

All Hands on Deck: A Case Study on the Sustainability Practices of Disney Cruise Line

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## ABSTRACT

### ALL HANDS ON DECK: A CASE STUDY ON THE SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES OF DISNEY CRUISE LINE

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The recent growth of sustainability awareness has impacted the core values of the cruise industry. To reflect the importance of protecting the earth and all its inhabitants, cruise lines have begun establishing sustainability practices. The purpose of this study was to examine the sustainability practices implemented by Disney Cruise Line. Research for this study was conducted using a case study guide, developed by the researcher, to analyze the environmental, economic, and social pillars of sustainability. The study found that Disney Cruise Line utilized effective sustainability practices that benefited the ocean, local communities, onboard guests, and crew. With an award-winning conservation fund and detailed educational programs, Disney Cruise Line has fulfilled sustainability needs. Disney Cruise Line should continue to implement the three pillars of sustainability to reduce carbon footprint, promote community development, and increase workplace inclusivity.

Keywords: sustainability, Disney Cruise Line, cruise industry, environmental, economic, social

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Background of Study

Every living thing is supported by the earth. Through the provision of natural elements, landscapes, and essential goods, Earth is the foundation for humans' health and well-being. To return the favor, many individuals are trying to protect and conserve the earth's land. However, despite many land preservation regulations, most of the earth is still being neglected, for "less than 30% of the 510 million square kilometers of area on Earth's surface is covered by land" (LePan, 2021, para. 5). This being so, establishing sustainability efforts for the ocean is crucial for the earth to bear the extensive use of its greatest asset.

Sustainability is a universal value that most individuals hold, but large corporations are particularly expected to comply with sustainability needs. A study targeting the values of global shoppers expressed that 66% of consumers would spend more for a product or experience if it came from a sustainable brand, and 81% of global consumers feel strongly that companies should help to improve the environment (NielsenIQ, 2021). Cost and convenience are no longer a necessity, as company values are more important to consumers than personal benefits. To be successful in today's market, companies must adopt sustainable behaviors, because stand-alone products are no longer enough to drive sales to environmentally conscious consumers.

The entertainment and leisure industries profit off the promotion of experiences, so understanding the significance of developing sustainable programs is crucial. As a

similar industry that directly utilizes Earth's sensitive waters, the cruise industry has an especially high responsibility to protect the ocean and marine life. The purpose of this study was to examine the sustainability practices implemented by Disney Cruise Line.

### Review of Literature

Research for this review of literature was conducted at Robert E. Kennedy Library on the campus of California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. In addition to books and other resources, the following online databases were utilized: Academic Search Premier, Google Scholar, Hospitality & Tourism Complete, OneSearch, and ProQuest. This review of literature includes the following subsections: sustainability, sustainability in the tourism industry, and sustainability in the cruise industry.

As a relatively new and multi-faceted concept, sustainability can be interpreted differently by everybody. Some may immediately think of the phrase “reduce, reuse, recycle,” a staple reference used in educational programs, while others relate the term back to the issues of climate change and global warming. While there is no one correct definition for sustainability, it is commonly referenced as “an approach to meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own” (Potvin & Richards, 2015, p. 16). Baumgärtner and Quaas (2010) suggest that sustainability has a view of the inherently uncertain future through aims at justice in the current domain of human-nature relationships (p. 2057). Sustainability is comprehensive and focuses on addressing current face-value needs that will, in turn, positively affect the

future. This is successfully executed through the emergence of the three pillars of sustainability: environmental, economic, and social.

The three-pillar conception of sustainability is quite ubiquitous as it has no single point of origin, but it is represented by the gradual intersection of large-scale impacts. Supported by the popular 3Ps of sustainability, “planet, people, and profits” (Jauhari, 2014, p. 144), the three pillars are vital to understanding the core of sustainability. Environmental sustainability is arguably the most well-known pillar of sustainability as environmental issues are one of the biggest areas of concern facing mankind currently. Arora (2018) states that “Earth at present is going through one of the biggest biodiversity loss phases, the impact of which is unforeseen and unpredictable” (p. 1). As a result, it is crucial to assess the impact of human activities on the local ecosystems and planet on a regular basis. Arora continually expresses that:

The underlying concern of modern society is that while today people are enjoying the comforts of economic development, the future generations are on the verge of confronting scarce natural resources and polluted environment and it is our most important responsibility to leave the planet as a self-sustainable system providing equal opportunities of survival to future generations (p. 2).

