

The Interrelationship between Heritage Tourism and Social Capital in the Context of Urban Regeneration Policies

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the interrelationship between heritage tourism and social capital regarding neighborhood regeneration policies using the El-Shujaiya neighborhood as a case study. Although the neighborhood is endowed with material and immaterial cultural heritage in community traditions and historical sites and buildings, it has experienced urban decay, eroding social capital. Apart from the political situation hindering international tourism, the neighborhood can attract Palestinian visitors. The research aims to formulate primary guidelines where a declining urban area can utilize its heritage assets to regenerate physically, socially, and economically. To achieve the aim, the researcher conducted a group discussion including eight participants representing key actors and stakeholders utilizing a SWOT approach to understand internal and external factors impacting area regeneration and investments in heritage tourism. Findings indicated implementing urban regeneration through heritage tourism succeeds when a neighborhood maximizes community participation to bridge heritage tourism and rebuild social capital.

Keywords: *Heritage Tourism, Urban regeneration, Social capital.*

ملخص البحث

يتناول البحث العلاقة المتبادلة بين السياحة التراثية ورأس المال الاجتماعي في سياق سياسات تجديد الأحياء وذلك تطبيقاً على حي الشجاعة في مدينة غزة كحالة دراسية. يبرز البحث مشكلة التدهور الحضري وضعف رأس المال الاجتماعي في الحي على الرغم مما يتميز به من تراث ثقافي مادي وغير مادي متمثلاً في المواقع والمباني التاريخية وفي عادات وتقاليد المجتمع. ومع الأخذ بعين الاعتبار الوضع السياسي في قطاع غزة الذي يعيق السياحة الدولية فإن البحث يهدف إلى صياغة مبادئ توجيهية لسياسات التجديد الحضري تقوم الاستثمار في السياحة التراثية كوسيلة للتجديد الحضري وتدعيم رأس المال الاجتماعي. و لإنجاز هذا الهدف، أجرى الباحث مناقشة جماعية تضم ثمانية مشاركين يمثلون الجهات الفاعلة الرئيسية باستخدام نهج SWOT لفهم العوامل الداخلية والخارجية التي تعيق سياسات تجديد المنطقة من خلال الاستثمار في السياحة التراثية. وقد أظهرت النتائج أن المشاركة الشعبية في سياسات التجديد الحضري تمثل احد عوامل نجاح إعادة بناء رأس المال الاجتماعي و التجديد الحضري المستند على تفعيل السياحة التراثية.

الكلمات المفتاحية : السياحة التراثية ، التجديد الحضري ، رأس المال الاجتماعي .

1. INTRODUCTION

Apart from the political conflicts in the Gaza strip hindering activating international tourism, the Al-Shujaiya neighborhood in the city of Gaza could provide a heritage destination to attract visitors from Gaza Strip regions. As one of the oldest neighborhoods in the Gaza Strip, the area offers a wealth of material and immaterial heritage. However, the neighborhood has suffered urban decay and escalated violence, making its public image unattractive similar to refugee camps in the Gaza Strip.

As a result, heritage tourism has not been given enough attention from the government and non-profit government organizations (NGOs). This research investigates the interrelationship between heritage tourism and social capital, aiming to formulate primary guidelines directing neighborhood regeneration-led heritage tourism.

2. CULTURAL HERITAGE

Cultural Heritage embodies inherited resources people identify as representing and manifesting constantly evolving traditions, beliefs, experience, and customs, regardless of ownership. It encompasses the environmental facets coming from the presence of people and places over time (Dümcke & Gnedovsky, 2013, p. 6). It comprises tangible objects, such as historic sites, and intangible assets, such as social traditions (McKercher, et al., 2002).

3. SOCIAL CAPITAL

Social capital engenders understanding differences in socio-economic growth of specific neighborhoods, cities, or countries (Murzyn-Kupisz & Działek, 2013). Putnam (2000) defined social capital as “the features of social organization, such as networks, norms, and social trust, facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (p. 2).

Mohan and Mohan (2002) asserted social capital had gained traction among academic scholars and public officials as an efficient, low-cost, social, and economic policy instrument. This new capital constitutes an essential investment for individuals and social groups, with implications for economic development, political practices, and the quality of life. Putnam (2000) divided social capital into two categories. The first entails bonding social capital related to kin, close relationship, or neighborly connections, including tight relationships and personal confidence (p. 22).

