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Oksana Roik

Candidate of Economy Sciences,
Associate Professor of the Department
of Tourism, Lviv Polytechnic National
University, Lviv, Ukraine;
e-mail: okšana.r.obervan@lpnu.ua
ORCID: [0000-0002-3617-8068](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3617-8068)
(Corresponding author)

Lilia Bublyk

Candidate of Economy Sciences,
Department of Management of
Organizations, Lviv Polytechnic
National University, Lviv, Ukraine;
ORCID: [0009-0008-5886-1440](https://orcid.org/0009-0008-5886-1440)

Myroslava Haba

Candidate of Economy Sciences,
Associate Professor of the Department
of Tourism, Lviv Polytechnic National
University, Lviv, Ukraine;
ORCID: [0000-0002-8642-8942](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8642-8942)

Oksana Makar

Candidate of Economy Sciences,
Associate Professor of the Department
of Tourism, Lviv Polytechnic National
University, Lviv, Ukraine;
ORCID: [0000-0001-8135-0018](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8135-0018)

Vasyl Mykhailyshyn

PhD Student, Department of
Management of Organizations, Lviv
Polytechnic National University, Lviv,
Ukraine;
ORCID: [0009-0004-9935-1755](https://orcid.org/0009-0004-9935-1755)

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MULTI-CRITERIA APPROACH FOR DEVELOPING STAKEHOLDER-ORIENTED STRATEGIES IN TOURISM ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT

ABSTRACT

This study develops a stakeholder-oriented strategy for tourism enterprise management using a multi-criteria decision-making approach. The research focuses on evaluating and prioritising stakeholder preferences to align enterprise objectives with their expectations. Conducted in a prominent tourism region in Ukraine, the study identifies primary and secondary stakeholder groups, including employees, investors, local government representatives, tourists, and local communities. Data collection combined semi-structured interviews with 20 primary stakeholders and a survey of 150 participants from all stakeholder groups. Using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), the study prioritised four dimensions of impact: economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and operational. Economic impacts, particularly investment opportunities and job creation, emerged as the most critical. Socio-cultural dimensions, such as cultural preservation, followed, while environmental and operational impacts ranked lower in stakeholder priorities. The findings offer a practical framework for integrating diverse stakeholder perspectives into strategic planning, ensuring alignment with enterprise goals and sustainable development principles. This research contributes to stakeholder theory by demonstrating the applicability of AHP in tourism management and providing actionable recommendations for enhancing stakeholder engagement. Future research should explore longitudinal changes in stakeholder preferences and the incorporation of advanced decision-making models to refine prioritisation processes.

Keywords: stakeholder-oriented strategy, AHP, tourism management, sustainability, decision-making

JEL Classification: L83, Q56, M10

INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion and globalisation of the tourism industry have created both significant opportunities and complex challenges for tourism enterprises. Among these challenges is the necessity to balance the diverse and sometimes conflicting interests of multiple stakeholders while ensuring long-term sustainability and maintaining competitiveness in a dynamic market environment (Shpak et al., 2022; Kalyna et al., 2024). Stakeholders – including investors, employees, local communities, policymakers, and tourists – play a pivotal role in shaping the strategic direction of tourism enterprises (Buhalis, 2000; Luštický et al., 2013). However, the heterogeneity of their needs requires an integrated and methodologically sound decision-making approach that accounts for economic, socio-cultural, and environmental considerations. Stadnicki and Terebukh (2022) explored the rationale behind the optimal location of production using a system approach, which is critical for improving the efficiency and sustainability of production systems. They argue that careful consideration of geographical and logistical factors can significantly enhance operational performance. Similarly, Lisovska et al. (2022) highlighted the role of innovation processes in regional development, focusing on modelling the financial outcomes for subjects involved in innovation activities. Their research underscores the significance of financial modelling in assessing the economic viability of innovation-driven enterprises in various regional contexts.

Despite the growing recognition of stakeholder theory in tourism management, existing research has not sufficiently addressed the methodological challenges associated with

integrating stakeholder preferences into strategic decision-making processes (Harrison et al., 2015). Traditional management approaches often fail to capture the multidimensional nature of stakeholder priorities, leading to misalignment between enterprise strategies and stakeholder expectations. This gap is particularly pronounced in the context of post-crisis recovery, where tourism enterprises must navigate financial instability, infrastructural reconstruction, and shifting market dynamics.

This study seeks to advance the theoretical and methodological understanding of stakeholder-oriented strategic management in tourism by applying a multi-criteria decision-making (MCDM) approach. Specifically, the research employs the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) to systematically prioritise strategic objectives based on stakeholder perceptions across four key dimensions: economic, sociocultural, environmental, and operational (Munda, 2004; Bauer et al., 2013; Macharis et al., 2015). By doing so, the study not only contributes to the refinement of stakeholder theory in tourism but also provides a practical framework for decision-makers seeking to enhance the resilience and sustainability of tourism enterprises in volatile environments.

