

AN EVALUATION OF THEORETICAL ROBUSTNESS OF DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY IN TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

Maintaining destination sustainability has been gaining attention from academic researchers over the past three decades, and it remains a popular issue in the recent five years. This topic is of great importance because of its potential benefits in improving the life quality of local communities, accelerating economic development, and passing down cultural values to the succeeding generations. Sound ideas often have strong theoretical foundations; nevertheless, limited studies have examined the theoretical robustness of this topic. Hence, this study first retrieved 15 recently published articles (i.e., from 2013 to 2016) from top-tier hospitality and tourism journals and then evaluated the theoretical robustness of these articles. Findings of the present study indicated that in terms of the topic destination sustainability in tourism, the articles retrieved to study are theoretically robust to a great extent. Future studies should involve the less applied theories to enhance the theoretical rigorousness in tourism.

Keywords: destination sustainability, ecological, socio-cultural, theoretical robustness

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is complex in nature because it offers different available products as different terms can be used to describe essentially the same product (McKercher, 2016). The topic of sustainability is complex because it affects all industries and involves a wide range of stakeholders (Ooi, Laing, & Mair, 2015; Xu, Zhu, & Bao, 2015). To be specific, in the mid-1980s, the word “sustainability” was suggested when destinations are in the mature or declining stage (Weaver, 2012). Over the past 30 years, sustainable tourism has long been a critical issue for many destinations, and it is very difficult to have a single clear definition and measurements of sustainability (Xu, Zhu, & Bao, 2015).

According to Ooi, Laing, and Mair (2015), socio-cultural, ecological, and economical aspects are widely acknowledged as the three main dimensions measuring the sustainability of a certain destination.

Ensuring destination sustainability is of great importance because sustainable tourism development protects natural and cultural resources, enhances the life quality of local residents, and accelerates the economic development of a certain region (Eagles, 2013). Over the past decades, many tourism destinations have been making efforts toward sustainability from two perspectives: socio-cultural perspective and ecological perspective (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006; Ooi et al., 2015; Robinson, 1999). The socio-cultural dimension is difficult to examine because on the one hand, it includes the community participation and the mobility of local residents, while on the other hand, the cultural integrity of a community should also be considered (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006; Robinson, 1999). Hence, the key concept of tourism sustainability is to provide opportunities for current and future generations, not only authorizing local communities but also considering their cultural values (Ooi et al., 2015). The ecological perspective often refers to developing natural-based attractions and preserving the natural environment simultaneously (Cernat and Gourdon, 2012). For instance, geo areas and some protected districts must balance human activities and conservation (Eagles & McCool, 2002; Yatsevich, 2009). In the recent five years, an increasing number of studies have investigated destination sustainability in terms of the socio-cultural and ecological perspectives. For example, Cernat and Gourdon (2012) developed a model for cross-cultural sustainable tourism in three dimensions: economic, socio-ecologic, and infrastructure dimensions. The model also provides the indicators for these dimensions. The application of this model to three countries showed that even though tourism activities are performed in a similar level, they can have different effects for the local environment in terms of the socio-ecological aspect. Torabi Farsani, Coelho, and Costa (2012) assessed the innovative strategies of geoparks regarding socio-cultural sustainability.

Their results indicated that geopark activities promote cultural components. Although previous studies have pointed out the importance of maintaining destination sustainability and investigated destination sustainability from the socio-cultural and ecological perspectives, limited studies have examined the theoretical robustness of the recently published articles in terms of maintaining destination sustainability. Nevertheless, sound ideas and arguments must be grounded on theories. Hence, the objectives of the present study are *i) to examine the theoretical robustness of recently published articles, and ii) to provide implications for future studies.*

Literature Review

Issues of Destination Sustainability

Sustainable tourism development not only brings economic benefits to local communities but also conserves ecological and socio-cultural integrity (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005). Hence, this topic has gained interest from academic researchers over the past 30 years (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006; Miller, 2001; Ooi et al., 2015). In the recent years, some studies have investigated maintaining destination sustainability in terms of the ecological (i.e., natural and built resources) perspective, with the aim of maintaining the stability of a certain destination while some other studies investigated the socio-cultural effects of destination sustainable development. (Puhakka, Cottrell, & Siikamäki, 2014; Torabi Farsani et al., 2012).

