several studies conducted in 2022, 2021, 2011, 2019 in different countries.

The results of the research show people interested in social relationships how significantly attitudes can change depending on a tourist's behavior, attitude, and certain signs. Social acceptance problems also hinder the development and promotion of a tourist area, especially in terms of regulating social acceptance processes, tourists and the local population, Regulation of social relations between tourists and employees or between employees is possible by introducing a new direction of management in business facilities, leadership, Ethical management ensures the development of positive social attitudes among employees, the elimination of misunderstandings in social relationships, and the breaking of social distance through the implementation of appropriate leadership and relevant management approaches.

Research novelty: Social acceptance is an important process that can change priorities and approaches to social relations in tourism as the largest social institution. The novelty of the research is the identification of the problem of social acceptance, its connection with business processes, tourist satisfaction, which is not necessarily determined only by the prompt delivery of quality service or product, the novelty of the research is the discovery of ways to regulate social acceptance and the discussion of appropriate approaches from ethical management. We encounter problems of social acceptance during social interaction, xenophobia, homophobia, and social distancing.

Research objective: To determine the role of social acceptance in the process of tourism business development.

Research objectives:

- Analysis of statistical data and sources of the tourism industry, the number of tourists;
- Analysis of statistical data on employees in the hospitality industry,
- Study of the relationship between social acceptance and tourism,
- To study the relationship between ethical management and social acceptance,

Important questions for the research are:

- What is social acceptance and what role does it play in the tourism industry?
- What is the impact of social acceptance on tourism development?
- How important is the form of social acceptance in the relationship between tourists and locals?
- What are the possibilities for regulating social acceptance in ethical management?

1. Social acceptance in relations between tourists and the host community

The tourism industry is an important source of income for the world's population, and its financial progress depends significantly on the quality of services and products, Service quality does not only include etiquette, timely service delivery, service quality is determined by tourist satisfaction, which is largely determined by social relations, non-discriminatory, rational attitudes, with proper communication, social acceptance and healthy communication can support business processes and have a beneficial impact on increasing the number of customers.

Tourism is a social institution because it connects many important parties, including tourists, tourism products and services, travel agencies, tour operators, cultural institutions, state tourism authorities, sports companies, and others.

With kindness, with kindness towards tourists. The number of tourists in the world has been increasing every year since the pandemic, let's consider the latest statistics on the number of tourists and visits:

According to data from the World Tourism Organization, approximately 285 million tourists traveled around the world in the first half of 2024, which is 20% more than last year. The increase in figures was caused by the opening of the Asian market and visa changes.

By the end of 2023, total revenue from tourist travel, accommodation, and transportation amounted to 1.7 trillion US dollars. These figures are large-scale in their economic and social terms.

The benefits derived from tourism enable society to improve social conditions. In the hospitality industry, tourist satisfaction is largely determined not by tangible but by intangible products, Which, as we have already mentioned, is caused by goodwill, impressions, exchange of information, emotions and feelings, thus, the attitudes of citizens of host countries towards tourists during the travel process can influence both their satisfaction and dissatisfaction, as well as the increase or decrease in the number of tours.

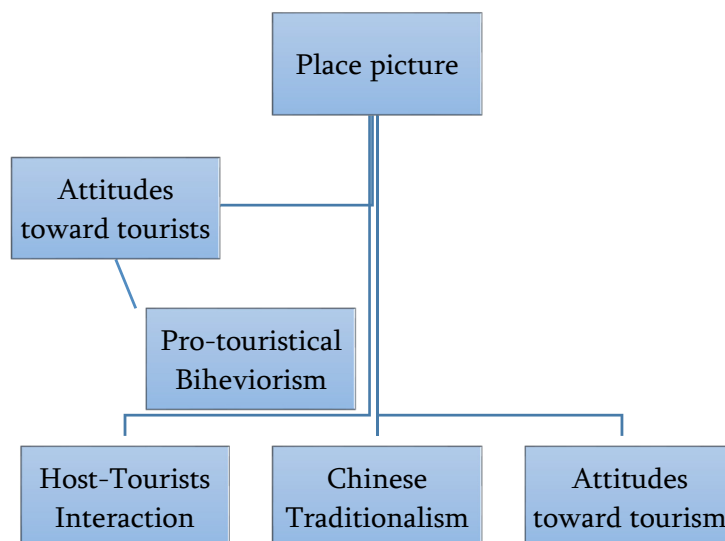
The satisfaction of tourists, or consumers, in tourism is determined by the quality of social relationships and attitudes. Consumer satisfaction should be determined based on emotional, sensory, and social components. In terms of attitude, it is important to analyze the tourist social interaction research model, which was developed for a study conducted in China in 2022. The study aimed to study social interaction between residents and tourists. The model presents important social factors and parties involved in social interaction (see Figure 1).