The relevance of this research is further underscored by the ongoing challenges facing Ukraine's tourism sector in the aftermath of the full-scale war. Prior to the war, the industry was a key driver of economic growth, contributing USD 1.6 billion to the national economy and supporting 1.2 million jobs (International Tourism Highlights, 2024). However, the conflict has severely disrupted this trajectory, with tourism revenues expected to fall short of pre-war projections by over USD 1 billion by the end of 2024. Cumulative revenue losses are projected to reach USD 12.7 billion by 2030, while employment in the sector is estimated to decline by more than 60% by the end of 2024 compared to pre-war levels. While the industry is adapting to conditions of investment shortages, the volume of suspended foreign and domestic private investments is estimated at tens of billions of dollars (Strategic Roadmap, 2023; RDNA3, 2024).

The financial recovery of Ukraine's tourism sector remains highly uncertain due to reduced consumer demand, infrastructure damage, and broader macroeconomic instability. While certain western regions, such as Lviv, Zakarpattia, and Ivano-Frankivsk, have experienced growth in domestic tourism driven by the relocation of internally displaced persons, this has not compensated for the substantial decline in international arrivals. In 2023, domestic tourism expenditures increased by 15%, yet total sectoral revenues remained 65% lower than in 2021. Hotel occupancy rates in western Ukraine reached 50-60%, while in central and eastern regions, they remained below 20%, reflecting the uneven nature of the recovery process.

A crucial determinant of the sector's recovery will be the expansion of financial support mechanisms, particularly state-backed loan guarantee programmes. For instance, the "Affordable Loans 5-7-9%" initiative has facilitated over 100,000 loans for SMEs, yet only 5-7% of these have been allocated to tourism enterprises, highlighting accessibility constraints within the sector. The introduction of additional financial instruments – such as low-interest recovery loans, deferred repayment schemes, and targeted grant funding – could significantly improve credit accessibility, particularly for enterprises seeking to rebuild damaged infrastructure or expand services in more stable regions. International financial institutions, including the European Investment Bank (EIB), USAID, and the World Bank, have pledged approximately €500 million for SME recovery, with a portion allocated to tourism enterprises. However, bureaucratic inefficiencies and delays in fund disbursement have hindered effective implementation. Streamlining grant application processes and introducing targeted financial incentives for tourism development projects will be critical to accelerating recovery.

Another key factor influencing the long-term restoration of Ukraine's tourism sector is the ability to attract foreign direct investment (FDI). Prior to the war, the industry accounted for 3.9% of GDP, generating over USD 3 billion annually; however, since 2022, FDI inflows into the sector have declined by more than 80%. Without a comprehensive financial strategy –including enhanced credit accessibility, structured investment incentives, and a long-term recovery roadmap – the industry will continue to face severe structural constraints. The effectiveness of financial recovery measures will ultimately depend on the ability of the government and financial institutions to adopt adaptive policies that address immediate SME needs while fostering sustainable growth and competitiveness in the long term.

Traditional sources of financing, such as bank loans, remain the primary mechanism for supporting tourism SMEs, but their accessibility is often restricted due to heightened risk perceptions among financial institutions. Alternative financial instruments, including microfinance and grant programmes, have emerged as viable solutions for improving the financial resilience of tourism enterprises. These mechanisms not only alleviate liquidity constraints but also facilitate innovation, infrastructure development, and market diversification.

The findings of this study underscore the urgent need for tourism enterprises to adopt adaptive management strategies that account for evolving stakeholder expectations and shifting market conditions. A multi-criteria decision-making approach offers a robust framework for balancing economic, social, and environmental priorities, which is essential for the sustainable recovery and long-term development of Ukraine's tourism sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA)

The tourism industry is a key driver of economic development in many countries, contributing significantly to employment, GDP, and foreign exchange earnings. In Ukraine, prior to the onset of the full-scale war, tourism was on a steady growth trajectory, with the sector contributing approximately USD 1.6 billion to the national economy and providing over 1.2 million jobs (International Tourism Highlights, 2024). However, the tourism sector is highly vulnerable to external shocks, including political instability, natural disasters, and conflicts. The ongoing war in Ukraine has exacerbated these vulnerabilities, severely impacting tourism activities and causing a significant decline in international arrivals and overall sector performance (Uhodnikova, 2018).

