



Sustainable Tourism Management

A Collection of Studies from Malta, Lebanon and Jordan



George Cassar
Editor

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Promoting socio-economic sustainable development through innovative technological actions for Mediterranean tourism heritage and landscape protection clusters.

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The 2007-2013 ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). The Programme objective is to promote the sustainable and harmonious cooperation process at the Mediterranean Basin level by dealing with the common challenges and enhancing its endogenous potential. It finances cooperation projects as a contribution to the economic, social, environmental and cultural development of the Mediterranean region. The following 14 countries participate in the Programme: Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Palestinian Authority, Portugal, Spain, Syria, Tunisia. The Joint Managing Authority (JMA) is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (Italy). Official Programme languages are Arabic, English and French.

The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

This book is not for sale

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The Project

HELAND is a European framework project aiming to promote socio-economic sustainable development through innovative technological actions for Mediterranean tourism-heritage and landscapes protection clusters.

HELAND counts on the participation of organizations from Malta, Spain, Cyprus, Palestine, Jordan and Lebanon that deal with tourism studies, regional development and innovative solutions, technological actions for Mediterranean tourism-heritage and landscape protection clusters.

The **HELAND** Project is co-funded by the European Commission through the ENPI (European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument) Programme, which is the financing instrument of the new European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) for the 2007-2013 period aimed at reinforcing cooperation between the European Union (EU) and partner countries and regions placed along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

The screenshot shows the HELAND project website's gallery page. At the top, there are logos for HELAND (Promoting Mediterranean Heritage Tourism) and ENPI CBCMED (Cross-border Cooperation by the Mediterranean). Below the logos is a navigation menu with links: Home, Project, Partners, Pilot Areas, Multimedia, Contact Us, News, and Partners Area. The main heading is "Gallery". The gallery consists of 12 case study thumbnails arranged in a 3x4 grid. Each thumbnail includes a photograph and a caption. The captions are: "Heland Meetings and Field Visits", "Case Study: City of Mdina (Malta)", "Case of Study: City of Xaghra (Malta)", "Case Study: 'Cedar Pride' Dive Site, Aqaba Marine Park (Jordan)", "Case Study: Old City of As-Salt (Jordan)", "Case Study: City of Madaba (Jordan)", "Case Study: Bkassine Pine Forest and the Holy Valley of Qadisha (Lebanon)", "Case Study: Al-Shouf Cedar Reserve (Lebanon)", "Case Study: Valley of Al Badhan (Palestine)", "Case Study: Larnaca Mountainous Area (Cyprus)", and "Case Study: Defensive Watchtowers System at Castellón Coast (Spain)". At the bottom of the page, the website URL www.helandproject.eu is displayed.

Background

It is a known fact that the Mediterranean regions are the cradle of some of the most important civilizations of the world and have undoubtedly left a cultural heritage that has continued to influence the entire world to this day. These regions have also a diversity of landscapes that contribute to local and regional identity, reflecting the past and present relationships between human beings and their natural and built environment. Nowadays, however, increasing threats to the cultural identity, heritage and landscape diversity of the region due to external (e.g. globalization) and internal factors (e.g. rapid urbanization with consequent impacts on traditional socio-economic structures), can continuously be witnessed. The Mediterranean is now experiencing the increasing degradation of its environment, cultural heritage and landscapes.

Because of this reality it is necessary to encourage concerned organisms and organizations, to strive for the rational use of this space with innovative and the most recent technologies, taking due account of the requirements of conservation and reinforcing the practice of sustainable tourism that exerts as low an impact as possible on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate income, employment, and the conservation of local ecosystems. Innovation, together with absorption and application of technologies to traditional and important sectors, such as Tourism in the Mediterranean countries, will be a key aspect for their future economic development.

Main Objective

The goal of the project is to promote the socio-economic development and enhancement of territories through the support of innovation and research as part of the process of local development of the Mediterranean Sea Basin countries.

HELAND regards research and innovation activities are a key factor in the process of the competitive development of territories through the tourism industry.

More specifically, **HELAND** will establish a common approach for sustainable tourism through the application of cutting-edge technologies in two important axis which are heritage and landscapes protection. These will help us to achieve better management and tourism sustainability indicators and therefore enhance the quality and economic indicators of tourism in the partner countries. With this project we will be able to modernize “mature” productive sectors such as tourism based on sustainability criteria and the natural/cultural specificities of the territories, international normative principles, and on the knowhow of the local actors, as well as responding to new demands that are emerging in the service sector.

The diffusion of new procedures and innovative technologies will be promoted through the setting up of a cross-border network at the basin level, among universities, research centres, professional societies, regional institutions, SME clusters, etc.

The Partners



**Collected Papers
studying 3 pilot sites**

Malta - pilot site Mdina

Lebanon - pilot site Bkassine

Jordan - pilot site Madaba



Sustainable Tourism - Mdina: A Situation Analysis of a Cultural Destinationy

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Abstract

This paper looks at tourism in the walled town of Mdina. It discusses the main impacts of tourism on the city by examining the economic, social and cultural aspects. Furthermore it assesses the use of ICT in cultural heritage management. An examination of various aspects underlines how tourism has impacted the city in the past twenty years and how the residents of Mdina have, over time, adapted to tourism activity. Such activity leads to particular effects such as positive economic proceeds which in turn prompts the tourism enterprises within the city to do their best to become more accessible to visitors especially through better use of ICT. This helps the city to become more sustainable.

Keywords

Tourism; Cultural Heritage; Sustainable Indicators; Mdina; Malta; HELAND; ETIS

Sustainable Tourism - Mdina: A Situation Analysis of a Cultural Destination

Introduction

Tourism is an economic activity, which is now considered by all as an important industry. Nevertheless, this does not diminish its potential to serve as a tool for the positive development of society and a means of good governance, should the right principles of sustainability be implemented. In the past, tourism had been primarily viewed in terms of its economic advantages, marked by an increase to a country's revenue and expanded employment; however, the resources of the tourist destination were also extensively exploited, and this led to much uncontrolled development (Bogdan, 2011). Nevertheless, as tourism practices are part of human activity, these are continually being influenced and affected by changes experienced by society which remodel and redesign the daily realities of this industry. This prompts us to take a brief look at the stages that have affected tourism growth and sustainability along time. There being numerous paradigms and perspectives of development theory, it is not the intention of this paper, due to the restraints of length, to go deeply into each and every one of them, but it is pertinent to give at least a brief outline of some of the development theories.

Development Theories and Sustainable Development

Keynesian theory emerged during the Great Depression of the 1930s. It argued that growth should be controlled by national governments which adjust measures such as tax cuts and pay cuts to control demand and therefore ensure stable growth and employment (Keynes, 1936). The modernisation development paradigm developed by Rostow mostly along the 1950s and 1960s, is characterised by the importance given to economic development, industrialization and state involvement within societies (Rostow, 1960).

A criticism of the Modernisation theory provided by the Neo-Marxist Andre Gunder Frank prompted the advent of Dependency theory which rejected the idea that developing countries and regions should follow the development stages of developed countries by taking the route through agriculture and industrialization (Frank, 1969) to achieve growth. Modernisation theory argues that previous growth in western countries was achieved through colonialism where there was investment in technology and the buying of cheap raw resources from less developed countries and believes that, if developing countries want to achieve economic growth they should follow the same path of development. Dependency theory, however, does not support the Modernisation theory as it holds that though developing areas may presently be in a non-colonialism situation yet this does not necessarily mean that they are politically and economically independent; and they may also be weaker members in the world market economy and have distinctive features that indicate that they are not just primitive versions of developed countries.

Tourism Area Life Cycle theory (Butler, 1980) explains Dependency theory from a tourism perspective. It argues that dependency is a negative influence on tourism areas because, if balance is not achieved, there could be economic leakages from the local destination to core regions. Therefore, it continues, tourism destinations experience stable growth when there is less dependency.

Malta was a British colony from 1800 until it gained its political independence in 1964. However, the emergence of tourism as an economic activity showed that the dependency relationship lingered on in the post-independence era and to some extent is still present today. For many decades since 1964 Malta's incoming tourism market was highly dominated by British tourism and political relationships, and this limited diversification has weakened the tourism economy (Falzon, 2003). This British domination has, arguably, been mitigated by a more diversified source tourism market though it is still the strongest single source market for Malta (Malta Tourism Authority, 2014).

Although previous development theories incorporated important elements which are still relevant for the growth process in modern economies, they failed to mention other resource limitations, where, for example, the prediction that land is a limited resource and could bring economic growth to a standstill was not taken into consideration and therefore carrying capacity limitations are not given their due attention.

Empowerment theory criticizes the development theories, since it contends that an increase in GDP and political independence does not bring with it an increase in general prosperity. Real prosperity is achieved by development growth sustained by respecting fundamental human rights since, "Development must be woven around people and not people around development and it should empower individuals and groups rather than disempower them" (UNDP, 1993:1).



Up to 1964 Malta was a British colony and served as a naval base for the Royal Navy. In 1955 the only overseas base where Wrens (female members of the RN) were employed was Malta. This picture shows a common scene in the streets of Valletta when Wrens marched from their barracks to naval buildings

Sustainable development is a more recent development principle that underlines two elements, namely, the significance of development and the conditions required for sustainability. Similar to the Empowerment theory, it recognizes that “development is not just about increasing wealth but about a change in behavior, aspirations to an increase in the quality of life” (Tosun, 2000:2). Sustainable development reflects on the idea that the natural resources within a place are not unlimited. What is being emphasised in sustainable development is a level, not a growth, of physical resource use. This means that what needs to be developed is the qualitative capacity of using the world’s unlimited non-renewable resources to improve and create goods and services for satisfying human needs, without destroying the resource base which all humans and ecological systems depend upon (Tosun, 2000).

Sustainable Tourism Development

Sustainable Tourism Development is relatively new and has gained more significance in these last 20 years. It is an adaptive concept emerging from the parent concept of sustainable development and therefore contributes towards the same objectives and principles (Liu, 2003) related to the destination. Sustainable tourism focuses on quality, continuity and balance. Quality through sustainable tourism translates into a valuable experience for visitors, in the context of improving quality of life of communities and brings forth the significance of the natural environment. “Sustainable tourism cannot exist without the continuity of the natural resources, culture and customs of host communities” (Bulin and Călărețu, 2011: 62). This form of tourism aims to ensure a balance between all stakeholders including the tourism industry, social players, environmental representatives, the government, the local authority and local communities. In order to ensure continuity of cultural, natural and local community resources, the management strategy has to involve long-term planning and stakeholder engagement. “If we protect the environment in such a way as to bring about in the long run economic misery, we would be defeating the whole purpose of development. If we promote economic wellbeing in the short run, and lead to environmental and social degradation, we will be winning one battle and losing another, with the end result of ending up worse in the long run”. (Briguglio, 2003:n.p.) On the Malta scene, in the case of Mdina (see below, HELAND Project Pilot Site), the residents living within the small walled city have lamented that, due to the heavy influx of mass tourism they feel they are a museum display (Orbasli, 2000). The “question remains as to whether Mdina will be able to remain a place for its residents or will simply be turned into a commercial museum for visitors” (Ibid:98).

Destination Competitiveness Measurement Concepts

Sustainable tourism development is also closely linked to destination competitiveness, which attempts to measure tourism economic impacts and is used to develop destination management. For a destination to be competitive, the development of a tourism destination must be sustainable, not just in economic terms but also in environmental, social, cultural and political terms (Ritchie and Crouch, 2000, 2003). Moreover within the balance sought by sustainability principles, destination competitiveness emphasizes that the place must not only attract large numbers of tourists but must also be able to deliver an attractive tourism experience which surpasses that of competing destinations. The drive for an edge in the tourism experience



Mdina has been a favorite sight to visit by tourists for many decades and has had to accept its destiny and adapt to it. It is still trying to handle this reality up to this day (Source: MTA)

over the offer of others has nowadays developed into an increasingly elaborated objective of different destinations by leveraging on creative tourism and ICT. As Richards has observed, "Tourism destinations seeking to distinguish themselves from their increasingly numerous competitors have turned to culture as a means of distinction, and culture has been linked to tourism as a means of generating income and jobs" (2001:24). Moreover, with regard to the commercialization or 'serial reproduction' (Harvey 1989; Richards and Wilson 2006) of culture, it can be argued that cultural development is no longer sufficient to create distinction between destinations. These have thus started to replace culture-led development strategies with creative development, putting creativity and innovation on a higher level of importance in their development strategies, and in particularly in tourism development (Richards and Wilson, 2006).

Tourism competitiveness mostly takes the approach of the measurement of economic indicators. Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA) are used by various destinations to measure the GDP, employment, tax revenues, tourism consumption and characteristics of tourism human resources. These have become a useful tool to bring out the necessary knowledge needed by various direct and indirect stakeholders to underline the necessary importance of tourism and its contribution towards the economy whilst it generates the products and services required for consumption by visitors. A criticism of TSA is that it fails to include the measurement of positive and negative tourism impacts comprising those environmental, social and cultural.

HELAND Project, Mdina Pilot Site – ETIS Indicator System

The Heland Project is a European framework project aimed at promoting socio-economic sustainable development through innovative technological actions for Mediterranean heritage tourism and landscapes protection clusters. It is a project under the 2007-2013 ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme which is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (Heland Project, n.d.).

For its objectives this Project is implementing a more comprehensive indicator system, that is, the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS). In Malta, one chosen pilot site on which this tool has been used, is Mdina. The ETIS tool has been commissioned by the European Commission, through the DG Growth (formerly DG Enterprise and Industry), with the purpose to provide the tourism stakeholders with a toolkit that assists them in the measuring of sustainability impacts and benchmark their progress and performance in the future (DG Enterprise and Industry, 2013). The ETIS tool measures tourism impacts on a tourism destination level and takes into consideration the environmental, economic, social and cultural impacts on this destination. The ETIS is composed of 27 core and 40 optional indicators that can be integrated on an optional basis. The 67 indicators are divided into the four sustainability pillars which consist of: 4 core and 5 optional Destination Management impacts; 5 core and 9 optional Economic Value impacts; 7 core and 11 optional Social and Cultural impacts; and, 11 core and 15 optional Environmental impacts. The ETIS is a more comprehensive system based on sustainability principles quoted by Agenda 21, chapter 40, which states: “indicators of sustainable development need to be developed to provide solid bases for decision-making at all levels and to contribute to a self-regulating sustainability of integrated environment and development systems” (Briguglio, 2003: n.p.).



European Tourism Indicator System ETIS

For the Sustainable Management of Destinations



The Town of Mdina

The fortified small town of Mdina is located on the hilltop in the western central part of Malta. This town, has a history that goes back thousands of years as it was occupied successively by Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans and Byzantines. It has an Arab flavour with narrow winding streets traceable to Aghlabid and Fatimid Arab rule. Indeed, the present footprint originates from Arabic rule, who reduced the Punico-Roman enceinte by about two-thirds. It was the undisputed principal town of the Maltese Islands up until the time when the Knights of St John's arrived in Malta in 1530. Mdina has from at least medieval times hosted the palatial residences of the Maltese noble families who have continued to conserve and value their sumptuous and historic Renaissance and Baroque homes.

Mdina is one of the most popular tourism sites in Malta, welcoming 90 per cent of tourists that come to Malta, and which works out at about 1.3 million persons every year (MTA, 2013). This is a huge influx of tourists especially when taking into consideration that in Mdina there are only 237 residents (NSO 2011) dropping steadily from the 325 residents of 1992. In 1993, researchers had already indicated that the residents felt like they were being obliged to sacrifice their privacy and tranquillity for the national good without compensation from either government or tour operators (Boissevain, 1996) Questions that one may consider asking, given the increasing influx of tourism arrivals and the decrease of the resident population by 25 per cent in the past 20 years may include: How has the relationship between tourists and residents evolved? Has this relationship any effect on the decrease in the number of residents? Is there really a possibility that Mdina eventually becomes a museum town?

Methodology

For the present project, two studies were conducted. The first one dealt with the measurement of economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of tourism on Mdina. This study was commenced in February 2014. The questionnaires were designed based on the sustainable tourism indicator tool in order to create questions applicable to the different stakeholders in Mdina including the police, the Local Council, residents, the business community, cultural attractions and visitors. For the sustainability research, 238 respondents, consisting mainly of international visitors, were selected using the random sampling method and stopped at various points in Mdina, including Greeks' Gate, Main Gate and Cathedral Square. Another 38 questionnaires were administered to Mdina residents. Questionnaires included closed ended questions that reflected the ETIS indicator toolkit. Another 36 in-depth interviews were conducted with each of the tourism cultural attractions. The tourism business community including restaurants, bars, and souvenir shops, while the cultural attractions comprised museums and audio visual attractions. Given that in Mdina there is only one hotel within the walled space, a separate in-depth interview was designed specifically to address the hotel accommodation sector. Data compiled from the questionnaires was then processed and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The second study dealt with ICT and cultural tourism attractions and was begun in February 2014. It aimed at discovering the level of penetration of ICT among Mdina's cultural tourism attractions and to assess the visitors' perception of ICT on Mdina as a tourism destination. In

March 2014 one questionnaire for cultural attractions and another for international visitors were designed and as from April the collection of primary data was undertaken. For the ICT research, 100 respondents consisting mainly of international visitors, were selected using the random sampling method. This was administered at various points in Mdina including Greeks' Gate, Main Gate and Cathedral Square.

For the ICT enterprise, 9 cultural attractions were interviewed. Out of these, 1 is a historic house museum, 3 are religious museums, 3 are audio visual-attractions, 1 is a stately home, and 1 is an archive.

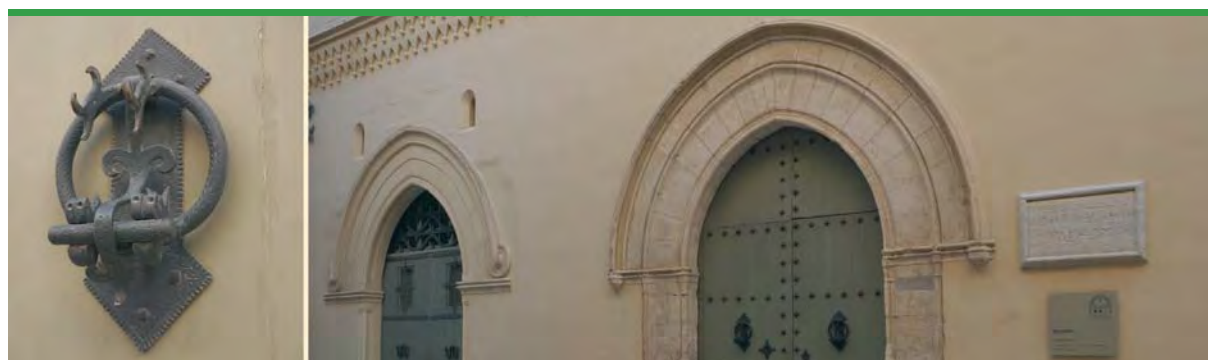
The findings related to the Sustainable Tourism Indicators

Pilot Site Management

From the in-depth interview with the representative of Mdina Local Council, it emerged that Mdina has no sustainable tourism strategy or plan and neither is it represented by a pilot site management organization.

As regards tourism and cultural attractions, 2 (28.6%) out of the 7 cultural attractions, and 4 (13.8%) out of 29 tourism enterprises stated that they had an environmental and/or sustainable certification as part of their tourism management. Regarding Corporate Social Responsibility Policy (CSR), 3 (42.9%) out of 7 cultural attractions and 5 (17.2%) out of 29 tourism enterprises have a CSR Policy. Despite the fact that most cultural and tourism enterprises do not carry out corporate social responsibility measures and activities to positively affect the environment and local community, on the other hand 6 (85.7%) out of 7 cultural attractions stated that they communicate sustainability efforts to tourists and the general public. Therefore, results show that there is more effective communication and marketing of sustainability efforts to tell tourists about what is being done rather than actually implementing CSR policies themselves. The number of tourism enterprises that communicate their sustainability measures reached 27.2 per cent, a number which is similar to that of those implemented CSR within Mdina.

Only 15 (40.6%) residents out of 37 confirmed that they are involved in the planning and development of tourism. On the other hand, 83.1% of visitors tend to be very satisfied with the tourism experience in Mdina and 80.3 % are aware of sustainability efforts within the pilot site. The number of repeat tourists is that of 22%, most of these having visited Malta more than once in the last 30 years.



The charm of Mdina - an elaborated door knob and medieval features

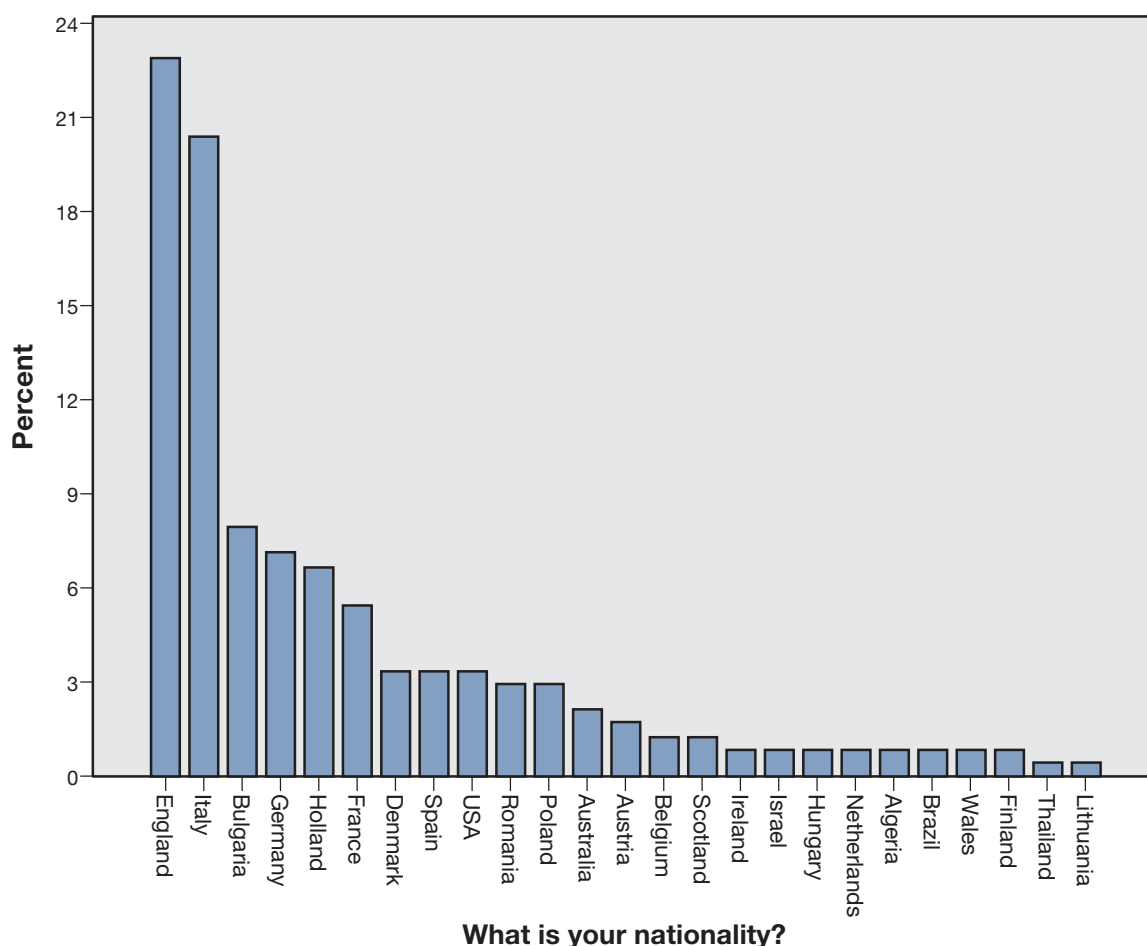
Economic Value

- Tourist Profile**

The results obtained, as shown in Table 1 and from the visual representation of Graph 1, the most prominent international tourism arrivals to Mdina are from the UK (22.9%) and Italy (20.4%). This reflects the distribution of visitors to the Maltese Islands.

What is your nationality?	Frequency	Percentage
Finland	2	0.8%
England	55	22.9%
Germany	17	7.1%
Israel	2	0.8%
Bulgaria	19	7.9%
Spain	8	3.3%
Ireland	2	0.8%
Denmark	8	3.3%
Italy	49	20.4%
France	13	5.4%
Lithuania	1	0.4%
Thailand	1	0.4%
Wales	2	0.8%
Australia	5	2.1%
Poland	7	2.9%
Scotland	3	1.3%
USA	8	3.3%
Holland	16	6.7%
Austria	4	1.7%
Brazil	2	0.8%
Romania	7	2.9%
Belgium	3	1.3%
Algeria	2	0.8%
Netherlands	2	0.8%
Hungary	2	0.8%

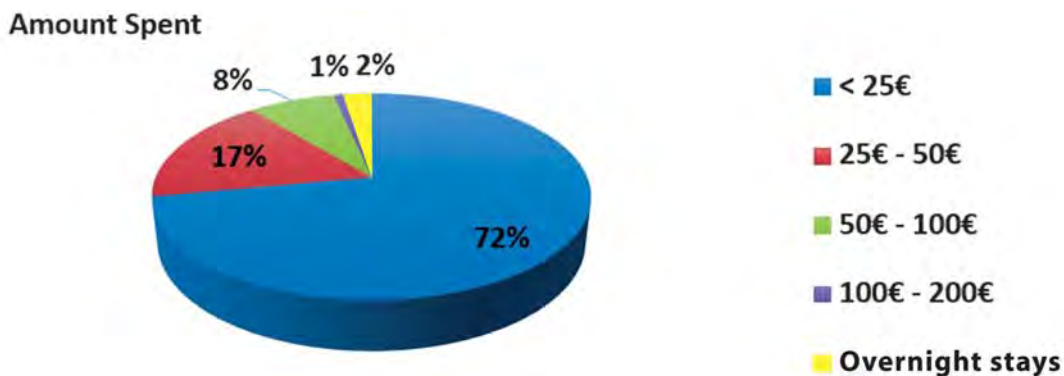
Table 1: Tourist source markets



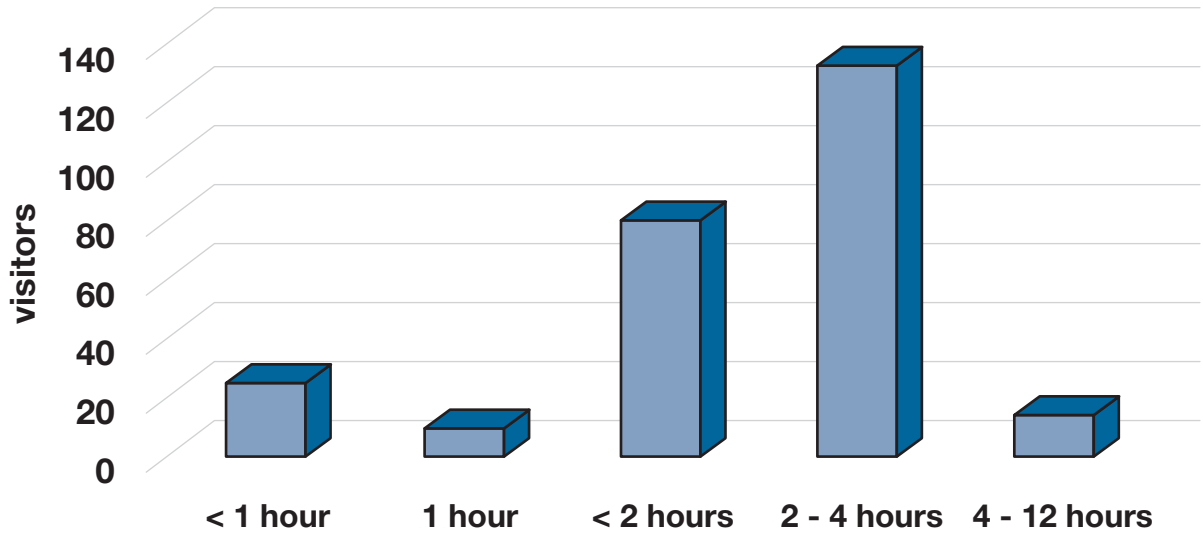
Graph 1: Graphical representation of tourist source markets

• **Daily Visitor Expenditure and Length of Stay**

The visitor expenditure is based on such items as accommodation, transportation, food & drinks, shopping, entertainment, and entrance to museums. The total per capita expenditure is of Euro 910 (MTA 2014). From the graphical representation below (Graph 2) it transpires that expenditure by visitors to Mdina ranges from Euro 200 to less than Euro 25 with the majority, that is 72%, claiming that they spend less than Euro25 during their visit to Mdina. This might be explained considering the relatively short stay of tourists most of whom remain on the site between 2 to 4 hours while only very few stay for half a day or a full day (Graph 3). Only 4 (1.68%) visitors out of 238 are overnight visitors.



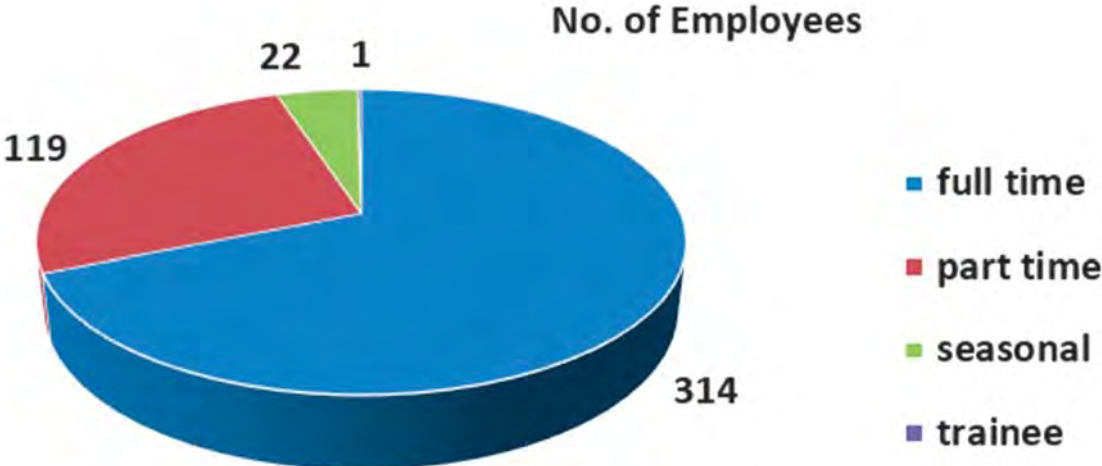
Graph 2: Graphical representation of daily expenditure of tourists in Mdina



Graph 3: Graphical representation of length of stay of visitors in Mdina

Regarding cooperation from the business community when it comes to marketing a common strategy for Mdina, only 17% of business enterprises stated that they participate in cooperative activities. Such cooperative activities include involvement in associations of tourism enterprise and common promotional advertising programmes. This lack of community efforts to promote sustainability measures from a community point of view is not mitigated by local authorities since, from the in-depth interview with the Local Council it resulted that Mdina lacks a Trade Destination Policy for the promotion of the purchase of local trade products and/or fair products and services.

Regarding the quality and quantity of employees, 456 employees were employed throughout the year on full time, part time, seasonal and traineeship basis.



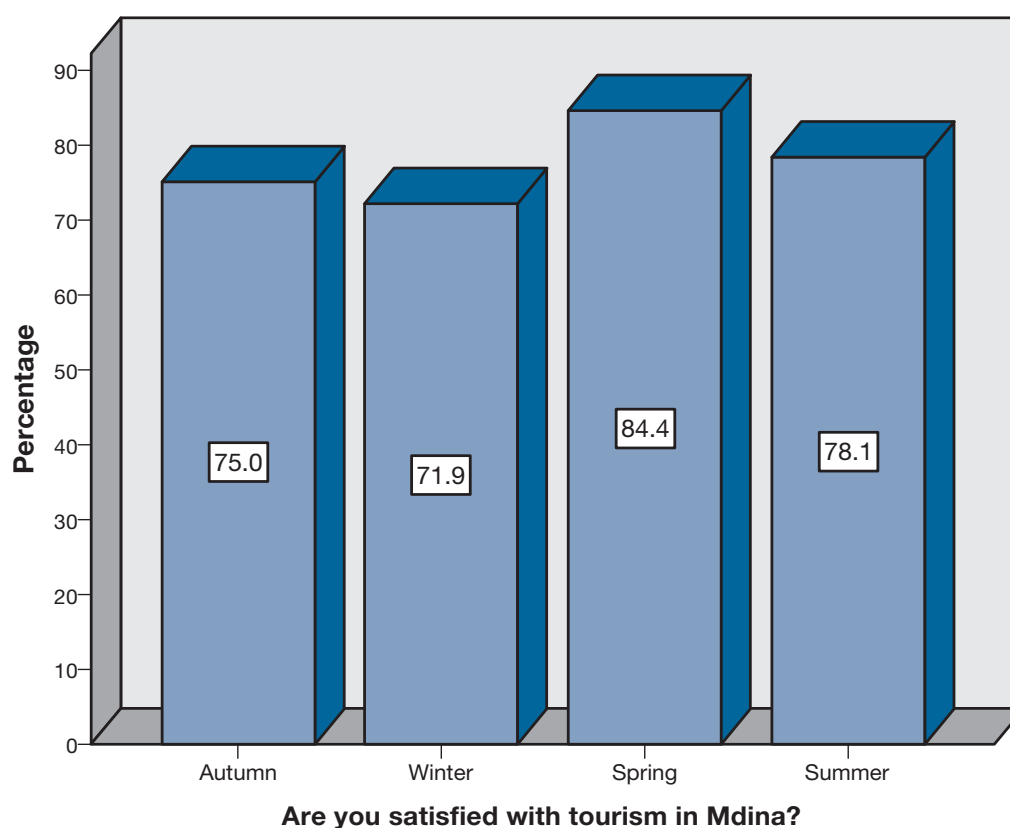
Graph 4: Graphical representation of number of employees

- **Cultural/Social Impact**

Tourism arrivals in Mdina reach 1.3 million visitors per annum whilst the local population is that of 237 residents. Despite this imbalance between tourist and resident numbers, generally locals are satisfied with tourism in spring (84.4%), in summer (78.1%), in autumn (75%) and in winter (71.9%) as seen in Table 2 and Graph 5.