Figure 1.¹

Arriving international tourists, statistics by regions, world				
Year	2021	2022	2023	2024
World	69	34	12	3
Europe	59	20	6	2
Asia	92	75	35	18
America	63	29	10	1
Africa	72	31	4	5
Central Europe	58	5	22	35

- Host community-local interaction,
- Attitudes towards tourists,
- Attitudes towards tourism,
- Traditions (especially Chinese traditions),
- Place image, representations created for a particular tourist destination.

¹ UN Tourism. World Tourism Organization, % Change Over 2019. Preliminary Figures. Data as collected by UN Tourism, May 2024.

Scheme 1. Tourist Interaction Research Model²

To study social attitudes towards different factors, to see how strongly social interaction influences social relationships, attitudes, and moods. 2011 A study was conducted this year in 3 Serbian cities, Belgrade, Novi Sad, and Sombor, aiming to study the behavior of tourists and the attitudes of locals, and the interaction between them. It was found that the population reacted differently to tourist behavior due to the presence of tourists with different interests and motives and different tourist destinations in the cities. Tourists' motives influence their behavior. The behavior of tourists interested in music festivals, club music was often more intense, noisy, and caused aggression among locals than the behavior of tourists interested in cultural tourism or business tourism. For example: In Novi Sad, locals describe rough, aggressive incidents during the EXIT music festival, unlike Belgrade, which hosts more business trips, events, urban and cultural tourism.

In 2021, a survey was conducted in Romania, which aimed to study the attitude of the local population towards tourism. The survey covered a fairly large area, 7071 km from the city of Constanta, More than 500 respondents were selected for the study, the total number of completed questionnaires was 556. According to the results of the study, the interest of the local population in the tourism development process is very high, as well as:

- o The interest of the local population in the tourism development process is very high, as is the interaction rate.
- o Locals believe that tourism has a positive impact on income and employment rates
- o In terms of negative impacts, a certain portion of respondents blame tourism for the increase in crime rates, in terms of the increase in drugs, crime, and criminal cases,³

It is important for our research to consider all types of interactions and forms of social acceptance, to prove that they play the most important role in the development of tourism. Social interaction is a result of the need for socialization, people engage in tourism activities not only for recreation, visiting new places, but also for basic social needs. In the process of social interaction, a tourist's knowledge about certain objects, places, people, cultures, and tribes is enriched, their attitudes and moods change, and this change in attitude is also related to the forms of service and information provision.

² Shen, Ke., Yang Jian. & Chuan Geng. How Residents' Attitudes to Tourists and Tourism Affect Their Pro-tourism Behaviours: The Moderating Role of Chinese Traditionality, Journal Environmental Psychology.

³ Fan, D., Understanding the Tourist-Resident Relationship Through Social Contact: Progressing the Development of Social Contact in Tourism, Journal of Sustainable Tourism, Volume 23. 2023.

<https://eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk/34881/1/Accepted%20version.pdf> [l. s. 14.03.2024].

Some researchers talk about barriers in the process of communication and relationships that affect the subjectivity of analyzing and understanding behavior. Intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural barriers are relevant, the greater the individual communication process, the stronger the influence and psychological attribute barriers. Intrapersonal attributes are: Structural attributes include: equal status, authority support, travel disposition, cultural differences, cultural-political sensitivity, destination safety, and more. The role of people's independence and collectivity is seen in all the above cases, because tourism is a social institution and it involves all kinds of interactions, both individual and collective, the importance and impact of each attribute on social acceptance is so great.

In social acceptance, attitudes between social groups, interaction within groups, mood, and acceptance are particularly strongly felt. Problems of social acceptance are also relevant in Georgia, especially in placement facilities, coupled with our society's high cultural awareness, attitudes towards traditions, rules, and social norms.