From increasing concerns of habitat destruction, rising sea levels, floods, droughts, and more, environmental sustainability is the key to engaging in sensitive ecological development.

As the next pillar, economic sustainability targets the “profits” section of the 3P’s. Defined by Jauhari (2014), as “the impact of consumption on economic well-being of consumers associated with financial aspects” (p. 145), economic sustainability is largely

used to address debt-burden, earning pressures and work-life balance. However, financial bottom lines and profits are not only considered through this association, for external stakeholders also aim to improve the economic development of communities to strengthen local initiatives and the standard of living. Sumner (2018) emphasizes that “economically sustainable communities meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, their children, and other users, to contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice” (p. 5). Through the support of co-operatives, nonprofit businesses, and fair-trade networks, local economies and individuals can thrive off the impacts of community economic development. To propel the effectiveness of these sectors, economic sustainability coincides with economic efficiency. As illustrated by Baumgärtner, & Quaas (2010), “economic efficiency, understood as non-wastefulness, is the allocation of natural goods and services as well as their human-made substitutes and complements” (p. 445). While most goods and services are offered based on necessity, economic sustainability is founded in evolving items that are considered a luxury or nonessential. Successful stakeholders and large companies are built from satisfying human demands and desires, but economic efficiency is achieved by managing the push-and pull relationship between humans’ excessive wants and limited natural resources. Prioritizing economic sustainability and efficiency is critical for organizations to profit off resourceful commodities.

The final pillar of sustainability is social, which is arguably the most engaging, as it encapsules the heart of humanity. Gilek et al. (2021) defines social sustainability as “recognitional, representational and distributive justice, which when broken down covers unarticulated concerns relating to culture, identity, gender, status, rights, lifestyles, ways

of knowing, timely and effective participation, and the equitable distribution of access, risks, benefits, and capacities” (p. 2). While the list for what contributes as a sector of social sustainability may seem long, it is a direct representation of how many different factors affect our well-being. Social sustainability especially relies on social capital to target the concerns of representational justice. Social capital, also known as social cohesion, is an intermediate outcome of participation, as it connects the interaction among participants and developing networks through an exchange of knowledge and trust (Gilek et al., p. 6). The exchange of knowledge and trust is not always accessible, as issues of racism, discrimination, poor jobs, and the inability to meet basic needs may hinder individual well-being. Böstrom et al. (2015) explains that “social sustainability cannot be built from nowhere. To achieve social sustainability, there is a need to set in motion relevant procedures that are able to take hold of people’s concerns and resources” (p. 152). The simple goal of social sustainability is to make peoples’ lives better. By building upon available procedures and building blocks, recognitional, representational, and distributive justice can be used to improve quality of life and relieve societal pressures.

On the surface, the tourism industry is built on satisfying the needs and wants of consumers through once-in-a-lifetime experiences. While this may be true, the industry is primarily based on resource, wealth, and hospitality; desperately needing the three pillars of sustainability to create a positive balance. Environmentally, tourism is among the highest polluting industries as it “generates 8 percent of all global greenhouse emissions and creates some 35 million tons of waste every single year” (Dolnicar, 2020, p. 1). Socially, many tourists are unaware that their vacation-related decisions and behaviors at



local destinations are strategically strayed by companies to differ from how they would typically decide or behave (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2016, p. 34). Poor information is given to tourists and consumers about the sustainable practices, or lack thereof, used at their desirable vacation spots. Economically, Huang and Coelho (2017) state that “tourism, directly or indirectly, accounts for around 10 percent of the world’s gross domestic product and is one of the main sources of employment worldwide (p. 510). This economic success, though beneficial, overshadows the negative social and environmental impacts that clearly need to be addressed. Fortunately, sustainability practices in tourism have risen as one of the major and speediest developing businesses around the world (Islam et al., 2020, p. 94). The tourism industry has evolved and coined the term “sustainable tourism” to express a positive change in tourism operated within the public. Jauhari (2014) interprets sustainable tourism as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities” (p. xxiv). As a result, the tourism industry can generate income and employment in ways that are less harmful to the ecosystem. Sustainable tourism is crucial for the industry to optimize the use of environmental resources, respect the local communities, and ensure long-term economic gain. The tourism industry is strong and has been built from unsustainable practices to meet its current success, but with sustainable tourism, the industry can continue to thrive safely and set a high standard for future generations.

