



Article

# Institutional Support Strategies for The Development of Social Tourism Entrepreneurship

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**Abstract:** This study examines institutional support strategies for the development of social tourism entrepreneurship, focusing on the interplay of policy frameworks, financial mechanisms, and collaborative structures. Social tourism entrepreneurship offers a viable pathway to address pressing socio-economic disparities, particularly in contexts where governmental resources are insufficient. However, its growth is often constrained by limited institutional backing and policy clarity. Using a systems approach and comparative analysis of local and international practices, the research identifies key challenges, including the scarcity of targeted governmental programs, underdeveloped legal frameworks, and limited financial incentives. The study highlights the importance of integrated policy measures, legal recognition, capacity-building, and cross-sector partnerships to foster sustainable and inclusive tourism. The findings provide practical recommendations for embedding social tourism entrepreneurship into broader development agendas, thereby enhancing its role in poverty reduction, social inclusion, and community resilience.

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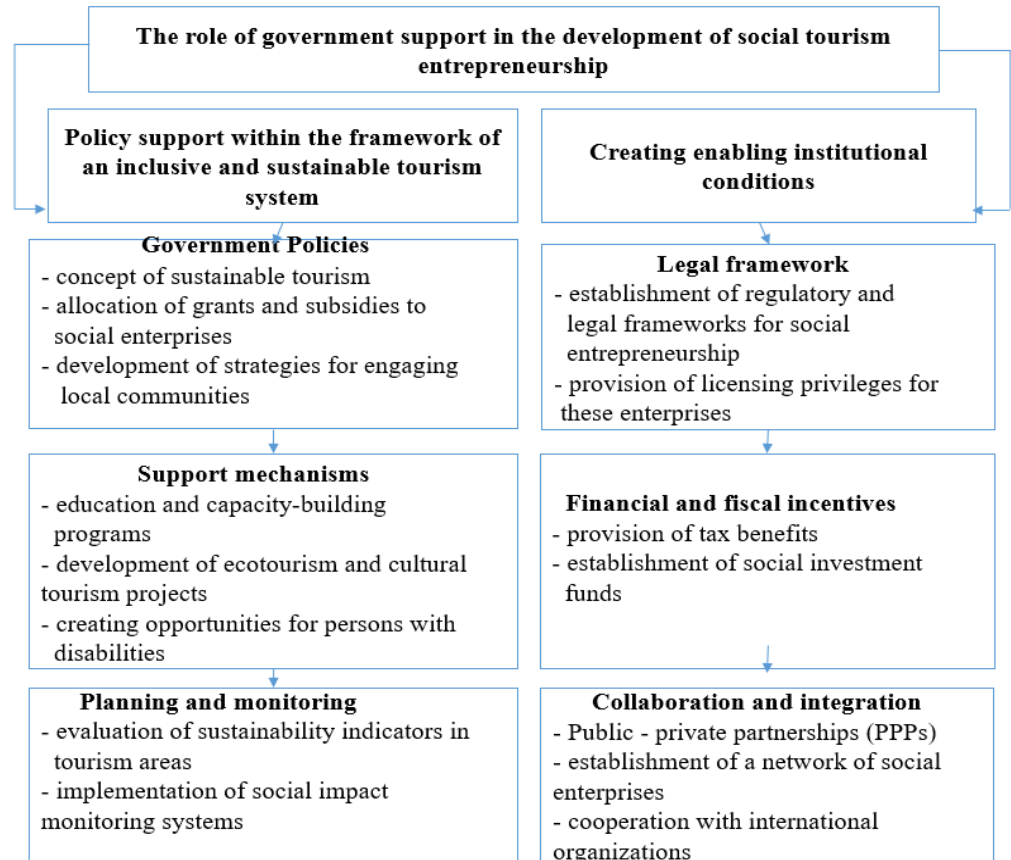
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**Keywords:** Social Tourism Entrepreneurship, Institutional Support, Financial Support, Inclusive Tourism, Sustainable Tourism.

## 1. Introduction

It is emphasized that the country can contribute to the development of social tourism entrepreneurship through two main directions: first, by formulating policies that support the establishment and operation of social enterprises within an inclusive and sustainable tourism framework; and second, by facilitating the creation of institutional conditions that promote, legalize, and harmonize social entrepreneurship activities. [1], [2]

Although resource-constrained social tourism entrepreneurship has been viewed as a promising approach to addressing various social tourism-related challenges, in developing countries it is increasingly regarded as a tool for solving social problems that governments are either unable or insufficiently resourced to address. A critical analysis of current national efforts reveals a growing emergence of different forms of social tourism entrepreneurship; however, creating social value in this domain remains a highly challenging task [3]. To overcome these challenges, the country may consider designing and proposing institutional support programs. Indeed, the government's willingness—or lack thereof—to fulfill practical responsibilities in this area may result in either the advancement of social tourism entrepreneurship or in stagnation and a reluctance to invest in its development, see Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** The national support model for the development of social tourism entrepreneurship.