On the one hand, since the last decade, an increasing number of studies have attempted to develop indicators for sustainable tourism (Cernat & Gourdon, 2012; Miller, 2001). For example, Miller (2001) showed the indicators in many aspects of sustainability such as environmental issues, employment, and financial leakages. Ooi et al. (2015) examined the socio-cultural sustainability of tourism development, and the results indicated that the quality of life is regarded as the most important sociocultural sustainability indicator for mountain resort tourism. These articles mainly deal with identifying the indicators. On the other hand, other studies devote efforts in constructing frameworks or models for sustainable tourism.

For instance, Xu et al. (2015) advocated a transfer to real practice from the abstract model based on the adoption of Weaver's path model applied in the development of mass tourism. The study argues that the lack of the systematic and integrated planning of a government-dominated approach may lead to the inadequate management of villages, although "learning-by-doing approaches" seem to be practical in achieving sustainability. Moreover, Ponting and O'Brien (2014) applied a framework in analyzing the surf tourism in Fiji in terms of sustainability. The findings indicated that the need for regulation by most stakeholders has been gaining a growing acceptance to find solutions through a transactive and participative process. Furthermore, Gill and Williams (2014) investigated the shift from growth models in a resort destination context. The findings suggested that athletes' accommodation built by the local Olympic organizing committee could serve as a permanent resident-restricted housing to ensure the resort's sustainability. These studies are classified as those that construct frameworks or models.

Furthermore, some other studies investigate destination sustainability from stakeholders' perspectives. For example, Dabphet, Scott, and Ruhanen (2012) used diffusion theory to explore the concept among stakeholders about sustainable tourism development in Kret Island, Thailand. The results confirmed that applying diffusion theory could help to understand the concept transfer regarding the development of sustainable tourism. Meanwhile, they provided useful information for designing information dissemination programs. Puhakka et al. (2014) examined the perceptions of sociocultural sustainability among local stakeholders by adopting questionnaire survey. The findings proved the four homilies. Moreover, Ong and Smith (2014) compared the sustainability practice outcomes among differing stakeholders. The findings showed that in general, the perceived sustainable tourism practices and the reality among stakeholder groups are a good match to some extent. By contrast, the notable differences are attributed to stakeholders' self-interest. Chiabai, Paskaleva, and Lombardi (2013) on the other hand focused on personalizing and differentiating the cultural tourism considering specific territorial characteristics from stakeholders' perspectives. The results showed that web utilization is insufficient in involving stakeholders' participation.

In addition, Poudel, Nyaupane, and Budruk (2014) examined the sustainable tourism outcomes in the protected districts from tourism stakeholders' perspectives. The findings indicated that tourists and local residents have different perceptions of positive effects. Similar findings can be found in terms of negative effects. The aforementioned studies mainly examine destination sustainability through stakeholders' perspectives.

By contrast, some articles do not belong to these three main streams. For instance, the study of de la Barre (2013) was based on the narrative framework in understanding the relationship between place identity and sustainable tourism in remote areas. In total, three narrative themes were found. García-Rosell and Mäkinen (2013, p.396) explored the multiple views regarding sustainable tourism and provided a critical reflection. The results revealed four moral discourses: "ethical egoism", "utilitarianism", "deontology", and "virtue ethics."

In general, previous studies regarding destination sustainability published in the recent five years can be categorized into three streams: **i) identify indicators, ii) construct framework/model, and iii) examine tourism sustainable development from stakeholders' perspectives.** Nevertheless, although most of the studies identified seem to be ideal, they lack practical implications to some extent. In addition, over the past three decades, no significant contributions have been made to the topic of destination sustainability because in most cases, different theories have been applied to investigate the same topic, and different methods have been used to arrive at the same results. In addition, sound ideas should depend on a strong theoretical background. Hence, the present study intends to summarize the ten recently published articles to evaluate their theoretical robustness and to provide implications for academic researchers.