Are you satisfied with tourism in Mdina?	Frequency	Percentage
Autumn	24	75.0%
Winter	23	71.9%
Spring	27	84.4%
Summer	25	78.1%

Table 2: Residents' satisfaction with tourism in Mdina by season

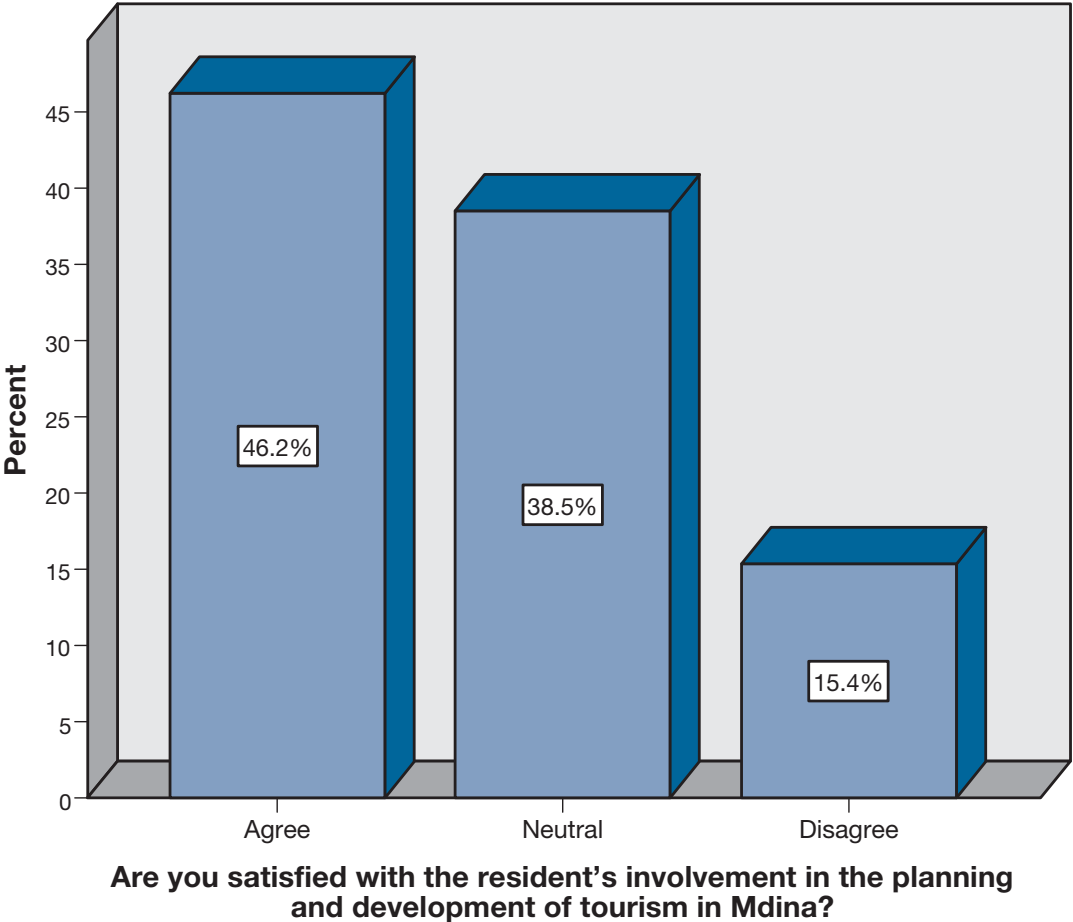


Graph 5: Graphical representation showing satisfaction levels of residents in Mdina by season

The satisfaction of locals with tourism in general could be explained to some extent when seeing their reply to the question about their involvement in the planning of tourism in Mdina, as shown in Table 3 and Graph 6.

Are you satisfied with the residents' involvement in the planning and development of tourism in Mdina?	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	18	46.2%
Neutral	15	38.5%
Disagree	6	15.4%

Table 3: Residents' involvement in tourism planning in Mdina

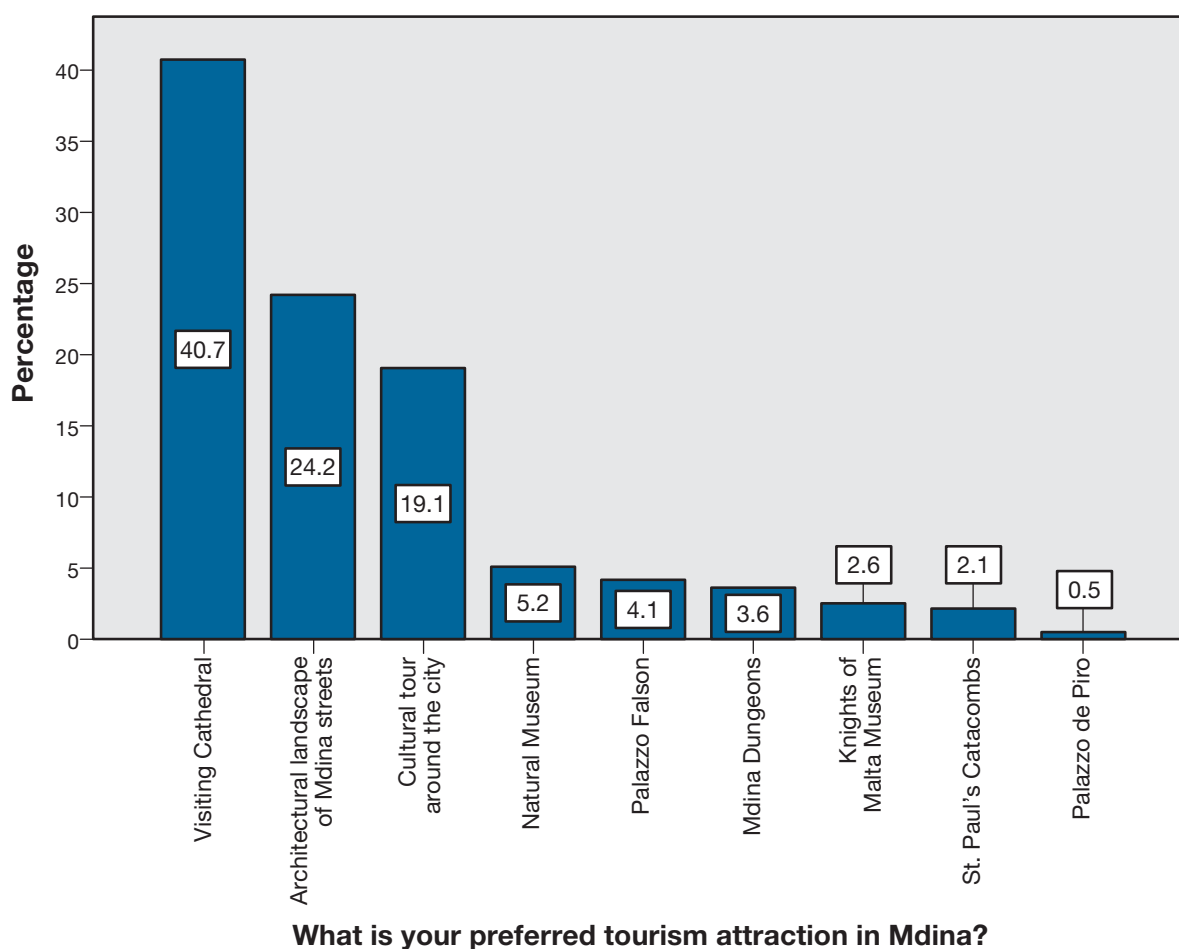


Graph 6: Graphical representation showing residents' involvement in tourism planning in Mdina

When tourists were asked to indicate the most popular cultural tourism attractions in Mdina, the more highly preferred attractions were the Cathedral and the architectural landscape of the Mdina streets. This shows that a good 24 per cent of visitors preferred to visit Mdina and just walk through the winding streets instead of visiting other attractions.

What is your preferred tourism attraction in Mdina?	Frequency	Percentage
Mdina Dungeons	7	3.6%
Visiting the Cathedral	79	40.7%
Architectural landscape of Mdina streets	47	24.2%
Cultural tour around the city	37	19.1%
Palazzo Falson	8	4.1%
Palazzo de Piro	1	0.5%
Natural Museum	10	5.2%
Knights of Malta Museum	5	2.6%
St Paul's Catacombs	4	2.1%

Table 4: Tourists' preferred attractions in Mdina



Graph 7: Tourists' preferred attractions in Mdina



Tourists are satisfied with Mdina and especially seek visiting the streets and the interesting architecture (left) and the cathedral (right)

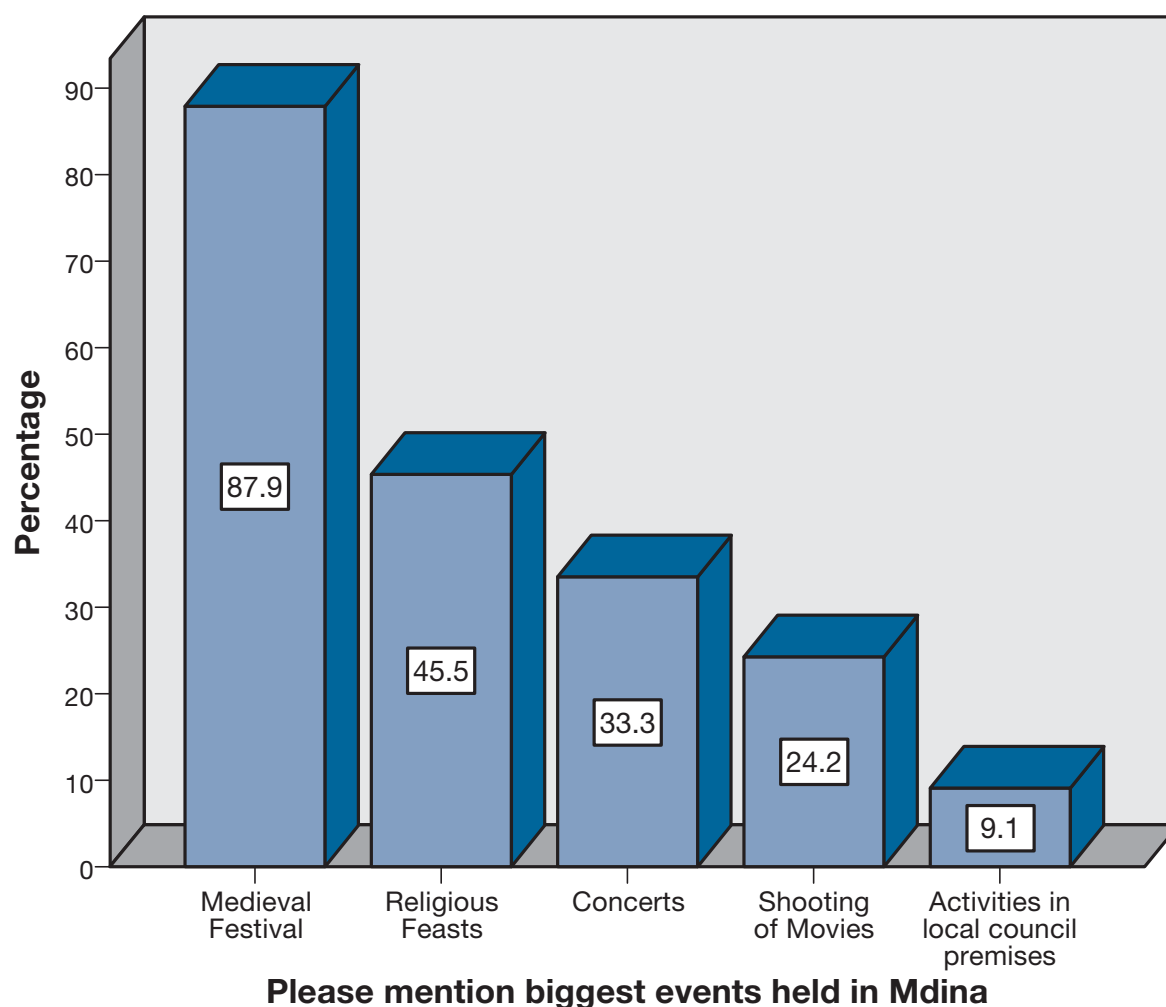


The narrow streets of Mdina entice many tourists to walk through them and explore what is around the corner (Photo by: Mario Galea - viewingmalta.com)

Residents were asked about the most popular events in Mdina and which of those events were the most authentic and the ones that reflected their local cultural traditions. The event scoring high from the locals' perspective was the Medieval Festival, an annual event organized by various tourism stakeholders in Malta including the Malta Tourism Authority, re-enactment groups, and cultural and tourism attractions.

Please mention biggest events held in Mdina	Frequency	Percentage
Medieval Festival	29	87.9%
Religious Feasts	15	45.5%
Concerts	11	33.3%
Shooting of Movies	8	24.2%
Activities in local council premises	3	9.1%

Table 5: Most popular cultural tourism events in Mdina

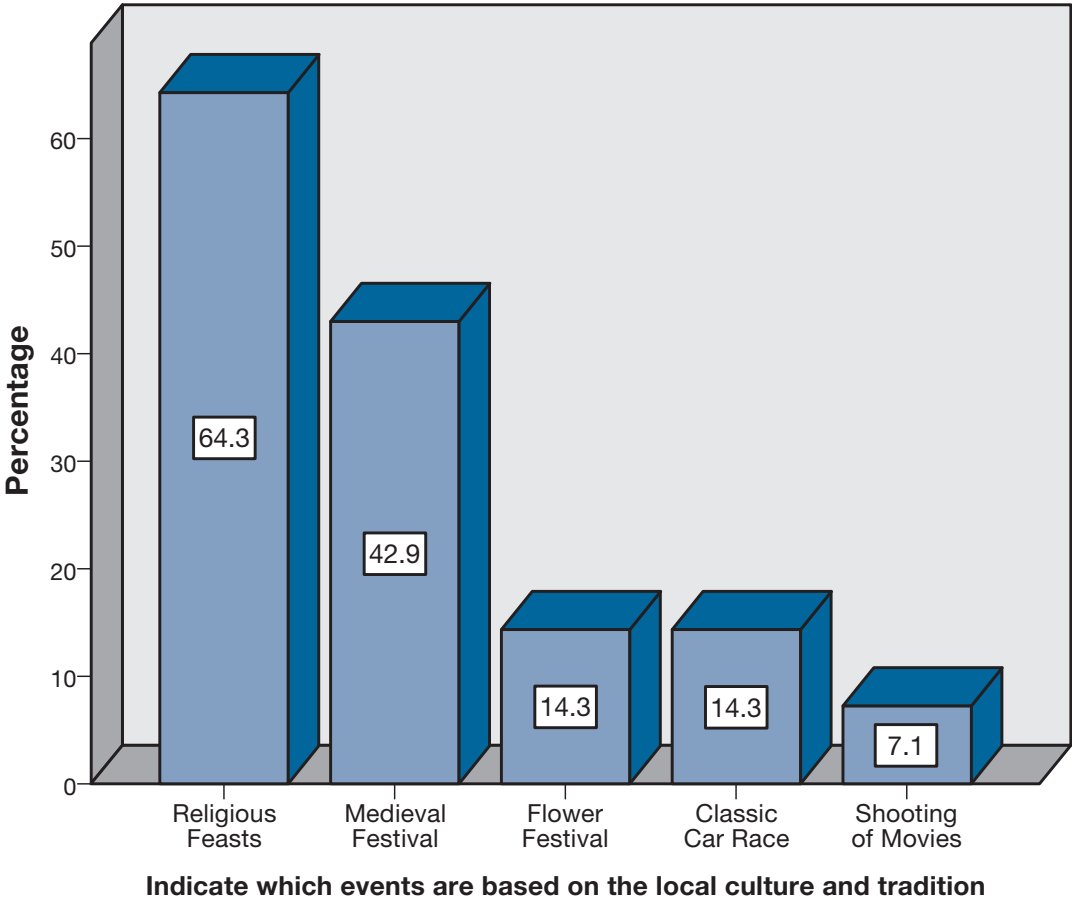


Graph 8: Most popular cultural tourism events in Mdina

When it came to authentic events tied to local culture and tradition in Mdina, from Table 6 and Graph 9, it transpires that religious events ranked first, gaining a score of 64.3% of replies. This shows that despite the fact that the most popular events are the ones organized by stakeholders from outside Mdina’s local community and are very popular since they are mostly advertised and visited by tourists, on the other hand the ceremonies and events that most represent the local traditions of the community are the ones that are the ‘living ceremonies’ practised by the residents of the place. The question that begs an answer here would be: ‘Is Mdina’s tourism product moving towards a commercialized organized offer or is it still being true to the local cultural traditions of the place?’

Indicate which events are based on the local culture and tradition	Frequency	Percentage
Medieval Festival	6	42.9%
Religious Feasts	9	64.3%
Shooting of Movies	1	7.1%
Classic Car Race	2	14.3%
Flower Festival	2	14.3%

Table 6: Most popular cultural tourism events in Mdina



Graph 9: Cultural tourism events based on local culture and tradition



Polyptych of St Paul found in the Cathedral (Source: www.gov.mt)



Religion in Mdina - St. Agatha's Chapel, St Roque Chapel, St Peter in Chains Chapel

ICT - Cultural Attractions and Visitors

- **Community Involvement and Social Activities**

Regarding social activities, 77 per cent (7 sites) of cultural sites responded that they organised social activities; 66 per cent (6 sites) stated that the main type of social activities were exhibitions; 1 did fundraising; 3 responded that their site is utilised as a meeting space; and 3 fell under the category 'other'. Further social activities included religious and spiritual workshops, tea-time concerts and a living space for retreats; while 2 responded that social activities consisted of workshops for children and old people. This question was offered as a multiple choice response, where the respondent could choose more than one type of social activity organised within the site. All 9 sites (100%) stated that they targeted both local and foreign visitors.

- **ICT and Community Involvement**

There were 7 (77%) out of the 9 sites that responded which utilise ICT for social activities. The type of IT utilised include social media, newsletters, IT systems for audio visual shows and for digitisation of documents. A multiple choice question was put regarding how ICT is viewed within a site: 7 respondents replied that ICT was viewed as a way to promote communication and marketing activities to engage with the audience; 3 replied that ICT is viewed as a way to exhibit the artefacts; and 1 included ICT as a way to manage the organisation, and to categorise and document artefacts.

- **ICT Presence within Heritage Cultural Sites**

With regard to the proficient use of the internet by employees, 8 (88%) out of the 9 sites replied that more than 50 per cent of their employees are proficient in the use of the Internet. Only one replied that less than 10 per cent of the employees were skilled in the use of Internet. On the other hand 7 (77%) out of 9 respondents claimed that their employees communicate with their suppliers and internal management utilising ICT, specifically e-mail; 2 responded that employees do not utilise ICT for communication with suppliers; while 8 (88%) out of 9 of the respondents claimed that employees are given access and the use of internet to communicate with clients electronically.

All the 9 respondents claimed that their sites have internet access and have a 'good' download speed and internet performance.

The 9 respondents also claimed that they had a website for the cultural site, with 4 (44%) stating that the primary aim of the website was to provide information about the cultural value of the site to the visitors; 3 replied that the website was used as a communication tool between the heritage site personnel and potential and present visitors, and 2 said that the primary function of the website was e-commerce.

Regarding the technology utilised to enhance the presentation of the artefacts and interpretation, none of the 9 respondents claimed to have apps for their site. Only 2 replied that artefacts are digitised in order to be used through various technological means. All respondents said that they do not have QR codes; 3 had self-guided tours, 1 had 3D audio visual, and 5 utilised ICT for signage. Again, 5 out of the 9 heritage sites had Multilanguage function for the interpretation of the artefacts.

Concerning the ICT and Innovation surveys to visitors, 67 per cent of the visitor respondents claimed that internet is important within a destination. Moreover, 58 per cent of international visitors stated that information stands to display guidelines and knowledge about Mdina take priority over wifi spots or 3G accessibility. 97 per cent of international visitors to Mdina had a smartphone with 58 per cent of visitors preferring to use the smart phone within a destination for maps and directions about the place. When asked whether they would prefer an electronic virtual guide rather than a personal local guide, 47 per cent replied that they agreed to have electronic virtual guides around Mdina, with 31 per cent preferring the personal attention of a local person, while 22 per cent kept a neutral stance.

Discussion and Conclusions

This paper has shown that the walled town of Mdina has adapted to the tourism influx which in the span of 20 years has increased from ca 950,000 in 1993 (Boissevain, 1996) to over 1.3 million visitors in 2014. This adaptation has however taken place at a cost. Residents in the city have declined and the few services present in 1993 aimed for residents have completely disappeared whilst the number of tourism-related attractions have increased. In a classic analysis of tourism impact assessment this would imply a negative trend. However, the study conducted in the past year has shown that residents reacted well to the changes happening around them. Clearly tourism is leaving economic impacts in that expenditure although on the low side is sufficient given that the majority of visitors spend between 2-4 hours in the city, and employment is rather high with tourism generating employment for more than 400 persons who live in the city and in the nearby towns.

The study on the use of ICT in the cultural sector has shown that visitors are keen to have more access to ICT for them to be able to enjoy the city. On their part, the enterprises within the city are willing to increase both the use and access to ICT. The study shows that further benefits could be obtained by using ICT in order to manage better the cultural heritage within the city.



The old city and its walls poised on a hilltop

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Tourism, Globalization and Identity - Mdina as a Maltese Case Study

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Abstract

Malta, a small island in the middle of Mediterranean, is a melting pot of cultures and identities. For its size and its population, the Maltese archipelago attracts over 1.7 million tourists a year (MTA, 2014). This is a sign of globalization at its best and impacts on the Maltese islands, its culture and its identity. Globalization is therefore an element which has become evident and which needs to be studied and assessed if Maltese society is to safeguard its cultural and natural heritage for posterity. This paper looks at one of the classical tourism destinations in Malta - Mdina, the old and past capital of the island. The small, walled town of Mdina receives about 1.5 million tourists a year, not counting domestic visitors. One can realize how big an impact this creates on the restricted space and resources, and the 237 residents of Mdina, but also on the business community that operates there. Being a historic yet residential town, Mdina's business community views the invasion of tourism as an opportunity for profit and expansion of their business enterprise. On the other hand, the residents have to keep up with all the forms of pollution-noise, waste, overcrowding, and lack of privacy- that tourism brings with it. How much more can Mdina take if it wants to safeguard its culture and identity while continuing to be a magnet for the ever-growing tourism industry in Malta? The dilemma is clear and needs our attention.

Keywords

Cultural Tourism; Sustainability; Mdina; Globalisation

Tourism, Globalization and Identity – Mdina as a Maltese case study

Introduction

The fortified small town of Mdina is located on the hilltop in the western central part of Malta. This town has evidence of at least six strata of settlements beneath the walls of the city with today's present layer being the seventh (Manduca, 2003). It is the second major cultural centre of the Maltese Islands and it attracts 95% of the visitors that visit the Maltese Islands, which in 2014 surpassed 1.7 million. Currently being prepared for UNESCO heritage enlisting, this small fortified town, has been a major subject of debate for the past 20 years, when Boissevain and Sammut (1994) presented the first findings on the impact of cultural tourism activities on Maltese communities. This paper, based on studies conducted within the framework of the HELAND project and applying the ETIS sustainable tourism indicator system, aims to present the impact of an ever growing global tourism phenomenon on this community analysing the reactions of the residential population and the business community within the city.

The Mediterranean is one of the main regions where the effects of globalisation are intense. The region considered to be the “first region of tourism in the world” (Anastapopolous, 2002) attracted 343 million international tourists in 2014 (UNWTO, 2015). Although showing uneven growth in tourism numbers between the Northern rim and the Southern and Eastern rim, this region has sustained a major increase in inbound travel unparalleled by other regions in the two decades between 1990 and 2010 (Lanquar, 2011) and beyond. The onset of low cost airlines has contributed also to the increase in travel and consequently the increase in the globalisation of the region.



The flag of Mdina flying over the main entrance to the city

Literature Review

Prior to delving deeper into the impacts of global tourism on the community of Mdina, it is worth understanding some of the main arguments raised on the topic of tourism impacts on Mediterranean communities.

Physical pressures and unrest between locals and tourists within the Mediterranean is perhaps one of the more salient impacts. The sheer volumes on beaches and at historic centres are the cause of much concern to local populations (Boissevain and Sammut, 1994, Follian, 2002; Lindkund, 1996; Salazar 2010). However not all communities react with such aversion. Boissevain (1996), in his introduction to *Coping with Tourists*, argued that local communities have developed coping mechanisms with which to protect their social integrity and cultural identity. Crain (1996), Black (1996) and Odermatt (1996) speak of how communities devise mechanisms that enable them to enjoy their own culture or leisure habits without sharing these with foreign visitors whose presence would mar the experience of the cultural activity for the residential population.

Another major influence of tourism on Mediterranean societies is that impacting the moral fabric. Mediterranean societies are characterized by rules of moral and social conduct that dictate the way in which people ought to behave (Davies, 1980). These rules govern every aspect of society such as, but not only, religion and the family. Tourism has, however, challenged some of the more 'sacred' characteristics of Mediterranean societies.

Although in Islamic culture, travel plays an important role as it is part of the Islamic religious obligation to travel to Mecca (Din, 1989), the impacts of foreign visitors motivated by ludic behaviour and in search of sun, sex and fun, have left indelible effects. For example certain North African governments, such as that of Algeria, resisted the development of tourism for decades due to the potential impacts this would have on the country's cultural identity (Zoubir, 2001). Prior to the Arab Spring Revolution in 2011, the more westernized countries of Tunisia and Egypt had a thriving tourism economy based on mass tourism. The accompanying factors of hedonism, permissiveness and limited cross-cultural interaction and communication were not seen in a positive light. Tunisia and Egypt have opted to develop tourism by isolating it from mainstream society by constructing enclaves in which the two separate lives of the European visitor and the local service provider run parallel. This contact is not without its concerns. Semi-nude visitors around the pool, and open affection between men and women, offend local populations. Moreover, "visitors knowingly or unknowingly offend Islamic mode of conduct by violating rules of propriety in and around mosques" (Poirier, 2001: 204; see also Bleasdale and Tapselle, 1999). Moreover, Poirier (ibid.) points out that in Tunisia there has been a return to the veil as a symbolic protest against the moral decadence brought about by tourism.

Tourism has also brought about a re-evaluation of the social fabric. In Mediterranean societies, women were often confined to the home taking care of their family. In rural, agricultural and fishing communities, women also assisted their husbands in the fields. The new wave of employment on the coastal zone and within urban centres, generated by tourism brought

about a change in these structures. Primarily, women could earn a wage, implying that both husband and wife could contribute financially to the family. However, there are indications that women employed within the tourism sector earn less than their male counterparts, or occupy positions that are unskilled (Kinniard and Hall, 1994). Another related factor is the increased incidence of child labour in Egypt (Abu Stet and Elmhat 1996).

In agricultural societies, tourism led to a situation where males left the hinterlands in order to work in the tourism sector on the coastlines, leaving behind vast lands that could go to waste unless these were worked. In some countries this presented an opportunity for women to take up the economic activity themselves and create new forms of alternative tourism activity, namely agrotourism. In the Greek Islands and in Cyprus, cooperatives of agrotourism businesses run by women were set up with the assistance of female politicians (Cyprus Agricultural Company, n.d). These cooperatives offer accommodation in homes and meals, thus creating an alternative tourism experience that generates income and helps to sustain an activity that would have otherwise been lost.

Tourism in the region has also been responsible for generating beneficial impacts. Primarily tourism has led to the creation of employment and it brings about economic and social development through the encouragement of education and training. Tourism has also been beneficial in helping certain Mediterranean societies to conserve or even promote further their cultural identity. One such example is crafts, which have, to a certain extent, boosted local economic systems (Bleasdale and Tapsell, 1999), revived traditional skills and crafts (Theuma, 1997) or created new crafts (Markwick 2001). However Bleasdale and Tapselle (ibid.) caution against the possible temptation of replacing traditional designs in order to incorporate others more in line with the visitors' requests – examples of such commoditisation have already been detected in certain protected communities within the region (Malim, 2001: 74). These points urge us to reflect that while tourism could be used in order to encourage economic prosperity, yet at the same time it needs to allow for the continuity and sustainability of traditional skills.

Another area which has been affected by tourism activity in the region, is the development of cultural activities such as festivals and events. Getz (1991, 1995) argued that festivals and events are a means through which economic activity could be developed, moreover, festivals and events help tourism destination to promote themselves and assert their cultural identity. The Mediterranean countries are well equipped to provide such a cultural activity and can allow visitors to experience a range of festivals and events ranging from religious to cultural (see Boissevain, 1991; Centre for Cultural Heritage Preservation, 2004; and Novelli, 2004). Again, the danger that such events can become corrupted due to the over commercialisation of the event itself remains an issue (Greenwood, 1989; Cremona, 2001).

Food is another cultural aspect whose fate has changed as a result of tourism activity. Hjalagar and Antonioli Corigliano (2000) argue that food plays an important role in creating destination images. Mediterranean food and diet need very little introduction as the region is renowned for its culinary diversity and richness (Wright, 1999). Since 2010, Mediterranean food has been recognised as a World Immaterial Heritage by UNESCO which makes it imperative that it is

protected from external challenges and dilution in quality (Xavier Medina, 2011). The fate of food in a number of cultures has indeed been affected by tourism activity. In Malta, for example, restaurant culture was an alien concept since food was mostly consumed at home. Thus with the onset of mass tourism activity, visitors were provided with a predominantly British or continental cuisine, whilst Maltese cuisine continued to thrive in the home. However, the exposure to more continental tourists and their quest for Maltese food has led to a re-evaluation of local culinary traditions (Theuma, 2004). Similarly, Alcock (1999) describes how in Mallorca, an interest by visitors for healthy vegetarian diets has urged local chefs and restaurant owners to revisit traditional Mallorcan cuisine leading to its revival. Moreover, food tourism presents an alternative route to the development of niche tourism, at the same time sustaining local economic structures. In analysing wine tourism events in Apulia (Puglia) in Italy, Novelli, (2004) outlines how this activity is used to create a new image for the region while at the same time promoting wine-related activities with visits to cellars and wine production structures.

This section has outlined the main physical, social and cultural impacts of tourism on communities with a focus on the Mediterranean region. It is evident that due to its rapid development in the region, tourism has left physical impacts on a fragile environment. The social and cultural fabric of Mediterranean societies has also been effected. Nevertheless, it has been shown that the region has also benefited from tourism in that it has rediscovered aspects of cultural identity which would have otherwise been lost.



Two important annual tourism events organised in Mdina and its environs

Left: The Medieval Mdina Festival which evokes Mdina's historical past

Right: The Mdina Grand Prix which brings together vintage cars that take part in a race in the streets outside the walls of Mdina

Methodology

The study conducted for this paper is based on the European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS) tool for Sustainable Management at Destination Level, prepared by DG Growth (formerly known as DG Enterprise and Industry). This tool provides tourism stakeholders with a toolkit to measure sustainability impacts and benchmark progress and performance in the future (DG Enterprise and Industry, 2013). It measures tourism impacts on a tourism destination level and takes into consideration the environmental, economic, social and cultural impacts on this destination. ETIS is composed of 67 indicators (27 core and 40 optional) divided into four sustainability pillars: Management Impacts; Economic Value Impacts; Social and Cultural Impacts; and, Environmental Impacts.

The study conducted in Mdina included a tourism impact study which was carried out between February 2014 and February 2015. The questionnaires were designed on the ETIS sustainable tourism indicator tool in order to create questions applicable to the different stakeholders in Mdina including the police, the Local Council, residents, the business community, cultural attractions and visitors. For the sustainability research, 238 respondents, consisting mainly of international visitors, were selected using the random sampling method at various entry/exit points in Mdina (there are only 3 entry/exit points into the walled city). Another 38 questionnaires were administered to Mdina residents. Questionnaires included closed ended questions that reflected the ETIS indicator toolkit. For the tourism business community which included restaurants, bars, and souvenir shops, and cultural attractions which comprised museums and audio visual attractions, 36 in-depth interviews were conducted. Given that in Mdina there is only one hotel within the walled space, a separate in-depth interview questionnaire was designed specifically to address the hotel accommodation sector. Data compiled from the questionnaires was then processed and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

Mdina: A Silent City, a Jewel in the Crown, a Museum Town, or a Living City?

Mdina, has a very long history as a fortified town. Originally established in the Punic period (starting in 700 BC), it served as Malta's principal, and only, town until the arrival of the Knights of St John. The Order being a maritime power opted to move the seat of administration to the maritime village of Birgu upgrading it to a harbour town. Mdina today qualifies as a city on the basis of its important historical attributes. It is considered as a major historic and cultural city, one attracting about 90% of the total visitor arrivals in Malta every year (MTA, 2013). This is a huge influx of tourists especially when considering that in Mdina there are only 237 residents (NSO 2011), a gradual but steady drop from the 325 residents of 1992. In the mid-1990s, Boissevain and Sammut (1994) had indicated that the residents had been feeling like they were being obliged to sacrifice their privacy and tranquillity for the national good without being given any compensation neither by the government nor by the tour operators. Twenty years down the line, the residential population of Mdina has declined by 25% whilst tourist facilities have increased by more than 365% in certain areas.

Fig. 1 shows the demographic fluctuations of Mdina over the past 110 years. Mdina was always a small town constrained by its fortifications which restricted its physical expansion. Mdina’s population numbers were affected through time by elements including its proximity to Ta’ Qali military airdrome used especially during World War Two, the nearby Mtarfa living quarters for military personnel and their families, and by changes in its legal boundaries. Living in Mdina was not always seen as beneficial since within the town there was a hospital for Tuberculosis patients, and people felt this to be a threat to their health. Mdina started to gain in popularity as a tourism destination from 1957 onwards (Theuma 2002). Mdina itself was known for certain craft items and its hotel (Boissevan and Sammut 1994).