To date, there has been insufficient research on the impact of the institutional environment on social entrepreneurship, as well as on the mechanisms that either promote or hinder these processes [4], [5]. Moreover, existing knowledge about effective policy directions aimed at fostering social entrepreneurship remains limited. The ambiguity of the concept of social entrepreneurship, the lack of clear definitions regarding its practical dimensions, and the scarcity of data on how the institutional environment influences it all point to significant opportunities for further in-depth study of these issues [6].

#### Literature Review

Many researchers have conducted studies aimed at the rapid development of the tourism sector and the introduction of accessible tourism types for the population. The literature review on this topic has been carried out based on the analysis of scientific works related to the development of social tourism entrepreneurship, and their core scientific and practical ideas have been thoroughly examined [7]. Theoretical approaches and practical research in the field of comprehensive development and management of social tourism entrepreneurship have been deeply studied, and existing scientific positions have been critically analyzed [8], [9].

The study investigates the significance of institutional and political support in the development of social entrepreneurship. It also explores the theoretical foundations and conceptual diversity of social entrepreneurship [10], strategies for sustainable tourism and poverty reduction [11], and the complexities of tourism policy and planning [12]. Furthermore, the role of social inclusion and youth empowerment in reducing social inequality and integrating marginalized groups into economic life has been extensively analyzed [13].

## 2. Materials and Methods

The research methodology of this article is aimed at conducting a comprehensive analysis of social tourism entrepreneurship and improving its development mechanisms in a dynamic environment. It is based on a set of scientific research methods and approaches. The systems approach enables the identification of the interconnections between economic, social, and political factors related to entrepreneurial resources in the field of social tourism, their structural components, and interaction mechanisms. In addition, the article applies a comparative analysis method by examining both local and international experiences, which has made it possible to identify the most effective mechanisms for developing social tourism entrepreneurship.

In reality, as political issues become increasingly complex and interconnected, and as government budgets continue to shrink, governments are becoming less equipped with the resources and capabilities needed to directly address social challenges. As a result, they are showing a growing interest in innovative approaches to solving social and economic problems. However, a growing body of critical research indicates that, despite the significant expansion of such forms of tourism—particularly in developing countries—creating social value is not an easy task. Moreover, the challenges associated with this process may be further exacerbated by a lack of institutional and political support.

In order to formulate research findings applicable in practice, modeling and forecasting methods were also employed. In particular, various scenarios for the development of social tourism entrepreneurship were developed, and their potential outcomes were forecasted. This plays an important role in improving the decision-making process in the management of the social tourism sector. The methodological approaches mentioned above made it possible to develop scientifically grounded recommendations for the comprehensive development of social tourism entrepreneurship.

## 3. Results and Discussion

The analytical findings obtained during the research have revealed several key challenges in the development of social tourism entrepreneurship. Although research in the fields of tourism and social entrepreneurship remains limited, the number of general academic sources on social entrepreneurship is gradually increasing. However, scholarly literature specifically addressing the role of policy and government in supporting social entrepreneurship within the tourism sector is particularly scarce. This lack of research underscores the need for systematic reviews aimed at expanding existing concepts and providing theoretical explanations. Therefore, this article seeks to formulate key insights and lay a solid foundation for future research.

In addition, the article analyzes examples from both the Global North and the Global South, deriving important conclusions and, where relevant, highlighting the differences between policy approaches. In recent decades, many governments have adopted neoliberal strategies that prioritize free-market principles and move away from direct intervention, instead focusing on indirect policies aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of destinations [14], [15].

Many government policies are primarily designed to serve the interests of large tourism enterprises and can generally be categorized into three main directions. These policies typically include the following initiatives:

1. Increasing demand for tourism (e.g., removing barriers that hinder growth, repurposing underutilized infrastructure and resources—such as coastal areas or national parks—for tourism use);
2. Improving labor productivity (e.g., maintaining minimum wage standards and protecting labor rights);
3. Attracting investment (e.g., easing environmental regulations and reducing bureaucratic obstacles);
4. Addressing market failures (e.g., supporting governance mechanisms to enhance coordination and cooperation within the industry).

In many countries, these political initiatives have tended to support large corporate interests. However, since these companies are accountable not to national governments but to international shareholders and centralized headquarters, tourism policies directed toward this sector are often called into question in terms of their ability to protect and promote the public interest.

Drawing on the concept of the 'invisible hand', some experts argue that the industry must preserve local resources and assets to safeguard its long-term interests. However, reliable and comprehensive evidence demonstrating that global tourism companies systematically and effectively implement sustainable and responsible practices remains scarce.