The cruise industry is a large subsidiary of the tourism industry that has its own victories and losses when it comes to sustainability. These polarizing effects have grown as recreational cruising has piqued across several destinations in the booming tourism

market. On one hand, “recreational cruising promises economic and social sustainability, thereby generates employment and enhances workforce capabilities in communities. Conversely, it raises significant pressures on ecologically sensitive small islands, especially when anthropogenic activities precipitate negative environmental impacts” (Tham et al., 2021, p. 130). As ships carry more visitors, their presence is bound to consequently impact small or less-developed islands that are unequipped to handle a massive surge of tourists. Of course, the cruise industry also faces backlash regarding environmental issues as concerns about ocean pollution, carbon emissions, and wildlife habitat destruction rise. Implementing strategies of sustainable development in the cruise industry not only boosts profit, but also saves the needs of the planet. Tham et al. expresses that at the end of 2019, around 30 million tourists cruised globally (p. 130). The cruise industry must now hold themselves to a high standard of sustainable responsibility, for the business has the ability to heavily influence massive amounts of people through their decisions.

Overall, the cruise industry is one of the most popular sectors of the tourism industry. Ignoring sustainable practices to create a greater profit is no longer an acceptable or ethically viable option for businesses to continue within this field. Instead, by addressing environmental, economic, and social sustainability, companies in the tourism industry can leave positive marks on the earth and community that will benefit the next generation of travelers.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the sustainability practices implemented by Disney Cruise Line (DCL).

### Research Questions

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What environmental sustainability practices are currently being enforced by DCL?
2. What economic sustainability practices are currently being utilized by DCL?
3. What social sustainability practices are currently being employed by DCL?
4. How effective are the environmental sustainability practices currently being enforced by DCL?
5. How effective are the economic sustainability practices currently being utilized by DCL?
6. How effective are the social sustainability practices currently being employed by DCL?

## Chapter 2

### METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the sustainability practices implemented by Disney Cruise Line (DCL). This chapter includes the following sections: description of organization, description of instrument, and description of procedures.

#### Description of Organization

A case study was conducted on Disney Cruise Line. Disney Cruise Line, originally founded in 1996 as Magical Cruise Company Limited, is a subsidiary of the universally renowned Walt Disney Company (Chrusciel, 2020). Starting with only 2 ships carrying 1,754 passengers in 875 staterooms, DCL has expanded to 5 ships with the most recent vessel, released in 2022, holding up to 4,000 passengers in 1,133 staterooms (Northstar Travel Media, 2022). This ship increase has allowed DCL to continuously sail to numerous destinations: Alaska, Bahamas, California coast, Canada/New England, Caribbean, Europe, Mexico, Hawai'i, Bermuda, and Panama Canal (Chrusciel). Tickets for DCL can range from \$1,300 to over \$10,000 depending on the acquired accommodations and range of stay, which typically consists of three days to two weeks. As an over \$400 million corporation, Disney Cruise Line specializes in extravagant entertainment expressed through Broadway-style musicals, fireworks at sea, upscale restaurants, themed youth clubs, nightclubs, lounges, and pool side recreation activities (Disney, 2022). Guests sailing on the Bahamian and Caribbean cruises also have exclusive access to Disney's private island, Castaway Cay. As an island solely available

to Disney Cruise Line guests, Castaway Cay provides multiple port and beach adventures that include snorkeling, hiking trails, yoga classes, waterslides and more (Disney).

Disney Cruise Line's reputable brand, suitability for all ages, and inclusion of countless activities have caused the organization to become one of the most popular and sought out cruise lines in the world.

### Description of Instrument

The instrument utilized in this study was a case study guide developed by the researcher (see Appendix A). The guide was utilized to measure the areas of operation that coincide with the three pillars of sustainability as mentioned in the Review of Literature. The environmental sustainability section consists of topics regarding ocean conservation, waste management, water treatment, ecosystem protection, and energy efficiency. Areas related to social sustainability are comprised of consumer perceptions, transparency, and crew welfare. The economic sustainability section includes the topics of price and community development.