Census Year	Population
1901	304
1911	482
1921	816
1931	982
1948	1384
1957	823
1967	988
1985	421
1995	377
2005	278
2011	237

Figure 1: Population in Mdina since 1901
 (Source NSO: Overview of total population of Mdina: Census since 1901)

As the role of the city shifted from a residential to a more touristic function, the nature of facilities within the city itself changed. Fig. 2 presents the facilities within Mdina in 1994 and in 2015. This table brings out some interesting developments but also some worrying concerns. There has been a major increase in tourism-related facilities, whilst those facilities that served the local resident population have ceased to exist. Moreover, despite an increase in outlets selling souvenirs, one of the two outlets manufacturing traditional crafts and artisan work (a guild) is no longer operative. One has to mention that the increase in heritage attractions is a positive one since the outlets that have started to operate in these years are ones that are intrinsically related to the city itself, hence giving the visitors an enhanced experience of the place.

FACILITIES	1994	2015	% increase or decrease
Hotels	1	2*	+ 200%
Bars / Catering Establishments	2	7	+350%
Restaurants	3	11	+367%
Souvenir/Gift Shops	4	10	+250%
Heritage Attractions	4	12	+300%
Chapels/ Churches/ Cathedral	4	4	=
Tourist Information Offices	0	1	+100%
Police Station	1	1	=
Grocery Shop	1	0	-100%
Traditional Crafts / Artisans	2	1	-50%
Petrol Service Station**	2	2	=

* The second hotel is located outside the Mdina walls and was established post-1994.

** Situated outside the walled city.

Figure 2: Facilities within the walled town of Mdina in 1994 and 2015
(Sources: Boissevain and Sammut (1994); Theuma et al (2015))

The first editions of the Mdina festivals held during the 1992-1994 were a principal cause of concern for the residents. These events created major disturbances and were deemed to be an intrusion on the serenity of the residents (Boissevain and Sammut, 1994; Boissevain 1996). Today Mdina is host to two major events that have somehow become synonymous with the city itself. The first is the Medieval Mdina Festival, which is a festival that brings together re-enactors and is intended to highlight Mdina's medieval past. The event has now become a permanent fixture in the Maltese events calendar. It is worth noting that this event has a major input from the Local Council, something that the previous festivals did not.

The second major festival is the Mdina Grand Prix – a four day event held in October which uses the Mdina backdrop for classic car racing and a number of related events. This festival is a major event that attracts a number of classic car collectors from around the world, giving Mdina added value.

This change in attitude tends to indicate that the community is slowly starting to embrace these events, rather than reacting negatively to them (Theuma et al, 2015). Mdina and its residents have adapted to the intense attention that their city gets during these events, and although the monitoring of the situation is still advocated, it appears that there is consensus among the stakeholders within the city that it is their role to uphold the city and participate fully in these events. A major change that has occurred during the past 20 years is that the Local Council is in favour of, rather than against, such events and this has enabled the city to endorse and accommodate such events better.

There are a number of major issues that need to be addressed but which are beyond the scope of this paper. Mdina's architectural heritage makes it an ideal place for historic festivals; however, the issue of authenticity regarding such 'invented festivals' still remains. Mdina's concern as a cultural city being presented as a tourism product focusses on the authenticity of the offer. Mdina's architectural and historical characteristics are still very much tangibly present. Yet, when it comes to festivals, re-enactments and events that propose to make Mdina's cultural value accessible to tourists, a question at once comes up as to how representative these are of Mdina's authentic heritage. One may legitimately enquire about the level of faithful representation of the reconstructions of the city's historical past which are intended to bring forth how Mdina was at a particular historic time. The fundamental question comes out naturally: 'Is the fast-paced tourism activity commoditizing Mdina for economic reasons to the detriment of the real cultural value of the events, character and setting of those events?' The commercial nature of the tourism industry and the inaccurate depiction of the cultural heritage events raise questions regarding the level of authenticity reached by these tourism oriented manifestations.

Despite the strong role that tourism has in Mdina, the locality does not have a tourism sustainability plan and it is not represented by a pilot site management organisation. There are 41% of the residents that have claimed that they have a role or are involved in the planning of tourism activities within their city. Although the percentage is relatively low, this is still quite significant since tourism activities are not included within the current remit of Local Councils; hence the fact that members of the community feel that they are participating indicates that the locality is forward looking and understands that unless there is full endorsement by the community, very little can be done.

In the study conducted in the 1990s, the Mdina resident community had shown discontent with the way tourism activity was carried on within their locality. Residents complained bitterly about the constant flow of visitors going round their tiny city, at times rendering them like objects to be gazed at (cf. Urry, 2002). One resident even commented that "we are not carpets" (Boissevain and Sammut, 1994). Despite this imbalance between tourist and resident numbers, Mdina residents today claim that, overall, they are satisfied with tourism in their locality albeit with some minor differences from one to the other. When one takes a look at their response according to the seasons, for spring 84.4% claimed to be satisfied, for summer it was 78.1%, for autumn then, the positive response was 75%, while for winter this reached 71.9%. The relationship of the residents with tourism seems to be ambivalent however, since it was less than half of the population (46.2%) that fully agreed with the statement that they



Mdina has lost its traditional businesses - the Guilders shop has closed down and the city is also losing its peace due to the large number of tourists every day

were satisfied with the residents' involvement in the planning and development of tourism in Mdina. Another 38.5% of the residents claimed not to have an opinion on this, meaning that they were neither positively nor negatively moved. Lastly, 15.4% expressed themselves in disagreement with the statement.

Residents were asked about the most popular events in Mdina and which of those events they deemed to be most authentic and thus reflected their local cultural traditions (Fig. 3, Fig. 4). The event scoring highest among the locals was the Medieval Festival, the annual event mentioned above and organized by various tourism stakeholders in Malta including Malta Tourism Authority, re-enactment groups, cultural and tourism attractions.

Please mention biggest events held in Mdina	Frequency	Percentage
Medieval Festival	29	87.9
Religious Feasts	15	45.5
Concerts	11	33.3
Shooting of Movies	8	24.2
Activities in local council premises	3	9.1

Figure 3: Most popular cultural tourism events in Mdina

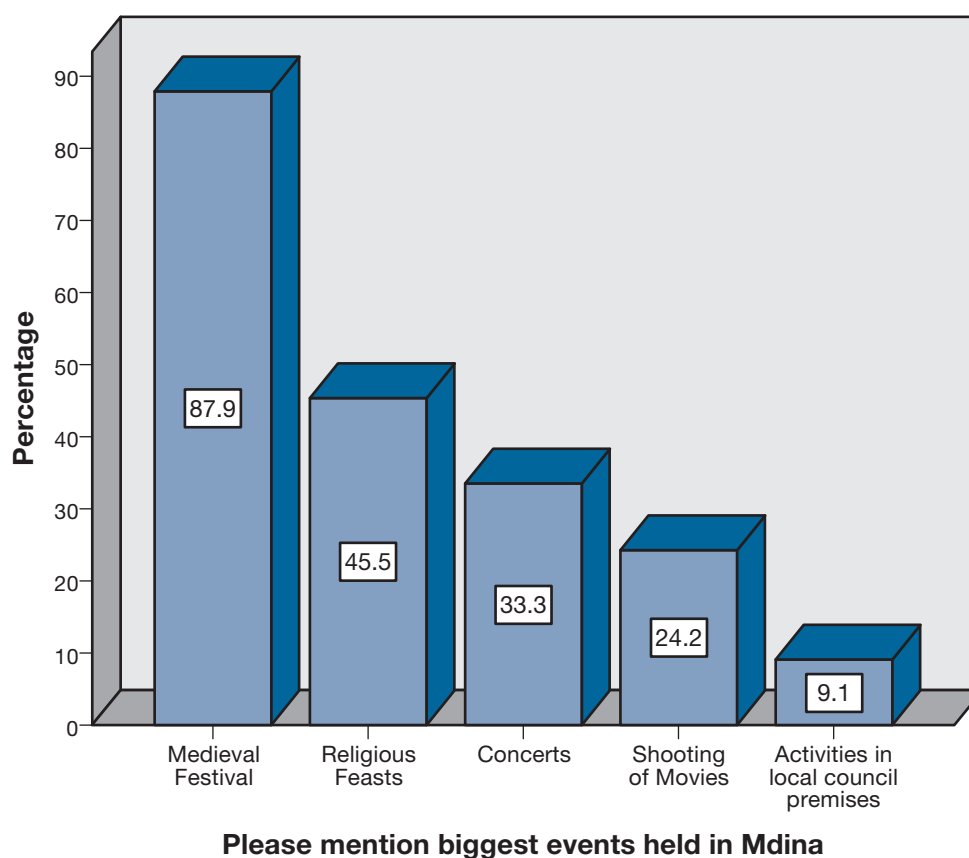


Figure 4: Most popular cultural tourism events in Mdina

When the question was put regarding which event best related to local culture and tradition in Mdina, 64.3% of the residents considered religious events to be the most related to their heritage. This shows that despite the fact that the most popular events are the ones organized by stakeholders from outside Mdina’s local community and are very popular since they are mostly advertised and visited by tourists, on the other hand the ceremonies and events that most represent the traditions of the local community are the ones that are the ‘living ceremonies’ practised by the residents of the place. The question that begs an answer here would be: ‘Is Mdina’s tourism product moving towards a commercialized organized offer or is it still being true to the local cultural traditions of the place?’

Indicate which events are based on the local tradition and culture	Frequency	Percentage
Medieval Festival	6	42.9
Religious Feasts	9	64.3
Shooting of Movies	1	7.1
Classic Car Race	2	14.3
Flower Festival	2	14.3

Figure 5: Cultural tourism events based on local tradition and culture

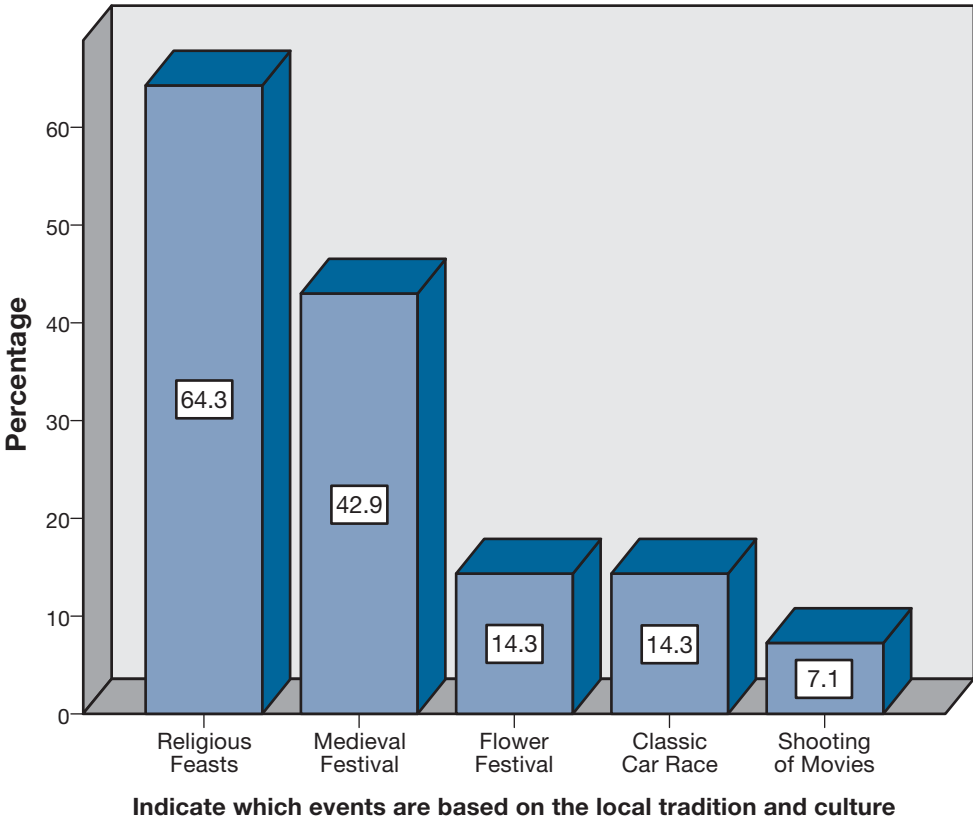


Figure 6: Cultural tourism events based on local tradition and culture

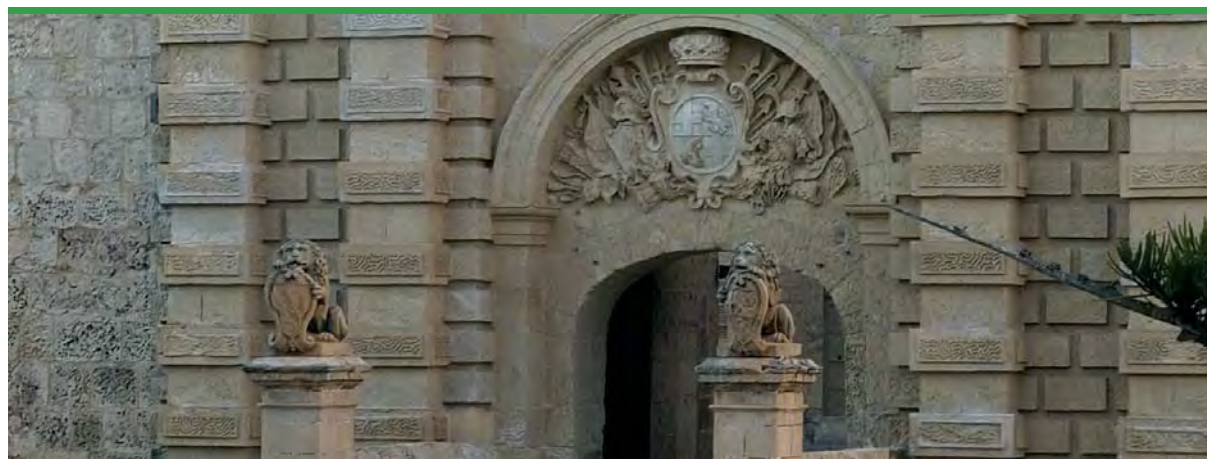
The Visitor

During the data collection phase, the sample of respondents was derived from various parts of the world. The highest number (25%) were from the UK and the second highest came from Italy (20.4%). The visitors were mainly from continental Europe, however there were also respondents from North America (4%), Australia (2%), South America (1%) and Asia (0.5%). This distribution of visitors generally reflects the distribution of visitors to the Maltese Islands. From the sample population of visitors, 22% stated that they had visited Mdina in the past 30 years, with 83% of the visitors to the city reporting that they were very satisfied with their experience in Mdina.

Although Mdina has two accommodation facilities, one within the city walls and one just outside the walls close to the town of Rabat, most of the visitors to Mdina are day visitors who come either on organised tours or on their own. Our sample was composed of 98.3% day visitors and 0.7% overnight stays. Most visitors spent an average of 3 hours touring the city, whilst it was only 7% (the 0.7% are included here) who spent 5 hours or more. Compared with what the city has to offer this is relatively low. Fig. 7 outlines the average time spent by visitors in Mdina.

Time spent (hrs)	Percentage of Visitors
1	13
2	30
3	36
4	14
5 or more	7
TOTAL	100

Figure 7: Time spent in Mdina



The Vilhena lions and the baroque entrance of Mdina

Visitor expenditure went on accommodation, transportation, food and drinks, shopping, entertainment, and entrance to museums, amongst others. The total per capita expenditure for a visitor to the Maltese Islands is of €910 (MTA 2014). Since most of the visitors were day trippers, our data does not include average spend on accommodation within or outside the city. The expenditure by visitors to Mdina ranges between €200 and less than €25, with the majority, that is 72%, claiming that they spent less than €25 during their visit to Mdina. This might be explained in relation to the relatively short stay by tourists with most remaining on site for about 3 hours while only very few stay for half a day or more.

The tourist spend was then matched to the length of stay. Fig. 8 and Fig. 9 clearly show that notwithstanding the length of stay being less than 1 hour, or 5 hours and more, the majority of visitors still spent less than €25 per head. Only 4 (1.68%) visitors out of 238 were overnight visitors.

How much did you spend per person per day during your stay in Mdina? (incl. transport, accommodation, food & drink, shopping, entertainment, other services)		Visitor spending			Total
		less than €25	€25-€50	€50 or more	
Length of stay at Mdina?	1 hour	26	2	2	30
	2 hours	61	7	2	70
	3 hours	66	15	3	84
	4 hours	17	10	5	32
	5 hours or more	10	6	0	16
Total		180	40	12	232

Figure 8: Length of stay and average spend

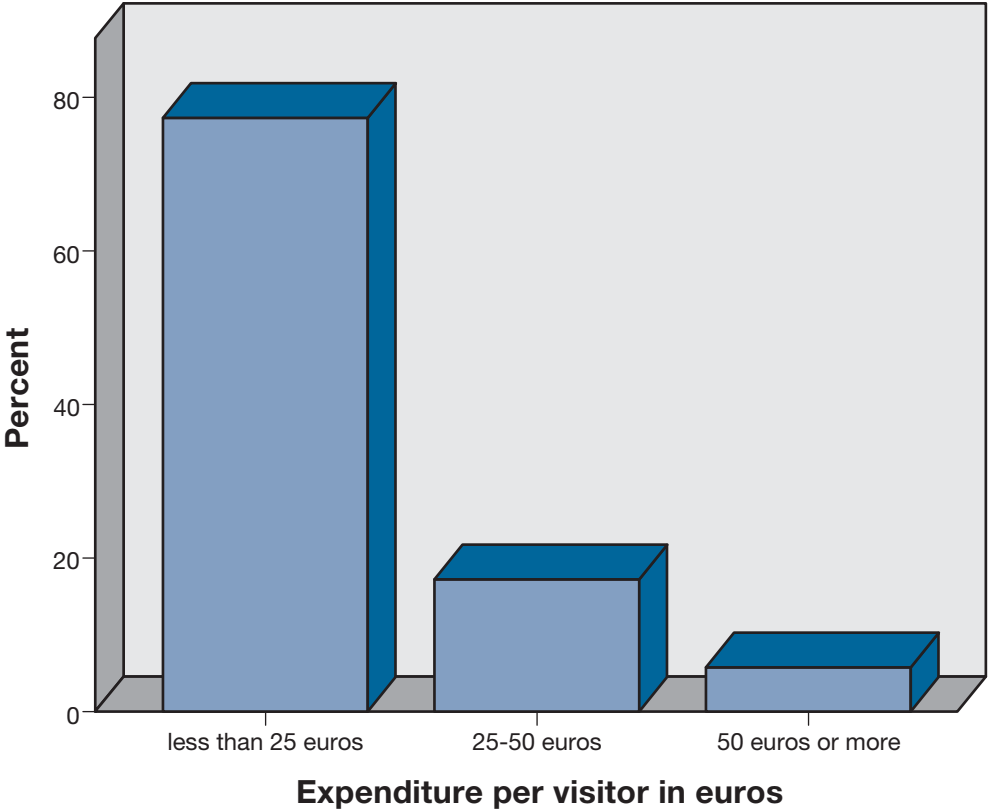


Figure 9: Average spend per visitor

From the tourist sample in this study, the most preferred attractions in the city were the Cathedral (40.7%) and the architectural landscape of the Mdina streets (24%). On the other hand 19.1% of visitors preferred to just walk through the winding streets of Mdina. Museums were chosen by 11.4% of the visitors; heritage homes by 4.5%; whilst St Paul's Catacombs (which are in nearby Rabat) were preferred by 2.1%.

Employment in Tourism

Tourism related entities in Mdina generate employment for 456 persons split up as follows: 69% are employed on a full-time basis, 26% on a part-time basis; 4.8% are seasonal employees, and during the time of our research, 0.2% of the employees were classified as trainees. More than half of the tourism related entities have a male manager (57.1%); 34.3% of the establishments are run by female managers, whilst 3.3% of the establishments have both male and female managers. When it comes to employees, 34.3% of the establishments have predominantly male employees in customer service, whilst 48.6% of the establishments have females employed in customer services; 14.3% of the establishments have an equal number of males and females in their customer relations section whilst 2.9% do not have any employees in customer relations.

The paper has so far focused on the relationship of locals with tourism activity in the city of Mdina. The remaining part will address the way in which tourism stakeholders, and in particular heritage attractions and other service providers, are addressing the carbon footprint and sustainability issues.



Religion is a central activity which represents the people of Mdina best - the interior of St Paul's Cathedral (Photo by: Mario Galea - viewingmalta.com)

Tourism Related Establishments

The results from our study show that tourism enterprises and cultural attractions mostly source food and drinks to service tourists through importation. These food and drink services were categorised into three groups: foods and drinks which are sourced from the primary local area of Mdina, Rabat and Dingli (a village which is close to Rabat); foods and drinks which are sourced from the secondary local area including Malta; and foods and drinks which are imported from foreign providers. The study shows that most foods and drinks are imported, with the majority of the consumables, 40-60%, being imported from abroad, 20-40% being sourced from Malta, and 0-20% being brought from the primary local areas of Mdina, Rabat and Dingli.

Like other tourism SMEs, tourism and cultural attractions, are starting to become more aware of the use of sustainable activities such as environmental and/or sustainable certification as part of their tourism management and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy. Results indicate that up till now the uptake of such initiatives is relatively low with only 25% of these entities stating that they already uphold a CSR policy in their organisation, with 31.6% of these stating that they contribute towards organising educational activities and 26.3% contributing towards conversation on biodiversity. At 10.5% each, the organisations contribute towards 'green' activities such as planting of trees and also towards heritage landscape protection.

Despite changes in the way business is conducted, Mdina tourism stakeholders still operate individually rather than collectively with only 17% stating that they participate in cooperative activities. Such cooperative activities include involvement in associations of tourism enterprise and common promotional advertising programmes. This lack of community efforts to promote sustainability measures from a community point of view is not mitigated by local authorities since, from the in-depth interview with the Local Council it resulted that Mdina does not have initiatives or policies in place to promote the purchase of local trade products and/or fair products and services.



The Medieval Mdina Festival 2011
(Photo by: Ray Attard - viewingmalta.com)

When it comes to the internal environment of these same organisations, such concerns were indeed considered. In fact, 69.4% have a positive environmental conscience with regard to waste separation with 66.7% switching to energy saving lighting including LEDs.

Despite the positive environmental culture within organisations, renewable energy sources are not on the high end. When asked whether the enterprise or cultural attractions benefited from renewable energy sources such as solar panels, solar heating and other sources, 86% said they do not have any such environmental systems. It was however pointed out, that Mdina, being a city of high heritage value made it more difficult for them to install exterior systems, such as solar panels, due to visual pollution. Also, the Planning Authority of Malta had strict regulations on what should be permitted on the walls and the roofs of such buildings.

Conclusion

Mdina is a city with many facets. It is a tourist destination of the highest order. It is also a residential city where people go about their daily life. It is a small walled city and therefore has restricted space and little where to expand. Being a heritage site also has its consequences which are not always easy to remedy. It is evident that Mdina is now bearing the brunt of its own popularity and tourist attractiveness; indeed of its uniqueness. Its residents have to cope with pressures which they did not bring about themselves but which they have to live with whether they like them or not. Escaping from one's own prominence is never an easy task and Mdina knows that this is also its destiny. The question revolves around how long Mdina would be able to continue to weather the pressure of people, needs, and exigencies created by an all year round strong and aggressive tourism activity.



One medieval corner in Mdina - Palazzo Santa Sofia

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The Impact of New Emerging Technologies on the Tourism Sector: Evidence from Lebanon

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Abstract

In a world where innovation has a life cycle that is faster than giving birth to a child, going from railroad, electricity, telephone, automobile to the Internet has been the most important innovation in our century (Hoffman, 2000). All of the innovation throughout the years and decades has impacted the lifestyle of all the people living on planet Earth and more especially the business world. Nowadays, Internet has become part of the life of each human being where they rely on it for working, learning, leisure, socializing, entertainment and shopping. In this research paper, we focalize on the fact that the Internet has become an essential part of any leisure or business trip we are planning. The research compares and analyzes the impact of social media, emerging new technologies and e-tourism on the sustainable tourism and tourism sector in the Middle East, taking the example of Lebanon. This research is divided into different parts: a literature review, an interview and a focus group analysis of this interview held in the Lebanese University.

Keywords

Social Media; E-Tourism; New Technologies; Tourism; Sustainable Tourism; Middle East

The Impact of New Emerging Technologies on the Tourism Sector: Evidence from Lebanon

Introduction

The world as we know it in the last century has evolved in a way that every product that had a life cycle of years has become a product with a limited life cycle of months. It took us years and decades to develop trains, railroads, cars, and to understand the power of the Internet. Now in a single year, a product has multiple upgrades, software are evolving on a daily basis, phone on a monthly basis, cars ... Innovation has impacted the life style of all the people living on the blue planet, the way of living has changed from groups to individuals living with a smartphone interacting with other people even if they are miles apart. Businesses are now depending on the Internet to maintain a high competitive background; we are in an era where the Internet has become a way of life and a life support for every single person (Barwise, Elberse and Hammond, 2006). If we direct our attention to the touristic sector, we can see that it has become an industry based on the internet and the feedback of its customers, and not on what we imagined our destination will be. The rise of Google and Google Earth, or TripAdvisor has impacted this sector in a positive and negative way. In other words, if we want to visit a country or a site, we already know what to wait for and what our expectations are, because prior to our physical visit we can visit this country or site virtually. So no more 'advertising lies' from the touristic companies as we could have witnessed when the brochure was the only way to see where we are going. We went from passive internet presence to an interactive user-generated content where each individual is free to submit any idea or advice via comments on any content on the web (O'Reilly, 2005). Twenty years ago, nobody would have imagined the possibility of valuing a virtual company based on the internet for more than 1 billion dollars. Facebook now has more than 1.8 billion connected users worldwide and they can easily share comments and 'like' anything with a single click on their laptops. This is why social media has become a crucial factor in the development of the tourism sector and especially in its sustainability. Collecting information, deciding on the destination we target, are now being influenced by the comments and feedback of the internet users, even tourism promotion is now based on social media (Fotis, Buhaldis and Rossides, 2012).

The Internet has become the number one market place worldwide, where the five most popular online purchase / search items are for books, travel arrangements, gifts, CDs and clothes (Center for the digital future, 2008). Therefore many touristic organizations were obliged to go through a whole process of re-engineering their plans, so they could take advantage of the enormous market place that has been provided by the emergence of new technologies and this new internet-empowered business, where you can benefit from customers that are not based especially in the same geographical area as you, or where you can benefit from online users to develop a new marketing strategy via crowdsourcing (Laudon and Laudon, 2007). We can now witness a perfect and immense bond among new technologies as social media and tourism, whereas the success of the tourism sector and its sustainability depend on the success of the company's and / or the country's presence on the web.

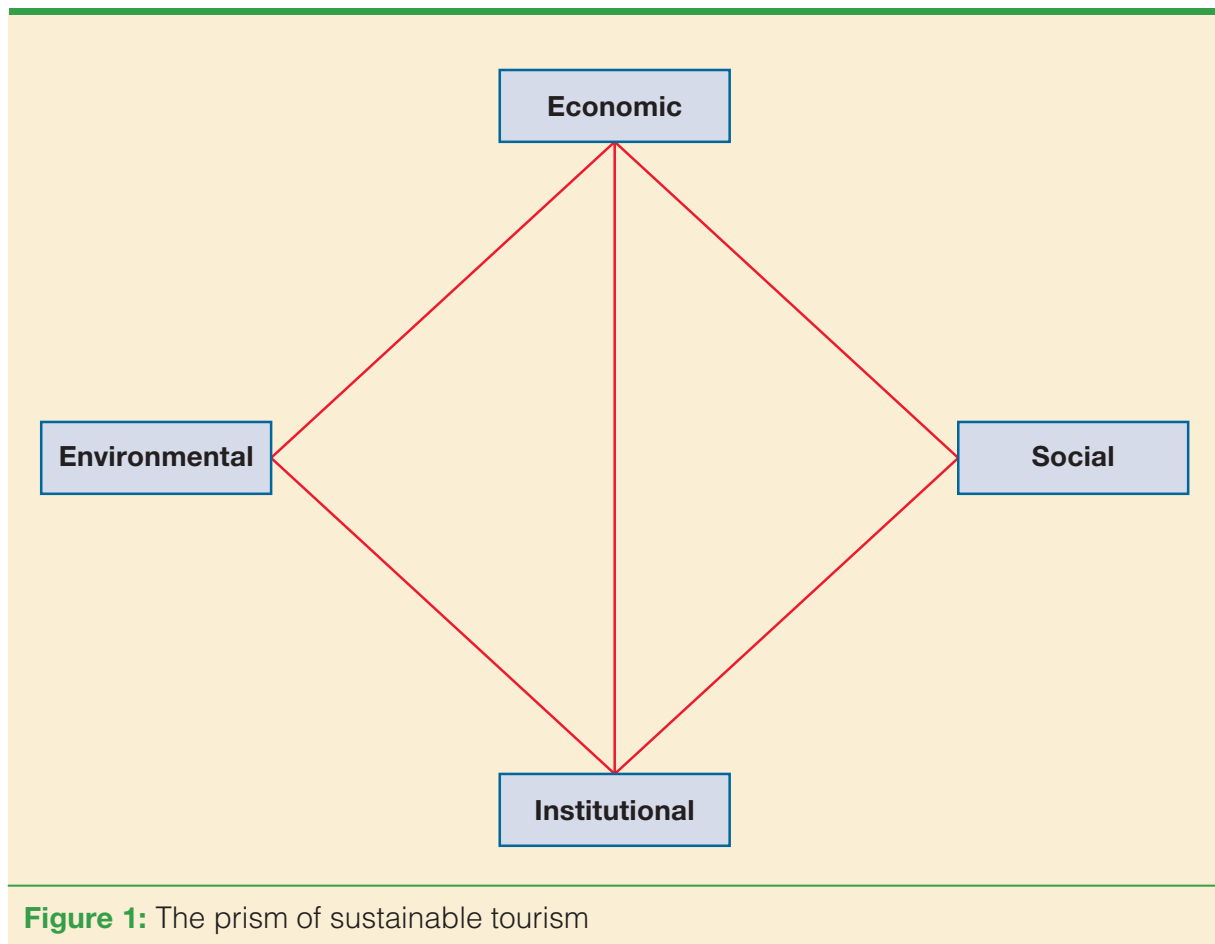
Therefore, in this article, we are going to analyze the impact of new technologies and social media on the micro and macro environment of a touristic destination based in the Middle East, more specifically in the South of Lebanon, a region known as Bkassine that is well known for its archaeological sites, caves, Roman and Phoenician presence and for its pine forest that is one of the few pine forests that are still intact in the region.

We are going to start with a literature review of social media and new technologies, e-tourism and sustainable tourism, followed by an analysis of an interview that will be conducted in the region of Bkassine.

Literature Review

Sustainable tourism

The International Conference of Environment Ministers and Biodiversity and Tourism (1997) has come to the conclusion that sustainability and sustainable development that are applied to tourism should always be developed in a way that fortifies the local economy and enhances the local workforce as well as develop new policies and legislation to ensure that the benefits of sustainable tourism return to the local community. Based on prior research we can now talk about a prism of sustainability which includes four dimensions: environmental, economic, social and institutional. The following prism is an updated version of the traditional way how sustainable tourism was considered and which was developed following a three dimensions prism (Valentin and Spangenberg 2000; Eden, Falkheden and Malbert, 2000).



This prism will allow us to establish the sustainability indicators and the possibility to adapt the planning and management of the community of Bkassine to the standards of maintaining a sustainable tourism in their region. The standards and indicators of sustainable tourism have formed part of multiple research and have been suggested by multiple organizations, for example, the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development. Therefore, in this article we are going to concentrate mainly on this prism to elaborate our interview questions; this will be elaborated more later on in this research.

New technologies

New technologies, and more specifically the digital technologies, have changed the way of communication among people, and allowed them to communicate via a virtual portal or a new communication channel called smartphone, which has transformed the web into a new social place and market (Habibi, Laroche and Richard, 2014).

That is why we are going to revise a literature review on two factors of new technologies which are, social media and online booking, using the technology of smartphones.

Social media

Social media is a term which has been used since we shifted to the Web 2.0. We went from passive internet presence to an interactive user-generated content where each individual is free to submit any idea or advice via comments on any content on the web (O’Reilly, 2005). The easiest way to understand the difference between the Web 1.0, which was based on a passive internet presence, to the Web 2.0, which is based on a user-generated content, is to understand Table 1.

Web 1.0	Web 2.0
DoubleClick	→ Google AdSense
Ofoto	→ Flickr
Akamai	→ BitTorrent
mp3.com	→ Napster
Britannica Online	→ Wikipedia
personal websites	→ blogging
evite	→ upcoming.org and EVDB
domain name speculation	→ search engine optimization
page views	→ cost per click
screen scraping	→ web services
publishing	→ participation
content management systems	→ wikis
directories (taxonomy)	→ tagging (“folksonomy”)
stickiness	→ syndication

Table 1: The core differences between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0

Social media is the core of every business nowadays, due to the fact that we are shifting from a geographical marketplace to a worldwide marketplace. We do not have boundaries anymore if we need to sell our product around the world. In term of tourism agencies that are dedicated to tourism, air companies can now advertise, sell and get feedback behind a screen that is a gateway for access to a whole new database of customers worldwide. Cohen (2011) has summarized the 30 different definitions on social media. We are going to cite two of the most interesting definition that can help us understand why the use of social media in tourism is crucial.

1. Platforms, media and online tools that are the basis of social media are depending on information technologies.
2. The links that are created by social media are forming a virtual community that is using cross platforms to interact with one another, therefore affecting the buying behaviour and the choice of any person, which means that it is affecting the behaviour of people.