Seven Types of Theories

Smith, Xiao, Nunkoo, and Tukamushaba (2013) categorized theories that have been applied to the hospitality, tourism, and leisure studies into seven different types of theories. The first type of theory is suggested by Wacker (1998) and refers to a theory used in natural sciences.

The second involves testing the existing theories that have been applied in social sciences. The third denotes a statistical model that is presented as a theory. The fourth type of theory signifies an untested or untestable model. The fifth represents a research design or epistemology, which is presented as theory. The sixth is grounded theory, which refers to data collection or analysis approach, and is more like a methodological approach than a testable theory. The final type of theory is a one that is borrowed from other fields, which expands and enriches the hospitality and tourism field but is often used as an “analogy” in hospitality and tourism. In conclusion, theory type 1 is a theory that is used in natural sciences. Theory types 2, 3, and 5 require the foundation of previous theories or studies and the data collected to either test the previous theories or to prove the frameworks or hypotheses. Theory type 4 represents an untested model. Type 6, grounded theory, symbolizes a significantly broad scope that includes data collection, analysis, and others. Type 7 is a theory that borrows from an existing theory in other fields and is used as an “analogy” in tourism. Table 1 provides a summary of the explanation of the theories applied in hospitality, tourism, and leisure studies. The present study refers to these seven types of theories summarized in Table 1 to evaluate the theories that are applied by the ten retrieved articles.

Table 1. Summary of Seven Types of Theories

Theory type	Definition
Type 1	“A theory that is used in natural sciences”
Type 2	“Test the existing theory in social sciences”
Type 3	“A statistical model that is presented as a theory”
Type 4	“An untested or untestable model”
Type 5	“A research design or epistemology that is presented as theory”
Type 6	Grounded theory
Type 7	A theory borrowed from other disciplines and is used as an “analogy”

Sourced from Smith, Xiao, Nunkoo, and Tukamushaba (2013)

METHOD

In order to better understand the latest publications in terms of maintaining destination sustainability, two large databases, namely, Science Direct and Google Scholar, were selected to search for relevant published articles in terms of destination sustainability. Science Direct was selected because of its easy accessibility of reliable electronic information sources and the provision of an overview of articles published in a specific field (i.e., destination sustainability). Google Scholar was also selected because it offers the latest information on a selected topic and presents the most relevant information at the top of the result lists. Thus, the use of these two databases in the present study ensures the reliability, validity, and the timeliness of the retrieved articles.

The databases were searched for relevant articles in October 2016. Keywords such as “destination sustainability,” “social impacts,” “cultural impacts,” “socio-cultural impacts,” “economic impacts,” and “natural-built resources” were used to search for relevant articles published in hospitality and tourism journals in recent years. These articles were then carefully selected based on two criteria. First, only full-length empirical studies published in hospitality and tourism journals were included in this study. Second, other articles, such as conference papers and book chapters, were excluded. Thereafter, the author carefully read each article selected based on the aforementioned criteria and determined whether such article should be included in the analysis. The direct relevance of the topic was also considered. The final data includes a total of 15 of the most updated relevant articles for further analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Summary of the 15 Retrieve Articles

Table 2 provides a summary of the ten retrieved articles published recently. Three articles were published in 2016; four articles were published in 2015 ($n = 4$); five articles were published in 2014 ($n = 5$); and the remaining three articles ($n = 3$) were published in 2013.