A pilot study was conducted by the researcher on Royal Caribbean Cruises. As one of the most popular cruise corporations with similar sizing and services to Disney Cruise Line, Royal Caribbean Cruises is a suitable organization to test the instrument on. After executing the pilot study, the researcher found a similarity between the topics of ocean conservation and ecosystem protection. The decision was made to remove ocean conservation and ecosystem protection as their own topics and combine the subjects under the overarching area of ocean and marine wildlife conservation. This change creates a more refined list of environmental sustainability that will improve the case

study guide. The researcher also decided to add the topic of diversity and inclusion to the social sustainability section and change the topic of price with philanthropic work in the economic sustainability section. These topics are vital aspects of employee wellbeing and corporate growth that will be used to create balanced areas of operation.

### Description of Procedures

A case study was conducted on Disney Cruise Line. The instrument utilized in this study was a case study guide developed by the researcher. Data were collected and analyzed over a two-week period primarily using the Disney Cruise Line company websites. The environmental sustainability practices of the cruise line were evaluated from the websites' environmental overviews that consist of the organization's most recent sustainability reports and examples of environmental stewardship. The social impact and workforce sections of the company's 2020 corporate social responsibility reports were utilized to assess the social and economic sustainability practices. The majority of results gathered during the research process consisted of qualitative data.

## Chapter 3

### PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the sustainability practices implemented by Disney Cruise Line (DCL). A case study was utilized to examine Disney Cruise Line. This chapter includes the following sections: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, and social sustainability.

#### Environmental Sustainability

As an organization that directly capitalizes on the use of the ocean and other natural resources, Disney Cruise Line has established many environmental sustainability practices to target the concerning areas of water treatment, waste management, ocean and marine wildlife conservation, and energy efficiency. To address water treatment issues, Disney Cruise Line has invested in advanced wastewater purification systems that use natural processes to treat and purify onboard wastewater to levels exceeding international shipping standards. DCL has also taken steps to ensure all crew members use biodegradable cleaning products wherever possible, avoiding potentially harmful phosphates and other chemicals associated with traditional cleaners.

Since Disney Cruise Line ships deal with daily waste production, waste management solutions were created with extensive focus on recycling, condensation, and cooking oil to minimize excess production. To date, shipboard recycling processes have helped to eliminate more than 6,400 tons of metal, glass, plastic, and paper from traditional waste streams through recycling. Condensation is utilized by DCL to provide

specific onboard services with fresh water. Naturally occurring condensation from the ships' onboard air-conditioning units is recycled to supply fresh water for laundry facilities and for cleaning the outer decks of the ships, saving more than 30 million gallons of fresh water each year. Lastly, Disney Cruise Line has a partnership with Bahamas Waste Management in Nassau to convert the offloaded cooking oil into biodiesel fuel to power a fleet of local vehicles. 100% of the offloaded cooking oil is recycled in ports of call around the world, resulting to more than 1,000 gallons of cooking oil to be recycled each week.

Disney Cruise Line directly profits off the use of the ocean, which is filled with many inhabitants, so the organization has created programs that focus on ocean and marine wildlife conservation. The Disney Conservation Fund (DCF), a global awards program that supports the study and protection of the world's wildlife and ecosystems, has contributed to promoting community-based conservation efforts around the globe. Guest contributions to the fund have been matched by The Walt Disney Company allowing the DCF to distribute more than \$30 million in total donations since 1995. The Disney Conservation Fund works closely with Disney's Animals, Science, and Environment Team—an internal department of animal experts and researchers working to uphold high standards of animal care, professionalism, ethics, conservation, and education—to monitor and review coral reefs, sea turtles, whales, and other marine life.

Home to millions of aquatic species, coral reefs are vital to preserving high ocean biodiversity. Researchers at Castaway Cay, Disney Cruise Line's private island, are currently engaged in a multi-year project focused on restoring the health of coral reefs through the study of transplanted long-spined sea urchins native to the area. To protect



the endangered sea turtle population, crew members have partnered with experts from Disney's Animals, Science and Environment Team to study and monitor loggerhead sea turtle nests on Castaway Cay. As a whale-watching network, Disney Cruise Line voluntarily participates in a program to record sightings of humpback whales off the coast of Alaska for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration during summer sailing. Marine life avoidance refresher training is also conducted for captains and first officers to help them recognize whale types, their behavior, and migratory patterns as the first step in avoiding interactions. By complying with voluntary seasonal shipping lane changes, voluntary reporting, and ship speed reductions, DCL can travel without disturbing marine life.