Given these challenges, the development of effective strategies for tourism enterprises in Ukraine is critical to their resilience and sustainable recovery. In this context, one of the most promising approaches for formulating these strategies is the application of multi-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) (Banville et al., 1998; Beck et al., 2012; Baudry et al., 2018). MCDA provides a framework that integrates multiple perspectives and stakeholder interests into the decision-making process, allowing tourism enterprises to navigate complex challenges and develop strategies that balance economic, social, and environmental considerations. This approach is particularly relevant in Ukraine's post-war recovery efforts, where it can help ensure that tourism development aligns with the needs and priorities of diverse stakeholders, including government bodies, local communities, business owners, and tourists.

Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) is a well-established and widely recognized methodology employed to support decision-making processes that involve multiple, often conflicting, criteria (Velasquez & Hester, 2013). MCDA enables decision-makers to evaluate various alternatives by considering a predefined set of criteria, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data. It is particularly valuable in situations where decisions must balance diverse objectives, including economic, social, and environmental factors. The approach allows for a structured evaluation of different options, offering a transparent framework that considers stakeholder preferences and trade-offs (Macharis & Baudry, 2018). Despite its widespread use, existing empirical studies have primarily focused on MCDA applications in sectors such as transport infrastructure (Macharis et al., 2009), environmental management (Bauer et al., 2013), and urban planning (Ghorbanzadeh et al., 2018), with limited attention given to its role in post-crisis tourism recovery. Previous research on MCDA in tourism (Li et al., 2018; Poister et al., 1999) has demonstrated its utility in balancing economic benefits with environmental conservation and social equity. However, these studies largely concentrate on stable tourism markets rather than post-war contexts like Ukraine.

In the case of Ukraine, the tourism sector is currently in a state of significant disruption due to the ongoing war. As the country seeks to recover and rebuild, there is a pressing need to develop tourism strategies that can adapt to the new realities and challenges facing the industry (RDNA3, 2024). Existing research has yet to comprehensively address how MCDA can facilitate recovery-oriented tourism planning in a war-affected country. This study builds upon previous empirical applications of MCDA while addressing the gaps in its use for post-conflict tourism resilience and stakeholder-driven recovery strategies.

Stakeholder Theory in Tourism Enterprise Management

Stakeholder theory, first introduced by Freeman (1984), advocates for the inclusion of all parties who are affected by or have an interest in the actions and decisions of an organization. The theory suggests that business success is not only determined by the goals of the shareholders or owners but also by the ability to meet the needs and expectations of a wide array of stakeholders (Mitchell et al., 1997; Medeiros de Araujo & Bramwell, 1999).

Empirical studies have demonstrated that stakeholder engagement is critical for achieving sustainable tourism development (Byrd et al., 2008; Amoako et al., 2022). For example, Byrd (2007) and Lindberg et al. (2019) highlight the role of participatory governance models in mitigating conflicts between local communities and tourism developers. However, the application of stakeholder theory in post-war tourism recovery remains underexplored. This study contributes to the existing

body of knowledge by examining how stakeholder engagement, combined with MCDA, can enhance decision-making in Ukraine's tourism sector under crisis conditions.

The integration of multi-criteria decision analysis into stakeholder-oriented decision-making processes helps address this complexity. MCDA allows for the systematic evaluation of alternatives based on a variety of criteria, facilitating a more holistic approach that incorporates the interests of all stakeholders. By using MCDA, decision-makers in tourism enterprises can assess the potential benefits and trade-offs of various strategies and ensure that the actions they take align with the broader interests of the community, the environment, and the business (Banville et al., 1998; Beck & Hofmann, 2012).

Integrating Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis with Stakeholder Involvement

The integration of Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis with stakeholder theory has gained increasing prominence in the tourism management literature as an effective approach to address the complex challenges of tourism development and sustainability. MCDA allows for systematic evaluation of various decision alternatives based on multiple criteria, which is particularly valuable when there are diverse, and sometimes conflicting, stakeholder interests (Sotear & Lynnaire, 2014; Keseru et al., 2021). Despite the growing body of research on MCDA and stakeholder engagement in tourism (Scuttari et al., 2019; Velasquez & Hester, 2013), little empirical work has been conducted on their joint application in post-crisis settings. Previous studies have demonstrated the utility of MCDA for sustainable transport (Macharis & Bernardini, 2015) and urban development (Baudry et al., 2018), yet there is a gap in understanding how these methods can be leveraged to rebuild war-affected tourism economies.