In contrast, the second bridges social capital, characterized by fragile bonds and social (or generalized) trust and relates to loose links with associates or association representatives. Putnam (2000) explained, bridging capital remains critical in economic development because it allows access to new opportunities not available in closed networks of close links. Too much bonding capital can stifle imagination, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Portes (1998) added this activity might result in avoiding interaction with others, limiting access to external economic and human capital outlets. Murzyn-Kupisz & Działek (2013) urged public institutions at various levels to provide social capital development opportunities. Nevertheless, they must remain mindful of distinct possibilities and take on new challenges beyond conventional restoration, demonstration, or education.

4. CULTURAL HERITAGE AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

Many researchers have addressed the interrelation between social capital and cultural heritage (Kinghorn & Willis 2008; Murzyn-Kupisz & Działek 2013). Cultural heritage is usually included in the general discussions on social capital construction (Lak, Gheitasi & Timothy 2020). Understanding the relationship between cultural heritage and social capital requires shedding light on sense of place because culture emphasizes a sense of place and promotes residents' belongingness (Lak, Gheitasi & Timothy 2020). Graham et al. (2009) professed sense of place and social capital are linked in a cycle, making opinions differ on which comes first and importance. They stated that cultural heritage leads to a distinct sense of place and continuity, promoting a higher sense of self-esteem and place attachment. Diverse expressions of heritage and heritage programs can also foster a sense of place, establishing cultural identity, local pride, and a sense of accomplishment.

Murzyn-Kupisz & Działek (2013) pointed out tangible and intangible cultural heritage influenced social capita. They explained the importance of heritage sites in creating gathering places and recalling cultural events promoting social integration, identity and civic pride, and collaborative actions, NGO events, and volunteer efforts. According to research presenting the role of heritage sites to develop local identity and a sense of community, historical sites may serve as cultural centers—spaces establishing trust and social networks (Lak, Gheitasi & Timothy 2020; Sandell, 1998; Van ZYI, 2005). Historic sites offer a solid base for NGOs and local authorities to strategize social development. The strengthening of social capital engenders explicit goals of heritage organizations when incorporating activities encouraging new encounters: clubs, discussions, special gatherings, creative exhibitions, and guided tours (Murzyn-Kupisz & Działek, 2013). According to researchers presenting heritage institutions to enhance local identity and a sense of community, museums, and historical sites may serve as cultural centers—spaces to form trust and social networks (Lak, Gheitasi & Timothy 2020; Novy, 2011; Sandell, 1998;). These strategies are of different forms, such as personal or group oral history interviews, engaging in activities and programs at historical sites, museums, local libraries, or visiting and discussing historical sites (e.g., walking tours of local historical sites).

5. HERITAGE TOURISM

Heritage tourism entails the “traveling to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historical and natural resources” (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2008, cited in Hasan & Jobaid, 2014, p. 41). Heritage tourism or cultural heritage-based tourism embodies tourism capitalizing on an area's culture, specifically focusing on people's traditions, lifestyles, and history. It also includes cities' museums, theaters, and sports stadia (Richards & Wilson, 2007).

5.1. Heritage Tourism Regenerating Neighbourhoods

In terms of being an economic engine and a catalyst for social change, researchers have indicated heritage tourism plays a critical role in community revitalization, including impacting cultural policymaking, concentrating on heritage visitors as a niche urban demand, revitalizing the everyday past, location branding, and participatory management (Bianchini, 1993; Brebbia & Galiano-Garrigos, 2016; Timothy, 2014). Nonetheless, heritage tourism may have some negative consequences for neighborhoods (Darowski et al., 2007).

5.1.1. Socio-economic Impacts

Referring to investing in cultural heritage tourism, Charnley (2005) demonstrated how heritage tourism contributes significantly to a local economy, creating business and jobs, alleviating unemployment, promoting cultural diversity. Supporting this expert, several researchers have asserted heritage tourism encourages public support to protect cultural heritage properties (Novy, 2011; Murzyn-Kupisz, 2013). In addition, strengthening social capital through revitalizing historical sites as socio-economic generators can constitute goals of a heritage organization actively broadening its agenda to incorporate activities constructing social capital (Murzyn-Kupisz, 2013).