In the study we organized on social acceptance, 20 accommodation facilities, medium and small-sized hotels, were selected, and in-depth interviews were conducted with the owners. The rating of the facilities (according to Booking.com indicators) ranged from 8.5 to 9, which gave hope for a healthy social attitude towards tourists. However, a study conducted in the Adjara region to study the quality of social relations found that:

- For a certain part of the respondents, it is unacceptable for citizens of Islamic faith to communicate and provide services with appropriate clothing, including closed clothing which prevents not only the hotel owner, but also other tourists staying in the hotel from perceiving them as safe people,
- The majority of respondents do not welcome tourists of different sexual orientation,
- For 3 respondents, the insurmountable problem is the racist factor, skin color. They do not deny that they do not have close social relationships with people who differ on this basis, although they refuse to provide services only to Arab tourists.

Social acceptance is based on political, cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious signs and factors that also create subjective attitudes. The collective systematization of society creates collective attitudes, uniform evaluations, Thinking style, collective or structural attributes. Cultural awareness manifests itself in severe forms in highly cultural countries, countries that have centuries-old culture, traditions, customs, and the population takes this fact very seriously. Collective and cultural awareness are relevant for intercultural communication, in relationships between people of different cultures. Traditional, national society is characterized by xenophobic attitudes towards tourists, which is related to the fear of losing part of one's own, national, culture. Xenophobic attitudes are also discriminatory in nature and lead to social distance between members of society. Social acceptance is related to: With social interaction, social attitudes, intercultural communication, xenophobia, racism, and even homophobia.

Figure 2. Development of social contact between tourists and residents⁴

Intrapersonal antacedents	Interpersnal Antacedents	Structural antacedents
• Personality • Language • Porpose of the travel • Personal role in travelling	• Diskrimination • Stereotypes • Common goals • Cooperation between groups • Personal Interaction	• Supporting of authorities • Moods for traveling • Booking length • Types of attractions • Place security

⁴ Fan, D., Understanding the Tourist-Resident Relationship Through Social Contact: Progressing the Development Of Social Contact In Tourism, Journal Of Sustainable Tourism. 2023.

Influence of the content on residents	Influence of contact on tourists
•Development of positive attitudes •Increasing emotional solidarity •Supporting of tourism development •Improving life quality	•Knowledge •Knowledge of cultural differences •Location knowledge •Development of personal cultural components

2. Social acceptance and ethical management of employees

The scale, social and economic role of the tourism industry also affects the business organizational and corporate systems of companies, changing corporate culture. Social acceptance is important not only between tourists and service providers, but also between employees of tourism facilities and the company's corporate governance. During the study of social interaction and attitudes, we encounter facts that reveal discriminatory attitudes towards people, employees, and tourists in tourism, in particular, unhealthy social attitudes towards employees. The violation of their labor rights, the existence of negative, aggressive attitudes towards them, it is also important that the disruption of the social acceptance process also implies not only the absence of interaction. The absence of social exchange also implies the existence of social distance, in the hospitality industry, towards employees who have different religious beliefs, ethnic origins, skin color, sexual orientation, or other different characteristics. In their relationships and communication with other local employees, social distancing is maintained, which not only creates problems in the work culture, but also leads to a deterioration in the quality of spraying, the working environment, and the climate.

The number of people employed in the tourism industry, particularly the hospitality industry, is growing every day; in the US alone, according to 2024 data, the number of employed people will exceed 15 million people, the majority of whom are women. The number of employed people is significantly increased by the employment of foreign citizens in tourism. In the US, the employment rate of foreigners is growing faster than the rate of local employment. According to 2018 data, the number of people from foreign countries among the employed was 2,971,041 people, and the number of people seeking employment in the tourism industry is increasing every year.

In some scientific sources, those employed in the tourism industry are referred to as a category with low work ability. Higher education is also a problem among those employed in the tourism industry.⁵ In Portugal alone, more than 60% of employees have a secondary education, which complicates the process of learning and understanding social relationships, leadership, and the vast majority of employees, 70%, are women.

To regulate healthy attitudes and relationships among employees in hospitality industry facilities, a direction has been introduced in tourism management: Ethical Teamwork Management. Ethical management, by its very nature, is concerned with eliminating any form of discrimination, aggressive, irrelevant, or disproportionate attitudes in the corporate environment. We usually encounter unequal attitudes towards employees, ethical problems, high workload, bullying on various grounds. Managers and supervisors working in tourism facilities who are interested in ethical management learn how to organize an optimal work environment, with appropriate corporate culture, rules and norms that ensure all employees work in a healthy environment.