A majority of these articles (12/15) were published in Journal of Sustainable Tourism. Another three articles were published in Journal of Travel Research, Tourism Geographies, and International Journal of Tourism Research. In terms of different dimensions, one article discussed the political effect, whereas another article dealt with the economic effect. Two articles belonged to ecological sustainability, and five articles dealt with the combination of ecological effects, socio-cultural sustainability, and technological effects. The remaining six articles investigated socio-cultural sustainability. The main themes of these retrieved articles dealt with socio-cultural sustainability and ecological sustainability based on different cases. Moreover, other articles explored the possibility of developing sustainable tourism products such as cultural tourism. Recently, political and economic effects have been gaining increasing attention from academic researchers. In terms of the methods applied in these articles, seven articles applied a purely qualitative approach; six articles applied a purely quantitative approach; and the remaining two articles applied a mixed approach.

Table 2. Summary of 15 Retrieve Articles

Paper No.	Year	Journal	Dimension(s)	Theme	Method(s)
1	2016	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Political	The importance of political environment on the tourism development	Quantitative
2	2016	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Ecological(i.e., natural and built resources), social-cultural, and technological	Three-dimensional mountain destination innovation model of mountain tourism destinations	Quantitative
3	2016	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Social-cultural	Conflicts between social capital and social sustainability	Qualitative
4	2015	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Ecological, economic	The interface of environmental and economic in a heritage destination	Quantitative
5	2015	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Economic	The relationship between sustainability and economic success	Quantitative

6	2015	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Ecological	Sustainability and nature-based mass tourism	Qualitative
7	2015	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Socio-cultural	Socio-cultural sustainability of mountain resort tourism	Qualitative
8	2014	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Socio-cultural	Socio-cultural sustainability of Oulanka National Park, Finland	Qualitative Quantitative
9	2014	Journal of Travel Research	Ecological, socio-cultural	Stakeholders' perspectives of sustainable tourism development	Quantitative
10	2014	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Ecological, socio-cultural	Sustainability of surf tourism in Fiji	Qualitative
11	2014	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Ecological	Sustainable coastal tourism management in emerging destinations	Qualitative Quantitative
12	2014	Tourism Geographies	Socio-cultural sustainability	Creating a governance path towards sustainability	Qualitative
13	2013	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Ecological sustainability, socio-cultural	Constructing a framework to the tourism product development	Qualitative
14	2013	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Socio-cultural sustainability	Cultural tour sustainability in remote areas	Qualitative
15	2013	International Journal of Tourism Research	Socio-cultural sustainability	Managing sustainable cultural tourism through e-Participation model	Quantitative

Theoretical evaluation of the 15 retrieved articles

Table 3 provides a summary of the theories applied by the 15 retrieved articles. The first and second articles applied theory type 3. In particular, the first article adopted the statistical model to examine the political effect on the sustainable development of a tourist destination. The findings proved the importance of a stable political environment on the sustainable development of a tourist destination. Similarly, the second article tested the effects of socio-cultural, political, and technological effects on the development of a mountain tourist destination based on the three-dimensional “Mountain Destination Innovation Model.” The results proved the different levels of the aforementioned effects according to the different stages of tourism development. The third article explored the conflicts between social capital and social sustainability on sustainable destination development. It designed a small-scale and longitudinal research from the perspective of local residents, local authority, and innovative industries. The findings indicated that in East London, because of the uneven distribution of social capital, some conflicts arise for social sustainability. Thus, the third article applied theory type 5 because it is a research design or an epistemology that is considered a theory. The fourth article adopted grounded theory to examine the effects of environmental values on destination competitiveness, which can be considered as a sustainable tourism strategy. Via questionnaire survey, four of the most important environmental values are identified, and the cleanliness of the ocean is regarded as the most important value. The fifth article adopted a statistical model and equation to determine whether the concept of sustainable tourism is a barrier of economic success for tourism. The results showed that an effective marketing program is vital for economic achievement. Thus, the fifth article adopted theory type 3. The sixth article applied Weaver’s path model from an evolutionary perspective and tested this theory by taking a nature-based mass tourism destination in Huangshan, China as an example of sustainable development. Weaver’s path model is regarded as the “mother of all models” to better explain the concept and is widely applied to social science (Hollnagel & Woods, 2005). After the theory was tested, the findings showed that this model had a risk of running into a potential path-dependency trap and advocated governments’ integrated and systematic planning (Xu et al., 2015). Hence, the sixth article applied theory type 2 because it was based on an existing theory and tested the theory.