The integration of MCDA with stakeholder involvement has also been beneficial for the implementation of strategies that foster community-based tourism. In regions where tourism development is sensitive to cultural and social contexts, MCDA has been used to ensure that the interests of local residents are adequately represented and that they benefit from the development (Keseru et al., 2021). However, the effectiveness of such approaches in conflict-affected regions, where stakeholder priorities are often drastically altered by security concerns and economic instability, remains an open research question. This paper seeks to bridge this gap by examining the specific role of MCDA in balancing economic recovery with sustainable tourism development in Ukraine's post-war context.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This study aims to develop a stakeholder-oriented strategy for tourism enterprise management using a multi-criteria decision-making approach, ensuring alignment between enterprise objectives and stakeholder expectations while promoting sustainable development. The research focuses on identifying key stakeholder groups, including employees, investors, local government representatives, tourists, and local communities, and assessing their preferences regarding economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and operational impacts. By applying the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), the study systematically prioritises stakeholder concerns and determines their relative importance in strategic decision-making. The findings contribute to the development of a strategic framework that integrates stakeholder perspectives into tourism enterprise management, fostering long-term sustainability and competitiveness. Additionally, the research offers practical recommendations for enhancing stakeholder engagement and optimising decision-making processes within tourism enterprises. From a theoretical perspective, the study advances stakeholder theory by demonstrating the applicability of multi-criteria decision-making methods, particularly AHP, in tourism management.

METHODS

This research employed a mixed-methods approach to develop and evaluate a stakeholder-oriented strategy for tourism enterprise management. The study was conducted between January and September 2024 in a prominent tourism region in Ukraine. The selected regions provided a well-defined stakeholder ecosystem, including diverse private, public, and community actors, making it an ideal setting for examining stakeholder perceptions and preferences.

The study began by identifying and categorising stakeholders into primary and secondary groups. Primary stakeholders included employees, investors, and local government representatives actively involved in tourism operations and planning. Secondary stakeholders comprised tourists and local community members indirectly affected by the activities of tourism enterprises (Bryson, 2004). This categorisation facilitated targeted data collection and analysis of stakeholder priorities.

Selection of Respondents and Sampling Strategy

To ensure the representativeness of the sample, a purposive sampling strategy was employed for semi-structured interviews, while a stratified random sampling approach was used for the survey. The selection criteria for interview participants included: (1) direct involvement in tourism enterprise management, investment, or policymaking (for primary stakeholders), and (2) a minimum of three years of professional experience in the tourism sector. These criteria ensured that respondents possessed relevant expertise and insights into strategic tourism planning.

For the survey, participants were stratified into stakeholder subgroups (tourism employees, investors, local government representatives, tourists, and community members) to maintain proportional representation. The sample size of 150 respondents was determined based on Cochran's formula for finite populations (Cochran, 1977), ensuring statistical reliability. Tourists were selected through systematic random sampling at key tourism sites, while local community members were chosen using a quota-based approach to reflect demographic diversity in terms of age, gender, and occupation.

Data Collection and Analytical Techniques

Data collection combined qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder preferences. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 representatives from primary stakeholder groups. The interviews focused on identifying key strategic priorities, operational challenges, and the desired impacts of tourism activities (Reed, et al., 2009; Ritchie, et al., 2003). Additionally, a questionnaire survey was distributed to 150 participants from both primary and secondary stakeholder groups. The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale to evaluate the perceived importance of four impact dimensions: economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and operational (Likert, 1932; Rickards, et al., 2012; Joshi, et al., 2015).

To prioritise the identified strategic objectives, the study utilised the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP). This method involves several mathematical steps. Stakeholders performed pairwise comparisons using Saaty's nine-point scale, where a_{ij} represents the relative importance of criterion i compared to criterion j (Saaty, 2001; Saaty & Vargas, 2022). The matrix is defined as:

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & a_{12} & a_{13} & \dots & a_{1n} \\ 1/a_{12} & 1 & a_{23} & \dots & a_{2n} \\ 1/a_{13} & 1/a_{23} & 1 & \dots & a_{3n} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 1/a_{1n} & 1/a_{2n} & 1/a_{3n} & \dots & 1 \end{bmatrix} \quad (1)$$

Each element in the pairwise comparison matrix is normalised by dividing it by the sum of its column:

$$a'_{ij} = \frac{a_{ij}}{\sum_{i=1}^n a_{ij}} \quad (2)$$

The normalised matrix A' is then used to calculate the weights for each criterion.

The weights (W_i) for each criterion are obtained by averaging the normalised values in each row:

$$w_i = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{j=1}^n a'_{ij}. \quad (3)$$

The consistency of the matrix is evaluated by calculating the Consistency Ratio (CR):

$$CR = \frac{CI}{RI}, \quad (4)$$

where CI is the Consistency Index, calculated as:

$$CI = \frac{\lambda_{max} - n}{n - 1} \quad (5)$$

Here, λ_{max} is the largest eigenvalue of the matrix, and RI is the Random Index, which depends on the number of criteria. A CR value below 0.1 indicates acceptable consistency.

