

ABSTRACT

A COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE OLD CITY OF AS-SALT IN JORDAN: TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE URBAN TOURISTIC DESTINATION

By: Zain Ahmad Hajahjah¹

Historic cities, in most cases, are suffering from the lack of sufficient measures that ensure the protection of its cultural and heritage contents from the increasing pressures of modernization and globalization trends, which have begun to intrude and replace the traditional character of its contexts. Gradually, preservation of these contexts through tourism starts to receive more attention, since tourism finds huge potentials in the cultural heritage destinations, not just to meet the growing desires and aspirations of travelers, but also to achieve maximum socio-cultural, economic and environmental benefits for the host communities. As-Salt, the Jordanian historic city, is rich with cultural, historical and social components that is threatened to be vanished due to the continuous overcrowding and deterioration of its built heritage and infrastructure. In addition to the lack of official guidelines that is supposed to ensure the legal protection of these resources, nevertheless, the city is not well-promoted in the tourism maps of the country. This research focused on developing a comprehensive approach for the management of the old city of as-Salt, where the potentials of tourism, as a tool for cultural preservation, were considered while promoting and managing the city as a distinguished tourist destination. The method, relied on making assessment for the existing local policies and strategies, in addition to reviewing and analyzing some case studies at international and regional levels. The research was supported by data collected through semi-structured interviews and designated questionnaires, which were conducted for most of the relevant stakeholders in order to get a better understanding for the situation of as-Salt, as well as to ascertain the different opinions, positions and interests regarding heritage management and tourism planning for the city. Furthermore, the assessment process depended on 'Integrated

¹PhD Student
International Graduate School: Heritage Studies
Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg
Email: Zhajahjah@gmail.com
Phone: 00491739393915

Cultural Heritage Management Approach' in order to identify the parameters that need to be considered while planning for the sustainable development of the city. The results of the research were figured out using statistical software SPSS to evaluate socio-cultural parameters, in addition to the use of the GIS applications to overlay different type of data; qualitative and quantitative, and combine them in a single analysis in order to create political, social, and economical correlations that lead to develop a comprehensive approach to manage the city of. As a result it was found that as-Salt has many management-related problems regarding its heritage protection and tourism development, such as the weak coordination and integrity between the two realms, the inactive legal framework, lack of marketing, improper development of tourism-related products especially activities and recreational attractions, in addition to other problems related to tourism infrastructure. Therefore, some recommendations have been proposed that are mainly relied on the need for the establishment of an official umbrella to guide the relationship between heritage protection and tourism development in the city. In addition, new set of strategies focusing on the improvements of promotional techniques, developments of new attractions and activities, involvement of local communities and private sector in the development process, and finally some economic regeneration procedures, were also proposed.

Keywords: as-Salt, Living Heritage, Sustainable Tourism, Culture, Integrated Cultural Heritage Management Approach