Moscardo (1998) underpinned heritage tourism offers visitors historical knowledge and entertainment while contributing to social development and enhancing the quality of living for local communities. Sandell (1998) also investigated the role of museums as a catalyst for social inclusion, unveiling a museum might mitigate social inequalities in three ways. Firstly, it tackles social exclusion through cultural activities and projects. Secondly, it acts as a center for civilizing young people when diverting them from undesired behavior, such as offending and dealing with drugs. Thirdly, it enhances social development, providing a forum for social interaction and persuasion on vital issues. Moreover, heritage site location may also serve as a hub for engagement and conversation between long-term residents and community newcomers (Murzyn-Kupisz & Dzialek, 2013). Heritage tourism also promotes the local community's pride while providing the opportunity to meet people from diverse social backgrounds, often groups that would never communicate or interact otherwise (Novy, 2011).

Kinghorn and Willis (2008) postulated unique local (regional) themes and references in museum exhibits allow visitors to self-identify with the given subject, provoking conversation about what they have seen, creating pride in the locality (region) and thereby implicitly increasing bonding capital.

5.1.2. Heritage Tourism Eliminating Neighborhood Stigma

Some communities become stigmatized for various reasons, including the spread of violence, poverty, and degradation of the built environment. According to some scholars, the negativity keeps tourists and developers away from the neighborhood even though it has a rich cultural heritage. (Huning & Novy, 2006; Lak, Gheitasi & Timothy 2020). However, researchers also have underscored heritage tourism as a tool for urban regeneration in some stigmatized neighbourhoods.

For instance, Murzyn-Kupisz & Dzialek (2013) clarified despite the host community's initial mistrust or contempt for strangers, they may accept to interact positively with them because the strangers respect and associate with their local heritage. At the same time, participating in heritage-related events transforms outsiders into locals. The case of the Harlem neighborhood exemplified heritage tourism upgrading an urban area. According to Huning and Novy (2006), Harlem in New York was characterized by urban blight, institutionalized racism, crime, and poverty. Before the 1980s and early 1990s, most New Yorkers and tourists found the neighborhood a "no-go zone." However, Harlem has undergone a significant construction boom since then, and critics contended tourism played a significant role in Harlem Renaissance. Visitors have helped to undermine Harlem's image and shape the public's resource perception.

In comparison to Harlem, the researchers reported the regeneration initiative in Glasgow did not entirely achieve its objectives. The effort was not primarily economic and culturally oriented, and the local community was not encouraged to participate in the regeneration project (Huning & Novy, 2006). The role of art and culture in this participation aimed to involve society's participants and, as a result, establish a sense of belonging to their place of residence. García (2004) illustrated although Glasgow benefited significantly from the regeneration project through infrastructure growth, it lacked long-term preparation inviting the public and private involvement. He adds that part of this failure was that the city's policies focused more on economics than cultural growth.

5.2. Negative Impacts of Heritage Tourism on a Neighborhood

While several researchers highlighted the positive role of heritage tourism in urban regeneration (Huning & Novy, 2006; Lak, Gheitasi & Timothy 2020), others have unmasked the negative impact of tourism on neighborhoods' social and built environment (Nasser, 2003; Rantsis, 2004; Van Zyl, 2005). Not all interactions result in favorable outcomes; they generate disputes and tension. The tourism experts have buttressed this argument, as various researches have underscored how heritage tourism could detrimentally affect the historical region (Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009; Cohen, 1978). Some of these effects result from pressures created by the neighboring population development. At the same time, others result from a lack of understanding, the absence of a conservation structure or program, and various speculations on the land's values (Nasser, 2003). Referring to Putnam's (2000) social capital classification, traditional societies with substantial bonding capital may resist external interactions and inspirations, remaining distrustful or even hostile to outsiders (Murzyn-Kupisz, 2013). Heritage may also breed contention rather than motivate social inclusion. Urban scholars have debated about what should be remembered, maintained, and promoted as heritage. Such strains can erode trust, neighborhood links and cooperative networks or even break them up entirely (Logan & Reeves, 2009; Rantsis, 2004). Yoon et al. (2001) demonstrated tourism relies on local communities' goodwill, as their support helps develop successful operations, especially for destination viability. Heritage institutions may promote the values of influential social, economic, or political groups, turning them into instruments of dominance and power rather than social inclusion (Murzyn-Kupisz & Dzialek, 2013).