The user-generated content (UGC) has changed the way of thinking of the consumers when they need to shop, due to the fact that other consumers have shared information about the product or service, they also shared the pros and cons of the product or service which will facilitate the buying process of other consumers based on the comments left by users. This implies that the trip characteristics play a key role in the decision of the next travellers to pick a destination (Sigala, Christou and Gretzel, 2012).

We can now witness a new role for social media, which is a marketing and promotional role that has been included in the process of the tourism sector (Sigala, Christou and Gretzel, 2012). Social media has become an effective way of creating a marketing generated content and channel for the tourism sector (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013). New means for tourism are now provided by social media, whereas marketing organizations are now reengineering new processes and models for a new marketing era.

The Lebanese Ministry of Tourism is encouraging people to visit Lebanon and its touristic places that are being promoted via the use of social media (Ministry of Tourism, 2013). We cannot talk about the changes that are implied to the marketing sector due to social media, without talking about its cultural impact. Due to these modifications the tourism environment is seeing permanent changes owing to the effect on the social interaction, construction of tourism imagination and the media consumptions (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013). Social media has become part of knowledge sharing and creation in the tourism sector, which has become possible due to the online media platforms and networking which are contributing in a positive way, helping customers or travellers to have an insight on the destination they are choosing and on the location of the hotel they are choosing; as well as being provided with a virtual tour guide which supplies them with hints on where to go and where not to (Chalkiti and Sigala, 2008). That is why using social media in tourism education has become an essential academic topic to be studied by students, and in particular the Facebook aspect of social media (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013).

E-tourism

Tourism innovation is a concept that is still unclear, but we know for sure that the Internet and social media have produced an essential contribution to the development of tourism and especially to e-tourism. E-tourism is part of a process called e-commerce which is defined as a way of buying and selling products or services via the use of a network on a computer – the network being the Internet (Turban, Lee, King and Chung, 2000). E-tourism, which falls within the wider e-commerce, is a form of social commerce that was used for the first time in November 2005 by Yahoo and then developed by David Beisel. Social commerce is based on a user-generated content that helps customers understand the value of the product they are buying as well as the pros and cons of it, and this affects the buying behaviour of the customers. The information that is being shared on the network will allow the customers to decide whether or not they will eventually visit a particular destination they had thought of visiting. E-tourism will reengineer the processes of tourism, which implies a new way of using the Internet and intranet to develop a strategic relationship between the organization and all of its stakeholders. E-tourism includes all the factors of any business, e-marketing, e-finance, e-commerce. Having a good information and management system will allow the organizations to shift as smoothly as possible to the e-world (Buhalis, 2003). Buhalis has argued that the use of e-tourism implies the development of a trusted transaction process and partners to help customers to trust the system.



Two views of the Bkassine region

Methodology

In this part of our article, we are going to present our research strategy for the data collection, and how we collected the data. After a brief resume on the context of the country, we look at the research interview with persons in the town of Bkassine. This part will also include the characteristics of the variables and the relationship among them, and the procedure we applied for data collection, sampling, and data treatment.

Research context

Lebanon is considered to be an unstable country due to the uprising of the extremist movement ISIS, which is present in all the countries around Lebanon. From the macro geography perspective, in the north we have Syria, a country which has been devastated by war since many years, and in the south we have Israel which has been occupying the Palestinian lands since decades. If we consider the micro geography analysis we have an ethnic and religious country, with a large concentration of Sunnites in the north and a concentration of Shiites in the south. As for Mount Lebanon, there is a concentration of Christians. It may sound like a racist country but this is the configuration of our country even if it is considered a taboo in the rest of the world. Our research will also be based on the help of the HELAND project that is funded by the European Neighbourhood Partnership Initiative, which includes 9 partners from 6 Mediterranean countries. The HELAND project has a main objective, that of promoting cultural heritage and landscape protection to foster quality and sustainable tourism.

Data collection

For the article upon the impact of new technologies on the tourism sector in Lebanon, we used a primary source of data collection and administered individual interviews based on questions. The individual interview was based upon dependent and independent variables and these are presented in the next section. The interview was administered on 50 individuals from the region of Bkassine.

Sampling

The following study has been conducted to understand the impact of new technologies on tourism in a region in the south of Lebanon called Bkassine which is well known for its archaeological sites, caves, Roman and Phoenician presence and for its pine forest that is one of the few pine forests that are still intact in the region. We used a probability sample that was randomly selected as a simple random technique. The population was the Lebanese residents of the region, aged from 24 to 64. The initial sample has been equal to 50 respondents with a possible rate of none respondents that is equal to 40% and an active response rate equal to 60%.

Data treatment

The treatment of the result collected from the individuals has been analyzed through an individual analysis. As for the methodology used for the questions, the Likert scale as originally coded: strongly disagree=-2, disagree=-1, neither agree nor disagree=0, agree=1, and strongly agree=2 (Bergkvist and Rossiter, 2007), was maintained as it is.

Variables

The dependent variable has been considered as follows: the tourism and sustainable tourism. This dependent variable has been measured by the use of the Likert scale: strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, and strongly agree.

The independent variable has been considered as follows: the new technologies. It has also been measured by the use of the Likert scale: strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, and strongly agree.

Typology of the questions

As for the type of the questions, we divided them into two groups: the first group is based on the macro environment and the second one is based on the micro environment. Our question is addressed in such a way so as to address the following impacts: 1. Impact on the region, 2. Impact of the social media, 3. Economic impact. The question of the individual interview has been confirmed by a spokesperson of the municipality of Bkassine.

Micro-environment	Macro-environment
Do you agree that advertising the region on social media has a positive impact on tourism? (Q1)	Do you agree that advertising the region on social media has a negative impact on tourism? (Q2)
Do you agree that the description of the characteristics (ancient city, pine forest...) of the region on new technologies tools will have a positive impact on tourism? (Q3)	Do you agree that the description of the characteristics (ancient city, pine forest...) of the region on new technologies tools will have a negative impact on tourism? (Q4)
Do you agree that the economical subventions given by the municipality of Bkassine are enough to ensure a positive development of the tourism sector? (Q5)	Do you agree that the use of new technologies as online booking, social media or online feedback could help attract more tourists to the region? (Q6)
Do you agree that the infrastructure of the region is decent enough to ensure a positive image for the tourists that are visiting the region? (Q7)	Do you agree on the fact that the culture of the region should be more prepared to accept the different type of tourists visiting the region? (Q8)
Do you agree on the fact that the municipality is not using enough resources to develop its online community? (Q9)	Do you agree that the region of Bkassine is a sustainable touristic place? (Q10)

Table 2: The questionnaire for the individual interview



The Bkassine Festival
(Source: www.facebook.com/BkassineVillageOfficialPage)



Left: The street in Bkassine village leading to Mar Takla church
(Source: www.facebook.com/BkassineVillageOfficialPage)



Right: The interior of Mar Takla church showing the main entrance

Results

The individual interview was created on the base of 10 questions, scaled upon the characteristics of Likert. It was also divided into two groups, the macro and micro environment, and targeted the following topics: social media, new technologies, cultural changes, sustainable tourism, and economics. The scales used to convert the question was 1 for strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 neither disagree nor agree, 4 agree, and 5 strongly agree.

The results of the individual interview came out as following:

Question	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Q1	0	0	7	3	20	30
Q2	23	0	7	0	0	30
Q3	0	2	4	6	18	30
Q4	18	6	4	2	0	30
Q5	0	22	2	6	0	30
Q6	0	0	6	16	8	30
Q7	0	2	0	22	6	30
Q8	0	0	24	2	4	30
Q9	0	0	4	3	23	30
Q10	0	3	2	12	13	30

Table 3: Results of the individual interview

We divided the questions into the categories they represent – social media, cultural changes, sustainable tourism and economics:

1 = SD	2 = D	3 = D / A	4 = A	5 = SA
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Table 4: Categories represented by the questions

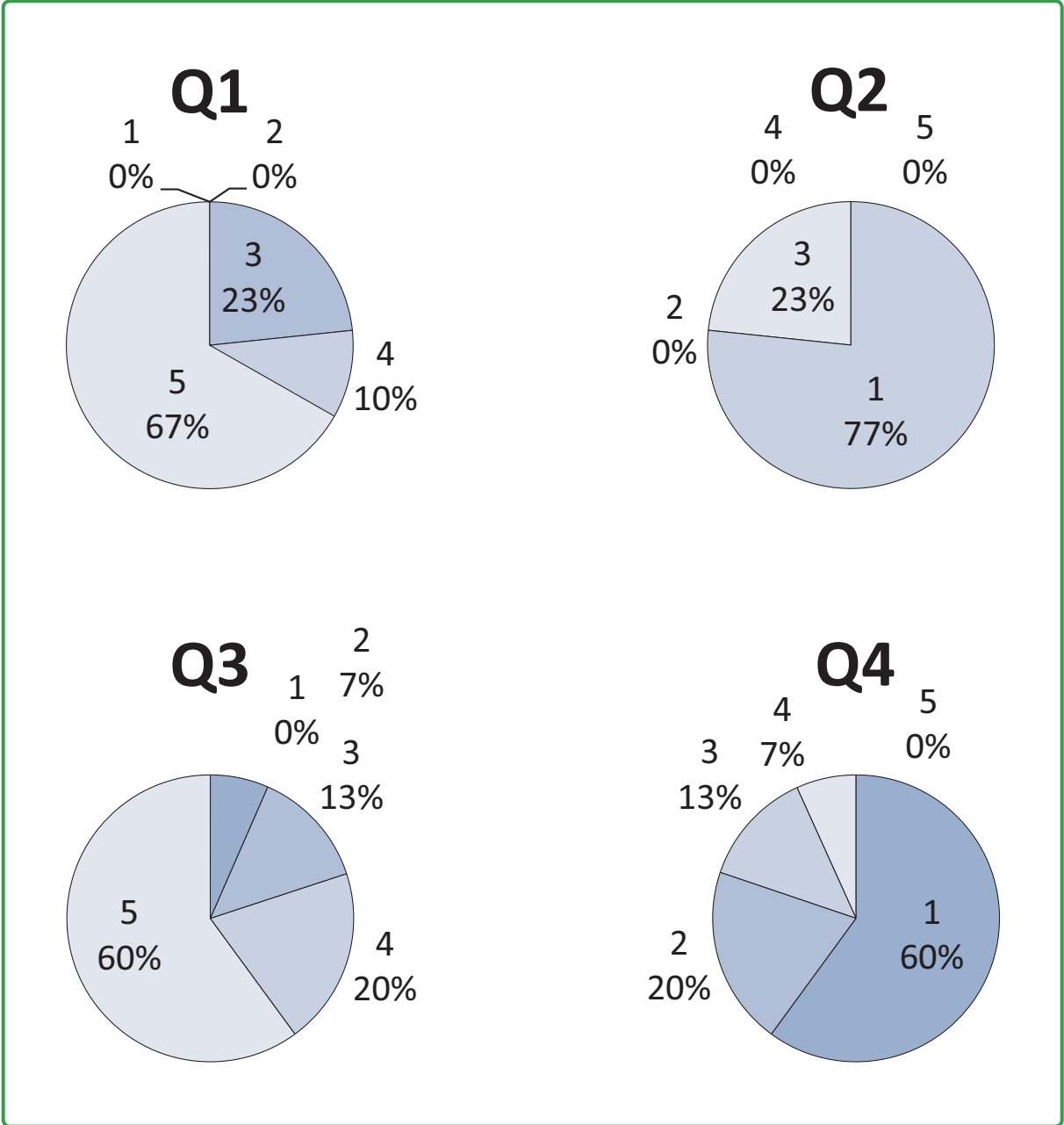


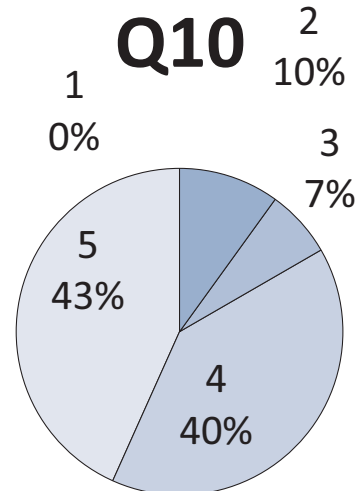
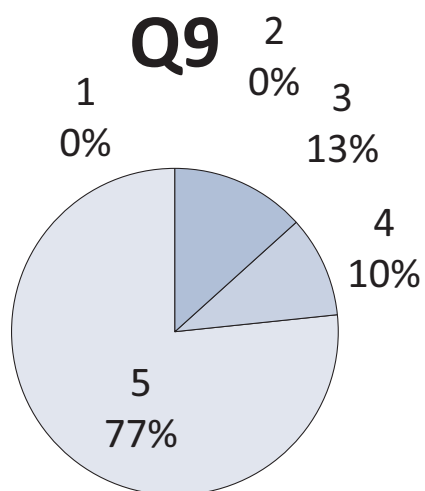
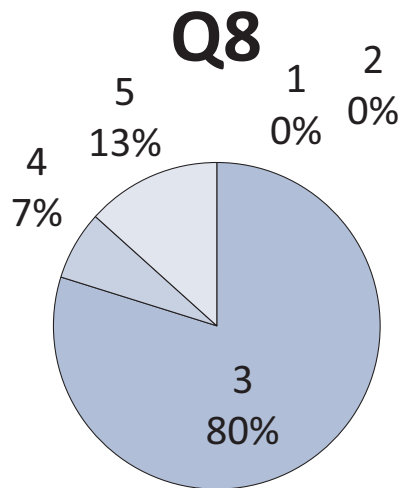
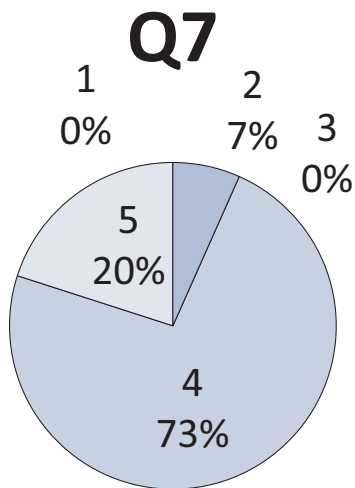
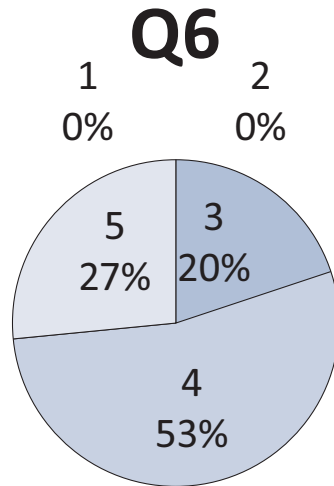
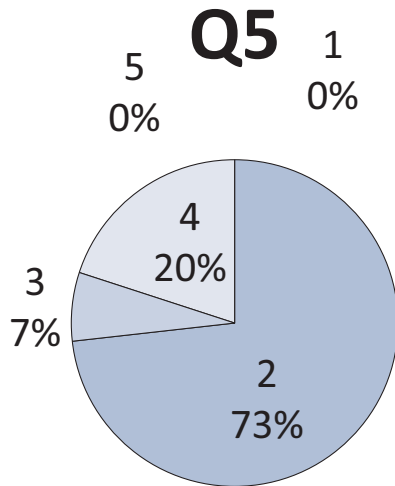
The fountains area acts as a link between the village and the forest - areas around the traditional village fountains need to be renovated and developed into public resting areas with views on the forest

The response rate on the questions according to the Likert scaling gave us a clear view on the impact that new technologies have on sustainable tourism and answered the research question. It was as follows.

Topics	Questions related
Cultural changes	Q8
Social media	Q1, 2 and 9
Economics	Q5 and 7
New technologies	Q3, 4 and 6
Sustainable tourism	Q10

Table 5: Response rate and percentage





Following the results obtained through the individual interviews, we analyzed the interviews, obtained an answer for the research question on the impact of new technologies on tourism, and gathered information from a southern region in Lebanon called Bkassine. For the cultural change characteristics, we witnessed a high impact of 'none' interest (neither agree nor disagree), which is due to the cultural background of the Lebanese residents. As for the economic characteristics, we found that there is a high disagreement with the municipality of Bkassine in terms of economical subventions which indicates that, were the municipality willing to hand out more help in terms of economical subventions, the region of Bkassine would have a better tourism sector. For the infrastructure, the interviewed individuals have shown that they do agree that the infrastructure is decent enough to reflect a positive image of the region. Out of the 30 interviewed individuals, 20 have acknowledged the fact that Bkassine is a region that is following the path of sustainable tourism. As for the social media and new technologies, an average of 65% of the individuals we interviewed have shown a high interest in terms of the implication of the region of Bkassine in social media and new technologies and are willing to invest more in social media to advertise the region. In fact, they do believe that social media and new technologies are a gateway for a bigger and better marketplace. And it is a place where they can describe and give feedback about the region without the plagiarism of fake dream places.



Jezzine water falls

Conclusion

This article has demonstrated that the impact of new technologies on tourism and sustainable tourism is enormous, along with the willingness of the residents of the region under study to involve themselves on social media or websites dedicated to tourism like TripAdvisor, in order to develop a better advertising campaign for the region. This willingness is the result of the major advantages from an economic point of view that they perceive as stakeholders, for the improvement of the infrastructure of the region to absorb a higher number of tourists in the coming years.

We have seen that the major impacts on tourism and sustainable tourism are mainly the results of this new era where new technologies are ruling the world. Social media has a huge advertising and marketing impact on any region that is willing to develop its touristic sector.

The initial challenge of this paper was to create awareness in the future for regions in the Middle East that seek to develop a better image of the tourism sector in their countries, revolving around the use of new technologies that has a huge impact on the macro and the micro environments. In other words, it is about the use of social media in advertising the sites that could be visited by tourists, both on a wider as also on a more local level.

The limitations of this study is that despite the useful findings, we also encountered some problems. First of all, every study or individual interview is based on the honesty of the respondents. We knew that some respondents may not give a frank answer. Secondly, the data is collected via an individual interview, which could lead to erroneous information. The sample size was fair enough but not the best sample size to determine all the factors. Finally, the questions asked are limited to a few characteristics. Therefore, future research needs to be administered to a larger population in order to get more critical and more precise answers, which balance out the erroneous information and the dishonest respondents. Besides, we can acknowledge that this article helped us to recognise better the true nature of new technologies in the tourism sector and moreover acknowledge that social media is able to help us to develop and obtain a better image of our tourism sector.



Bkassine Pine Forest

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Heritage and Landscape Sustainable Management in the Tourism Industry: Case studies from Lebanon

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Abstract

The application of the Sustainable Development Concept (SDC) in the tourism industry has been debated for over twenty years. Many studies have been conducted on the social, environmental and economic sustainability of tourism destinations. However, little comprehensive research has taken into consideration the holistic approach of sustainable landscape and heritage management. This paper reports on testing a holistic tourism sustainability analytical framework in ten Lebanese landscapes and tourism destinations distinguished by their rich and diverse cultural and natural heritage. The studied areas offer many types of tourism services and activities with different management approaches. The analytical framework tackles four dimensions of sustainability: economic, social, environmental, and management, with emphasis on the ecological issues and on the role of local communities and municipalities in managing and sustaining their tourism resources. The study was conducted between February 2013 and February 2014. In-depth interviews were carried out with 16 stakeholders in 10 different sites. The stakeholders are involved in the management, preservation, as well as the tourism services provision of the sites. The research findings confirm the value of using a holistic sustainability measurement tool particularly in terms of balancing the environmental, social, economic, and management dimensions of sustainable tourism. The results highlight several concerns in achieving sustainable tourism management of cultural and natural landscapes in Lebanon.

Keywords

Sustainable Development; Sustainable Tourism; Sustainability Indicators; Landscape Management; Destination Management

Heritage and Landscape Sustainable Management in the Tourism Industry: Case studies from Lebanon

Introduction

Tourism literature is replete with accounts of adverse social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts, caused by mass tourism. The list of observed impacts ranges from localized inflation, potential increases in crime, economic exploitation of local populations to social dislocation, destruction of heritage, and severe environmental damages (Hall & Page, 2002; Mason, 2003; Budeanu, 2005; Schianetz et al, 2007). This is especially true in fragile landscapes such as coastal zones and rural areas where the lack of proper sustainable tourism management and the development of infrastructure can contribute to the degradation of the natural and cultural resources. However, if correctly planned and managed, tourism can also contribute to environmental protection and conservation of biodiversity, and to the sustainable use of natural resources (Bruzzi et al, 2011).

In the last three decades many concerns surfaced about the physical environment of destinations used for tourism. Mass tourism activities in the Mediterranean basin are causing irreversible damages on the natural and cultural landscape. Mediterranean regions are systematically losing their attractiveness. Moreover, it is becoming evident that, over the next few decades, more pressure will be placed on attractive Mediterranean landscapes. In this context, Lebanon's rural areas are experiencing important changes on many levels. The local communities and government's responses to these changes will have a significant influence on cultural diversity, and ecological, economic and social values in the future. Sustaining these values while using them in the tourism industry cannot be achieved without building a common understanding of sustainable landscape and tourism management. The management of tourism destinations needs to be supported, realized and valued according to specific criteria and indicators. Therefore, the monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of tourism on the landscape, through a clear list of sustainability indicators, is a necessity.

Nowadays, such an approach cannot be implemented without the use of new technologies and innovative tools in the tourism sector, in order to help all stakeholders in the planning and decision making processes, and to guarantee sustainable landscape management. Therefore, the aim of this paper is twofold.

- a. To understand the gap that still seems to exist between tourism development and sustainable landscape management in Lebanon.
- b. To show how local communities and municipalities can use sustainable tourism indicators in order to assess their actual situation and to base their future decisions and actions on new innovative approaches in heritage and landscape management.



The olive terrace in the Bkassine region - a landscape worthy of conservation

The main question of the research is to explore if there is any difference in the level of tourism sustainability between protected landscapes and non-protected ones. The hypothesis is: “protected landscapes in Lebanon tend to be more sustainable in terms of tourism development and management”.

Conceptual linkages: landscapes, tourism and sustainability

The relationship between landscape and tourism is essential. This relationship emerges from the tradition and practice of both cultural geography and tourism studies and from the socio-cultural evolution of the landscapes of tourism *per se* (Terkenli, 2002; Terkenli, 2005).

The increasing human population and pressure on land use is damaging natural and cultural resources around the globe, resulting in the modification of the world’s most significant landscapes. The conditions of these natural environments and man-made landscapes are very important in determining the viability and attractiveness of tourism destinations. Hence, the tourism industry has traditionally constituted a source of pressure on natural resources. Typically the concern of tourism stakeholders has focused on how tourism development may provide enhanced opportunities for the effective management of environmentally sensitive areas and the preservation of unique landscapes. Therefore, designs and plans that will achieve a sustainable use and management of landscapes are becoming increasingly critical, especially in the tourism industry (Dwyer et al, 2009; Gordon et al, 2009; Selman 2004).

Landscapes are an abundant natural resource and form an important basis for the tourism industry (Pérez, 2002). Lovell and Johnston (2009) define multi-functional landscapes as “landscapes which provide multiple environmental, social and economic functions and are able to achieve multiple societal needs including energy and food production, management of waste, conservation of biodiversity and the management of water quantity and quality across

the landscape; the improvement of landscape heterogeneity and therefore resilience; and the provision of recreational opportunities.” However, the improper planning and management of tourism and recreational activities can easily disturb fragile landscapes that may eventually lose their values and attractiveness.

The concept of landscape health is based on principles of landscape ecology and function. Landscape health is defined by the capacity of landscapes to: (i) maintain basic processes such as capturing energy, retaining water and cycling nutrients; (ii) provide habitats, food, and shelter, for sustaining populations of all native animals, plants and microorganisms at appropriate scales in time and space; and, (iii) provide people with their cultural, spiritual, aesthetic and livelihood needs (Whitehead et al, 2000). According to Selman (2004), the maintenance of valued landscapes often requires the active collaboration of local communities in their planning, management and sustainable development.

The tourism industry has been repeatedly denounced as an exploiter, a defiler of landscapes, and as a modern medium of globalizing or homogenizing standards of identity and development for contemporary landscapes (Terkenli, 2005).

The issue of sustainable tourism development has received substantial scholarly attention in the past three decades, and various definitions have been formulated. A widely used definition is that put forward by the United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). This says:

“Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems” (WTO, 2001).



Sustainable tourism includes the safeguarding of the cultural heritage - traditional buildings in Bkassine kept in pristine condition

Thus, sustainability in the context of tourism means regulating the use of tourist resources so that they are not consumed, depleted, or polluted in such a way as to be unavailable for the use of future generations of tourists. Sustainable tourism is also oriented toward the economic viability of the tourism industry, referred to as the “economic sustainability of tourism” or “tourism imperative”. It can also refer to a business that perseveres and flourishes over a long period of time or an industry that acknowledges biophysical and social limits and intentionally remains small in scope (Baros & David, 2007; Burton, 1995; Holden 2000; Larson & Poudyal, 2012; McCool & Moisey, 2008).

Ólafsdóttir and Runnström (2009) consider that the expansion of tourism provides innovative resources for an economic boost to many peripheral communities. However, the natural ecosystems are extremely vulnerable. It is therefore of vital importance for such communities to plan the growth of tourism along sustainable lines. To achieve sustainable tourism development in fragile environments, tourism should be maintained in a way that would not cause negative disturbance to nature, culture, society and economy. Therefore, tourism development is sustainable only when none of the core components are neglected (Baros & David, 2007; McGehee et al, 2013).

In order to secure long-term benefit from tourism, decision makers need straightforward planning tools with which they can monitor the impact of tourism with regard to environmental, cultural and economic sustainability. Variations in the sensitivity and vulnerability of both the natural and the cultural heritage of each site must be recognized and mapped. The challenge is to provide the infrastructure that tourists need, as well as to identify viable strategies for sustainable use of the natural resources (Ólafsdóttir & Runnström, 2009).

Since the Rio World Summit of 1992 and with the emergence of the paradigm of sustainable tourism, tourism practitioners and scholars have carried out a good number of studies so as to understand how tourism sustainability will be objectively achieved, assessed and measured. Ko (2005) argues that if sustainable development is one of the tourism industry’s major contemporary objectives, then the industry needs to be able to measure its performance and impacts in this area. Several studies on tourism sustainability indicators assume the existence of an integrated relationship between the social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Therefore, managers of destinations should adopt sustainability principles to underpin tourism development. This is consistent with the widespread view that destinations should measure tourism success not by number of visitors but by “yield” per visitor, narrowly defined as an economic measure, or more broadly as incorporating the economic, social and environmental dimensions (Dwyer et al, 2009). Mitchell et al (2013) consider that there is much social and political support for tourism sustainability, but very little empirical research into its value, particularly to public sector organizations. Many studies proved that local authorities play an important role in tourism management through their planning activities, policies and programmes (Richins, 2000; Andriotis, 2002; Harril, 2004; Emilsson & Hjelm, 2007; Bruzzi et al, 2011). Moreover, recent studies have shown the important links between governance features and the sustainability performance of tourism with the need for multi-stakeholder debates that should consider these links (Dinica, 2009; Eagles, 2009). Therefore, besides the three main dimensions of sustainability, the management and governance dimensions will also be adopted in this study (Figure.1).



Figure 1: Integrated approach of tourism sustainability indicators

From an environmental perspective, Bruzzi et al (2011) link the tourism sustainability concept to the need to harmonize the protection of the environment with a satisfactory economic and social development. The misuse of the natural resources can cause a degradation of the tourist appeal of the destination, bringing it finally to its economic decline. Hence, environmental sustainability plays an important role in sustainable tourism because it is the precondition and assessment standard (Jiang, 2009).

To understand how the sustainable tourism model may function in this context, this study gives specific attention to the measurement of tourism sustainability indicators, especially in terms of management and local governance. In 2004 the WTO referenced Sustainable Indicators as “Information sets which are formally selected for a regular use to measure changes in key assets and issues of tourism destinations and sites” (WTO, 2004).

However, the utilization of sustainability indicators in the tourism industry is a complex process. In order to measure and value such indicators in an accurate and efficient way, baseline information for tourism policies should be provided, especially for a highly fragmented tourism sector, whose impacts are often hidden by this fragmentation. Secondly, indicators are supposed to streamline statistical systems and data collection, in an industry where the weakness of the statistical data is often underlined. Thirdly, the construction of indicators is, at least in theory, linked with a decision-making process, and should be developed alongside a policy process (Dubois, 2005).



The playing of lights on the Mar Takla church during the Bkassine Festival

Methodology of work and research design

This study combines qualitative-descriptive and quantitative-analytical methods as well as the hypothetical deduction method. It was conducted between February 2013 and February 2014 by the HELAND team at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (FTHM) of the Lebanese University. The HELAND project is funded by the European Neighborhood Partnership Initiative (ENPI) involving 9 partners from 6 Mediterranean countries and with a duration of 40 months (2012-2015). The main objectives of the project are the exploitation and promotion of the cultural heritage and landscape protection to foster quality and sustainable tourism. HELAND aims at addressing the needs and challenges of concerned stakeholders in the management of touristic sites in order to enhance their capacities in the field of sustainable tourism through the improvement of management tools, the adequate investment in new technologies, and the adoption of innovative policies.

Based on a literature review and field observations, 10 important Lebanese landscapes, considered as tourism destinations, were selected. The choice of the sites took into consideration their significant socio-cultural and ecological values and their important contribution to the rural tourism sector in Lebanon. To assess and measure the sustainability of each site, a set of indicators were used and regrouped in four dimensions, as determined in Figure 1. Each dimension contained a number of criteria based on the following considerations:

1. The Management dimension analyzes the capacity of the site-destination to engage in tourism development and management. Tourism is a people-oriented business and depends on planning and quality management. Understanding the actual and potential tourism management schemes and procedures for a destination is critical in determining to what degree a community can meaningfully participate in the development of sustainable tourism.
2. The Socio-cultural dimension gauges the community's involvement and acceptance of the tourism activities within its landscape.
3. The Economic dimension explores the positive impact of tourism on the local economy and its potential to address rural development problems such as employment, income generation, and poverty alleviation.
4. The Environmental dimension measures the influence of tourism infrastructure, services, and activities on the natural resources and its potential benefits for landscape protection and biodiversity conservation.

Each of the four dimensions gives rise to a number of indicators as essential factors in assessing and measuring tourism sustainability. These indicators are derived from a considerable amount of literature on the various positive and negative impacts of tourism and from various tourism sustainability frameworks and matrixes (WTO, 1993; WTO, 1995; WTO, 1998; WTO, 2004; Dubois, 2005; Gutierrez et al, 2005; Ko, 2005; Cernat & Gourdon, 2007; OECD, 2008; Jovicic & Ilic, 2010; Jovici, 2013; EU, 2013).

A draft version of 88 indicators was tested on the field before elaborating the final list with a total of 51 indicators. The final list and the quantitative analysis of the indicators took into consideration the lack of quantitative data in Lebanon, especially in the rural tourism industry.

Tables 1,2,3,4, and 5, show the detailed list of indicators used. In order to transform the qualitative indicators into a measurable form to assess the level of sustainability, two different scoring systems were adopted. For the Yes or No answers the following scores were used:

- 0 if Not existing
- 1 if Existing but needs improvement
- 2 if Existing and well governed and managed.

As for the level of application, a Likert scale was used with the following scores:

- 0 for Weak
- 1 for Fair
- 2 for Good
- 3 for Very good.

Each dimension was weighted in percentage, depending on its total score, in a way to have an overall sustainability score totalling 100%.