The final practice of environmental sustainability demonstrated by Disney Cruise Line is energy efficiency, specifically aided by ship hull coating, water production, and fuel regulation. DCL made history as the first cruise line to utilize an innovative hull coating on its ships that is both 100% non-toxic and effective in increasing fuel efficiency by reducing surface resistance in open water. To preserve water production, excess heat from power generators is used to run evaporators, which, combined with other shipboard initiatives, transform approximately 142,000 gallons of seawater into potable water on board each of the ships every day. Fuel regulation is also key to using energy effectively and on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015, the North American Emission Control Area (ECA) requirement to use 0.1% low sulfur fuel went into effect. To increase fuel efficiency, all Disney ships comply with this ECA requirement and use route optimization software to further cut down on carbon emissions.

## Economic Sustainability

Disney Cruise Line is a business built on profitable luxury travel. To uphold economic sustainability, DCL focuses its attention on philanthropic work and community development. The Disney Conservation Fund (DCF), in addition to supporting wildlife protection, aids in funding non-profit organizations. Over the last five years, the DCF has awarded more than \$1.5 million to non-profit organizations supporting watershed stewardship efforts. This large contribution is responsive to the varying community needs of groundwater replenishment, water quality, and access to clean water within the regions DCL ships sail through.

To applaud the efforts of their crew, Disney Cruise Line has established many employee programs to benefit their needs in financial donations, volunteer services, and college scholarships. Disney employees and cast members have a tradition of giving back, particularly by donating to services and research that benefit their specific field within the company. Disney recognizes these contributions and, through the Disney Employee Matching Gifts Program, will match financial donations to charitable organizations around the world. Disney Cruise Line also provides an opportunity for employees to turn their hours of volunteer service into a financial contribution through VoluntEars grants. Since 2010, Disney has matched \$71 million in employees' personal donation of time and money. Lastly, The Walt Disney Company Foundation has awarded college scholarships for more than fifty years. One hundred and fifty academic awards are granted to graduating high school students of Disney employees and cast members

from around the world each year based on students' academic achievement, extracurricular activities, community service and demonstrated leadership.

While philanthropic work is used to support employee and research efforts, community development contributes to efforts in the local port communities visited by DCL ships. Home to Disney's private island, The Bahamas port is the highest visited port in the company. Estimated to make around 300 stops to the island of Nassau between 4 cruise ships per year, Bahamian partnerships are built to sustain the island's economic sustainability. Disney Cruise Line partnered with Disney's Animals, Science, and Environment Team, The Bahamas Ministry of Education, and Friends of the Environment—a leading environmental group in The Bahamas—to develop an environmental activity book designed to integrate marine conservation themes into the current Bahamian science curriculum. The book has been distributed to more than 1,500 children in public and private primary school across the Abaco Islands in The Bahamas since its development in 2010. As part of an ongoing effort, cast and crew members donated their time through community service to benefit 40 port communities in 2014. Their efforts included giving back to local nonprofits, hosting annual walks to raise funds and awareness for conservation programs, and leading ongoing shore cleanups that, to date, have removed more than 31,000 pounds of trash and debris from beaches and fragile waterways.

### Social Sustainability

Disney Cruise Line has displayed multiple practices of social sustainability under the areas of guest education, transparency, crew welfare, and diversity and inclusion.

DCL has created educational programs to help guests understand the environmental actions the company is pursuing. Onboard youth activity programs feature the promotion of endangered species conservation and mankind's impact on the environment. A "Safety Smart Goes Green" video, hosted by "The Lion King's" Timon and Pumbaa, is used to help inspire responsible environmental action by showcasing small steps everyone can take to make a difference for the environment in their everyday lives. DCL also aids guest education by hosting summer eco-camps that teach about local biodiversity and habitats and provide children with information about conservation and recycling. DCL sponsors and provides guidance for these camps in ports of call across The Bahamas and U.S. Virgin Islands.

Disney Cruise Line ensures transparency with guests by composing financial and environmental documents as open for public viewing. By demonstrating honesty, DCL supporters are not left in the dark about the internal affairs of the company they value. All corporate social responsibility reports are published yearly and include sections on the company's contribution to social impact, the workforce, and the environment.