5.3. Heritage Tourism Marketing

Academics borrowed marketing theories enhancing the consumer's experience and proposing its direct applicability to heritage and cultural tourism (Bonn et al., 2007). Silberberg (1995 cited in Nagi, 2012) defined heritage tourism marketing:

a tool of economic development that achieves economic growth through attracting visitors from outside a host community, who are motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, scientific, or lifestyle/heritage offerings of a community, region, group, or institution. (p. 47)

Applying marketing approaches to heritage sites elucidates the need for linking cultural heritage with long-term socio-economic development strategies. Sustainable marketing tourism planning requires understanding cultural heritage protection, visitor attitude and preferences, and the local community culture. Burns and Holden (1995) modeled three heritage tourism marketing components: the built environment (product), the cultural environment (host community), and the tourist (users / the market). World Travel and Tourism Council (Van Zyl, 2005, p.47) support this framework.

- The Product

Architectural elements, such as castles, palaces, temples, government monuments, and ancient ruins, have long epitomized valuable heritage tourism products. Some of these products have gained international attractions appeal because of being listed in UNESCO World Heritage Sites and monuments. On the other hand, heritage sites and monuments not listed in the UNESCO may have national attraction appeal, making them equal and significant with those listed in The UNESCO sites. In most cases, they mainly appeal to domestic visitors. However, several scholars have pointed out heritage offering needs to include additional aspects not historically viewed as attractive, such as farmhouses, fisheries, rural cemeteries, and abandoned industrial environments (Butler & Hinch, 2007; Timothy, 2014). With more sophisticated preferences and increased education, traveling consumers are disappointed with conventional mega tourist attractions catering to the masses and post-tourists. These expanding heritage tourism products also have improved respect for indigenous peoples' traditional traditions and values, such as indigenous knowledge, poetry, kinship relationships, worship, mythology, and hunting (Butler & Hinch, 2007).

- The Consumer (Visitors)

Considerations the consumer encompasses understanding the market (lifestyle, behavior, inspiration, behaviors, and trends, demography) to forecast potential markets, patterns, market elasticity, picture, cost and rate effect, and visitor satisfaction. The market for cultural heritage can be examined based on the size of visitors and their demand (Lak, Gheitasi & Timothy 2020). On the next level, local heritage may be attractive to international tourists, but it may be lucrative as an advantage for local tourists on day trips or in combination with visits to other attractions, such as sporting activities, national parks (Lak, Gheitasi & Timothy 2020).

- The Host Culture (**D**estination)

Social and cultural dynamics, economies, and facilities must all be considered in terms of the host community. Heritage tourism relies heavily on the development of social and public institutions. The vital role of social institutions in promoting collective involvement and engaged citizenship enhances resident capacities (Lak, Gheitasi & Timothy 2020, p. 6). Community interaction will aid in accumulating cultural knowledge and adopting native traditions and principles by natives in a stronger position to establish their own culture (Bailey, 2004). These elements should be considered during tourism planning. When providing tourism facilities (product), all factors should be addressed: infrastructure, transportation, accommodation capability, natural and human-made resource characteristics, conservation versus productivity, and knowledge systems.

6. FACTORS AFFECTING HERITAGE DESTINATION ATTRACTIVENESS

Kotler unmasked the significance of atmosphere in creating heritage tourism destination attractiveness. He defined atmospheric as "The effort to design buying environments that enhance consumer purchase probability"(Kotler,1973 cited in Bonn et al., 2007, p.347). Baker (1986) highlighted the atmospheric constituted three components: ambiance, design element and layout, and social dimensions.