Number of indicators: 11	Scoring system			
Existence	Not existing	Exists but needs improvement	Exists and is well governed and managed	
Existence of a management organization	0	1	2	
Existence of a strategic plan	0	1	2	
Existence of a management plan	0	1	2	
Existence of an action plan	0	1	2	
Existence of a monitoring and evaluation plan	0	1	2	
Existence of databases	0	1	2	
Existence of safety and security measures	0	1	2	
Qualitative assessment	Weak	Fair	Good	Very good
Consultative management	0	1	2	3
Communication of sustainability efforts to visitors	0	1	2	3
Networking and partnerships	0	1	2	3
Databases information quality	0	1	2	3
Total score: 26 (Weight 20%)				
Evaluation: 0-4 very weak; 4.1-8 weak; 8.1-12 fair; 12.1-16 good; 16.1-20 very good				

Table 1: Indicators for Management Sustainability

Number of indicators: 7	Scoring system			
Existence	Not existing	Exists but needs improvement	Exists and is well governed and managed	
Existence of training programs	0	1	2	
Qualitative assessment	Weak	Fair	Good	Very good
Tourism contribution to the destinations' economy	0	1	2	3
Income distribution from tourism	0	1	2	3
Visitors spending in the destination	0	1	2	3
Tourism contribution to local employment	0	1	2	3
Utilization of local resources, fair trade goods, and services	0	1	2	3
Gender equity in employment	0	1	2	3
Total score: 20 (Weight 15%)				
Evaluation: 0-3 very weak; 3.1-6 weak; 6.1-9 fair; 9.1-12 good; 12.1-15 very good				

Table 2: Indicators for Economic Sustainability

Number of indicators: 22	Scoring system			
Existence	Not existing	Exists but needs improvement	Exists and is well governed and managed	
Existence and usage of local/soft mobility transport services	0	1	2	
Existence of climate change adaptation strategy or planning	0	1	2	
Existence of Solid Waste Management plan	0	1	2	
Existence of Wastewater Management plan	0	1	2	
Existence of fresh water management plan	0	1	2	
Existence of landscape protection scheme	0	1	2	
Existence of biodiversity protection scheme	0	1	2	
Existence of biodiversity management plan	0	1	2	
Existence of biodiversity databases	0	1	2	
Existence of biodiversity monitoring and evaluation plan	0	1	2	
Qualitative assessment	Weak	Fair	Good	Very good
Involvement of tourism enterprises in climate change mitigation schemes	0	1	2	3
Solid Waste reduction and recycling	0	1	2	3
Wastewater treatment	0	1	2	3
Utilization of new technologies to reduce water consumption	0	1	2	3
Utilization of renewable energies in tourism	0	1	2	3
Landscape protection level	0	1	2	3
Biodiversity protection level	0	1	2	3
Tourism enterprises supporting nature conservation	0	1	2	3
Quality of information in the biodiversity databases	0	1	2	3
Respect of the carrying capacity of the site	0	1	2	3
Utilization of new technologies in landscape management and monitoring	0	1	2	3
Utilization of new technologies in nature conservation and monitoring	0	1	2	3
Total score: 56 (Weight 43%)				
Evaluation: 0-9 very weak; 9.1-18 weak; 18.1-26 fair; 26.1-35 good; 35.1-43 very good				

Table 3: Indicators for Environmental Sustainability

Number of indicators: 11	Scoring system			
Existence	Not existing	Exists but needs improvement	Exists and is well governed and managed	
Existence of databases on cultural sites	0	1	2	
Existence of schemes for cultural sites protection	0	1	2	
Existence of code of conduct	0	1	2	
Qualitative assessment	Weak	Fair	Good	Very good
Residents satisfaction with tourism in the destination	0	1	2	3
Gender equity in tourism management and employment	0	1	2	3
Accessibility for disabled	0	1	2	3
Cultural databases information quality	0	1	2	3
Integration of cultural sites in tourism products	0	1	2	3
Level of cultural sites protection	0	1	2	3
Level of application of the code of conduct	0	1	2	3
Level of conflict resolution arising from tourism	0	1	2	3
Total score: 30 (Weight 22%)				
Evaluation: 0-4.5 very weak; 4.6-9 weak; 9.1-13 fair; 13.1-17.5 good; 17.6-22 very good				

Table 4: Indicators for Socio-cultural Sustainability

Dimensions	Weighted score
Management sustainability	20%
Economic sustainability	15%
Environmental sustainability	43%
Social sustainability	22%
Total score:	100%
Evaluation: 0-20% very weak; 21-40% weak; 41-60% fair; 61-80% good; 81-100% very good	

Table 5: Overall Sustainability

Between February 2013 and September 2013, the HELAND research team at the FTHM conducted 10 field visits to the 10 selected sites for data collection. In-depth semi-structured interviews were held with 16 key informants, involved in landscape management and tourism development. The organizations and institutions represented included municipalities, nature reserves, tourism businesses, and non-governmental associations. Between October 2013 and December 2013, the key informants' interviews, the field observations, and the collected data were transcribed and entered into the analytical model for processing.

Landscapes and tourism in Lebanon: between degradation and conservation

Located on the eastern Mediterranean, Lebanon is in many ways a microcosm of the urbanizing Mediterranean problematic (Makhzoumi et al, 2012a). Although small (10,452 square kilometres), Lebanon is known for its rich and diverse cultural and natural heritage. The Lebanese rural landscape is a combination of natural ecosystems and cultural heritage, characterized by a rich and diverse mosaic of woodland patches, scattered villages, in addition to terraced perennial cropping of olives trees, fruit trees, and vineyards. Four principal factors have interacted to produce the exceptionally rich and unique landscapes of the country: biogeography, geology, ecology and historic human settlements. Coastal areas, middle and high mountains, hills, wide and narrow valleys, inland plain, and rivers provide a climatic diversity that harbours a wealthy biodiversity with many endangered and endemic species.

Strongly affected by land management plans, the natural and cultural landscapes of Lebanon are facing tremendous challenges. Land management practices contribute to the erosion of the country's natural resources and landscapes (soil, forests, caves, rivers, springs, mountain peaks, valleys, etc.). Landscape degradation problems are pertinent for rural and mountain areas, where traditional agriculture systems are still the main carriers of the landscape pattern and values.

Failure in planning and management are further aggravated by political marginalization that has left rural communities in Lebanon in need of social and economic development. Civil war (1975-1990), Israeli occupation in southern Lebanon (1978-2000), unbalanced reconstruction and development plans neglecting the three dimensions of sustainability (1990-2006), and the 33 Day War in July 2006 in turn depopulated much of the countryside, disrupted traditional rural lifestyles and undermined traditional rural economies (Makhzoumi et al, 2012b).



A very old olive tree in the Bkassine region which goes back thousands of years

The old land use system has been for these last fifty years undergoing a strong process of change to simplify and homogenize it, and this is leading to a decrease in both authenticity and multi-functionality. Over the years, the landscapes of Lebanon have been threatened by a multitude of factors that have caused the loss of biodiversity, the fragmentation or destruction of habitats, and the introduction of different forms of pollution caused by human activities – urban sprawl, land encroachment, industrialization, improper management and discharge of wastewater and solid waste. Among these human activities, uncontrolled tourism infrastructure development and mass tourism forms constitute an increasing pressure and threat on the natural and cultural resources.

Despite the degradation of the natural landscape, between 1992 and 2013 the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Tourism designated a number of Protected Areas. In 2013, existing classification of Protected Areas in Lebanon included 13 Nature Reserves, 3 UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserves, 24 Natural Sites, 5 Himas (tradition way of landscape protection by municipalities and local communities), 12 Protected Forests, 14 Touristic Sites. In total, these protected areas cover around 6% of the Lebanese territory. A multitude of other landscapes and natural landmarks (forests, valleys, river basins, mountain peaks, caves, specific geological landforms, etc.) remain without any form of protection and are facing many challenges. Most of these sites constitute an important asset for the tourism industry in Lebanon, in particular rural and nature-based tourism.

The tourism industry in Lebanon has always been an important economic sector constituting one of the main sources of income and employment. Between 1990 and 2002 tourism has rebuilt itself in parallel with the reconstruction of the basic infrastructure of the country. Tourism services and activities grew mainly in urban and coastal cities, while they remained neglected in most of the rural and mountainous areas. Since 2002, and despite the unstable political situation in the last ten years, the Lebanese tourism industry witnessed positive changes. New market trends are appearing and new tourism types are prospering all over the country. Nature and adventure based tourism are developing in many rural areas and natural landscapes. To benefit from this trend, all concerned stakeholders need to be prepared to welcome more domestic and international tourists in the near future. Tourism development in rural areas and natural landscapes should be planned and the management of the attractions should be improved in order to prevent damages to natural and cultural heritage and to maximize benefits for local communities.

The application of the Sustainable Development Concept (SDC) in the public sector in Lebanon is becoming more and more significant. In the last five years, an important number of municipalities initiated local development projects with support from local and international donors. However, these projects remain scattered in time and space. Very few municipalities integrate sustainable development dimensions in long term visions and policies, especially when it comes to landscape management and tourism development. Moreover, the SDC is not clearly reflected in the managerial procedures and skills of members and employees of the municipalities. In this context, this study will focus on 10 major cultural and natural landscapes in Lebanon used as tourism destinations. The studied sites are spread all over the country: eight are located in mountainous areas on the Western slopes of Mount Lebanon facing the

Mediterranean sea; and two are located in the Beqaa plain. Each landscape offers one or several types of touristic services and activities (cultural, nature-based, adventure and sport, educational, and recreational tourism), with different land ownership patterns, management systems, and protection schemes. Table 6 shows the main characteristics of the 10 sites.

Site name	Type, legal protection, year of establishment	Management & Governance	Tourism exploitation	Land ownership
Shouf Biosphere Reserve (SBR)	Nature Reserve Law 1996	Ministry of Environment Reserve Committee Reserve management team	Open for tourists since 2000	Public
Bkassine Pine Forest (BPF)	Protected Forest Decision 1997	Ministry of Agriculture Local Municipality Private (business)/Public management system since 2013	Open for tourists since 2000	Public
Baatara Pothole (BP)	Protected site Decision 2004	Local Municipality Private (NGO)/Public management system since 2012	Open for tourists since 1996	Private
Tannourine Cedars Forest Nature Reserve (TCFNR)	Nature Reserve Law 1999	Ministry of Environment Reserve Committee Reserve management team	Open for tourists since 2004	Public
Bcharreh Cedars Forest (BCF)	World Heritage Site & Protected Forest Decree 1997	Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Culture Local committee	Open for tourists since 1998	Private
Qadisha Valley (QV)	World Heritage Site & Protected Site Decree 1997	Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Culture Local committee Municipalities	Open for tourists since 1998	Public (20%) Private (80%)
Kfardebian Village (KFR)	No protection	Municipality Local community Ministry of Tourism for the Faqra ruins	-Faqra ruins open for tourists since 1996 -Ouyoun el Siman open for tourists since 1960 - Faqra bridge restricted access and controlled by the municipality	Private (Except for Faqra ruins and the high mountain of Ouyoun el Siman)
Aammq Wetland (AW)	Private protection 1996	Land owners	Exclusively for educational tourism and research	Private
Taanayel Farm (TAN)	Private protection 2008	Land owners in partnership with local NGO	Open for tourists since 2009	Private
Baskinta village (BKT)	No protection	Municipality Local community Local NGO for the Baskinta Literary Trail	-Open for tourists since 1960s -BLT open for tourists since 2008	Private

Table 6: Characteristics of the studied landscapes and tourism destinations

Results, presentation and discussion

The study findings are presented in the following tables and figures with a comparison of the 10 studied landscapes. Table 7 and Figure 2 show the management sustainability level.

Indicator	Scores of the sites/landscapes									
	SBR	BPF	BP	TCFNR	BCF	QV	KFR	AW	TAN	BKT
Existence of a management organization	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1
Existence of a strategic plan	2	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	2	0
Existence of a management plan	2	2	2	2	2	1	0	1	2	0
Existence of an action plan	2	2	1	2	2	1	0	0	2	0
Existence of a monitoring and evaluation plan	2	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	0
Existence of databases	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0
Existence of safety and security measures	2	2	0	2	2	1	1	1	2	1
Consultative management	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	1
Communication of sustainability efforts to visitors	3	3	2	2	1	1	1	2	3	0
Networking and partnerships	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	3	1
Databases information quality	2	0	0	2	1	1	0	2	2	0
<i>Total score (over 26)</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>4</i>
Weighted score (20%)	18.5	13.8	10.0	16.2	13.8	10.0	5.4	9.2	17.7	3.1
Evaluation	VG	G	F	VG	G	F	W	F	VG	VW

VW: very weak, W: weak, F: Fair, G: good, VG: very good.

Table 7: Comparison of the management sustainability



Figure 2: Comparison of the management sustainability



The Shouf Biosphere Reserve



Baatara Pothole

The Shouf Biosphere Reserve (SBR), the Tannourine Cedars Forest Nature Reserve (TCFNR), and Taanayel Farm (TAN) have very good management sustainability (18.5/20, 16.2/20, and 17.7/20). Baskinta (BKT) and Kfardebiane (KFR) villages have, respectively, very weak and weak management sustainability (3.1/20 and 5.4/20). At this level of sustainability, the hypothesis is accepted since the SBR and the TCFNR benefit from public and legal protection schemes, and the TAN has a private protection; while KFR and BKT do not benefit from any public or private protection schemes. Table 8 and Figure 3 show the economic sustainability level.

Indicator	Scores of the sites/landscapes									
	SBR	BPF	BP	TCFNR	BCF	QV	KFR	AW	TAN	BKT
Existence of training programs	2	2	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	1
Tourism contribution to the destinations' economy	3	2	1	2	3	1	2	1	2	2
Income distribution from tourism	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	1
Visitors spending in the destination	2	2	1	1	3	1	2	1	2	2
Tourism contribution to local employment	3	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Utilization of local resources, fair trade goods, and services	3	3	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	1
Gender equity in employment	3	3	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	1
<i>Total score (over 20)</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>10</i>
Weighted score (15%)	13.5	12.8	4.5	9.0	11.3	6.0	7.5	7.5	12.0	7.5
Evaluation	VG	VG	W	F	G	W	F	F	G	F

Table 8: Comparison of the economic sustainability

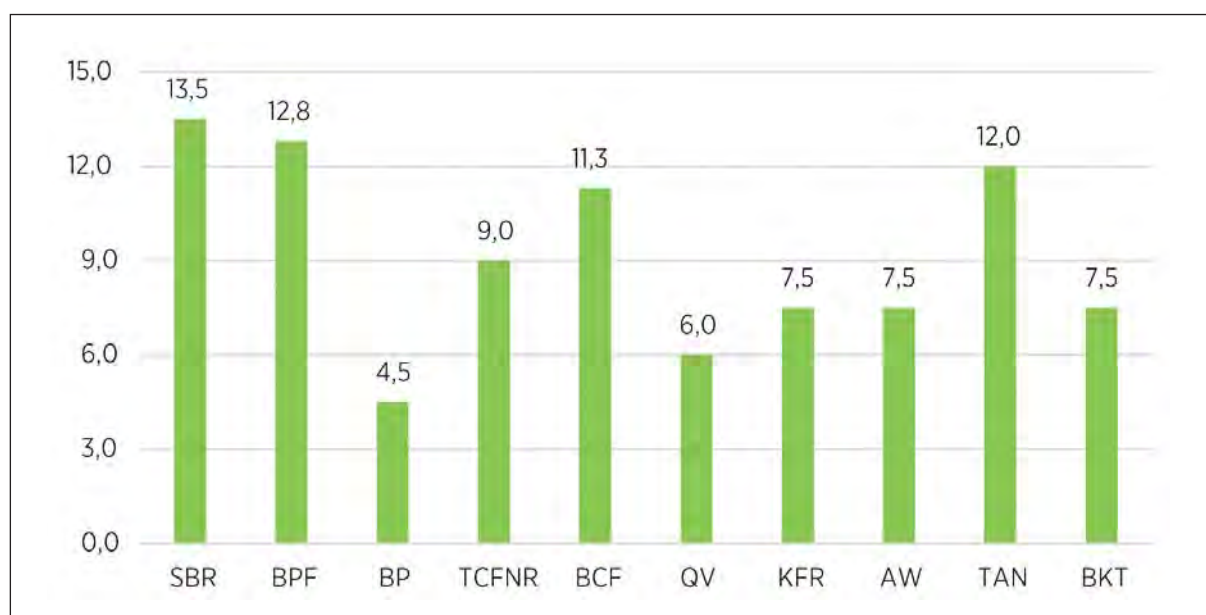


Figure 3: Comparison of the economic sustainability

Shouf Biosphere Reserve and Bkassine Pine Forest (BPF) have very good economic sustainability (13.5/15 and 12.8/15). Baatar Pothole (BP) and Qadisha Valley (QV) have weak economic sustainability (4.5/15 and 6/15). At this level, the hypothesis is rejected since all the four sites benefit from public and legal protection schemes. Moreover, we notice that the SBR benefits from the highest protection scheme by law and has the highest economic sustainability level, while TCFNR which also benefits from protection by law, has a fair economic sustainability level (9/15). Table 9 and Figure 4 show the environmental sustainability level.

Indicator	Scores of the sites/landscapes									
	SBR	BPF	BP	TCFNR	BCF	QV	KFR	AW	TAN	BKT
Existence and usage of local/soft mobility transport services	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
Existence of climate change adaptation strategy or planning	2	0	1	2	1	1	0	1	2	0
Existence of Solid Waste Management plan	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Existence of Wastewater Management plan	2	2	2	0	1	1	1	1	2	1
Existence of fresh water management plan	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	2	2	0
Existence of landscape protection scheme	2	0	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	0
Existence of biodiversity protection scheme	2	0	0	2	2	1	0	2	1	0
Existence of biodiversity management plan	2	0	0	2	2	1	0	1	1	0
Existence of biodiversity databases	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	1	0
Existence of biodiversity monitoring and evaluation plan	1	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	1	0
Involvement of tourism enterprises in climate change mitigation schemes	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0
Solid Waste reduction and recycling	2	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	0
Wastewater treatment	2	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Utilization of new technologies to reduce water consumption	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	2	0
Utilization of renewable energies in tourism	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	2	2	0
Landscape protection level	3	2	2	3	2	1	1	2	3	0
Biodiversity protection level	3	0	0	3	2	1	0	2	2	0
Tourism enterprises supporting nature conservation	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
Quality of information in the biodiversity databases	3	0	0	3	0	1	0	2	1	0
Respect of the carrying capacity of the site	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	3	2	1
Utilization of new technologies in landscape management and monitoring	3	1	1	2	1	0	0	1	3	0
Utilization of new technologies in nature conservation and monitoring	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	0
<i>Total score (over 56)</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>3</i>
Weighted score (43%)	32.3	15.4	13.8	26.9	15.4	10.8	5.4	22.3	29.2	2.3
Evaluation	G	W	W	G	W	W	VW	F	G	VW

Table 9: Comparison of the environmental sustainability

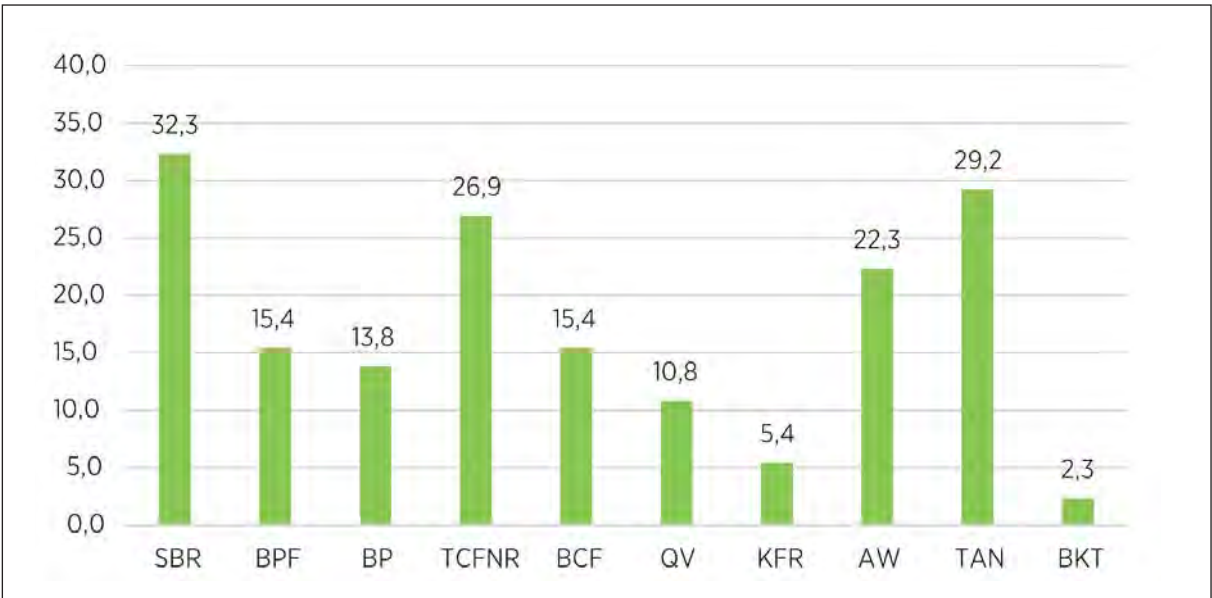


Figure 4: Comparison of the environmental sustainability



Tannourine Cedars Forest Nature Reserve



Kfardebiane village



Ammiq Wetland

None of the studied sites have a very good environmental sustainability level. The Shouf Biosphere Reserve, Tannourine Cedars Forest Nature Reserve, and Taanayel Farm have good environmental sustainability (32.3/43, 26.9/43, and 29.2/43); Ammiq Wetland (AW) has a fair environmental sustainability (22.3/43), and the other 6 landscapes have weak or very weak environmental sustainability. For this dimension, the hypothesis can be accepted since the SBR, TCFNR, TAN, and AW are all protected by law and by private initiatives; while the two sites with the lowest environmental sustainability, BKT (2.3/43) and KFR (5.4/43), do not benefit from any form of protection. Table.10 and Figure.5 show the social sustainability level.

Indicator	Scores of the sites/landscapes									
	SBR	BPF	BP	TCFNR	BCF	QV	KFR	AW	TAN	BKT
Existence of databases on cultural sites	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
Existence of schemes for cultural sites protection	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
Existence of code of conduct	2	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	2	1
Residents satisfaction with tourism in the destination	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Gender equity in tourism management and employment	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1
Accessibility for disabled	2	2	0	0	2	1	1	1	3	1
Cultural databases information quality	3	2	1	1	3	3	2	2	2	3
Integration of cultural sites in tourism products	3	1	0	1	3	3	1	1	2	3
Level of cultural sites protection	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Level of application of the code of conduct	3	0	0	2	2	1	1	2	3	1
Level of conflict resolution arising from tourism	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	3	1
<i>Total score (over 30)</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>16</i>
Weighted score (22%)	18.3	11.0	6.6	9.5	16.1	12.5	11.0	11.0	16.9	11.7
Evaluation	VG	F	W	F	G	F	F	F	G	F

Table 10: Comparison of the socio-cultural sustainability

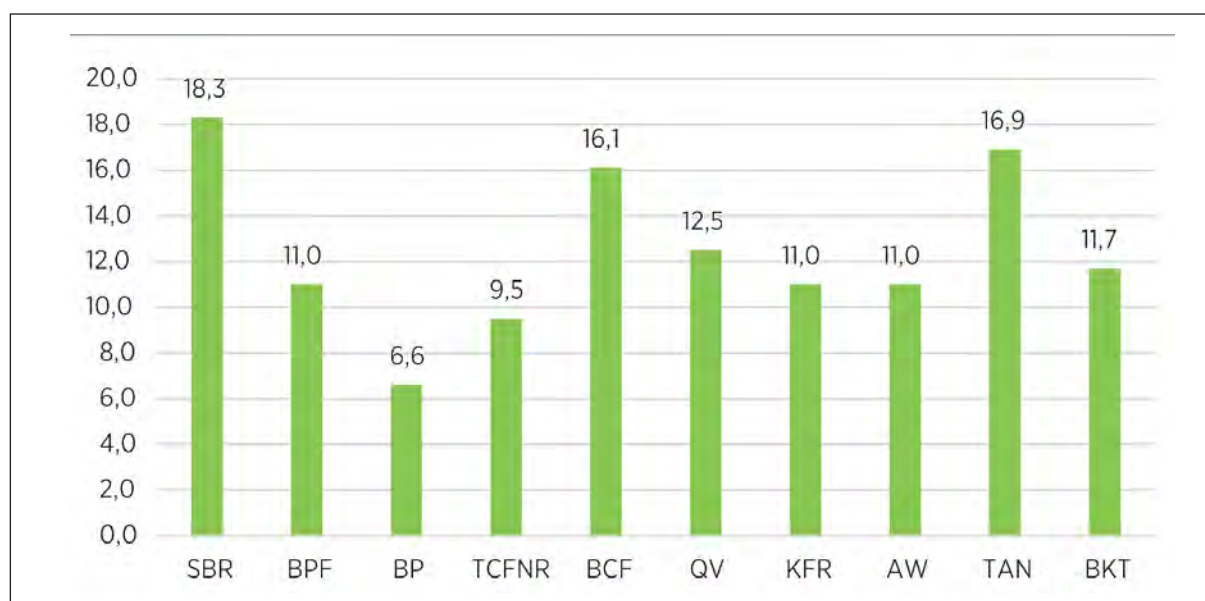


Figure 5: Comparison of the socio-cultural sustainability

The Shouf Biosphere Reserve has a very good social sustainability (18.23/22). Bcharreh Cedars Forest (BCF) and Taanayel Farm have good social sustainability (16.1/22 and 16.9/22). Only Baatara Pothole has a weak socio-cultural sustainability. Among the sites assessed as fair in terms of socio-cultural sustainability, we have protected (BPF, TCFNR, BCF, AW) and non-protected (BKT and KFR) landscapes. Therefore, for this dimension, the hypothesis is rejected.

The overall sustainability measure, with the four dimensions combined, shows that SBR has the highest score and was considered a “Very Good” landscape where social, environmental, and economic dimensions are being managed in a professional way with a clear strategy and objectives. The TCFNR and TAN are considered “Good” landscapes in relation to sustainability issues. The scores of the BPF, the BCF, and AW gave them a “Fair” sustainability evaluation. As for the landscape sustainability of the BP, the QV and BKT, it was evaluated as “Weak” (Table 11).

Dimension	Weighted score	SBR	BPF	BP	TCFNR	BCF	QV	KFR	AW	TAN	BKT
Management sustainability	20%	18.5	13.8	10.0	16.2	13.8	10.0	5.4	9.2	17.7	3.1
Economic sustainability	15%	13.5	12.8	4.5	9.0	11.3	6.0	7.5	7.5	12.0	7.5
Environmental sustainability	43%	32.3	15.4	13.8	26.9	15.4	10.8	5.4	22.3	29.2	2.3
Social sustainability	22%	18.3	11.0	6.6	9.5	16.1	12.5	11.0	11.0	16.9	11.7
Overall sustainability	100%	82.6	53.0	34.9	61.6	56.6	39.3	29.3	50.0	75.8	24.6
Evaluation		VG	F	W	G	F	W	W	F	G	W

Table 11: Comparison of the overall sustainability



Qadisha Valley

Table 12 shows the sustainability ranking compared with the score and the evaluation of the 10 visited sites for the 4 studied dimensions, as well as the overall sustainability, the average sustainability (50.4%) and the standard deviation (19.0).

Site	Management			Economic			Socio-cultural			Environmental			Overall Sustainability		
	Rank	Score/20	Evaluation	Rank	Score/15	Evaluation	Rank	Score/22	Evaluation	Rank	Score/43	Evaluation	Rank	Score/100	Evaluation
SBR	1	18.5	VG	1	13.5	VG	1	18.3	VG	1	32.3	VG	1	82.6	Very Good
TAN	2	17.7	VG	3	12.0	G	2	16.9	G	2	28.7	G	2	75.8	Good
TCFNR	3	16.2	VG	5	9.0	F	7	9.5	F	3	26.9	G	3	61.6	Good
BCF	4	13.8	G	4	11.3	G	3	16.1	G	5	15.4	W	4	56.6	Fair
BPF	4	13.8	G	2	12.8	VG	6	11.0	F	5	15.4	W	5	53.0	Fair
AW	6	9.2	F	6	7.5	F	6	11.0	F	4	21.9	F	6	50.0	Fair
QV	5	10.0	F	7	6	W	4	12.5	F	7	10.8	W	7	39.3	Weak
BP	5	10.0	F	8	4.5	W	8	6.6	W	6	13.8	W	8	34.9	Weak
KFR	7	5.4	W	6	7.5	F	6	11.0	F	8	5.4	VW	9	29.3	Weak
BKT	8	3.1	W	6	7.5	F	5	11.7	F	9	2.3	VW	10	24.6	Weak
Average for all sites													50.8%		
Standard Deviation													19.2		

Table 12: Sustainability ranking for the 10 visited landscape sites

The results presented in Table 12 provide a clear answer to the research question and prove the hypothesis. Landscapes protected by a law (SBR and TCFNR) are ranked among the top three. Landscapes protected by decisions and decrees, and protected private owned lands are ranked from number 4 to 8 with fair and weak overall sustainability. Taanayel Farm, a protected private owned property, is an exception and is ranked number 2. While the two landscapes containing public and private owned lands without any form of protection are ranked in the bottom with weak overall sustainability.



Baskinta village



Taanayel farm



The first printery in the Arab world - Bcharreh Cedars Forest

To conclude, it is worth mentioning that land ownership is a crucial factor that affects the management of tourism destinations and the protection of landscapes in Lebanon. Actually, the Lebanese legislation does not include any law or mechanism for the protection of private owned lands. Therefore, private land ownership can be a major obstacle that hinders the protection of very important landscapes. Moreover, the absence of strategic management plans at the local level of the municipalities is leading to uncontrolled and chaotic development resulting in the deterioration of the physical and natural aspects of many landscapes.

Conclusion and recommendations

This study examined the usefulness of a tourism sustainability evaluation matrix, formed of 4 dimensions and a list of 51 indicators, for the assessment and evaluation of landscape sustainable management. The successful application of this tool depends on the availability of data and on the cooperation of all the concerned stakeholders in providing accurate and up to date information about the landscapes they are managing or using for tourism purposes. Further landscape and natural and tourism destinations should be assessed, and the assessment tool developed in this study should be refined and revised in order to adapt to the continuous advancement in the tourism industry, especially in terms of technology and innovation.

The landscape and tourism sustainability analytical framework was useful for understanding the relationship between landscape protection and the level of tourism sustainability. It was important in demonstrating, that sustainability-oriented management is possible in any landscape and tourism destination. This approach should be adopted by local stakeholders and public institutions, especially municipalities that should improve their managerial skills. Recognizing that there is still a gap between tourism development strategies and landscape management and protection tools and techniques, results in an awareness for a need to act. Researchers, teachers, policy-makers, technical staff, local communities and others who are concerned with those landscapes cannot continue assisting to the same trends without reacting, rethinking and becoming involved.

Stakeholders involved in local tourism development and management should monitor their management approach in order to avoid and reduce negative impacts on the cultural and natural heritage and should adjust their plans to sustain better the landscapes of Lebanon. A sustainable strategic orientation for landscape management and tourism exploitation should incorporate regulation and harmonization of high quality tourism services and activities, professional public and corporate governance with local participation, visionary long-term management, development of innovative and adaptive policies and the use of new technologies.

Tourism stakeholders have, to some extent, the opportunity to fashion the future to their needs rather than to simply regard future events as beyond their control. In an increasingly turbulent and rapidly changing world, innovation and development driven by both internal and external circumstances will continue, but destinations and firms that do not adjust their strategies while their environments change, will have difficulty maintaining competitive advantages. It is according to how the country will manage its natural heritage that the pace is set for rural and nature-based tourism in the future.

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مشروع هيلاند (HELAND project)

"التطوير الاقتصادي الاجتماعي المستدام من خلال آليات وتقنيات متطورة تعمل على حفظ الإرث السياحي والطبيعي في منطقة حوض البحر الأبيض المتوسط"

مدير المشروع: العميد أ. د. فهد نصر

الفريق التقني: د. جاد أبو عراج - د. أمل الكردي - م. علي خريس

المدير المالي: السيّدة مهي ميخائيل

الطالبتان (ماستر): يارا خريس ومايا شمس

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Editorial Note

As from September 2014 the Heland team was made up of:

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- مقدّمة

إنّ الخطة الرئيسيّة لمشروع هيلاند الأوروبي هي الحفاظ على المواقع الأثرية والمناظر الطبيعيّة في المنطقة المحيطة بحوض البحر الأبيض المتوسط. ولتحقيق هذا الهدف، كان لا بدّ من دراسة ميدانيّة علميّة وافية لمجموعة مختارة من تلك المواقع في بلدان عديدة، كلبان، وفلسطين، والأردن، وإسبانيا، ومالطا، وقبرص. ولقد دخل لبنان هذه الشراكة عبر محميّة الشوف الطبيعيّة- المحيط الحيوي (SBR)، وكلية السياحة وإدارة الفنادق في الجامعة اللبنانية، والتي تنفّذ كلّ الدراسات العلميّة الميدانيّة، وتزور، لهذا الغرض، مختلف المناطق اللبنانية بغية الوقوف على مجموع الخطط المعتمدة، والآيلة إلى النهوض بالسياحة بعامة، وتطوير بعض أنواعها، كالسياحة البيئيّة والريفية تحديدًا. إنّ استثمار الطاقات البشريّة، بالإضافة إلى استخدام التكنولوجيا الحديثة في الحفاظ على التراث الطبيعي والتنوّع الحيوي، يندرج ضمن استراتيجيّة عامّة تلاحظ مفهوم الاستمرارية والاستدامة.



جسر مع انحناء طبيعي

إنّ الأخطار التي تتعرّض لها المناظر الطبيعيّة (*Landscapes*) في لبنان لهي متنوّعة؛ تبدأ بتقلُّص المساحات الخضراء والغابات، ولا تنتهي بغياب قوانين صارمة تمنع المسّ بتراث لبنان الطبيعي الغني. إنّ التلوّث، على أنواعه، قد بلغ مرحلة متقدّمة وبات يهدّد التنوّع الحيوي (*Biodiversity*)، مع ما يعنيه هذا الأمر من خسارة لبنان التدريجيّة لبيئته المتميّزة التي كانت، ولا تزال، أحد المقومات السياحيّة الأساسيّة. فكم من محميّة طبيعيّة، ومن درب جبليّ، ومن منظر خلّاب قد جعل من لبنان واحدة من فضلى الوجهات السياحيّة للعامة من الناس، ناهيك عن المتخصّصين.

- ملخّص الزيارات الميدانية

بهدف تقييم مدى استخدام التكنولوجيا في الحفاظ على المواقع الطبيعية وجمال الطبيعة ومناظرها في لبنان، قام فريق هيلاند من كليّة السياحة وإدارة الفنادق (*FTHM*) بوضع خطة مؤلّفة من زيارات ميدانية ستّ إلى مختلف المناطق، فكان أن شملت عشر مناطق طبيعية في لبنان. وكان الهدف دراسة كلّ موقع طبيعي وتقييم كلّ المعايير السياحيّة. ولهذه الغاية، فقد نظّمت الخارطة الذهنية من قبل الفريق (أي فريق هيلاند)، ووُضعت مجموعة كاملة من المؤشّرات. ومن أجل جمع المعلومات (*DATA*)، قام فريق هيلاند بمجموعة لقاءات مع المستثمرين القيمين على إدارة كلّ موقع، حيث تمّت مناقشة المشاكل المتعلّقة باستخدام التكنولوجيا الحديثة، والطرائق المتطوّرة في الحفاظ على تلك المواقع الطبيعيّة. هذا، وقد وُثقت المعلومات وتمّ تحليلها ودرستها لكي تتمّ الاستفادة منها لاحقاً. إنّ مقارنة التحليل لمختلف الزيارات الميدانية قد شكّلت دفعاً لتطوير الخطة المستدامة المتعلّقة بمشروع هيلاند.