Data analysis was conducted in several stages. Descriptive statistics summarised stakeholder demographics and preferences, providing an overview of the data distribution. The AHP method was used to compute global weights for each criterion, facilitating the ranking of strategic objectives. Gap analysis compared the prioritised objectives with the current strategies of tourism enterprises, highlighting areas for realignment to better address stakeholder expectations (Saaty & Vargas, 2022).

Ethical considerations were rigorously observed throughout the study. All participants provided informed consent, and their responses were anonymised to ensure confidentiality. The research adhered to ethical guidelines established by the institutional review board, ensuring compliance with academic and professional standards.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were rigorously observed throughout the study. All participants provided informed consent, and their responses were anonymised to ensure confidentiality. To minimise response bias, interviewees were assured of the non-commercial nature of the study, and surveys were conducted in a neutral setting. The research adhered to ethical guidelines established by the institutional review board, ensuring compliance with academic and professional standards.

RESULTS

Stakeholders were categorised into primary and secondary groups to ensure focused engagement. Primary stakeholders, including employees, investors, and local government representatives, demonstrated direct involvement in tourism operations and strategic planning. Secondary stakeholders comprised tourists and local community members indirectly impacted by tourism enterprise activities (Bryson, 2004; Reed, et al., 2009).

The stakeholder influence-interest matrix revealed that employees exhibited both high influence and interest, positioning them as critical stakeholders (Ritchie, et al., 2003). Investors and local governments were also prioritised for their high levels of influence or interest, whereas tourists and local communities showed moderate levels of both. Table 1 summarises the prioritisation outcomes.

Table 1. Stakeholder Influence-Interest Matrix.

| Stakeholder Group | Influence | Interest | Priority Level |
|-------------------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Employees | High | High | Critical |
| Investors | High | Medium | High |
| Local Governments | Medium | High | High |
| Tourists | Low | High | Moderate |
| Local Communities | Medium | Medium | Moderate |

The survey and interview responses provided a comprehensive dataset on stakeholder preferences regarding four impact dimensions: economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and operational.

The Analytic Hierarchy Process framework identified four primary dimensions – economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and operational – along with their respective sub-criteria (Table 2). Stakeholders performed pairwise comparisons of these criteria to priorities strategic objectives (Wilson, et al., 2018; Yannis, et al., 2020; Saaty & Vargas, 2022).

Table 2. Mean Rankings of Stakeholder Preferences for Impact Dimensions.

| Dimension | Sub-Criteria | Code | Mean Ranking | Standard Deviation |
|----------------|--------------------------------|------|--------------|--------------------|
| Economic | Investment opportunities | C1.1 | 4.65 | 0.52 |
| | Job creation | C1.2 | 4.48 | 0.58 |
| | Revenue generation | C1.3 | 4.32 | 0.61 |
| Socio-Cultural | Infrastructure development | C2.1 | 4.22 | 0.63 |
| | Cultural heritage preservation | C2.2 | 4.08 | 0.67 |
| Environmental | Environmental sustainability | C3.1 | 3.85 | 0.59 |
| | Resource conservation | C3.2 | 3.72 | 0.65 |
| Operational | Stakeholder collaboration | C4.1 | 3.55 | 0.70 |
| | Service innovation | C4.2 | 3.40 | 0.74 |

Figure 1 summarises the mean rankings (on a five-point Likert scale) derived from the survey data (Likert, 1932; Joshi, et al., 2015).