Ambiance entails elements influencing consumers' five senses, such as light, color, texture, music, and odor. Applying this dimension to heritage products, designers must manipulate these elements to assure visitor satisfaction and product attractiveness. This facet links with the design function. In the context of heritage products, this embodies atmospheric factors helping visitors interact with the heritage product, such as the layout and design of the heritage sites and buildings themselves. The social dimension in heritage tourism does not differ from product marketing. Visitors and employees in the cultural heritage context intersect with the extent of knowledge and training the service provider has and how visitors get informed.

Van Zyl (2005) mentioned the factors influencing heritage destination attractiveness with more details as presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Factors Influencing Heritage Destination Attractiveness

Location	Concerning its potential markets. How far from its competitors? Is it close to an existing tourist region?
Accessibility	How can the community be reached ? what is the condition of roads and other transportation links? Availability of means of transportation
History	Is the history of the community Unique ? are there desired monuments. are there unique persons who might add to drawing power
Climate	Is the climate mild? Outdoor activities (event attractions) could be influenced by bad weather.
Population demographics	Composition of community-level of education, ethnic background
Labor force	How many employed unemployed
Training opportunities	Are opportunities available for training
Attractions (existing & Potential)	Are there existing attractions to complement heritage or other types of tourism
Infrastructure	What is the state of the facilities & services that will support heritage tourism?
Local laws & Regulations	Do local regulation and laws support heritage tourism development
Community Attitudes	To what extent do the community and local business support the idea of heritage tourism
Utilization of cultural resources	What inhibiting factors exist concerning the use of cultural and natural resources
Land Tenure system	The extent of land rights in the area, can it accommodate private sector investment
The extent of service provision	What services, if any, are available to support heritage tourism development

(Adapted from Van Zyl, 2005, p.98).

Based on Van Zyl (2005), Kotler (1973), and Lak et al. (2020), the researcher summarized the components of heritage tourism marketing and factors impacting the efficiency of each component in the following Table 2.

Table 2 Heritage Tourism Marketing Components and Subcomponents

Component	Sub-component	Design and planning elements	
Product	The extent of service provision	restaurant Souvenir shops Entertainments	
	Accessibility	Transportations Roads	
	Design and layout	Attraction History Uniqueness infrastructures comfort	
	Ambiance	Lighting Climate Color Music	
	Customers/ Visitors	Visitors' attitude	Influence of the media on their perceptions and impressions Impression
		Culture	Integrated with host community culture Disintegrated
Destination / place /social	Community Attitudes	Bonding capital Bridging capital	
	Labor force	Trained Level of unemployment culture	
	Land Tenure system	Governmental ownership Private ownership	
		Security and peacefulness	

7. STUDY AREA AND METHODOLOGY

Al-Shujaiya typifies one of Gaza's largest and oldest neighborhoods, located on the city's eastern part. The neighborhood started as a Faubourg outside the walled city of Gaza during the Ayubid era, 900 years ago, and gradually evolved into a permanent town (Lembaud, 1987). Al-Shujaiya covers about 5.3 Km², hosting 95,000 inhabitants. The neighborhood is characterized by crowding and urban decay after decades of neglect during the Israeli occupation from 1967 to 1994. During the Israeli occupation, many new buildings were erected, replacing historic buildings (Rjoob, 2009).

Due to the absence of building monitoring from the Israeli authorities, the old district urban tissue was destroyed. The threat of destruction of the cultural heritage in the Al-Shujaiya neighborhood did not stop after the Palestinian National Authority's arrival (PNA) in 1994, even though they directed much concern to preserve cultural heritages in other neighborhoods. One evidence indicating the neglect of neighborhood cultural heritage occurred when PNA constructed a radio station at the top of *El Montar* hill, which has tremendous historical value. Stemming from its historical function as the central gathering space for those celebrating El Montar annual Thursday, people have come from all over Gaza Strip. Another negligence of El Turkman Architectural heritage transpired in 2002 when residents brought down the 600-year-old *El Sheikh Ali* mosque to compel the authorities to build a more prominent mosque. Such a crime did not arouse any government concern, leaving the perpetrators unpunished.

7.1. Method

The researcher used focus group discussion (FGD) to profoundly envision the socio-economic benefits of investing in heritage tourism in the Al-Shujaiya neighborhood. FGD engenders a qualitative research approach consisting of a deliberately planned discussion allowing participants to articulate their views in a group. It stimulates diverse perspectives and points of view while collecting information for exploration, benchmarking, analyzing, and checking perceptions, feelings, beliefs, and thoughts (Patton, 1990).