- زيارة محميّة أرز الشوف البيئيّة وغابة الصنوبر في بكاسين

محميّة أرز الشوف البيئيّة (*Shouf Biosphere Reserve SBR*) هي أكبر المحميّات الطبيعية في لبنان، وأكثرها كثافة، حيث تغطي 25% من غابات الأرز الموجودة في لبنان. تأسست المحميّة عام 1996، بموجب القانون 532 الصادر عن وزارة البيئة، لتعلن عام 2005 محميّة الشوف المحيط الحيوي (*SBR*) تابعة لمنظمة اليونسكو. بدأ فريق هيلاند زيارته بببيت المحميّة الواقع في بلدة معاصر الشوف، حيث تمّ شرح مميّزات المحميّة وخطة إدارتها. كما عُرض للخطوات المعتمدة في سبيل حماية الطبيعة وتنظيم النشاطات السياحية.

أمّا المحطة الثانية لجولة الفريق الميدانية، فكانت غابة الأرز في معاصر الشوف (وهي واحدة من الغابات الثلاث الهامة التابعة للمحميّة)، مروراً بببيت الضيافة الواقع في قرية الخريبة المحاذية لبلدة معاصر الشوف، وصولاً إلى الآثار الرائعة في بلدة نوحا، الرابضة على سفح جبل متاخم للمحميّة المحاذية لقضاء جزين *Jezzine Caza*.

وفي زيارة ثانية، توجه فريق هيلاند إلى غابة الصنوبر في بكاسين BPF، وهي غابة كبيرة من الصنوبر تقع على ارتفاع 950 مترًا، وتغطي مساحة مليون متر مربع، ما جعل منها أكبر غابة صنوبر في لبنان والشرق الأوسط. تُعتبر الغابة ملكًا لبلدية بكاسين، وهي محمية بموجب القانون رقم 3 الصادر عن وزارة الزراعة في العام 1997. بدأت الزيارة بالمرور بمكتب اتحاد بلديات جزين، حيث اطلع الفريق، وبشرح مسهب، على ماهية قضاء جزين ومميزاته الطبيعية والثقافية. كما تمّ عرض الخطة السياحية الجديدة المعدة من قبل اتحاد البلديات، بالإضافة إلى الخطط التطويرية في المجال الاقتصادي الاجتماعي، والبنى التحتية. بعدها كان للفريق جولة ميدانية على غابة بكاسين، والمشروع السياحي البيئي المنفذ حديثًا (*La maison de la forêt*) بيت الغابة. ومن شأن هذا المشروع أن يشكل مركزًا للخدمات السياحية للمنطقة المعنية. هذه الخدمات تتضمن مركزًا للمعلومات وتسهيلات الإقامة، ومطاعم بيئية، ونشاطات سياحية، كالشلق، وركوب الدراجة و *Zip-Line*. وفي الختام، اعتمد الفريق الفرصة وعرج على بلدة بكاسين الوداعة الرائعة المعروفة بهندستها المبنية بالحجر، والمزدانة بالقرميد. وقد تمّ، خلال الزيارة، جمع معلومات هامة متعلقة بإدارة المحميات الطبيعية والغابات، وتطوير نشاطات السياحة البيئية، ودور البلديات في تطوير المواقع السياحية، بالتعاون مع القطاع الخاص. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فقد علم فريق هيلاند بأن *SBR* و *UIM* يتعاونان بشكل مستمر من أجل تأسيس حديقة جيولوجية في منطقة نبحا؛ وعند إعلانها من قبل اليونيسكو، ستصبح هذه الحديقة الأولى في لبنان، والشرق الأوسط.

- زيارة شاتين وتورين في قضاء البترون والاطلاع على المشاريع السياحية البيئية في المنطقة

وتتبعتم الزيارات الميدانية التي نفذها فريق هيلاند في كثية السياحة وإدارة الفنادق في الجامعة اللبنانية، فكانت له محطة في ضيعة شاتين، في قضاء البترون، حيث وقف الفريق على شرح مسهب بشأن محاولات البلديات الحثيثة لتحويل شاتين إلى قرية بيئية نموذجية. وهناك، كانت للفريق خطوة زيارة موقع جيولوجي متميز وفريد، وهو "بالوعة بعنارة" (*Baatara Pothole*)، والتي تشتهر بجسورها الطبيعية الثلاثة المعقّلة، بحيث يعلو أحدها الآخر، ويصل ارتفاعها، من الأسفل إلى الأعلى، إلى نحو 100 متر. وحيث إنّ بالوعة بعنارة تشكل منظرًا طبيعيًا خلّابًا، تسعى البلدية إلى تنفيذ مشروع يهدف إلى تطوير نشاطات سياحية بطريقة مستدامة، للحفاظ على المكان وحمايته، نظرًا إلى الأعداد الكبيرة للسياح الذين يقصدون المكان للتنزّه، وللاستمتاع بمشاهدة البلوعة؛ الأمر الذي يشكل تهديدًا مباشرًا قد يؤدي إلى تخريب المكان. من هنا، كان لا بدّ من اتخاذ كل الإجراءات التي من شأنها منع أي نشاط قد يسيء إلى الموقع. وقد نال هذا التدبير اهتمام وزارة البيئة التي أصدرت قرارًا، في العام 2004، أفضى إلى حماية الموقع المذكور. إلّا أنّ المشكلة لا زالت قائمة بسبب مصادر التلوث،

وهي كثيرة، وتقع في محيط البالوعة؛ لذا تتسَلَّح البلدية بإرادة أهل شاتين، ولا تألو جهدًا لتحويل هذه البلدة إلى قرية بيئية، عبر تبني كل الوسائل والطرق الآيلة إلى حماية كل المصادر الطبيعية، وعلى رأسها بالوعة بعنارة.

ثمّ زار فريق هيلاند غابة أرز تنّورين، الواقعة بين قضائي البترون وبشري، والتي أعلنت محمية طبيعية من قبل مجلس الوزراء بموجب القانون 9 الصادر بتاريخ 25 / 2 / 1999. تتميز الغابة بكونها من كبرى غابات الأرز في لبنان، وأكثرها كثافة (80% من الأشجار هي أرز *Cedrus libani*). كما تشتهر بتنوّعها الحيوي الغني جدًا (*Biodiversity*)، وقد وقف الفريق على ظروف ولادة المحمية وتطورها، وكيف أنها كانت مخصّصة حصريًا للبحث العلمي، ما بين عامي 1999 و2004. وبعد العام 2004، فتحت أبواب المحمية للوافدين من عامة الناس. وبموازاة ذلك، تمّ استحداث دروب عدّة للسير داخل الغابة؛ وهذا ما يندرج ضمن خطة لتطوير السياحة البيئية، والتي تتوافق مع أهداف المحمية، أي حماية التنوّع الحيوي. بعدها، قام الفريق بمناقشة الاستراتيجيات التي سيعتمدها القيّمون على المحمية لإدارة فضلى للموقع، وللحفاظ على تميّزه، وتنوّعه الحيوي.

- زيارة لبلدة بشري ووادي قاديشا

جاءت هذه الزيارة بهدف دراسة وضع بلدة بشري ووادي قاديشا باعتبارهما مقصدًا سياحيًا. وكان لفريق هيلاند لقاءات عدّة ومناقشات مع لجنة الحفاظ على وادي قاديشا (*COSAQ*) أفضت إلى الوقوف على معلومات هامّة عن وضع الأماكن السياحية المختلفة للمنطقة، وكيفية إدارتها، ودور الأفرقاء المعنيين في الإدارة العامّة، والتنمية المحليّة، وتخطيط وإدارة السياحة، وحماية الطبيعة، والحفاظ على التراث الثقافي، والعلاقة التي تربط في ما بينها. ثمّ تمّت مقارنة الجهود المبذولة لاعتماد ممارسات مستدامة بهدف تحسين إدارة المناظر الطبيعية والحفاظ عليها.

وبلدة بشري متربّعة على أعالي جبال قضاء بشري التابع لمحافظة لبنان الشمالي، وتبعد عن العاصمة بيروت مسافة 112 كلم. وهي تُعرف بمعالها الطبيعية المتنوّعة، والمناظر الخلّابة، إذ تقع ما بين أعلى سلسلة من جبال لبنان - "جبل المكمل" - وأحد أعماق الوديان في لبنان وأهمّها - "وادي قاديشا" - الذي أُدرج على لائحة مواقع التراث العالمي سنة 1998. يشكّل متحف جبران خليل جبران وقبره ووادي قاديشا معلّمين ثقافيين رئيسيين في المنطقة. وتعتبر قاديشا واحدة من أهمّ المناطق التي سكنها النساك المسيحيون الأوائل في العالم؛ إذ تتضمّن أكثر من 400 مغارة، وملاجئ صخرية، وكنائس، ومحابس، وأديرة، محفورة جميعها في الصخور الطبيعية الوعرة. وبالإضافة إلى التراث الثقافي، يتمتّع وادي قاديشا بتنوّع بيولوجي غنيّ جدًّا؛ فهو موطن لمجموعة متنوّعة من الحيوانات والنباتات. وتشكّل غابة الأرز ودير مار أنطونيوس قزحيا مواقع مهمّة أخرى من بين الأماكن السياحية الجذّابة في المنطقة. تمّ بناء دير مار أنطونيوس قزحيا في القرن الرابع، من قبل القديس هيلاريون،

تكريماً للناسك المصري القديس أنطونيوس الكبير، بحسب الوثائق التي تعود إلى حوالي 1000 سنة م. دُمّر في القرن السادس عشر ولكن سرعان ما أعيد ترميمه. ويتألف الدير من ممرّ، وقاعة اجتماعات، وكنيسة، وطاقونة، وعدد من المحابس المحفورة في الصخور. ويُعرف الدير بأنّه مكان لمعالجة المرضى الذين يعانون من الاضطرابات النفسيّة. والجدير بالذكر أنّ دير مار أنطونيوس قزحيا يحتوي على أوّل مطبعة في الشرق الأوسط. ووفقاً للمؤرّخين، تمّ استيراد هذه المطبعة من إنكلترا إلى الدير سنة 1585. ويشكّل كتاب "المزامير" أول منشورة مؤرّخة تعود إلى سنة 1610. ولقد استُخدمت الحروف السريانية في الطبع لا العربية.

أمّا غابة أرز بشري، والمعروفة أيضاً بغابة "أرز الرب"، فقع على بُعد 121 كلم من بيروت، وعلى ارتفاع 2050 م عن سطح البحر. وهي مرتبطة بوادي قاديشا من خلال المرجعية التاريخية والقرب الجغرافي. تحتوي الغابة على أشجار الأرز اللبناني (*Cedrus libani*) المعمّرة، وعليه، فقد تمّ إعلان غابة أرز الرب، في عام 1998، واحدة من مواقع التراث العالمي، إلى جانب وادي قاديشا. وتعتبر منطقة الأرز من المواقع الطبيعية الوطنية التي تخضع لنصوص الحماية التي أقرّها قانون 1939/7/8 المتعلّق بالمناظر والمواقع الطبيعية في لبنان.

غير أنّه، وبالرغم من حمايته من قبل وزارة السياحة، لا يزال وادي قاديشا يواجه العديد من التهديدات التي قد تؤثر في استمرار تصنيفه كموقع تراث عالمي من قبل منظمة اليونسكو منذ 16 عاماً، وفي طبيعتها، النشاطات البشرية، أضف إلى ذلك السياحة غير المنظّمة. لذا، ناشد فريق مشروع هيلاند في كلية السياحة وإدارة الفنادق في الجامعة اللبنانية جميع الأقرء المعيّنين لتوحيد الجهود وصوّلاً إلى اتّخاذ تدابير صارمة تتعلّق بحسن إدارة وادي قاديشا وحمايته. كما دعا إلى وجوب استخدام أساليب مبتكرة لوقف التدهور الحاصل في هذا الموقع الثقافي والحضاري والطبيعي الفريد من نوعه.

- زيارة إلى "كفرذبيان" و"آثار فقرا" و"الجسر الحجري لفقرا" و"عيون السيمان"

وفي زيارة مميزة، قصد فريق هيلاند منطقة كفرذبيان، حيث تشارك بلديتها بالترويج لتنمية المبادرات نحو سياحة مستدامة في المنطقة، وتتولّى متابعة تطوّر نشاط القطاع السياحي فيها، نظراً لتوّع خصائص نقاط الجذب السياحي وغناه المتميز. وعليه، فقد تمّت مناقشة الاستراتيجية المعتمدة بهدف التنمية السياحية والإدارة السليمة للبيئة وأثرها في النواحي الاقتصادية والاجتماعية والثقافية. تقع كفرذبيان في أعالي كسروان، وهي تبعد حوالي 44 كلم عن العاصمة بيروت، و 27 كلم عن مدينة جونية، وبتراوح ارتفاعها عن سطح البحر ما بين 600 و 2500 متر. وهي تُعتبر من أوسع القرى في لبنان، بحيث تبلغ مساحتها 40 كلم². تمثل كفرذبيان مركزاً سياحياً مهماً خلال فصل الشتاء لكل من يهوى التزلج من اللبنانيين والأجانب على حدّ سواء، بحيث يتمتّع السائح بممارسة

هواياته في محطّات التزلُّج المنتشرة بفنادقها الفخمة، ومنها فقرا وعيون السيمان. كما تشكّل كفرذبيان وجهة سياحية هامّة خلال فصل الصيف، إذ تؤمّمها العائلات اللبنانية المقيمة على الساحل اللبناني لقضاء عطلة نهاية الأسبوع، طلباً للطقس المعتدل، وحضور المهرجانات المتنوّعة، والتمتّع ببساتين التفاح وبوفرة مياه العذبة ويناابيعها الغزيرة، مثال: نبع العسل ونبع اللبن. وتشتهر كفرذبيان، بالإضافة إلى السياحة الترفيهية والرياضية، بإرثها الثقافي والطبيعي، ويتمثّل بـ "آثار فقرا"، "الجسر الحجري الطبيعي"، ويعود تكوين هذا الجسر (جسر الحجر) إلى عوامل طبيعية وجيولوجية، حيث قامت الرياح والأمطار على مرّ السنين بحفر هذا الجسر على شكل قوس كبير. ويعود تكوين هذا الأخير إلى بداية فترة جيروسيك (*Jurassic*)، أي ما يقارب 200 مليون سنة. تبلغ فوهة القوس 38 متراً، وارتفاعه 58 متراً. أمّا في يومنا الحالي، فالجسر مهدّد بالتشويه لأسباب عديدة منها، ممارسة بعض النشاطات الرياضية العشوائية (كرياضة التسلّق...)، وتحويله إلى مكبّ للنفايات! ولذلك قرّرت البلدية، منذ عامين فقط، منع مختلف أنواع الرياضات ومراقبة محيط هذا الجسر باستمرار بهدف حمايته. وبالرغم من الجهود المبذولة لحماية هذا الموقع الطبيعي من خلال مرسوم يحمل رقم 934/1942، قرّر أحد مالكي الأراضي المحيطة بجسر الحجر بناء منزل خاص له في المحيط الخارجي لموقع الجسر. ولكنّ مسارعة نشطاء البيئة في لبنان للتدخّل لمنع هذا المشروع حالت ومتابعة العمل فيه، وبعد جهود جبّارة، وعلى مستويات قانونية ومؤسّساتية وسياسية عدّة، نجحوا بتوقيفه نهائياً عام 2013.

أمّا "آثار فقرا"، فتمتدّ على تلة صغيرة بعلو 1600 متر، مطّلة على وادٍ عميق مشهور بالأشكال الأرضية الكارستية (*Karst Landforms*). يقع الموقع على صخرة كارستية ضخمة تظهر على شكل غابة من الآثار، أو على شكل أنواع الشوكيات الظاهرة بين الأطلال. لقد تمّ بناء هذا الموقع في عام 43 بعد الميلاد، خلال حكم الإمبراطور الروماني *Tiberius Claudius*، ويتضمّن العديد من العناصر المعمارية المعتمدة في تلك الحقبة: "برج عالٍ" (*Big Tower*)، و"مذبح" (*Altar*)، و"ضريح" (*Shrine*)، و"معبد" (*Atargatis*)، وقبور قديمة عديدة، يعود تاريخها إلى العصر السابع قبل المسيح. بالإضافة إلى زيارة الموقعين السابقين، قام فريق هيلاند بزيارة أعضاء مجلس بلدية "كفرذبيان"، وكانت لهم جولة ميدانية على منطقة "عيون السيمان"، والتي تبلغ مساحتها حوالي مليون م²، وقد وضعتها البلدية بتصرّف "جنور لبنان" وإدارتها، وهي منظمّة أهلية تهتمّ بالبيئة الخضراء، حيث قامت بتنفيذ العديد من المشاريع، كالتشجير في الأراضي المرتفعة في منطقة كفرذبيان وغير ذلك. ويكمن الهدف الأول، وعلى المدى الطويل، في تحويل هذه الغابات من الأرز والشربين إلى مناطق محميّات طبيعية. وقد بدأ العمل بهذا المشروع عام 2007، وتمّت زراعة حوالي 30,000 شجرة حتّى يومنا هذا.

وبالرغم من الأهمية السياحية للقرية، نظراً لما تمتلكه من غنى في الإرث الثقافي والتاريخي والطبيعي، إلا أن فريق هيلاند لم يجد جهداً كافياً لصون محيطها البيئي من التعدادات المستمرة في قطاع البناء، أو في الأنشطة السياحية العشوائية وغير المنظمة. ونتيجةً لهذه السياسة الخاطئة ظهر تهديد كبير للينابيع العذبة والموارد الطبيعية، من خلال الامتداد المدي العشوائي، وبخاصة في ظل غياب القوانين المنظمة للعمل، وبالغياب الكلي للمراقبة، ما يجعل آثار النشاط السياحي في المنطقة يظهر بشكل سلبي على الصعيدين الإنساني والبيئي. وعليه، فقد أظهر فريق هيلاند *Heland FTHM* كل الاهتمام والرغبة الواسعة بالمساعدة وتقديم يد العون لبلدية كفرديان، في إطار التخطيط الاستراتيجي لتنمية رؤيا سياحية قائمة على الاستدامة، وتطويرها، وذلك بهدف صون الموارد الطبيعية والثقافية وحفظها.

- زيارة ميدانية لمستنقع عميق

كان الهدف من هذه الزيارة دراسة وضع مستنقع عميق وإمكانياته السياحية، باعتباره منطقة فريدة من نوعها لجهة المناظر الطبيعية والنظام الإيكولوجي في لبنان. وقد تركّز الاستطلاع على الأهمية البيئية للموقع، وإجراءات الإدارة، وجهود الحماية، والبحوث، وتطوير السياحة، والتنظيم. وإلى ذلك، فقد نوقشت المشاريع السياحية المحتملة التي يمكن تطويرها في هذا المستنقع، وفي المناطق المحيطة به، وذلك في إطار استراتيجية عامة للتنمية المستدامة.

يعتبر مستنقع عميق، الواقع في قرية عميق (البقاع الغربي)، من أكثر المواقع الغنية بالتنوع البيولوجي في لبنان؛ فهو مُحْتَضَن بين الحقول الزراعية الخصبة في سهل البقاع ومنحدرات غابات البلوط الصخرية المؤدية إلى مرتفعات جبال الباروك المهيبة. وهو ملكية خاصة تمت حمايتها منذ نهاية الحرب اللبنانية عام 1990، وبجهود خاصة. عام 1999، ورد المستنقع على لائحة "رامسار" بصفة منطقة رطبة ذات أهمية دولية، كما تمّ تصنيفه موقعاً هاماً للطيور (IBA). وفي عام 2005، أعلنت منظمة اليونسكو مستنقع عميق جزءاً من المحيط الحيوي لمحمية أرز الشوف الطبيعية (SBR)، ويُعدّ واحداً من أفضل الأماكن في لبنان لمراقبة الحياة البرية وإجراء البحوث العلمية في مجال التنوع البيولوجي، إذ يضمّ تنوعاً بيولوجياً غنياً من الزواحف والثدييات والفرشات، والبرمائيات، والأسماك، والزهور، والنباتات... إلخ. كما يمتدّ على واحدة من أهمّ طرق هجرة الطيور في العالم، مثال اللقلاق الأبيض، والبعج، والنسور، والشنقب، والطيور المائية. لذا من الضروري المحافظة عليه، وإلا تأثرت مجموعات الطيور بشكل سلبي.

لكنّ الحفاظ على مستنقع عميق على المدى الطويل يتطلّب قانوناً عاماً، كما ينبغي على أصحاب ومديري الموقع أن يبذلوا جهداً أكبر في سبيل تطوير الأنشطة السياحية المنظمة، المرتكزة على الطبيعة والتعليم. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فقد رصد الفريق افتقار عميق إلى التكنولوجيات الجديدة؛

لذلك أوصى فريق هيلاند *Heland FTHM* أصحاب ومديري الموقع البدء باستخدام المزيد من الابتكار والتكنولوجيا من أجل إدارة أكثر فعالية- وبخاصة في إطار الأنشطة السياحية- رصدًا وتنظيمًا.

- زيارة إلى منطقة بسكنتا والجوار

حيث إنَّ منطقة بسكنتا تزخر بالمناظر الطبيعية الخلّابة، جاءت زيارة فريق هيلاند إلى المنطقة للوقوف على مقوماتها السياحية، وعلى الخطط التي من شأنها تنشيط السياحة، بعامة، والبيئية منها، بخاصة، في منطقة عُرُفت بموقعها الجغرافي المتميّز، وبعمقها التاريخي الموثق. تمحورت المناقشات مع المجتمع المحلي حول وضع المنطقة عمومًا، والقيمة السياحية للمناظر الطبيعية والأماكن التي شكّلت جاذبًا سياحيًا منذ زمن بعيد. وقد اطّلع الفريق على دور جميع الفاعلين، من قيّمين ومستثمرين ومسؤولين، في الإدارة والتخطيط والاستثمار لهذا الموقع المتميّز، وفي حماية التراث الإنساني والثقافي والطبيعي.

تقع بسكنتا عند سفح جبل صنّين، وتعلو وادي الجماجم في قضاء المتن، في محافظة جبل لبنان؛ وترتفع عن سطح البحر ما بين 1050 و1350 مترًا، وتبعد عن بيروت العاصمة 45 كلم. ولعلَّ هذا القرب من بيروت، يُضاف إليه الطقس المعتدل، قد جعلًا من بسكنتا مسكنًا دائمًا لأكثر من 50 % من سكّانها. تُعتبر بسكنتا من الأماكن المهمة في جبل لبنان، نظرًا لكونها غنيّة بالتراث الثقافي، ولتنوّع مناظرها الطبيعية، من جبال، وسفوح، ووديان، وغابات، وأنهار. فهي تشبه إلى حدّ كبير القلعة، وقد أحاطت بها الجبال والعوائق الطبيعية من كلّ جانب، ما جعلها مكانًا لإقامة المسيحيين منذ العام 679 ميلادي. بسكنتا، كوجهة سياحية، معروفة، يقصدها السيّاح من داخل لبنان وخارجه لجمالها واعتدال مناخها. وعلى الرغم من فرادتها، لم تحظْ بسكنتا يومًا بخطة تهدف إلى استثمار مقوماتها السياحية، والحفاظ على تراثها بطريقة مستدامة؛ لا، بل على العكس، إذ إنّ الاستثمارات العديدة في قطاع العقارات تحديدًا، والذي شهد نموًّا ملحوظًا في الآونة الأخيرة، سوف تؤدّي إلى تزايد الخطر على المصادر الطبيعية، لجهة استهلاكها غير المتوازن، وتدميرها، على المدى المتوسط، والطويل أيضًا.

إنَّ الملكية الفرديّة، أو الخاصّة، تشكّل أهمّ العناصر التي تهدّد المناظر الطبيعيّة التي تزخر بها المنطقة، وتحول دون تحويل بعض المساحات، من غابات ووديان وجبال، إلى محميّات طبيعيّة تحظى باهتمام أصحاب الاختصاص، لجهة الحفاظ على تنوّعها الحيوي، وتطوير السياحة البيئيّة التي ترسخ ثبات الناس في أرضهم، وتضمن الإنماء المستدام. لا أحد يرغب بالاعتقاد أنّ بسكنتا تشكّل نموذجًا للإهمال، أو لتقاعس المسؤولين عن حمايتها وتطويرها، وهي التي تملك كلّ ما يلزم لتتألق كوجهة سياحيّة فريدة، إلّا أنّ الواقع يشير إلى غياب خطّة، أو مجموع خطط يشارك في وضعها المجتمع

المحلي، بمساعدة البلدية والجمعيات، على اختلافها. ولن ندخل هنا في التفاصيل، أو في الوقائع الاجتماعية والسياسية التي تبرر هذا التلکؤ في حماية بسكنتا التراث والطبيعة.

ومن بين المواقع الجميلة في بسكنتا، نذكر، على سبيل المثال لا الحصر: جبل صنين، وقناة باكيش، ووادي الدلب، ومرج بسكنتا، وهو عبارة عن غابة من الصنوبر، ووادي الجماجم. صنين هي ثالث أعلى قمة في لبنان؛ تقع على ارتفاع 2680 متراً فوق سطح البحر. وقد سُميت بهذا الاسم نسبة إلى "صن" و"نين"، آلهة الشعوب القديمة التي استوطنت بسكنتا قبل الميلاد. وقد اشتهرت صنين بشجر الأرز في عصر الفينيقيين. أمّا اليوم، فيُقصد الجبل لجماله، ومناخه، وموقعه الذي يمكن الزائر من رؤية جزيرة "قبرص" من أعاليه! وفي الطريق إلى صنين يطالعك مكان هادئ وروحاني، هو ضريح الأديب والمفكر والفيلسوف ميخائيل نعيمة.

أمّا بالنسبة إلى قناة باكيش، والتي سُميت تيمناً باسم الإله الروماني باخوس، فتقع في منخفض نسبةً إلى صنين، وهي مشهورة بالينابيع العذبة، وبأحد أقدم منتجعات التزلج في لبنان. وكان هذا المنتجع قد توقّف عن العمل في بداية الحرب اللبنانية عام 1975، ولم يُعدّ فتحه أمام الزائرين لاحقاً. تجدر الإشارة إلى أنّ الينابيع المتفجرة من جبل صنين وقناة باكيش مهددة حالياً بمشاريع العقارات التي لا تتسجم مع أيّ خطة لحماية هذه المنطقة السياحية، ثقافياً، وبيئياً. أمّا مرج بسكنتا الذي يحتضن غابة من الصنوبر المنتجة، فهو أيضاً مهدد بالاندثار بسبب النشاطات غير المنظمة، كالصيد، وتعبيد الطرقات، والبناء. كلّ هذه العوامل وغيرها تؤدي إلى تراجع الغابة، وتهدد نظامها البيئي بالكامل.

في السنوات الأخيرة، عُرفت بسكنتا أيضاً بدربها الأدبي الذي استحدث من قبل منظمة "درب الجبل اللبناني (LMTA- LEBANESE MOUNTAIN TRAIL ASSOCIATION) سنة 2008، بطول 24 كلم. يمرّ هذا الدرب الأدبي لبسكنتا بست ضيع أو بلدات صغيرة أخرى، وهي: كفرعقاب، بقعاتا، وادي الكرم، المشرع، عين القبو، زرعايا. إنّ هذا الدرب يسمح للزائر بالتعرف إلى تراث بسكنتا الأدبي، وهي الموطن للكثير من المفكرين والفلاسفة والشعراء، أمثال: ميخائيل نعيمة، رشيد أيوب، سليمان كنانة، جورج غانم، أمين معلوف، وغيرهم. وكان أمين معلوف، الأديب المعاصر، قد استوحى من أحداث تاريخية واقعية جرت في تلك المنطقة لدن الحكم العثماني، مجريات رائعته "صخرة طانيوس"؛ تلك الرواية التي نال عليها جائزة فرنسية مرموقة (Prix Concourt)، وقد تُرجمت إلى أكثر من لغة.

من الواضح أنّ منطقة بسكنتا الغنية بتراثها، تنفرد إلى خطة طموح تلاحظ ما تزخر به هذه المنطقة من عناصر طبيعية وثقافية، فتبني عليها ليمّ تحويل المكان إلى وجهة سياحية متميزة ومنظمة. ومن شأن خطة كهذه أن تلجأ إلى المعايير العالمية، وإلى استخدام التكنولوجيا الحديثة لحماية الإرث الثقافي والمناظر الطبيعية التي تُعتبر اليوم، وأكثر من أيّ وقت مضى، مهددة بالتراجع والانحسار. من هنا، أمل فريق هيلاند من كلّ المعنيين بالشأن السياحي، إيلاء منطقة بسكنتا كلّ الاهتمام اللازم؛ كما

يدعو كل الأطراف، من جمعيات أهلية، ومجلس بلدي، ونوادٍ للعمل معاً في سبيل وضع استراتيجية علمية غايتها إنقاذ المعالم السياحية والمناظر الطبيعية، على المدى المتوسط، والطويل، وكذلك تطوير السياحة البيئية التي تضمن، عبر استدامتها، الحفاظ على كل ما هو ثمين في بسكنتا، وفي غيرها من المناطق اللبنانية.

- الخاتمة

إنّ في طليعة أهداف مشروع هيلاند، تقديم دراسة واقعية مقارنة تشخيصية للتراث الحضاري والمناظر الطبيعية في منطقة حوض البحر الأبيض المتوسط، بهدف حمايتها، وذلك ضمن خطة عامة يُراد لها أن تُحقّق مفهوم السياحة المستدامة. وعليه، فإنّ أيّ دراسة مقارنة تحتاج إلى كمّ هائل من المعلومات المستقاة من مصادرها مباشرة، لا من المراجع، على كثرتها وأنواعها وأهميتها؛ لذا، دأب فريق هيلاند، كلية السياحة وإدارة الفنادق في الجامعة اللبنانية، على القيام بزيارات حقلية إلى مناطق لبنانية شتى، كما مرّ في سياق هذه المقالة، حيث اجتمعت عناصر عدّة، من شأنها، معاً، أن تصنع منظراً طبيعياً، وتراثاً ثقافياً وإنسانياً متميّزاً. وإذا كانت المقومات الطبيعية، من غابات، وأنهار، وجبال، ووديان، وتقاليد حضارية، من آثار، وأبنية تراثية، ومعالم بيئية، وغيرها، تشكّل مزيجاً يضع لبنان في مقدّمة الدول، على المستوى السياحي الجاذب، فإنّ غياب القوانين التي تحمي هذه المقومات من شأنه أن يهدّد بقاءها وصمودها في وجه الزمن، كما يمكنه أن يؤدّي إلى اندثارها، وخرابها!

وفي الختام، وبهدف تحليل الوضع القائم، عمّد فريق هيلاند إلى اقتراح مجموعة من المؤشّرات (*Indicators*) تتمحور حول استعمال التكنولوجيا الحديثة في مقاربة الحفاظ على الأماكن السياحية والترويج لها. ولقد لاحظ فريق هيلاند نقصاً حاداً في الاستراتيجيات المُقدّمة لتطوير الصناعة السياحية في لبنان. هذا، وسيعمل الفريق على الحدّ، لا، بل منع تخريب المناظر الطبيعية والثقافية، في حوض البحر الأبيض المتوسط عموماً، وفي لبنان على وجه التحديد. ومن المعروف أنّ تقدّمها هائلاً قد أُحرز خلال العقود الثلاثة السالفة في مجال الحفاظ على المعالم الطبيعية؛ إلّا أنّ هذه التقنيات لا تُستعمل على نطاق واسع، لذا كان لا بدّ من القيام بعمل ميداني توثيقي لجمع المعلومات بشأن الكثير من المناطق، المحمية منها، وغير المحمية، ومقارنتها بنموذج معيّن يراعي أفضل المعايير، ويعتمد أجود التقنيات. هذه الدراسة ستشكّل القاعدة التي ستركز عليها مجمل التوصيات ضمن خطة متكاملة تهدف إلى صون كلّ المعالم السياحية، والاستفادة منها بالمقابل للنهوض بالقطاع السياحي وفق ما صار يُعرف الآن بـ "السياحة المستدامة".

Sustainable Tourism Impacts in the City of Madaba, Jordan

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Abstract

This paper assessed the indicators that are most likely to affect sustainable tourism in the region of Madaba, one of the most attractive sites in central Jordan. The indicators were classified into 5 sub-groups and include managerial, economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts. The methods of the study relied on structured questionnaires that were distributed among stakeholders and locals. The results show that the carrying capacity at the attraction sites is very high (high tourist flow in a small area). The wastewater, water and energy management is severely impacted as well as transportation. The social impact is also very high and it is substantially contested by the inelastic cultural norms and traditions especially when tackling female inequality and empowerment.

Keywords

Madaba; Sustainable Development; Sustainable Tourism Indicators; Tourism Impacts

Sustainable Tourism Impacts in the City of Madaba, Jordan

Introduction

On an international level, attention to monitoring and evaluating sustainable tourism has been increased, and coupled with efforts on national and local policies, guidelines and codes as well as multiple conventions, programmes, workshops and media coverage (Webester and Ivanov, 2013; Butler, 1998; Gebhard et al., 2009). Local governments have become more aware of the negative impacts of tourism on the environment, societies and cultures. At the same time, the academic lexicon has become filled with a huge number of related studies that primarily focused on how to find greener, and fairer alternatives that combat impacts (Lozano-Oyola, Blancas, González and Caballero, 2012). In this regard, sustainable tourism refers to a tourism that succeeds in reducing the negative impacts or increasing the positive benefits on the environment, society and economy (TEATA, 2010). The World Tourism Organization (WTO) defined sustainable tourism as that which meets the needs of the present tourists and host regions, while protecting and enhancing the opportunity for tourists and protecting the host regions (WTO, 2004). Achieving sustainable tourism envisaged the management of those social, economic, and aesthetic resources where all the present needs could be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems (Gebhard et al., 2009).