A healthy work environment and climate are characterized by respectful treatment and attitudes. The role and importance of ethical management have increased in recent years due to the existence of social and corporate problems

⁵ UN Tourism. World Tourism Organization, % Change Over (2019) Preliminary Figures Data as Collected by UN Tourism, May 2024. <https://www.unwto.org/un-tourism-world-tourism-barometer-data> [L. s. 14.03.2025].

Picture 3. “The Leader’s Code” from Ethical Management



According to ethical management, the most important values and pillars are: human existence, organization, Ethical management regulates the behavior of employees in a company through specific rules, the environment, and respect and exchange are particularly important for ethical management. Ethical management helps leaders use techniques and approaches that ensure optimal management of teams and people, improve the quality of relationships and attitudes, and therefore have a positive impact on social interaction.

It is important an example of an ethical management system, the “leadership code,” which is based on:

- employee-oriented management,
- supplier growth management,
- Social responsibility management,
- Employee-respect management,
- Shareholder-oriented management.

The mechanism for selecting similar strategic directions in the implementation of ethical management is effective and provides consistent results. Present the main challenges for ethical management.

- Psychology, safety, ethics, economic profitability – in a company,
- The psychological aspect is significantly related to ensuring a healthy work environment, positive social relationships, information exchange, and proper analysis of information and employee behavior with empathy, a calm work atmosphere, "fees" imposed on employees for unethical behavior, and more. It is precisely the psychological and ethical aspects that provide the most regulation of social relations. According to the essence of ethical management, the leader should care not only about regulating relations and attitudes between employees

As well as optimizing relationships between customers and employees, on the other hand, the atmosphere, environment, and situation within the company always affect relationships with customers. Moods are contagious, and customers often feel this themselves. Ethical "leadership" represents the main challenge for modern tourism management in terms of both the development of social relations, rehabilitation, and improvement of service quality. In ethical management, monological connections are distinguished, including:

- Moderators,
- mediators, and
- facilitators.

Individual mediators include:

1. Emotional intelligence;
2. Psychological resilience;
3. Trust in the leader;
4. Service role identity;

There is a fairly strong and directly proportional relationship between social acceptance and ethical management, which unfortunately is not reflected in scientific and business management literature. However, it is clear that social acceptance is Discrimination against tourists based on different signs, discrimination against hospitality industry employees based on identical signs, and social acceptance-interaction problems are quite common in the industry. Thus, denying that ethical management, its implementation and systematization in leadership is not an effective direction for solving problems in social relations is illogical and a denial of the given. By implementing ethical management, it is possible to improve the quality of social acceptance not only among employees and tourists, but also among employees.

The intersection of ethical management with social acceptability provides the opportunity to eliminate irrational, unequal, discriminatory, xenophobic, homophobic, and aggressive attitudes, because the main principle of ethical management is teamwork, is about forming and shaping healthy social relationships and attitudes. Ethical management excludes bullying, aggression, social distancing, and intolerance both within the company and between employees and customers, tourists, and employees.

Conclusions

The revenue growth factor in tourism depends on customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is determined not only by the diversity of services and infrastructure, their accessibility, quality and timeliness of service, but also by a positive attitude, with social acceptance.

In the tourism business, the social side of relationships is important, as are social interests, which have a great impact on interaction, acceptance, attitudes, business results, tourist satisfaction, and the frequency and scale of service provision. In the tourism business, the social side of relationships is important, as are social interests, which have a great impact on interaction, acceptance, attitudes, business results, tourist satisfaction, and the frequency and scale of service provision.

In tourism, the main motivation of consumers or tourists is not only relaxation, travel, gaining new impressions, visiting foreign countries, but also the desire to socialize. People travel precisely because they want to communicate with people of different cultures, beliefs, or backgrounds. This reinforces the importance of social acceptance. Social acceptance is a complex process that involves social interaction between different parties, including tourists and non-tourists, locals and locals, and employees and tourists.

Attitudes towards tourism and tourists are mixed. A certain part of society, considering research and its results, also exhibits a negative attitude towards tourism. They blame the industry for the increase in various types of crime. In the deterioration of security, in the increase in crime rates.

Social relations between tourists and locals, residents, employees, or company employees can be regulated. By using ethical management and the necessary approaches in practice, by introducing them

into the corporate culture of companies, by introducing important rules that ensure equality (including in the corporate culture)

Implementing ethical management is more or less difficult in companies that operate in markets with high cultural awareness, For highly cultural societies, culture is a set of rules and norms, where a specific, often unequal, living social system of evaluation, understanding, judgment, and perception operates.

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