The seventh article developed a conceptual framework based on the previous studies considering the effect of social capital on social capital outcomes and socio-cultural sustainability (Ooi et al., 2015). The findings of participant observation and interviews, along with the analysis of documents, revealed the proofs and improvements of the previous model. Hence, this article applied theory type 5, which represents an epistemology that is designed for the study and is presented as a theory. Similarly, the eighth article also developed a framework. It included four dimensions: institutional, economic, environmental, and socio-cultural dimensions (Puhakka et al., 2014). Therefore, the third article also applied theory type 5. The ninth article used a framework to manage protected area(s), stakeholder theory as a conceptual framework to evaluate the sustainability in the protected area, and structural equation modeling to analyze the data (Poudel et al., 2014). Structural equation modeling is used as an ad hoc basis without a theory to test. Thus, the study belongs to the application of theory type 3. The tenth article applied theory type 5 because it is mainly based on the framework analysis for sustainable surf tourism (FASST), which represents an epistemology in investigating sustainable tourism (Ponting & O'Brien, 2014). After the recorded interviews and field notes are analyzed, the findings showed that the sustainable development of Fiji's surf tourism industry cannot be achieved without regulations.

The theory application of the eleventh article is different from those of previous articles. The article applied a case study approach to evaluate a beach resort in a less-developed economy through semi-structured questionnaire survey and field observation with some statistical data analysis (Ong & Smith, 2014). The study was based on theory type 7 because the article states that it contributes to the theoretical concerns about sustainable coastal tourism, but it actually only uses the theory as an "analogy." The twelfth article applied theory type 2 because it applied the path creation as the framework of the study to examine the influence of entrepreneurs on environments using the mountain resort in Whistler, British Columbia as a case. After the theory was tested through the analysis of the interviews and the document records from communities, the results demonstrated the possibility of entrepreneurs for using the agency within the community (Gill & Williams, 2014).

The thirteenth article developed a framework based on the literature to investigate the sustainable development from multi-stakeholder perspectives based on the ethical theory using content analysis (García-Rosell & Mäkinen, 2013, p. 396). The results indicated that “ethical egoism”, “utilitarianism”, “deontology”, and “virtue ethics” are constructed. Therefore, this study applied theory type 5, which is an epistemology that is presented as a theory with some data analysis support. The fourteenth article applied theory types 5 and 6 because this article first analyzed the information gained from participant observation, documents, and interviews. The initial findings were then used as a narrative framework for the analytical tool (de la Barre, 2013). Hence, on the one hand, this study applied theory type 6, which is grounded theory, to create the narrative framework, and on the other hand, it also used theory type 5, which represents an epistemology that is designed for the purpose of this study. The fifteenth article applied theory type 7. The study regarded the “bottom-up” approach as its theoretical framework to investigate an e-participation website for an Italian city regarding cultural tourism management (Chiabai et al., 2013). The study mentioned the theoretical background, but in essence it only listed the literature that was related to the topic; no real theory was applied and tested. Thus, the theory was used as an “analogy.”

Table 3. Summary of Theory Types Applied by the 15 Articles

Paper No.	Dimension(s)	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4	Type 5	Type 6	Type 7
1	Political			✓				
2	Ecological, social-cultural, and technological			✓				
3	Social-cultural					✓		
4	Ecological, economic						✓	
5	Economic			✓				
6	Ecological		✓					
7	Socio-cultural					✓		
8	Socio-cultural					✓		
9	Ecological, socio-cultural			✓				
10	Ecological, socio-cultural					✓		

11	Ecological							✓
12	Socio-cultural		✓					
13	Socio-cultural					✓		
14	Socio-cultural					✓	✓	
15	Socio-cultural							✓
Total No.:		0	2	4	0	6	2	2

Note: The total number of calculations exceeds 15 because article 9 applies theory types 5 and 6.