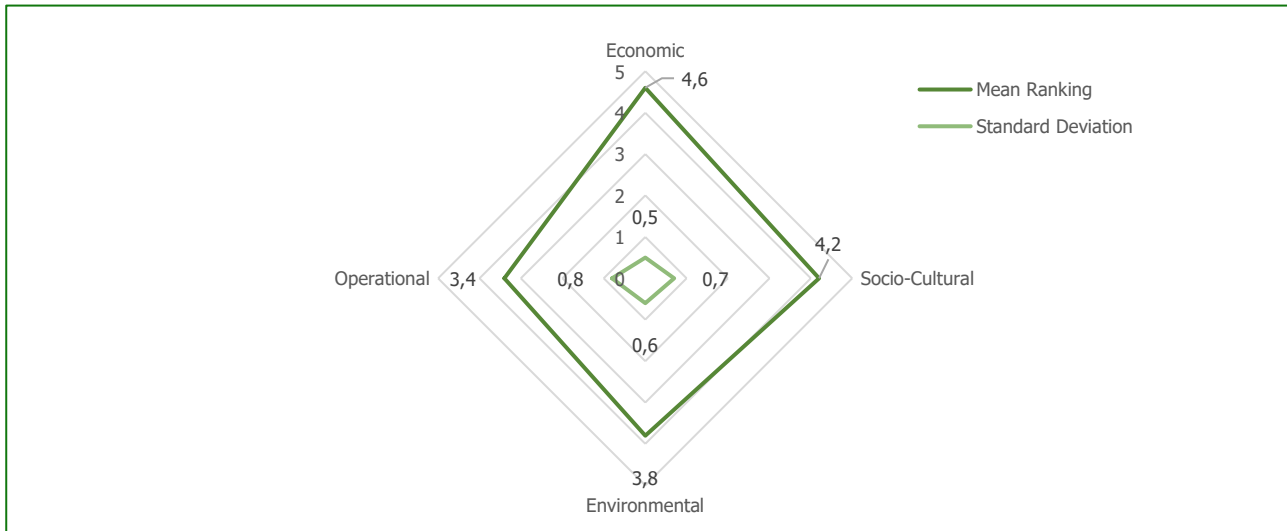


Figure 1. Mean Rankings of Stakeholder Preferences for Impact Dimensions.

The AHP analysis was constructed to evaluate the importance of the four dimensions and their corresponding sub-criteria. Pairwise comparisons provided the relative importance values, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Pairwise Comparison Matrix of Strategic Dimensions.

| Criteria | Economic (C1) | Socio-Cultural (C2) | Environmental (C3) | Operational (C4) |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Economic (C1) | 1 | 3 | 5 | 7 |
| Socio-Cultural (C2) | 1/3 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| Environmental (C3) | 1/5 | 1/3 | 1 | 3 |
| Operational (C4) | 1/7 | 1/5 | 1/3 | 1 |

The pairwise comparison matrix was normalised, and the weights for each criterion were calculated. Table 4 displays the normalised matrix and the calculated weights.

Table 4. Normalised Matrix and Weights of Strategic Dimensions.

| Criteria | Economic (C1) | Socio-Cultural (C2) | Environmental (C3) | Operational (C4) | Weights |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------|
| Economic (C1) | 1 | 0.662 | 0.536 | 0.438 | 0.558 |
| Socio-Cultural (C2) | 0.199 | 1 | 0.321 | 0.313 | 0.263 |
| Environmental (C3) | 0.119 | 0.074 | 1 | 0.188 | 0.122 |
| Operational (C4) | 0.085 | 0.044 | 0.036 | 1 | 0.057 |

The Consistency Index (CI) and Consistency Ratio (CR) were calculated to verify the matrix's reliability. With a maximum eigenvalue (λ_{max}) of 4.177, the results are as follows: CI – 0.059 and CR – 0.065. Since $CR < 0.1$, the matrix was deemed consistent.

The global weights of sub-criteria were calculated by multiplying the local weights of each sub-criterion by the weights of their respective dimensions (Likert, 1932; Joshi, et al., 2015). Table 5 presents the global priorities.

Table 5. Global Priorities of Strategic Sub-Criteria.

| Sub-Criteria | Dimension | Local Weight | Global Priority |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Investment opportunities (C1.1) | Economic | 0.451 | 0.251 |
| Job creation (C1.2) | Economic | 0.341 | 0.190 |
| Cultural preservation (C2.1) | Socio-Cultural | 0.420 | 0.111 |
| Environmental sustainability (C3.1) | Environmental | 0.528 | 0.064 |

In this manner, economic impacts (55.8%) emerged as the most critical, with investment opportunities and job creation receiving the highest global priorities. Socio-cultural impacts (26.3%) emphasised cultural preservation and infrastructure development. Environmental impacts (12.2%) were less critical but remained important for sustainability. Operational impacts (5.7%) were the least prioritised, reflecting stakeholder preferences for tangible and immediate benefits. The results demonstrated the utility of AHP in aligning tourism enterprise strategies with stakeholder priorities, ensuring a balanced approach to sustainable development.

The findings confirm the critical role of economic dimensions in stakeholder satisfaction, reflecting the immediate and tangible benefits that tourism enterprises can provide. However, the relatively high prioritisation of socio-cultural impacts suggests that stakeholders value the preservation of local identity and infrastructure development, particularly in regions with rich cultural heritage. The findings of this study underscore the prominence of economic factors in the strategic priorities of stakeholders, a trend that is not only reflective of Ukraine's specific context but also aligns with broader international patterns. In Ukraine, the prioritisation of economic aspects is particularly pertinent given the ongoing wartime conditions and the subsequent need for post-war recovery. Economic development, in this context, is not merely a preference but a critical necessity. Tourism is seen as a vital sector capable of driving job creation, attracting investment, and ensuring regional economic stability, which are all crucial for rebuilding the economy. The financial constraints faced by local communities and businesses further amplify the demand for immediate economic returns, which tourism is uniquely positioned to deliver (Stadnicki, Terebukh, 2022; Lisovska et al., 2022). This trend of prioritising economic recovery through tourism is not exclusive to Ukraine. Similar patterns have been observed in other countries that have experienced conflict or economic crises, such as Croatia, Israel, and Georgia. In these contexts, tourism has often been viewed as an "economic driver," essential for revitalising economies and fostering recovery. Research by Yannis et al. (2020) supports this notion, highlighting that in post-crisis situations, tourism frequently takes precedence as a means of restoring economic vitality, with stakeholders focusing on maximising economic benefits in the short term.