Because tourism is a growing industry it has brought several negative impacts on the natural and socio-cultural environment of countless tourism attractions (Hall and Lew, 1998; Mowfirth and Munt, 1998; Choi and Sirakaya, 2006). Managing tourism based on sustainable principles ensures long term quality of life for the local community as well as to the quality of the visitor's experience (Bramwell and Lane, 1993; Stabler, 1997). Tourist destinations should be planned, prepared and experienced in a way that sustains the local community, its culture, environment and ecosystem while still being profitable (Durovic and Lovrentjev, 2014). There are many benefits related to the social, cultural and environmental aspects of tourism, including renovated recreational facilities, a wider offering of leisure activities, a cleaner community, better preservation of historical buildings and cultural assets, and a better quality of life (Gursoy, Jurowski and Uysal, 2002; Jurowski, Uysal and Williams, 1997; Madrigal, 1995; McCool and Martin, 1994; Perdue, Long and Allen, 1990; Ross, 1992; Choi and Murray, 2010).

As the concept of sustainability expands into new territories, such as tourism, the need to implement and develop indicators in practice are crucial for the developmental process and understanding of the environmental, economic and social impacts. According to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), indicators are vital in the decision making process (UNCSD, 2007). They serve as a guidance tool to simplify the vast amount of knowledge of the physical and social sciences and turns this into workable and manageable units of information for decision makers (Ibid.). The UNCSD (2007) report underlines that: "we measure what we value, and value what we measure". This is a reflection of the importance of indicators as a method to facilitate the communication of ideas, thoughts and values. Moreover,

they result in policy actions in response to problems highlighted by such indicators. Sustainable indicators measure any progress that attempts to achieve sustainable tourism goals and objectives, while at the same time serve as an early warning tool for potential environmental, social and economic damage (Hardi & Zdan, 1997). The Brundtland Commission argues that measuring sustainability goes beyond economic issues, and should reflect the comprehensive approach that is at the heart of sustainability in order to gain a true understanding of human wellbeing (Hardi & Zdan, 1997).

Sustainable indicators should take a more holistic approach to measurements, where the different aspects (environmental, economic and social) that have impacts on a certain community are interconnected. In general, sustainable indicators can be distinguished from simple environmental, economic, and social indicators by the fact that they are integrating, forward looking, distributional, and developed with the input of multiple stakeholders in the community (Maclaren, 1996). During the process of selecting appropriate indicators, it is crucial to have a broad knowledge of indicators identified within literature (Tanguay, Rajaonson, and Therrien, 2011).

The notion of sustainable tourism and its applications is still relatively new in Jordan, and adding to this the absence of tourism impact studies, makes sustainability hard to reach. As mentioned previously, assessing the sustainable indicators of tourism may bring returns in the form of a better economy and local community development. This is very much applicable to Jordan where there are diverse types of site attractions distributed all over the country (scenic, archaeological, cultural, religious, etc.). The city of Madaba is one of these sites, and holds the value of being attractive to visitors in terms of religious, archaeological, scenic and cultural tourism. The impact of tourism has not been investigated and sustainability is far beyond the considerations of stakeholders and decision makers and this works to the detriment of the local community of the city. For this reason this study assesses the sustainable indicators in this city. Given the complexity of measuring sustainable indicators in Jordan due to the lack of available data and resources, multiple indicator systems were used to establish the database of the study.



The Church of St George Square, Madaba

The Study Area - Madaba City

Madaba city is one of the major tourism destinations in Jordan; it is accessible and located close to many other significant tourism destinations such as Mount Nebo, Mukawir, Hammamat Main, Um Al-Rasas, and the Dead Sea. It is also about 20 minutes away from the capital city of Amman. Throughout its history Madaba has witnessed the presence of many civilizations: Moabite, Nabatean, Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Umayyad. Its heritage dates back to at least 4500 BC. Madaba's historic urban core includes the Saraya building and the Roman Catholic chapel of St John (MOTA, 2005) and includes many archaeological sites. During the Late Roman period, Christianity was established in the Madaba region, as it became the seat of the bishop at least from the middle of the 5th century.

During the Ottoman period, Madaba witnessed major urban development especially after land reform. The historic fabric of Madaba supports a wealth in urban form characterized by a centralized morphological scheme meeting and melting in the historic core (MOTA, 2005). Accordingly, this represents the overlapping and co-existence of many archaeological sites in the city. One of the attractions in the city of Madaba is the famous 'Church of the Map' that contains the most preserved mosaic map of the Holy Land. There are religious buildings that are situated in the northwest quadrant of the historic core, which are attractive to tourists who come as pilgrims. Additionally, the Burnt Palace, the Church of the Martyrs 'Al. Khadir', the Church of the Virgin Mary; and several other urban structures dating to the 19th and early 20th centuries, such as the houses of the Twal, Jumean, Karadsheh, and Hamarneh families, (USAID, 2007) are part of Madaba's historic core.



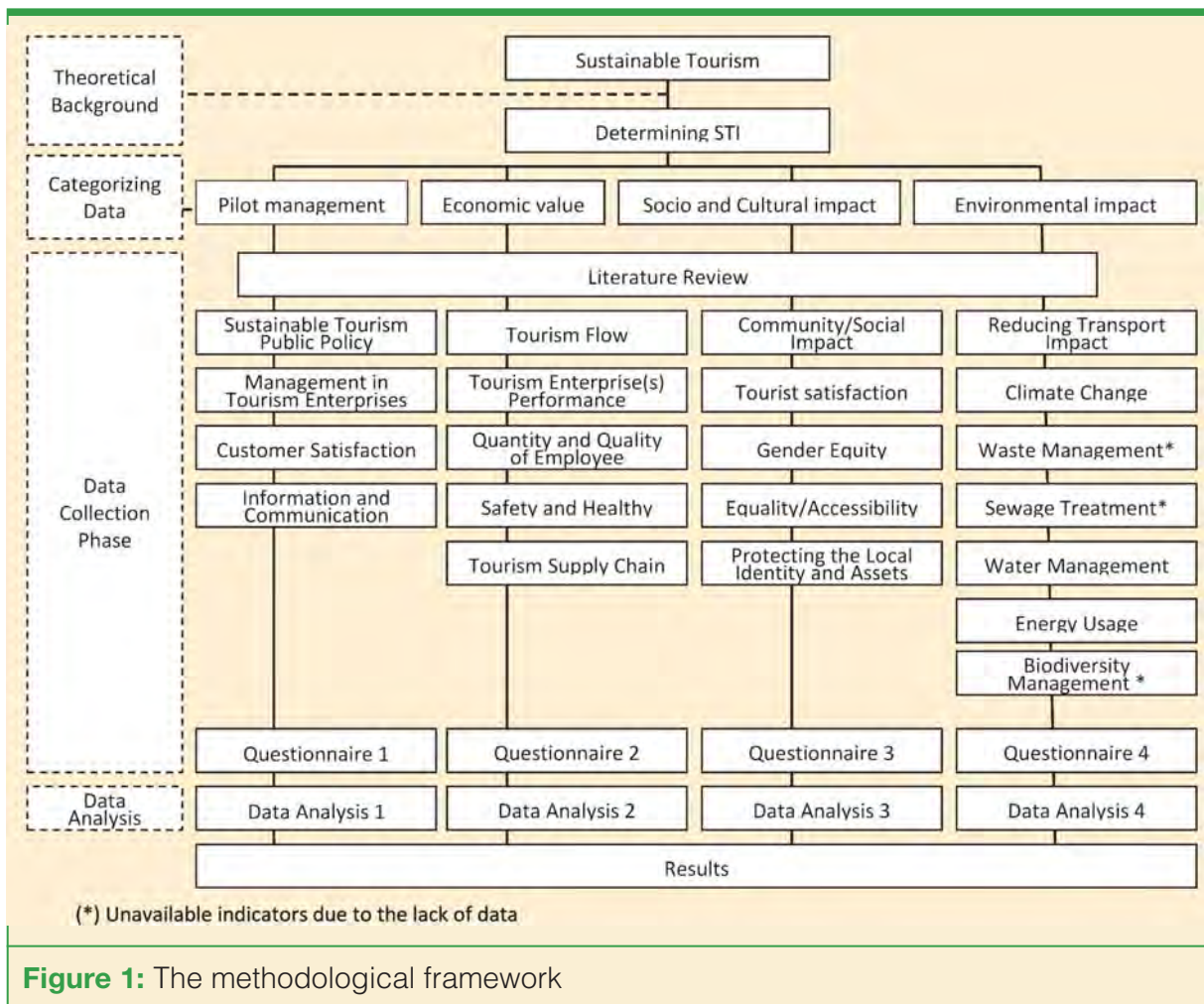
Aerial photo of Madaba showing its Main Ring Road (Source: MOTA, 2005)

Materials and Methods

The methodological framework that was followed to conduct this study is shown in Figure 1. The questionnaires targeted various stakeholders in Madaba including enterprises, residents, visitors, and managers. The tourism impact indicators were divided into four main categories:

- management (sustainable tourism public policy, management in tourism enterprises, customer satisfaction, and information and communication),
- economy (tourism flow, enterprises' performance, quantity and quality of employees, health and safety, and tourism supply chain),
- society (social impact, tourist satisfaction, gender equity, accessibility, and local identity), and
- environment (transport impact, climate change, waste management, sewage treatment, water management, energy use, and biodiversity).

These indicators were selected based on the WTO manual for sustainable tourism indicators and other literary resources of similar studies; the criteria of selection took into consideration also the environmental and socio-cultural context of the study area. The questionnaires were developed after a thorough review of literature on tourism topics that include sustainable tourism public policy, tourism flow, social impact, and transportation impact. The sample



targeted four main stakeholders – enterprises, residents, visitors and decision makers that are in charge of management (Table 1). The residents and the visitors (100 and 207 respectively) were selected randomly during the period of the study. The sample size of residents (no. = 100) was calculated according to the following formula:

$$SS = \frac{Z^2 * (p)(p-1)}{C^2}$$

Where:

Z = Z value (1.96 for 95% confidence interval)

p = Percentage of picking a choice, expressed as decimal (0.5 in this study)

C = Confidence interval, expressed as decimal (0.1 in this study)

The study was carried out during the period March to October 2014. The collected data was analysed using the statistical software SPSS.

Stakeholders	The number of distributed Questionnaire	
Enterprises	Entertainment	12
	Hotels	10
	Restaurants	25
	Others	3
	Total	50
Residents	100	
Visitors	207	
Management	Three Main Organizations: Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA); Department of Antiquities of Jordan (DoA); Greater Madaba Municipality(GMM)	

Table 1: Targeted Organizations



Madaba Governorate Circle

The Results and Discussion

Almost half of the residents were satisfied with their involvement and their influence in the planning and development of tourism. A total of 8% of the tourism organizations used their own measures for environmental quality assurance. However, none of these organizations have sustainability reports according to international standards. Residents' satisfaction is an important determinant of perceived positive and negative impacts of tourism (Nunko and Ramkissoon, 2011), and community commitment here was not found to be an antecedent of attitudes to tourism, probably because there is a substantial involvement of the local community in this industry. Consequently it is necessary that the local community supports future tourism development and maintains its robust growth (Hanafiah, Jamaluddin and Zulkifly, 2013). On the other hand, the majority of the visitors (87%) were satisfied with their experience during their stay in Madaba (Table 2). About 84% expressed their willingness to recommend Madaba to their friends and families, and 82% agreed that their experience in Madaba was up to their expectations. Tourists' satisfaction plays an important role in the survival and future of any tourism products and services (Gursoy, McCleary and Lepsito, 2007). Satisfaction is more an evaluation than an attitude and is a complex construct (Yüksel and Rimmington, 1998; Oliver, 1993), which contributes toward a positive impact in the area of Madaba as the results show. Regarding communication in the study area, a total of 76% of businesses (50 enterprises: 12 entertainment, 10 hotels, 25 restaurants and 3 other types of enterprises) communicate their sustainability efforts to visitors.

The results showed that the number of tourist nights per month in the last year was 1,929. The relative contribution of tourism to Madaba's economy accounted for approximately 13% of its total GDP. The number of same-day visitors in the high and low seasons was not included in the initial tourism statistical bulletin prepared by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA) for the period January to March 2013 and 2014. Yet, it was shown that the total number of tourists in Madaba in the high season during the period between April and May increased in 2014.

According to MOTA, the average length of stay of tourists from January to September was 1.95 days in 2014, 1.91 days in 2013, and 1.4 days in 2012. An average of 1.8 hours was spent by same-day visitors for the year 2014. Eight enterprises, 8 hotels, and 17 restaurants were

Month	2013			2014			Relative Change 13/14		
	Foreign	Jordanian	Total	Foreign	Jordanian	Total	Foreign	Jordanian	Total
January	9.46	64	9.52	10.46	32	10.50	10.6%	-50.0%	10.2%
February	12.00	42	12.04	14.07	24	14.10	17.3%	-42.9%	17.1%
March	21.13	68	21.20	23.54	64	23.60	11.4%	-5.9%	11.4%
April	28.59	601	29.20	33.94	258	34.20	18.7%	-57.1%	17.1%
May	22.30	58	22.36	28.60	198	28.80	28.2%	241.4%	28.8%
June	10.26	34	10.30	14.12	56	14.18	37.6%	64.7%	37.7%
Total	103.76	867	104.63	124.76	632	125.39	20.2%	-27.1%	19.8%

Table 2: The total number of tourists who visited Madaba in the high season
(Source: MoTA, 2013-2014)

involved in the managements/cooperative marketing at the site. Shorter stays represent greater administration costs for enterprises in the tourism industry; the economic impact of tourism on destinations depends to a large extent on the length of stay (Martinez-Garcia and Raya, 2008) because the tourist product must adapt itself to the amount of time the tourist has available at a destination (Decrop and Snelders, 2004). Two days of stay as in the case of Madaba is relatively long compared to similar attraction sites in the country, which means a positive economic impact. This is also supported by the number of arrivals to hotels at the study area. According to MOTA, a total of 6,277 hotel arrivals (12,908 nights) were registered for the year 2014 in Madaba, 15,989 hotel arrivals (23,148 nights) in 2013, and 21,304 hotel arrivals (34,799 nights) in 2012.

Enterprise Type	Involve in the managements/ cooperative marketing		Do not involve in the managements/ cooperative marketing	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Entertainment	8	66 %	4	34 %
Hotels	8	80 %	2	20 %
Restaurants	17	68 %	8	32 %
Other	0	0 %	3	100 %
Total	33	66 %	17	34 %

Table 3: Involvement in the managements/cooperative marketing

About 82% of tourism enterprises are actively taking steps to source local, sustainable, and fair trade goods and services in Madaba. Madaba is covered by a policy that promotes local, sustainable and/or fair trade products and services. About 66% of tourism enterprises are sourcing a minimum of 25% of food and drink from local/regional producers. The study found that 44% of hotel residents are satisfied with tourism. The percentages of men and women employed in the various tourism enterprises in Madaba are shown in Table 4.

Tourism Enterprises	Men		Women	
	Male Number	Percentage	Female Number	Percentage
Entertainment Enterprises	21	55.26 %	17	44.74 %
Hotels	87	73.72 %	31	26.28 %
Restaurants	262	81.36 %	60	18.64 %
Others	2	66.67 %	1	33.33 %

Table 4: Percentage of men and women employed in the various tourism enterprises



Madaba's Archeological Park

As indicated in Table 4, there is a substantial disparity in gender employment in the study area. Previous studies rationalized gender disparity in tourism to the culture of tourism (Jordan, 1997; Gentry, 2007; Tucker, 2007; Cheer, Reeves and Laing, 2013). Tourism is a powerful cultural ground and process that shape and is shaped by gendered representations of places, people, nations and cultures (Aitchison, 2000). In Jordan, the image of the transformation from women’s social reproduction work to reproductive work is still static. Gender disparity in tourism in Jordan is attributed to the lower social status of women. The results of the study by Assaf (2011) have shown that the current social and economic status of women in Jordan is definitely lower than that of men, which creates challenges for women in the tourism sector. This is also supported by the percentages of men and women holding the position of ‘general manager’ in tourism enterprises in Madaba as shown in Table 5.

Tourism Enterprises	Men		Women	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Entertainment Enterprises	8	66.67%	4	33.33 %
Hotels	9	90.00 %	1	10.00 %
Restaurants	20	80.00 %	5	20.00 %
Others	2	66.67 %	1	33.33 %

Table 5: Percentage of tourism enterprises where the general manager position is held by a female or a male



Madaba Municipality Circle

The gender disparity in Madaba, which is culturally constructed, lowered the average wages of women compared to that of men. The gross wages for men and women for the years 2012 and 2013 in all sectors are shown in Tables 6 and 7 (Statistics for the year 2014 were not available to the public at the time of writing).

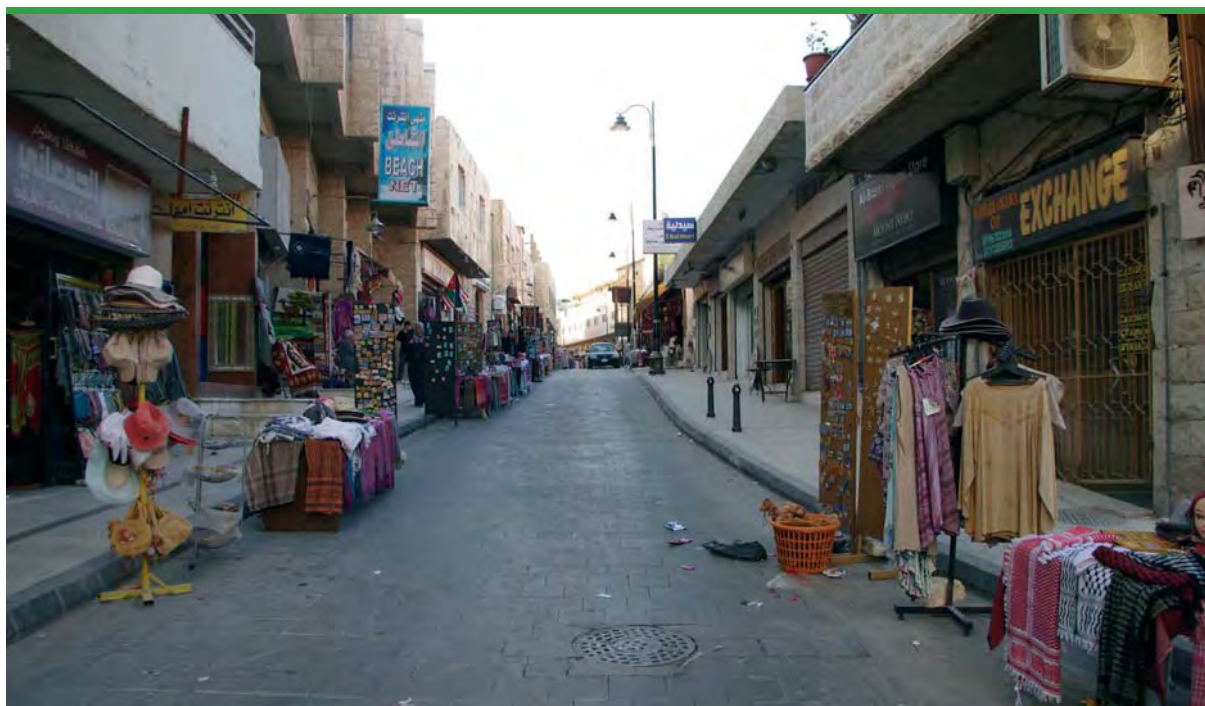
Pilot area level (above 15 years old) 2012									
<111.1 Euros		111.1- 221.1 Euros		222.2- 332.2 Euros		333.3- 554.4 Euros		>555.5 Euros	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0.7	2.2	10.9	16.8	27	27.8	52.8	47.6	8.6	5.6

Table 6: The gross wages for men and women in all sectors for the year 2012
(Source: MoTA)

Pilot area level (above 15 years old) 2013									
<111.1 Euros		111.1- 221.1 Euros		222.2- 332.2 Euros		333.3- 554.4 Euros		>555.5 Euros	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0.9	1.3	5.9	10.1	25	20.2	56.8	60.7	11.5	7.7

Table 7: The gross wages for men and women in all sectors for the year 2013
(Source: MoTA)

A total of 100 residents were asked about the impact of tourism on the integrity of the identity of Madaba. Most of the reviewed respondents perceived tourism as improving and maintaining the identity of Madaba. However, place identities should be reconstructed to meet tourist desires but at the same time maintain authenticity and tradition (Urry, 1995). The effect of tourism on identity is actually multi-factorial (Gmelch, 2004), which can either obliterate identity and local tradition (Mowfirth and Munt, 1998) or revive them (Leong, 1989; Grunewald, 2002). At the historical site of Madaba the foreign market may contribute to an identity loss although locals gain economic benefits (Greenwood, 1977).



One of the markets in Madaba aimed for tourists

Various modes of transportation have been used by tourists to reach the site. About 58% of the respondents reached Madaba using rental cars, 18% used public transportation, 14% came through travel agencies, and only 10% used a taxi. The average travel distance by same-day visitors within the site is estimated to be 2 km. The area of Madaba is very small, making it vulnerable to tourist overuse and overdevelopment, which poses extra burdens on the carrying capacity of the site (Inskeep, 1987). During the high seasons, road congestion and pollution is increased and thus impacts on the local environment, taking into consideration that the infrastructure at the site is modest. Previous studies have shown that transportation at destination sites may affect the ecology, degrade the destination, influence tourist experience and the economy (Sorupia, 2005), which is actually the case for the city of Madaba.



The entrance to the Shrine dedicated to the Beheading of St John the Baptist

None of the enterprises are involved in any form of climate change mitigation schemes. There are currently no climate change adaptation strategies or planning conducted by any governmental or non-governmental organization.

The data regarding the waste volume produced by Madaba or the volume of recycled waste is unfortunately not available. However, the study shows that only 8% of tourism entertainment enterprises are separating different types of waste and none of the hotels, restaurants or other enterprises is actually considering this issue. Data on the percentage of sewage treated at a secondary level prior to discharge in the pilot site is not available and could not be gathered from surveys. The percentage of commercial accommodation connected to the central sewage system and/or employing tertiary sewage treatment is not available either. Many tourists have no perception of the status of Jordan's water supply and consume more water when compared to local usage. The percentage of tourism enterprises in Madaba that have switched to low-energy lighting is 94%. Only 4% of the enterprises used renewable sources of energy. There are currently no plans for the protection, conservation, and management of local biodiversity and landscapes. In addition there are no biodiversity management and monitoring plans or even measures to combat light and noise pollution.

Conclusion

The study assessed five categories of sustainable tourism impacts: managerial, economic, social, cultural and environmental. Unfortunately some of the sub-categories were not assessed because of the unavailability of data and/or a measure, and include waste management, sewage treatment, and biodiversity management. The carrying capacity of the site is very high (i.e. the very high tourist flow in a small geographical area), which puts further demands on water, wastewater and energy management plans that may contribute to better sustainability. The situation becomes more serious in summer due to the massive tourist flow, where the stay reaches approximately 2 days per visitor. Most of the tourism enterprises have very good measures of safety but which need to be upgraded continuously. The transportation impact is very high in the city mainly due to the extensive use of rented cars by tourists and the modest infrastructure. There are no measures to combat climate change in this particular region of the country. On the social level, the city is almost like any other Jordanian city, where the norms, traditions and culture dominate the collective behaviour of the residents and how they deal with tourism in general and visitors in particular. Women are still treated with inequity in the tourism sector, which consequently interferes with the visitors' attitudes, interactions and stay at the city of Madaba. Sustainable tourism in the city of Madaba is severely impacted due to the nature of the city as a geographically-restricted site which is at the same time culturally dominated.

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Gender Equality in the Tourism Industry: A Case Study from Madaba, Jordan

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Abstract

The traditional cultural values in many localities may interfere with female participation in the tourism industry and even lead to inequality. Gender equality is considered as one of the indicators for the socio-cultural sustainability of tourist sites. Hence, female equality in one of the attraction sites in Jordan (Madaba) was evaluated using structured questionnaires and interviews. The results show that the tourism sector provides limited access to women's employment and opportunities for creating self-employment in small and medium-sized income generating activities in the region of Madaba, thus creating few paths towards the elimination of poverty among women and local communities in the study area. Inequality was very evident even in other industries due to cultural pressure. This study recommends collaboration among all the stakeholders - national and local governmental authorities and non-governmental bodies, industry, local communities, and community-based tourism initiatives to increase women's participation in the tourism industry and alleviate inequality.

Keywords

Jordan; Madaba; Women; Tourism; Inequality

Gender Equality in the Tourism Industry: A Case Study from Madaba, Jordan

Introduction

Gender is an integral part of one's identity, referring to the social, cultural and psychological aspects in life, but 'sex' refers to the biological aspects of being male or female. The definition of gender implies differences among the various cultures depending on the values, beliefs and behavioural expectations that are at the same time changeable over time (Jucan and Jucan, 2013). Gender in the tourism industry is viewed as being constructed, legitimated, reproduced and reworked (Aitchison, 2003), which may affect the gender identities of tourists, locals and employees (Crouch, 2002). Tourism is a highly gendered industry (Pritchard and Morgan, 2000), where women's participation is obvious but culturally variable. Swain (1990) noted that men and women are generally unequally affected by tourism because of the collective understanding of the social construction of gender (Craik, 1997; Jordan, 1997; Adkins, 1995; Kinnaid and Hall, 1996; Kinnaid et al., 1994). However, 'equality of opportunity' may contribute to the sustainable development and empowerment of females (Moser, 1989), which, however, differs from the feminist approach as this stresses the liberal development of women (Boserup, 1970).

In Jordan there is an inherent conflict between traditional values and the obligation of private enterprise, such as tourism, which places enormous pressure on women, at the expense of social sustainability and equality. The image of women in Jordan, as an Arab country, has been portrayed as frail and dominated by male relatives, a cultural phenomenon which stems from the traditional and religious laws. This phenomenon keeps women back from entering the tourism industry (Baum et al., 1997). Greater equality, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), is an essential component of a sustainable tourism industry because women make up almost half of the potential workforce. In addition, women's empowerment in tourism increases their economic opportunities which helps them to obtain equality and dignity (Jucan and Jucan, 2013). Masadeh (2013), for example, found that the tourism industry in Jordan is male-dominated, particularly in the upper echelons of management.

By the end of the first decade of the 21st century, the female participation rate in the labour force in Jordan was 15.3% (Kalimat and Al-Talfaha, 2011), which means that Jordan had the fifth lowest female participation rate worldwide (The World Bank, 2012). The majority of women were employed in the education and health sectors. Nevertheless there is a trend toward more women participating in the tourism industry in Jordan. Table 1 shows the participation rates in the labour force in Jordan for the years 1990-2011. The number of women in the labour force has increased from 1990 to 2011. Consequently, this study aims to examine the continuation of such a trend taking the attraction site of Madaba as a case study to assess whether there is any improvement in gender equality in the tourism sector.

Year	Total Labour Force	Women in the Labour Force (% of Total labour Force)	Women's Labour Participation Rate (% of Female Population Aged 15+)	Men's Labour Participation Rate (% of Male Population Aged 15+)
1990	663,272	10.7	8.9	65.3
1991	777,486	10.9	9.3	67.0
1992	842,023	11.6	10.0	66.6
1993	917,163	12.1	10.6	67.5
1994	988,526	12.6	11.2	68.1
1995	1,045,166	13.1	11.8	68.5
1996	1,089,579	13.3	12.0	68.7
1997	1,129,223	13.6	12.2	68.7
1998	1,164,876	13.7	12.2	68.7
1999	1,183,243	13.9	12.3	68.4
2000	1,212,988	14.2	12.5	68.2
2001	1,244,332	14.0	12.2	68.4
2002	1,267,107	14.9	12.8	67.1
2003	1,282,239	14.0	11.8	66.9
2004	1,307,927	13.0	10.8	67.0
2005	1,364,267	14.5	12.1	66.9
2006	1,393,811	15.0	12.4	65.9
2007	1,481,499	17.7	15.0	66.0
2008	1,517,472	17.3	14.6	65.8
2009	1,591,950	18.0	15.4	66.6
2010	1,613,065	18.2	15.3	65.4
2011	1,677,855	18.4	15.6	65.9
Average	1,216,140	14.3	12.32	67.16

Table 1: Participation Rates in the Labour Force in Jordan, 1990-2011

Labour force participation rate is the proportion of the population aged 15 and older that is economically active – all the people who supply labour for the production of goods and services during a specified period (World Bank).

Study area

Madaba city is located in the mid-southern region of Jordan about 30 kilometres from Amman, with a population numbering about 130,000 and an area of 2,008 km². Madaba has a promising future in the tourism sector generating a considerable income of foreign currency, infrastructural development, and opportunities for new management and educational experience, all of which contribute positively to the social and economic development of the city. The city of Madaba is characterized by its urban morphology that attracts tourists. Its geographical location in the mid-southern region enables it to be accessible from different directions and close to other popular tourism destinations such as Mount Nebo, Mukawir, Hammamat Main, Um Al-Rasas, and the Dead Sea. Historically, Madaba was the cradle of many civilizations: Moabite, Nabatean, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic. Its heritage dates back to at least 4500 BC. It flourished as a city during Moabite and Ammonite times (c. 800 BC), and the Hellenistic period (c. 300 BC).

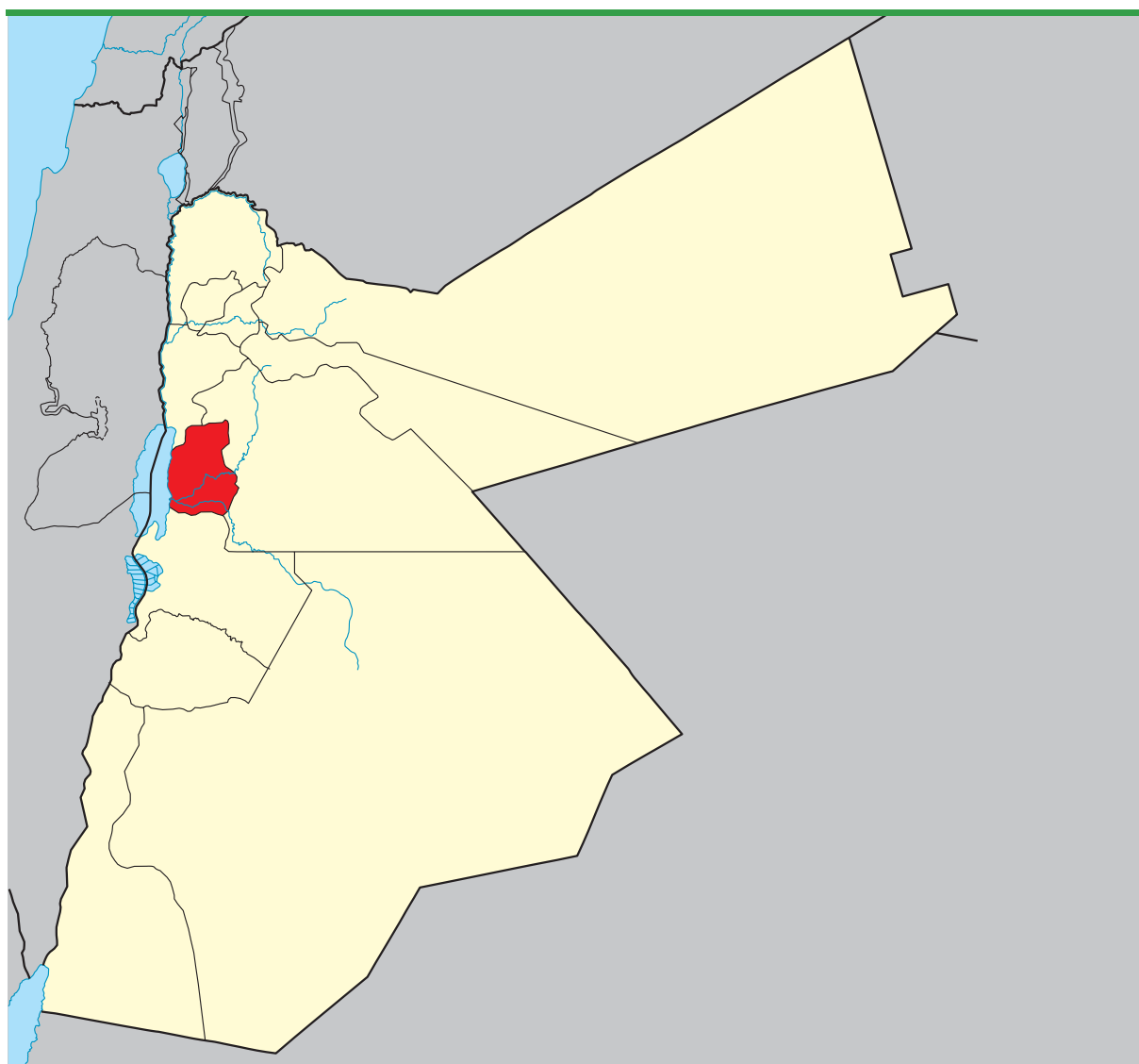


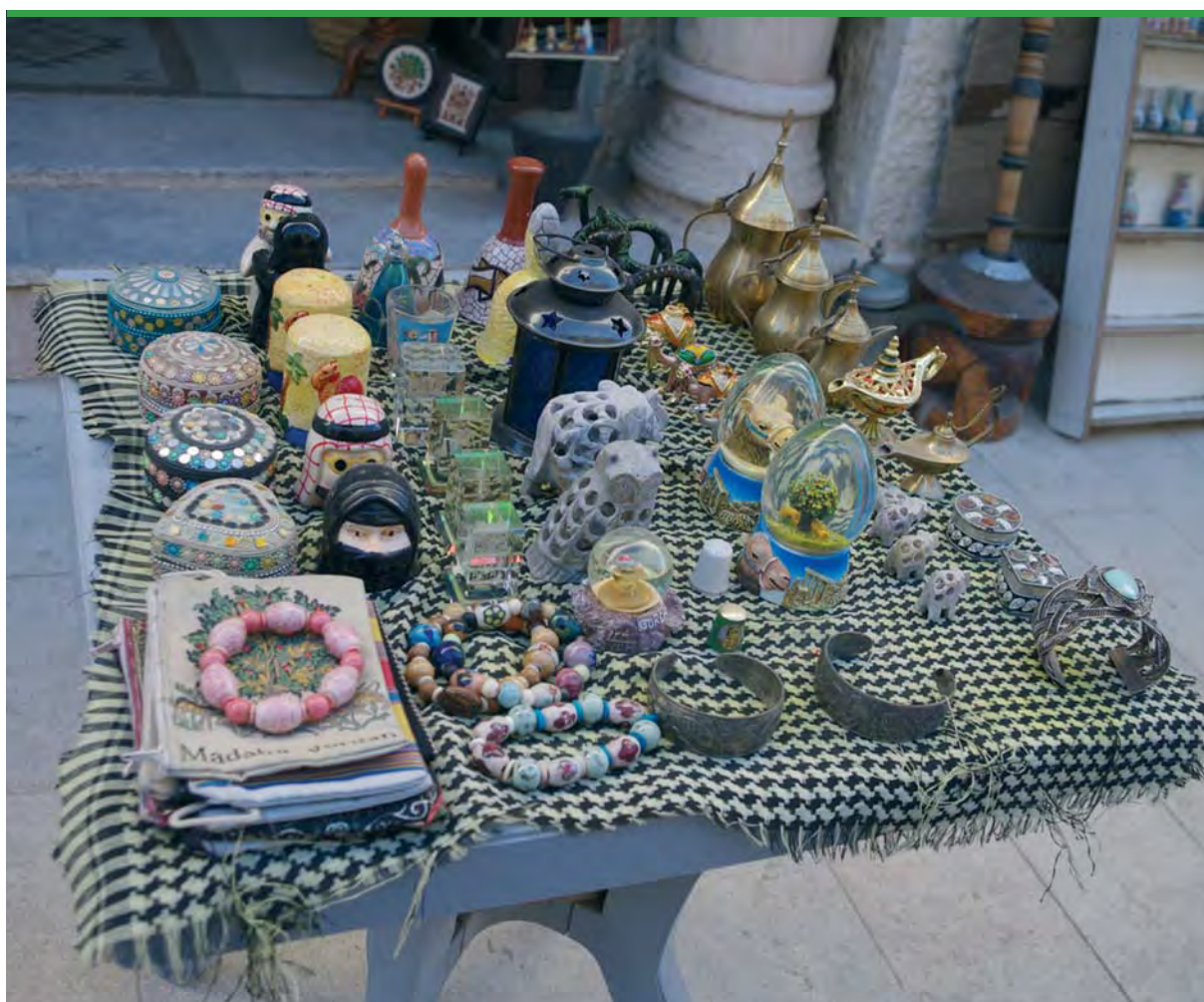
Figure 1: Map of Jordan with the location of Madaba (in red)

Materials and Methods

The study relied on structured questionnaires that were distributed to the employees of 25 tourism-related agencies and institutions in the study area (the city of Madaba). Interviews with families and individuals (women and men) were also conducted to obtain information about tourism in a socio-cultural context so as to draw a clear picture about gender and how it is constructed in the study area. The study utilizes 6 indicators of gender equality: number of women and men working in the cultural and environmental heritage sector, employment hierarchy, education level, wages, rate of employment, and the institutional mechanisms that were adopted to empower women. The data collection was performed on two levels - national (Jordan Census Department) and area of study (questionnaires and interviews). The collected data was analysed using the statistical software SPSS.