There are insufficient opportunities at the national level to address emerging and increasingly acute social problems. In this research, we aim to tackle social issues and promote more efficient use of community resources through social tourism entrepreneurship. Social tourism entrepreneurship is focused not only on resolving social challenges but also, to some extent, economic and legal issues. Globally, numerous enterprises dedicated to social entrepreneurship can be studied. An example in this regard is the KOTO (Know One Teach One) social enterprise in Vietnam, which trains socially vulnerable youth in culinary and hospitality skills. Similar programs also exist in developed countries, such as Jamie Oliver's 'About Fifteen' initiative in the United Kingdom.

Such programs are typically financed through commercial activities and are not limited to teaching vocational skills alone. They offer greater benefits by fostering life skills development, personal growth, and expanding social and professional networks. These positive impacts gradually extend throughout society and continue to yield results long after the program has ended. In contrast, training programs at government-funded short-term commercial training centers are less likely to contribute significantly to long-term social sustainability.

Social tourism entrepreneurship embodies social objectives and, in some cases, emerges as a promising approach for governments to address issues related to social tourism. It is important to emphasize that, particularly in developing countries, despite the growth of this type of tourism, creating social value often involves considerable challenges, where institutional support plays a crucial role.

Having previously examined ideas related to the institutional conditions that governments can create to support social entrepreneurship in tourism, we now turn our attention to the set of political tools and approaches that governments may employ. Political tools refer to the instruments, approaches, and mechanisms utilized by governments to achieve specific outcomes. The tools that governments can apply to support social entrepreneurship activities oriented towards tourism are typically classified into four main categories based on their source or mechanism of influence:

Financial instruments refer to strategic measures implemented by governments using direct financial resources to achieve targeted outcomes. They typically manifest through positive fiscal incentives, including subsidies, tax exemptions, and investment support. For example, such financial incentives are effective in engaging private sector participants in the conservation of ecological assets. Negative financial instruments are also employed, such as various taxes, fees, and environmental charges. The purpose of these measures is to achieve goals like reducing tourist flows in environmentally sensitive areas. Within the scope of social tourism entrepreneurship, the application of positive financial incentives particularly tax relief, subsidies, and grants is an important strategy to create favorable conditions for supporting social initiatives;

Information tools refer to the dissemination of information, education, and advocacy initiatives aimed at influencing the consciousness of communities and various social groups, as well as changing their behaviors. These tools play a crucial role in promoting the importance of social tourism entrepreneurship, encouraging active public

participation, and fostering shifts in social awareness. Additionally, voluntary accreditation systems, incentive award programs, and mechanisms supporting socially responsible market competition also fall within this category. By influencing consumers' informed choices, they further empower social tourism entrepreneurship initiatives;

Legal (authoritative) instruments are governance mechanisms aimed at achieving social outcomes based on the state's legal authority and political influence. Within this framework, existing laws and other normative-legal documents provide opportunities to regulate and support social tourism entrepreneurship activities. This includes legislation that grants legal status to social entrepreneurship entities, clarifies their financial obligations, tax burdens, and operational conditions. Such legal foundations play a crucial role in establishing the institutional environment necessary for the transparent and sustainable development of entrepreneurship;

Organizational instruments encompass a set of initiatives aimed at establishing and developing various institutions, organizations, or partnership systems to achieve government-designated goals. Through these tools, the state sector collaborates with private and non-governmental organizations to realize socio-economic outcomes. For instance, destination management and marketing organizations operating in the tourism sector and supported by the government. Such structures play a vital role in coordinating social tourism entrepreneurship initiatives and ensuring regional development.

As a result of the extensive reforms being carried out in our country, numerous practical activities related to social tourism are currently underway. Examples include initiatives such as the 'Youth Tourism Week' and organized tourist trips by the Federation of Trade Unions. We believe that systematic approaches play a crucial role in the planned and effective organization of such activities.

#### 4. Conclusion

Considering the income levels and physical capabilities of the population residing across the country, the government plays a leading reformist role in creating tourism types and routes accessible to all. We believe that achieving these goals will be faster and more effective through this approach.

In this regard, a critical question arises for governments: Should they promote social tourism entrepreneurship as a key instrument for addressing social issues, regardless of available resources? If the answer is affirmative, the next important question becomes: What favorable conditions can the state create to foster the development of social entrepreneurship?.

At first glance, this question requires ongoing research and practical observation. However, the serious social and environmental challenges emerging globally in the coming years, as well as the need for new socio-economic approaches to replace the existing capitalist model, necessitate urgent solutions to this issue. Therefore, this research primarily focuses on formulating practical measures.

To this end, governments must first integrate social tourism entrepreneurship into an inclusive and sustainable tourism system, as well as develop appropriate policy measures. Secondly, they need to establish mechanisms that support this activity, regulate it within a legal framework, and coordinate it with other institutions.

Although this study offers certain recommendations, practical measures should be adapted according to each country's and region's tourism industry, government structures, civil society, and their interrelations.

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