In contrast, in more stable European economies, such as France, Germany, and Spain, a more balanced approach is evident. Here, while economic efficiency remains important, there is a more pronounced emphasis on sustainability and socio-cultural integration. These countries prioritise long-term, sustainable development, ensuring that economic considerations are harmonised with environmental protection and cultural preservation (Wilson et al., 2018). This comparison suggests that, while immediate economic recovery may necessitate a focus on economic aspects, in the long run, a more comprehensive approach encompassing sustainability and socio-cultural factors should be adopted. In conclusion, the findings highlight the urgent need to prioritise economic recovery in wartime and post-crisis contexts, particularly in sectors like tourism that offer immediate benefits. However, the experience of other countries suggests that, as recovery progresses, there should be a shift towards balancing economic goals with broader objectives of sustainable development.

DISCUSSION

In the context of systemic socio-economic transformations in Ukraine, the formation of a stakeholder-oriented strategy for tourism enterprise management by applying the Analytic Hierarchy Process is of particular importance (Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Jovanović & Ivana, 2016; Saaty & Vargas, 2022). Investment opportunities and job creation were assigned the highest priorities, a decision influenced by the prevailing economic conditions in Ukraine and the necessity for enterprises to maintain financial stability (Schroeter et al., 2016; Strategic Roadmap, 2023). The position of different authors (Luštický & Kincl, 2012; Schroeter et al., 2016; Cavallaro et al., 2017) is relevant, but also debatable, as they consider certain concepts in relation to certain limited conditions of functioning of strategic objectives. These objectives focus on job creation, investment opportunities, and infrastructure development, and these were most aligned with stakeholder preferences.

The comparatively lower prioritisation of environmental and operational impacts highlights a potential oversight in stakeholder perceptions, where long-term sustainability and collaboration may not be fully appreciated. This could be attributed

to limited awareness or immediate economic pressures overshadowing these considerations (Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Cavallaro et al., 2017). Alternative explanations for the results include the possibility that respondents from certain stakeholder groups (e.g., tourists) may have been underrepresented, leading to biases in the prioritisation process. Additionally, regional socio-economic conditions may have amplified the emphasis on economic dimensions, particularly in areas recovering from economic instability (Luštický & Kincl, 2012; Jovanović & Ivana, 2016).

From a practical perspective, the results offer a clear framework for tourism enterprises to align their strategies with stakeholder preferences. By prioritising investment opportunities, job creation, and cultural preservation, enterprises can enhance stakeholder satisfaction and foster long-term sustainability.

The study contributes to stakeholder theory by demonstrating the utility of AHP as a methodological tool for integrating diverse stakeholder priorities into strategic planning. It highlights the interplay between immediate economic benefits and long-term socio-cultural and environmental goals, providing a balanced perspective on sustainable tourism management.

Building on the limitations of this study, future research could explore several key areas. Expanding the geographic scope by conducting similar studies in diverse cultural and economic contexts would help validate and refine the prioritisation framework. Additionally, a longitudinal analysis examining how stakeholder preferences evolve over time, particularly in response to economic or environmental changes, could provide deeper insights into shifting priorities. Further advancements could be made by incorporating more sophisticated decision-making models, such as fuzzy AHP or other multi-criteria decision-making tools, to address the subjectivity inherent in pairwise comparisons. Another important direction for future research involves assessing the effectiveness of awareness campaigns in promoting environmental and operational priorities among stakeholders, ensuring a more balanced and sustainable approach to tourism enterprise management.

This research raises new questions for further exploration:

1. How can tourism enterprises balance short-term economic gains with long-term sustainability in regions facing economic instability?
2. What role do external factors, such as government policies or global tourism trends, play in shaping stakeholder priorities?
3. How can digital tools enhance stakeholder engagement and improve the accuracy of decision-making frameworks in tourism management?

The findings of this study underline the necessity of adopting a holistic approach to tourism enterprise management that integrates economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and operational dimensions while actively engaging stakeholders in the strategic planning process.

CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to develop a stakeholder-oriented strategy for tourism enterprise management by identifying and prioritising stakeholder preferences using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP). The findings revealed that economic impacts, particularly investment opportunities and job creation, were the most critical priorities for stakeholders. Socio-cultural impacts, including cultural heritage preservation and infrastructure development, were also highly valued, reflecting stakeholders' desire for sustainable and community-focused development. Environmental and operational impacts, while less prioritised, remain significant for ensuring long-term sustainability and collaborative engagement.

The research highlights the importance of integrating diverse stakeholder perspectives into strategic planning processes. By employing AHP, this study provides a practical framework for systematically evaluating and aligning stakeholder expectations with enterprise strategies. This approach not only enhances stakeholder satisfaction but also contributes to more balanced and sustainable tourism management practices.

The results underline the need for tourism enterprises to address immediate economic concerns while simultaneously investing in socio-cultural and environmental sustainability. This dual focus is particularly relevant in regions like Ukraine, where tourism plays a critical role in regional development and post-crisis recovery. Stakeholder collaboration should be emphasised as a foundational element, ensuring that all voices are considered in shaping the strategic direction of enterprises.

While the study offers valuable insights, its regional focus and reliance on self-reported data present limitations. Future research should expand the geographic scope, explore evolving stakeholder preferences over time, and incorporate additional decision-making models to refine the prioritisation process. Specifically, the Fuzzy Analytic Hierarchy Process (FAHP) could be employed to address uncertainties and subjective judgments in stakeholder evaluations, providing more nuanced weightings of priorities (Buckley, 1985). The Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to the Ideal Solution (TOPSIS) would allow for a comparative analysis of tourism management strategies by ranking alternatives based on their proximity to an ideal solution (Hwang & Yoon, 1981). Multi-Attribute Utility Theory (MAUT) could be applied to assess trade-offs between economic, socio-cultural, and environmental objectives, particularly in balancing short-term profitability with long-term sustainability (Keeney & Raiffa, 1976). The Delphi Method could be integrated to refine stakeholder consensus over time, particularly when considering long-term strategic objectives for tourism enterprises (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). Additionally, raising stakeholder awareness about the importance of environmental and operational impacts could lead to a more balanced perspective in future studies.

In conclusion, the findings contribute to a larger understanding of stakeholder-oriented tourism management by addressing the interplay between economic, socio-cultural, and environmental dimensions. Tourism enterprises are encouraged to adopt a holistic and participatory approach to strategic planning, leveraging frameworks like AHP to foster sustainable growth, community engagement, and long-term competitiveness.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors have contributed equally.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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Роїк О., Бублик Л., Габа М., Макар О., Михайлишин В.

БАГАТОКРИТЕРІАЛЬНИЙ ПІДХІД ДО РОЗРОБКИ СТЕЙКХОЛДЕРНО ОРІЄНТОВАНОЇ СТРАТЕГІЇ В УПРАВЛІННІ ТУРИСТИЧНИМИ ПІДПРИЄМСТВАМИ

У дослідженні розроблено стратегічний підхід до управління туристичними підприємствами, орієнтований на зацікавлені сторони, з використанням багатокритеріального підходу до ухвалення рішень. Основна увага зосереджена на оцінці та пріоритизації інтересів зацікавлених сторін із метою узгодження цілей підприємств із їхніми очікуваннями. Дослідження проведене в одному з провідних туристичних регіонів України та ідентифікує основні й другорядні групи зацікавлених сторін, зокрема працівників, інвесторів, представників місцевої влади, туристів і місцеві громади. Для збирання даних використано структуровані інтерв'ю з 20-ма ключовими зацікавленими сторонами та анкетування 150 учасників із різних груп. За допомогою методу аналізу ієрархій (АНР) було визначено пріоритетність чотирьох основних царин впливу: економічної, соціокультурної, екологічної та фінансово-операційної. Найважливішими виявилися економічні аспекти, зокрема інвестиційні можливості та створення робочих місць. Соціокультурні фактори, зокрема збереження культурної спадщини, посіли друге місце, а екологічні та операційні аспекти мали нижчий пріоритет для зацікавлених сторін. Результати дослідження пропонують практичну модель інтеграції інтересів різних груп у стратегічне планування, що сприяє узгодженню корпоративних цілей із принципами сталого розвитку. Це дослідження робить внесок у розвиток теорії зацікавлених сторін, демонструючи ефективність методу АНР в управлінні туризмом і надаючи практичні рекомендації щодо підвищення рівня взаємодії із зацікавленими сторонами. Подальші дослідження повинні враховувати довгострокові зміни в пріоритетах зацікавлених сторін і залучати більш складні моделі ухвалення рішень для вдосконалення процесів пріоритизації.

Ключові слова: стейкхолдерно орієнтована стратегія, метод аналізу ієрархій (АНР), управління туризмом, сталий розвиток, ухвалення рішень

JEL Класифікація: L83, Q56, M10