Results

The collected data from the years 2012, 2013, and 2014 show that the number of women working in the tourism industry in Madaba area is 249 out of 1,214 accounting for 20% of the workforce. The majority fall within the age group 30-39 (43%), which reflects the same distribution on the national level (Figures 2 and 3).



Crafts on sale for tourists exhibited along Artisan Street

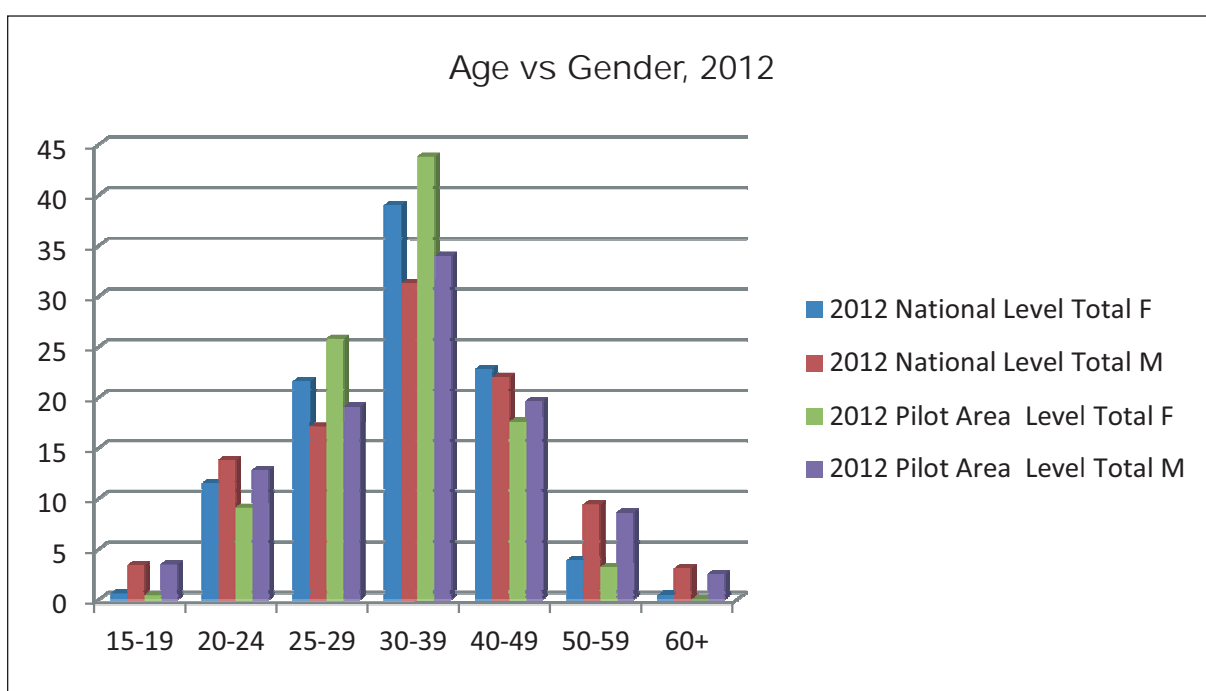


Figure 2: Age vs gender in Madaba area compared to the national level for the year 2012.

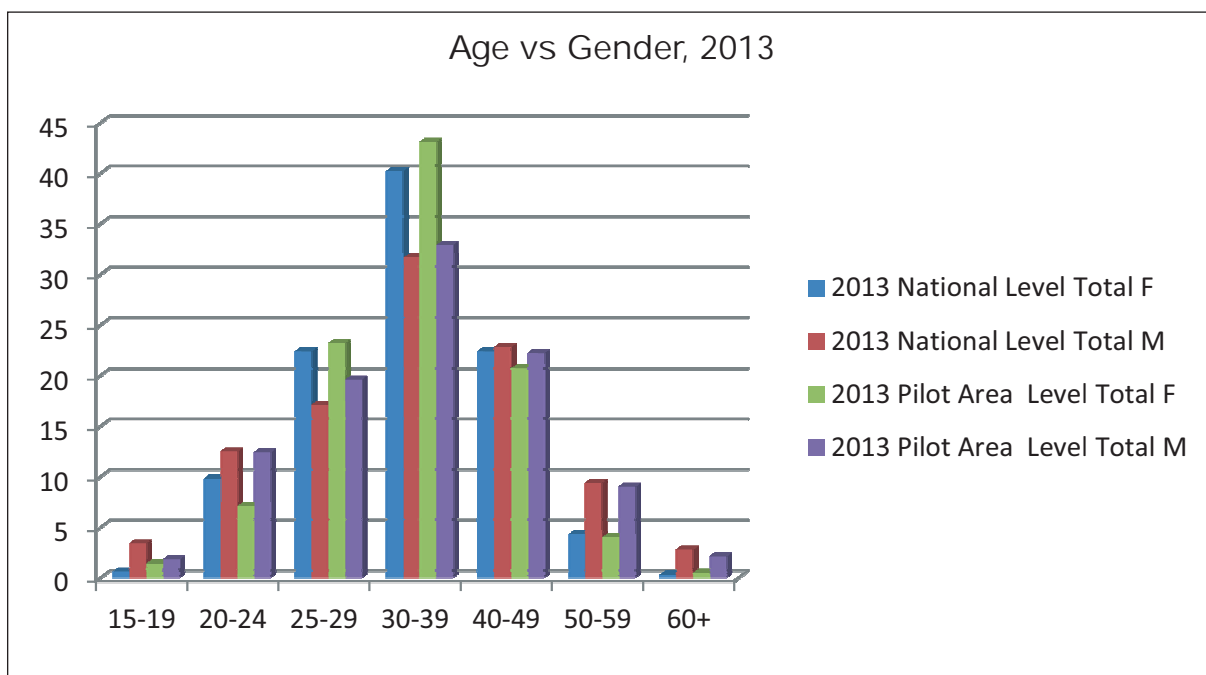


Figure 3: Age vs gender in Madaba area compared to the national level for the year 2013.

Unemployed women in Madaba believe that there was no work available or else claimed that they could not find a suitable job. Considering cultural and environmental disciplines at the Jordanian universities, the results show that for the years 2011-2014, female university graduates preferred geology and environmental sciences instead of history, for example, as a major of specialization while tourism is largely preferred by males (Figure 4).

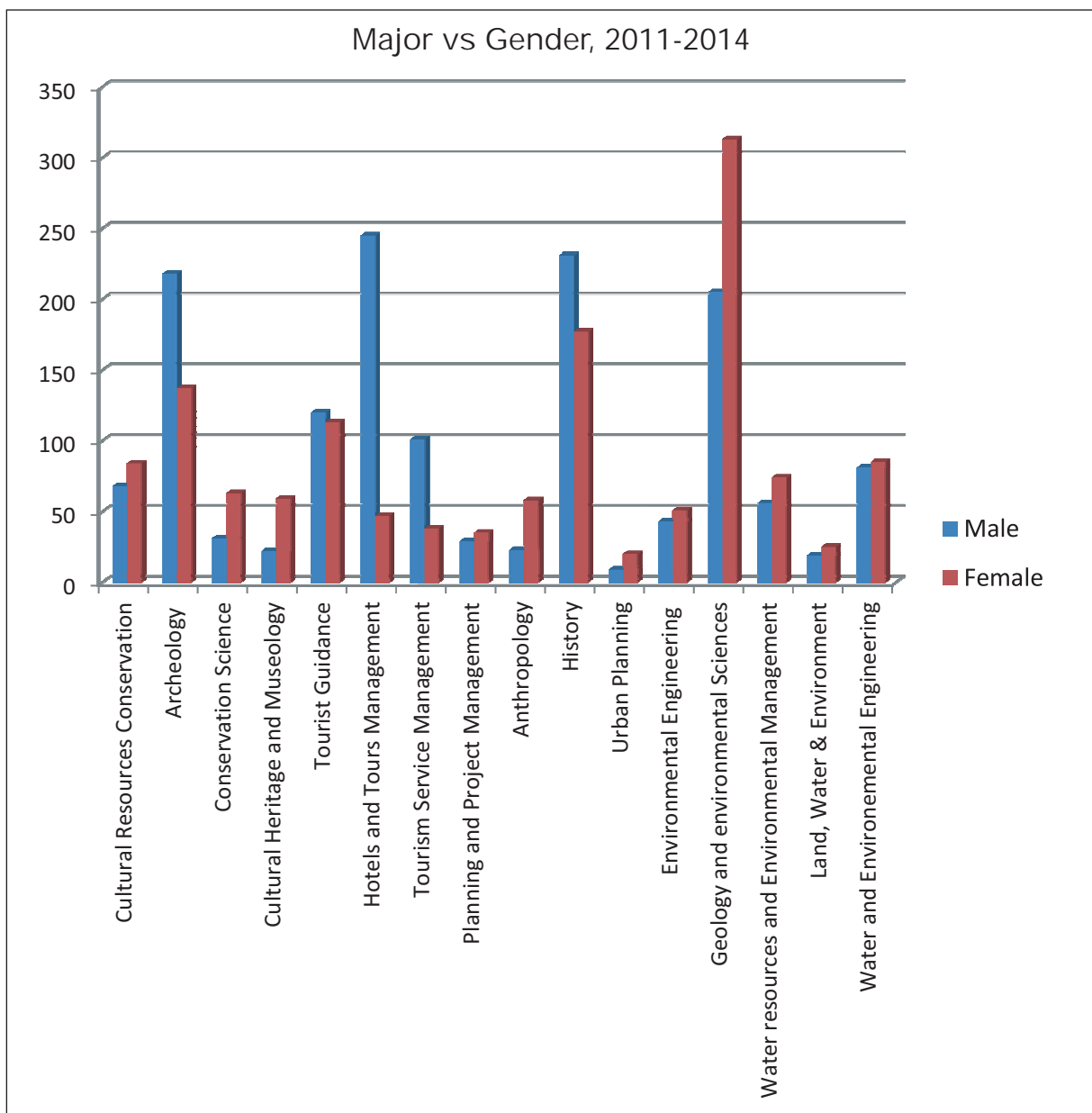


Figure 4: University major of women at Madaba region compared to men (2011-2014)



A mosaic of the beheading of St John the Baptist on the door of the Church dedicated to him

The majority of women working in the tourism industry in Madaba are either in possession of a high school diploma or a bachelor's degree (Figure 5).

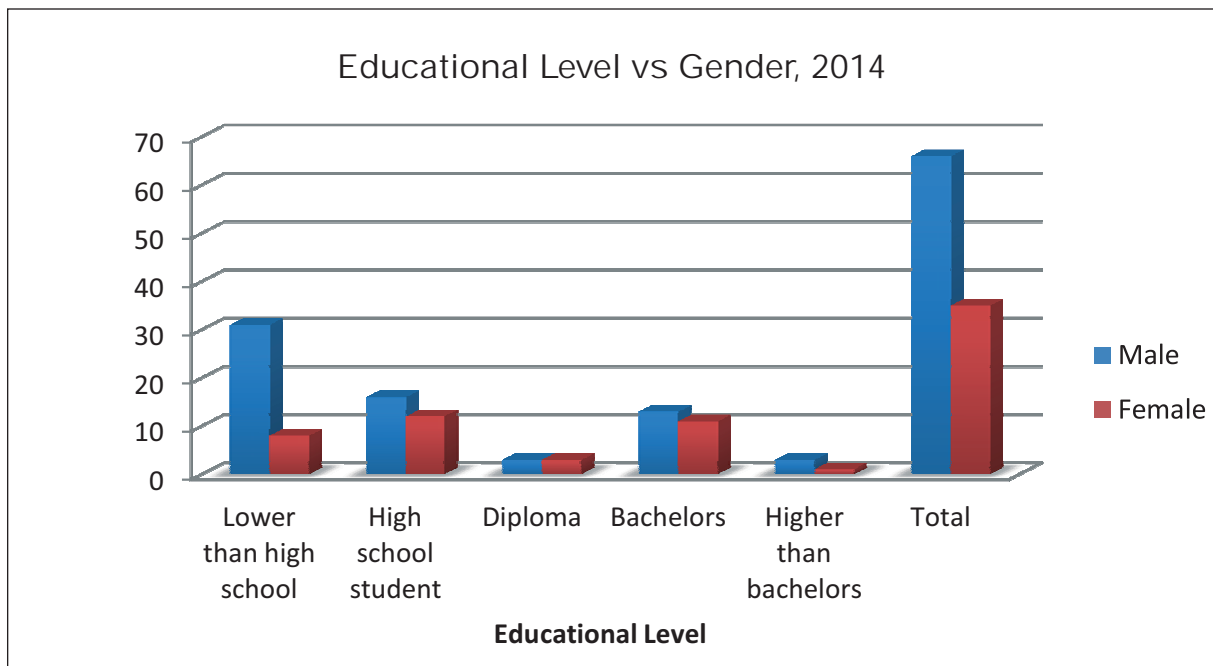


Figure 5: Gender and education level in the area of Madaba

In the tourism industry, the job position of women is mainly limited to administrative tasks, which means that outdoor tourism jobs are mostly limited to males.

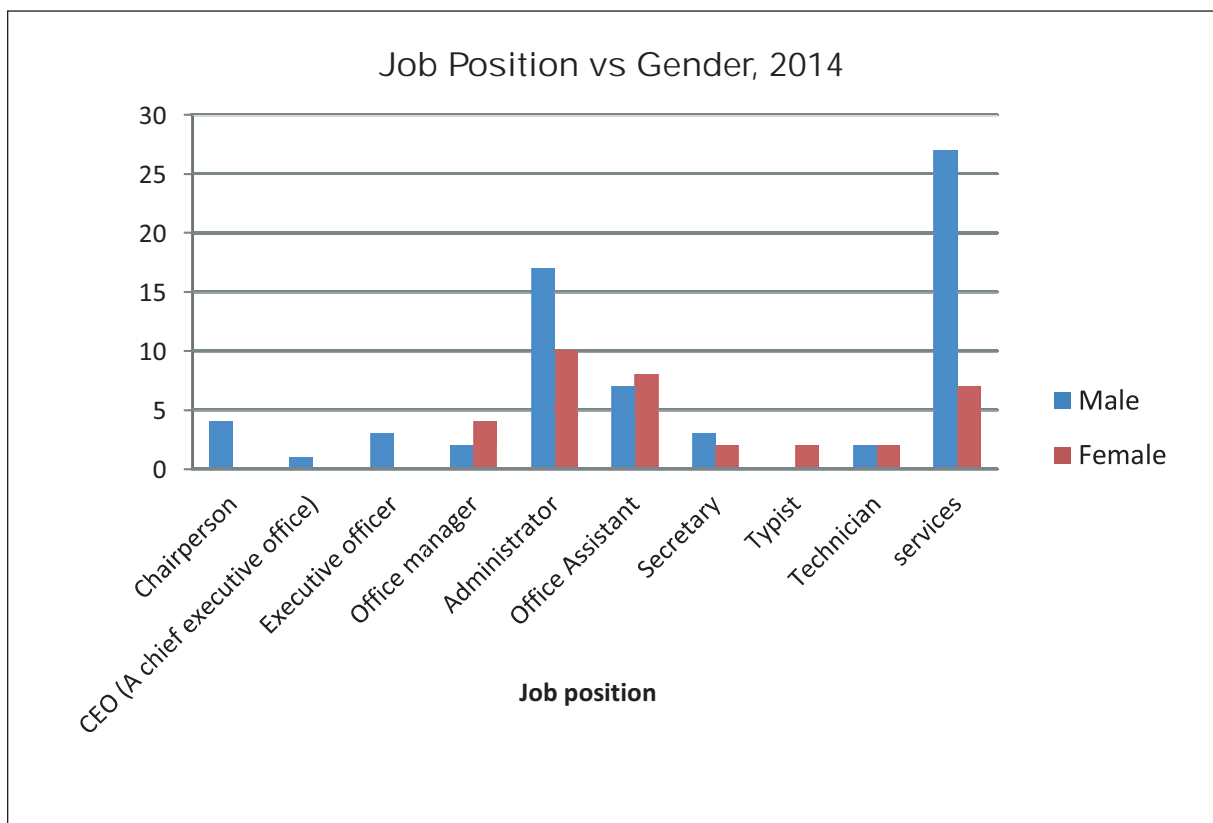


Figure 6: Job position in Madaba region by sex

The years of experience are also affected by gender, and males tend to have more experience than women.

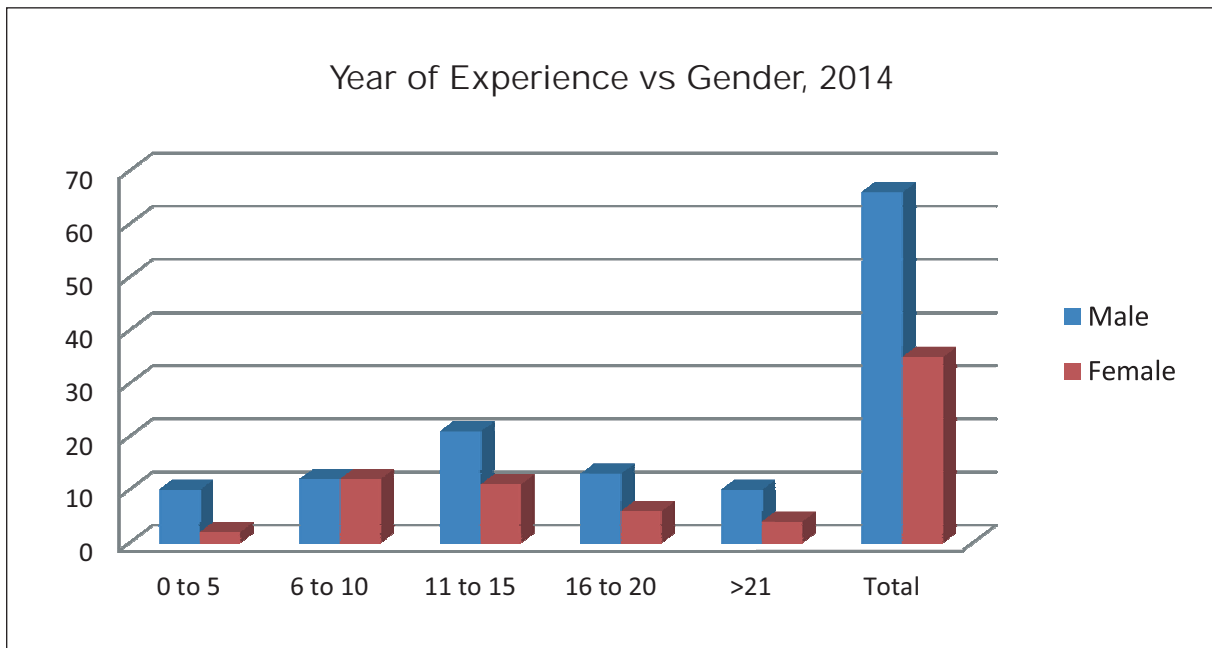


Figure 7: The years of experience in Madaba region by sex.

The wages in the Madaba area show a clear disparity between men and women. For example, women receive lower wages and are placed in a lower salary class (from 111-221 Euros) but there are those that received higher wages and are placed in a higher salary class (333-554 Euros) as shown in Figures 5 and 6; and this actually reflects the situation all over Jordan.



An ancient mosaic featuring a fish found in Madaba musuem

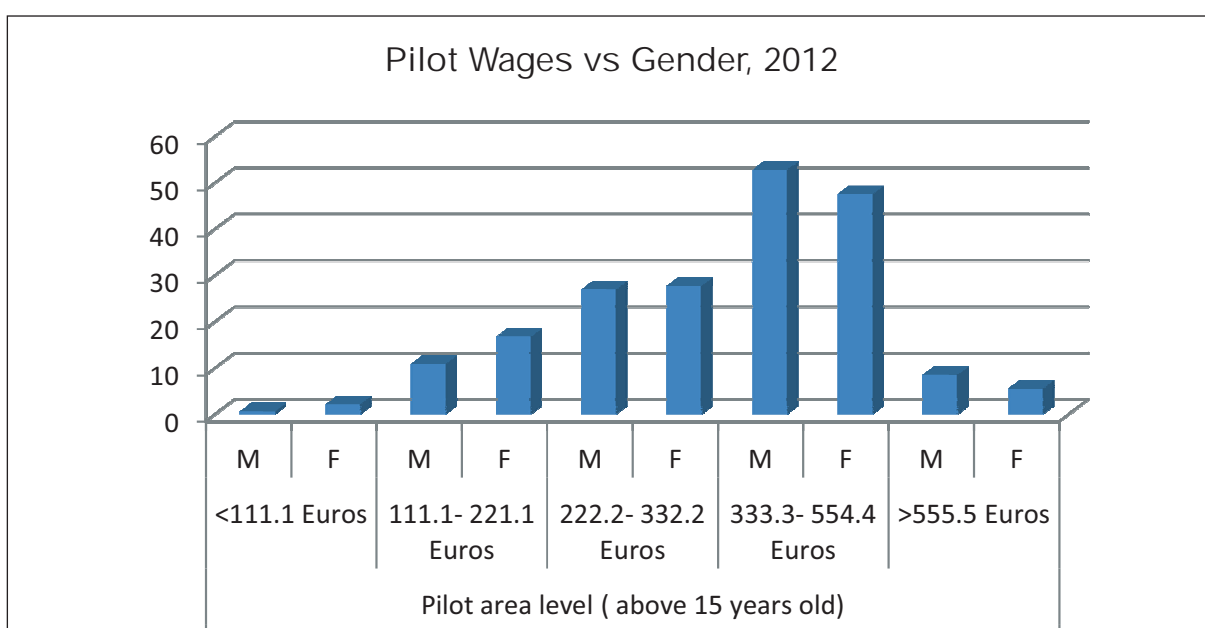


Figure 8: Wages vs gender in the study area for the year 2012

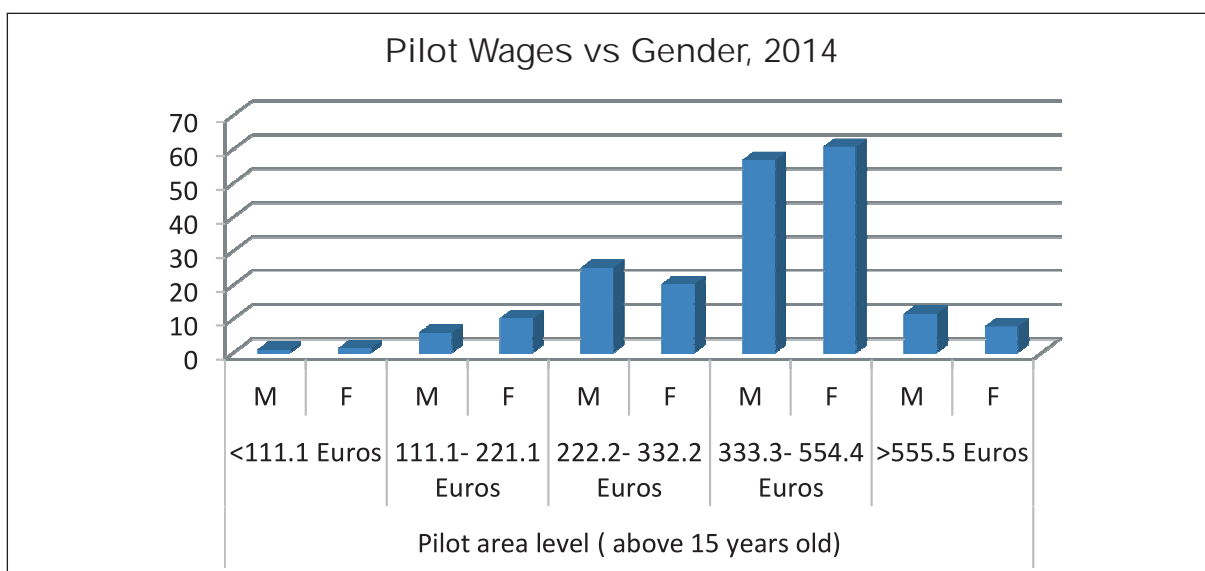
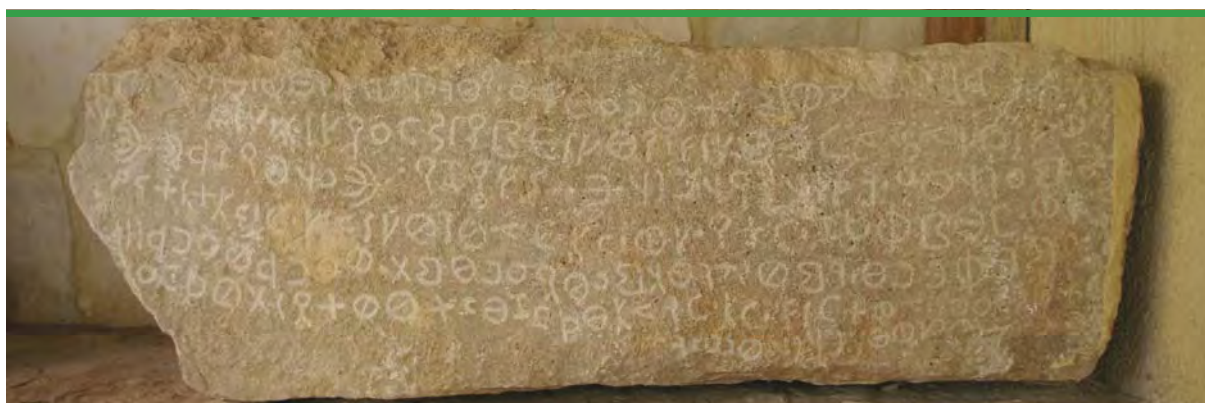


Figure 9: Wages vs gender in the study area for the year 2014

The employment rate in the study area is 20% for females for the years 2012 and 2013 which is, however, a little higher than the national level which is 17%.



An inscription on a stone slab exhibited in Madaba museum



A capital from a Christian edifice



Part of the facade of the church dedicated to St John the Baptist

Discussion

Even with equal education opportunities in Jordan, female participation in the tourism industry in the Madaba area is similar to that across the country, which is below that of men. There is a general trend in the region of Madaba towards hiring educated women in the tourism industry, different to the case of men where most are not educated. This is actually explained by the type of job women usually seek in such an industry; women prefer to be engaged in administrative jobs in the tourism industry to avoid working outside. It is a conscious choice to protect themselves from *outsiders* as is imposed by their families and Jordanian culture. In fact, gender is socially constructed, where people perceive gender in a way that is socially and unconsciously woven in their minds. Accordingly the sum of the behaviours in society has to be performed in parallel with its culture regulations. For example, women are not socially able to live on their own without the approval of their parents, and there are constraints on their mobility primarily arising from the social norms. Such standards would be an extra burden on women especially in this type of jobs, where women have to be extensively exposed to the public and deal more with *outsiders*.

Previous studies rationalized job segregation in tourism to the culture of tourism (Cheer, Reeves and Laing, 2013; Gentry, 2007; Tucker, 2007; Jordan, 1997). Tourism presents a powerful cultural process that shapes, and is shaped by, gendered representations of places, people, nations and cultures (Aitchison, 2000). Based on a post-structural and colonialist discourse approach (Aitchison, 2001; Enloe, 2001), tourism in Jordan neither markets nor promotes places and people for consumption; something that is culturally constructed. Consequently, this may work as a process for the selection of certain types of tourists and their demands. This process, in turn, possesses further gender disparity in employment in the tourism sector.

Based on the above results, some facts about women's positioning in the tourism industry in terms of hierarchical levels have been established. It appears very clear that the situation in the tourism industry resembles the one in the labour markets in general. As in many other sectors, there is a significant horizontal and vertical gender segregation of the labour market in tourism in Jordan. Horizontally, women and men are placed in different occupations – women generally work indoors, whereas men are employed outdoors. Vertically, the typical 'gender pyramid' is prevalent in the tourism sector – lower levels and occupations with scarce career development opportunities are dominated by women and key managerial positions are taken up by men.

There are many intertwined factors that keep gender segregation in the labour market in Madaba region, largely similar to the situation in the rest of the country. Among these there are culturally imposed gender stereotyping, traditional gender roles and gender identity. Women are seen as being suitable for specific occupations and they in turn seem to confirm this suitability. In addition, traditional gender roles in the Arab culture assign to women the main responsibilities for raising children and doing household work. Thus, women are often forced to choose modest labour, part-time or even seasonal employment but also with a very high turnover.

In Jordan there is no evidence of any upward transformation in the social image of women and their work and this especially so in rural areas. This image was confirmed by the International Labour Organization report of 2001 (ILO, 2001), which stated that gender disparity in tourism in



Mosaics and architecture going back to the past of Madaba

poor countries is attributed to the lower social status of women. The results of the study by Assaf (2011) showed that the current social and economic status of women in Jordan is below that of men, which creates challenges for women in the tourism sector. It is contrary to the study by Itani et al. (2011) who negated the need for social change among Arab women, but proposed the higher awareness and understanding of their work to make them more acceptable in their societies.



The entrance of the Madaba visitors' centre

The Constitution of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (1952) in article 6, stresses the equal opportunities between men and women. For example the selection criteria for jobs does not rely on gender, and leadership opportunities are by law not limited to men. Moreover, the government cabinet consortium in Jordan always pays high attention to include a sufficient number of women in it. However, a change in the social and cultural structures of gender inequality must be achieved to reach equal participation of women in the tourism industry (Chant, 2006).

Conclusions

Although tourism in Jordan is still a growing industry, it has demonstrated its potential for creating jobs and encouraging income-generating activities to benefit local communities in nationally renowned destination areas such as Madaba. Unfortunately, the tourism sector provides limited access to female employment and opportunities for creating self-employment in small and medium-sized income generating activities in the region of Madaba, thus presenting limited routes for the elimination of poverty among women and local communities in the study area. However, there are a number of conditions under which this potential can be used more effectively. This requires the collaboration of all the stakeholders – national and local governmental authorities and non-governmental bodies, industry, local communities, and community-based tourism initiatives. However, the tourism industry in Madaba region seems to be a particularly good 'candidate' for engaging in efforts towards the advancement of women. Due to its growing size, its rapid growth and its varied nature (i.e. religious tourism, cultural tourism, ecotourism, etc.), the tourism industry in this particular region offers a wide-ranging flexibility. This, in turn, can enable the industry to develop key initiatives for the advancement of women so that other industries can benefit from initiatives and strategies in the tourism sector as models for their own development. The reasonable percentage of women in the tourism workforce in Madaba provides a necessary base for the further advancement of women, which is an already established critical mass. Female equality in the tourism industry in Madaba necessitates a change in the traditional cultural and religious interpretations that perpetrate gender inequalities.

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