The findings of these 15 reviewed articles indicated that none of the articles applied theory types 1 and 4. Six articles applied theory type 2 ($n = 2$), type 6 ($n = 2$), and type 7 ($n = 2$). Four articles used type 3 ($n = 4$). Six articles ($n = 6$) applied type 5. No article adopted theory types 1 and type 4. In summary, theory type 5 is the most commonly applied theory by most articles on destination sustainability published in recent years. In other words, these articles showed an epistemology that is designed for the purpose of the study. In conclusion, the recently published 15 articles are theoretically robust in terms of destination sustainability based on the wide adoption of different types of theories.

Implications

Theoretically, the present study first summarized the 15 recently published articles regarding destination sustainability and then evaluates their theoretical robustness. In general, the findings showed that all of these 15 retrieved articles were theoretically robust to a great extent. Moreover, over 60% of the articles (10/15) applied theory types 3 and 5, which regard the statistical model as a theory, and a theory represents an epistemology that is particularly designed to match the purpose of the theory. By contrast, no article applied theory type 1 perhaps because of the nature of social science instead of natural science. Theory type 4, “an untested model,” was also not applied because social science is normally based on a theory or model that has been tested. Nevertheless, theories may vary among different sectors, which may limit the generalization of the findings.

On the one hand, studies that applied theory from other disciplines only used it as an “analogy.” Thus, testing the application of the theory in hospitality and tourism borrowed from other disciplines is recommended to enrich the hospitality and tourism literature.

Future studies are also suggested to adopt less commonly applied types of theories in this topic or to apply a combination of different types of theories. In addition, future studies can consider cooperating with different disciplines, such as the chemical discipline, to enrich the application of theory type 1, such as including the issue of coating material with sustainability. On the other hand, in terms of the method applied by the 15 retrieved articles, most of the articles regarding destination sustainability are qualitative studies. Nevertheless, starting from 2016, more quantitative studies have been adopted.

Furthermore, most of these articles provided indicators or insights from the perspective of stakeholders. However, practical implications are lacking to a certain extent. In essence, the issue of practical implications is particularly important regarding this topic. The indicators and model can help, but they cannot be the ultimate tool in achieving destination sustainability. Hence, future studies are suggested to add value to provide more practical implications. For example, basing on the path creation framework, Gill and Williams (2014) investigated the measures that a resort destination can undertake. The results showed that the athletes' accommodation built during the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games can serve as a permanent resident housing district so that the resource can be used. Furthermore, despite the ecological and socio-cultural effects on the sustainable development of a destination, the findings also showed the effects of economic, political, and technological factors on the sustainable development of a destination along with the recent change of the industrial structure that occurred globally. Thus, tourism industry practitioners should be aware of the multiple efforts on sustainable tourism development.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

In conclusion, ecological and socio-cultural effects on sustainable tourism have been continuing to gain attention from academic researchers. This topic is still popular in the recent five years because the ultimate goals of sustainable tourism is to improve the life quality of local residents, protect the natural environment, and pass down cultural values to future generations (Torabi Farsani et al., 2012).

After the 15 retrieved articles are summarized, the findings showed that the articles can be classified into three streams: **i) identify indicators, ii) construct framework/model, and iii) examine tourism sustainable development from stakeholders' perspectives** with the goal of making an optimal contribution to the sustainable development. In terms of the theories applied in these 15 retrieved articles related to sustainable tourism, the findings showed that in general, they are theoretically robust. Moreover, the results indicated that theory type 5 ($n = 6$) is the most commonly used theory, followed by type 3 ($n = 4$), type 2 ($n = 2$), type 7 ($n = 2$), and type 6 ($n = 2$). By contrast, no article applied theory types 1 and 4. Hence, future studies can apply the less applied theory type to enrich the theoretical robustness in hospitality and tourism. In addition, future studies can adopt this method to investigate the theoretical robustness of different topics. Furthermore, future studies can conduct additional investigations about the effects of political and technological factors on sustainable development based on the ever-changing global industrial structure.