Crew welfare is a vital aspect of Disney Cruise Line's guarantee for employee wellbeing and is upheld by the Employee Assistance Program. This program provides mental and behavioral health resources, including group meditation, mindfulness practices, and support groups for workers designated as essential. Disney Cruise Line also supports crew welfare through talent development. The organization prioritizes and invests in creating opportunities for employees to grow and build their careers by offering a multitude of learning and development programs. Through online, instructor-led, and on-the-job formats, as well as individualized development approaches paired with

succession planning, employees can improve their skills to benefit their personal growth within the company.

Along with talent recruiting, retention, and development efforts, Disney Cruise Line has also prioritized the cultivation of a diverse and inclusive workforce. In the 2020 financial year, 46% of U.S. employees identified as people of color and women represented 51% of the global employee population. DCL's main diversity and inclusion efforts fall beneath the theme of "Reimagine Tomorrow." This idea incorporates the six pillars of transparency, accountability, diverse representation, inspirational content, community investments, and culture to serve as the aspirational anchors for the company's critical focus moving forward.

## Chapter 4

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

With the rise of sustainability awareness, Disney Cruise Line (DCL) has prioritized the need to travel with conservation efforts in mind. This concluding chapter includes the following: a discussion of the findings, limitations of the research, conclusions based on research questions, and recommendations for the future.

#### Discussion

Disney Cruise Line has ensured the restoration and upkeep of ship and ocean functionality through the execution of effective environmental sustainability practices. Environmental sustainability is one of the biggest challenges and most important targets of the present times, for a single minute action can leave a giant impact on the future. Arora (2018) explains that natural resources are not only being over-exploited, but also becoming contaminated with toxic chemicals, making it difficult for biodiversity to grow and future generations to survive (p. 1). Disney Cruise Line is empathetic about the harm their ships can inflict on the ocean and combats the risk of pollution through the investments of technological advancements and strict employee procedures. The effectiveness of Disney Cruise Line's ocean and biodiversity sustainability practices is shown through the population increase of endangered species and the development of non-toxic water production methods. DCL understands that the ocean, with all its inhabitants, is fragile, and the best way to leave a positive mark on the environment is to not leave one at all. On board, ship sustainability practices have also proven to be

effective by the thousands of tons of waste being eliminated through a variety of recycling methods. The cruise industry is filled with organizations as influential as Disney Cruise Line and they would benefit from instituting as many environmental sustainability practices as DCL has. Protecting the earth should be a universal want and limiting pollution, at least in the ocean, can be achieved by all cruise lines by holding their ship and staff standards to the level of Disney Cruise Line. In turn, DCL should put additional focus on implementing sustainability practices on the private islands and ports that the ships and thousands of guests travel to. Putting the same care and attention to the local communities that is put into the ocean will help to reduce guests' carbon footprint and instill environmental sustainability from ocean to land.

Disney Cruise Line properly puts the economic sustainability practices of philanthropy and community development in effect through the principle of efficiency. Efficiency is used in sustainability to create goods and services that are allocated to their most valuable uses. Efficiency in economic sustainability is also defined by the two normative goals of satisfying the needs and wants of individual humans and creating justice between humans of present and future generations (Baumgärtner & Quass, 2010, p. 477). By listening to the financial needs of cast members and college applicants, DCL effectively addresses their crew through beneficial employee programs. Disney Cruise Line recognizes that investing money into employee efforts will result in the durability of employee satisfaction and loyalty. Allocating goods through employee funds increases individual gain, thus propelling the tradition of cast members to give back to the company in return. The justice between humans of present and future generations is clearly tended to by DCL's attention to the development of local port communities.

Spending time to integrate environmental curriculum and community fundraisers allows DCL to form partnerships with local ports that will ensure the longevity of the communities themselves and the ability for the ports to withstand mass guest visitations. Since ships travel across the globe and access thousands of ports in a single year, all organizations in the industry can benefit from giving back to their local communities to create lasting mutualistic relationships. To continue building economic sustainability, DCL should propose a plan to encourage onboard guests to be involved with the local activities and fundraisers. If guests are only viewing ports as vacation destinations, learning about the communities and their residents may incline some individuals to return the hospitality that is already being provided to them.

People, represented through employees and supporters, are the backbone of every business. Disney Cruise Line understands the importance of customer and crew retention and effectively manages these areas through social sustainability. Social sustainability covers a large spectrum of quality-of-life issues, but it often refers to both the improvement of conditions for people and the quality of institutions involved (Boström et al., 2015, p. 133). DCL improves the conditions of guests onboard through the provision of educational programs fit for all ages. Whether guests learn about environmental issues through watching videos or engaging in conservation activity programs, understanding the actions DCL is taking to create environmental sustainability helps people understand the values of the company they are cruising with. In turn, with the help of Disney Cruise Line's transparent social responsibility reports, guests trust that the organization is putting their best foot forward to make their cruising experience as safe as possible. The Disney Corporation, which includes parks and hotels, has the reputation of creating and



upholding high quality services. Much of this praise is due to the strong efforts of Disney employees, with DCL cast members being no exception. In return, Disney Cruise Line guarantees the security of their employees' wellbeing by upholding the importance of addressing mental and behavioral health. DCL has created an environment where cast members feel secure in their abilities to support their families and are given talent development opportunities to grow further in the organization. The cruise industry can learn from Disney Cruise Line to understand the need for a more diverse and inclusive workforce. Guided by the strong impact of recent social injustices, DCL strives to include proper representation of minority groups to their company culture and educate their stakeholders about the importance of diversity and inclusion efforts. Moving forward, Disney Cruise Line can continue to improve their workforce by hiring more female officers. While women represent the majority of DCL crew members, though only by 1%, they are typically placed into childcare, merchandise, or restaurant positions. Hiring more women, especially women of color, into ship operation positions will help to project Disney Cruise Line's social sustainability to a higher standard that can, hopefully, become the future norm.

The researcher came across several limitations that may have impacted this study. First, most of the information was gathered using online databases, specifically Disney Cruise Line's main website. The available information may not only have been incomplete, but the sites could have been explicitly favorable to the organization's practices with limited mention of any negative attributes. Another limitation is that the researcher has personal connections with the organization. The researcher has vacationed through DCL before and, following summer 2022, will be working for Disney Cruise

Line as a youth activities counselor. The researcher's loyalty to the company and excitement for the job opportunity could have created bias during data collection. Lastly, the timing of the research collection represents another limitation to the study. While the entire study was conducted over an eight-week period, data was only researched and gathered over a two-week period, which may not have been an adequate amount of time to obtain all substantial information about Disney Cruise Line. Despite these limitations, the researcher was able to discover and analyze plenty of information about the sustainability practices of Disney Cruise Line. Though bias may be present, the researcher analyzed all information under the intentional effort to remove bias and preconceived judgements.

This study analyzed Disney Cruise Line's environmental, economic, and social sustainability practices. To meet the increasing demand of sustainable tourism, DCL is putting its practices into effect through the creation of ecological, generational, and interpersonal development. By establishing programs that benefit onboard guests and crew, local port communities, and the ocean, Disney Cruise Line ensures safe and efficient sailing that aims to improve all parties involved.

## Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Disney Cruise Line has established an award-winning conservation fund that supports ocean biodiversity, wildlife, and on-board environmental management operations.

2. Disney Cruise Line supports local port community development by partnering with environmental groups to create fundraisers and conservation programs for nonprofit organizations.
3. Disney Cruise Line promotes guest and employee development by prioritizing educational programs and inclusivity in the workforce that emphasizes employee wellbeing.
4. The commitment of employees to follow ocean and marine wildlife conservation procedures and recycling processes aids in the protection of endangered species, preservation of millions of gallons of water per year, and minimization of excess waste production.
5. The provision of nonprofit conservation programs and Bahamian partnerships sustains the economy of local port communities.
6. Establishing educational programs has made guests more secure about the company's environmental impact and an inclusive workforce has put precedence on employee wellbeing.

### Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Companies within the cruise industry should institute multiple practices of environmental sustainability that cover more than just the ocean, like wildlife biodiversity and the contamination of natural resources.

2. Disney Cruise Line should help to reduce guests' carbon footprint by implementing sustainability practices on Disney's private island and local ports.
3. Disney Cruise Line should create a community program that allows onboard guests to be involved with local activities and nonprofit fundraisers.
4. Disney Cruise Line should continue to increase inclusivity in the workforce by hiring more women in officer positions.
5. Further research should be gathered on the hiring process of Disney Cruise Line employees and why women are not typically placed into upper management roles.

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## APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Instrument

<b>Questions/Areas</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Additional Comments</b>
Environmental Sustainability		
Ocean Conservation		
Waste Management		
Water Treatment		
Ecosystem Protection		
Energy Efficiency		
Social Sustainability		
Guest Education		
Transparency		
Crew Welfare		
Economic Sustainability		
Price		
Community Development		