The present study has several limitations. This study only analyzed 15 articles from top-tier journals, which may limit the rigorousness of the findings. Future studies are suggested to increase the sample size to have a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical robustness of this topic. In addition, future studies can evaluate the application of one theory on a specific tourism component and then improve the existing theory. Furthermore, in terms of the topic sustainability, the application of other types of theories, particularly theories regarding four capital model, natural capitalism, early community development model, popular sustainability, and ideal scientific model can be considered by future studies.

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Guide to Contributors

Submission Criteria

Manuscripts submitted are evaluated on the following criteria:

- Well-grounded and well-defined theoretical or conceptual underpinnings
- Relevant conceptual and research literature
- Careful analysis and treatment of the constructs and variables under study
- Significant contribution to the advancement of knowledge and practice in the field
- Clarity of expression

Submission Protocol

- Manuscripts should be submitted in electronic form, MS-Word format and emailed to luzysaber1620@gmail.com.
- Authors will receive a letter of acknowledgment upon submission of the paper and a letter of acceptance once the paper is accepted for publication.
- Manuscripts submitted to Luz y Saber should be original and has not been published previously. It should not be under consideration for publication elsewhere, and that if accepted, it will not be published elsewhere in the same form, in English or in any other language, without the written consent of the publisher. A “**Letter of Agreement**” shall be signed by the contributor to this effect.
- Manuscripts must contain an abstract (150-200 words) including 2-6 keywords. All pages should be numbered.
- Research articles should normally not exceed 6,000 words, research notes should not exceed 2,500 words and book reviews, 1,500 words.
- Manuscripts should be in accordance with the following format:
 - **Paper size:** Letter (8.5 x 11.5”)
 - **Paper orientation:** Portrait
 - **Font type:** Times New Roman
 - **Font size:** 12-point (exception of tables in 10-point)
 - **Paragraphs:** justified, single-spaced
 - **Margins:** top, bottom, left, right= 1”, header & footer=0.5”
 - **Column:** 1
 - **Numbering:** Tables and figures should be numbered by Arabic numerals
 - **Page numbers:** Arabic, bottom, right, 12 point Times New Roman
- Manuscript submissions should include the following files: title page, main document, tables and figures
- The title page should contain the name of author or authors, professional title, institutional affiliation, present position, mailing address, electronic mailing address, telephone number and fax number (if available).
- The main document should contain the title of the paper, abstract, introduction, theoretical background, method, results, discussion, conclusion and references. It should be divided into main headings and subheadings. Main headings should be bold and subheadings should be italicized.

- Tables and figures should be prepared as two separate files. The place where they are to be included should be clearly marked in the main document (e.g. “Insert Table 1 here”). Tables and figures should be clearly labeled in the format and style described in the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Style (6th edition) and suitable for direct reproduction. Good quality printouts of all illustrations on white paper produced in black ink are required.
- Authors are responsible for obtaining permissions from copyright holders for reproducing any illustrations, tables, figures or lengthy quotations previously published elsewhere.
- References should likewise follow the format and style described in APA (6th edition).
- Author’s name should not appear anywhere except on the cover page or title page of the manuscript to preserve anonymity during the blind review process.
- Acknowledgments of people, grants, funds, etc. should be placed in a separate section before the References.
- Proofs will be sent to the corresponding author. One corrected proof, together with the original, edited manuscript, should be returned to the Publisher within (10) working days by e-mail.
- A preliminary editorial review will be done by the Editor to assess the overall quality and suitability of the submitted article for journal inclusion. The same paper will receive two to three blind reviews. The review process normally takes two to three months to finish.
- Authors should incorporate the suggestions of the blind review team in the revised manuscript prior to publication.
- Authors will be asked, upon acceptance of an article, to sign the **“Transfer of Copyright”** agreement before the article can be published. This agreement is to ensure the widest possible dissemination of information under copyright laws.