7.1.1. Sampling

The researcher has a specific group of seven participants: two participants from the municipality of Gaza, two from the Ministry of Tourism, one from the ministry of culture, and two urban experts from the academic field.

7.1.2. Focus Group Process

The researcher used Google zoom application to organize the meeting with the participants. Twelve experts in architecture and urban designs were contacted ten days before the proposed date; they were given a brief background about the meeting's research topic and purpose. A discussion meeting with the group was held on 11/4/2021 at 9:00 am. It took 47 minutes to finish. After welcoming the participant, the researcher presented the research topic and the focus group guidelines, including the three principal issues of developing heritage marketing tourism: ambiance, design, and layout/physical environment, social environment, as displayed in Table 2.

The researcher then began the most intensive focus group study, analysing and reporting the findings. The findings were then compared among the readers, with the most popular answers highlighted. The most frequent answers were then chosen as the main study findings.

An FGD aims to understand social and environmental factors impacting heritage tourism investment and the neighbourhood's regeneration. To encourage participants to talk with one another rather than with the group facilitator, the researcher used the summary of the reviewing literature (see table 1) to create an interview guide with the following three questions:

- How do you assess the value and competency of Al-Shujaiya cultural heritage assets as an attractive product for local visitors? (The Product).
- How to change the negative public image of the area in visitors/customers' perception? (The customer).
- How to stimulate the local community (the destination) to participate positively in the developmental process of their cultural heritage, and how the community social capital influenced the investments in heritage sites of the Shaja'ia neighborhood? (The host Community).

The interviewer keenly used open questions to share viewpoints, opinions, and experiences on heritage tourism marketing, success possibilities, and challenges facing cultural heritage tourism in the Al-Shujaiya neighborhood.

8. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- Product/ heritage Assets

According to the respondents, a holistic approach should market to the heritage sites in the Al-Shujaiya. The respondents agreed Al-Shujaiya has unique and diverse cultural heritage assets, like *El-montar* hill and Moa'aen Besiso, one of the most famous poets in Palestine. The respondents voiced the lack of developed infrastructure (roads, gardening, and tourism facilities). They commented that local authorities should focus on projects promoting visiting historical sites, such as recreational parks, sports clubs, and kids' amenities.

In addition, they underscored the need to make some changes in the detailed plan, particularly about land use. They highlighted one of the biggest problems making the accessibility of heritage sites complex encompassed the Al-Shujaiya open market situated in the core of the historical area, causing traffic and noise, dirty streets, and sidewalks. Another problem entailed most historical sites are located in crowded residential areas with narrow streets. One of the respondents indicated an opportunity to change residential land into commercial and tourism uses. The declaration of the historical part of the neighbourhood as a tourist area could motivate residents to capitalize on their homes and convert them into buildings serving tourism. Furthermore, such an action could minimize residential buildings, make the area less crowded, and increase attractiveness. Moreover, land prices are expected to go up in the neighbourhood, reflecting a tangible economic improvement.

- The customers/Visitors

According to the respondents, international tourism is not possible in the current situation, but the potential could activate local tourism and improve regional appeal. One of the respondents mentioned a need to increase public awareness of the historical site value. He added very few know *El-montar* hill situated to the east of the neighbourhood was mentioned in the Old Testament as a place where the religious story of *Shimshom* took place. The respondents articulated the potential role of social media in promoting the hill as a destination for tourism. However, they agreed Al-Shujaiya as a tourist destination should be studied and analyzed from the potential visitors' perspective. One of the most vital points comprised Al-Shujaiya represents the original root of most Gaza clans expected to have nostalgia toward the neighbourhood when they recall their ancestors. Such a link could encourage them to visit and support the regeneration projects. However, respondents commented recent data and information insufficiently support Al-Shujaiya cultural heritage marketing. They insisted on studying the prospective visitors' attitudes, potential opinions, preferences, and motivations to understand their perceptions and impressions of Al-Shujaiya as a tourism destination. One threat entailed visitors could be hesitant to visit the area because of its association with social abuse. The participants emphasized the importance of social media in transforming the neighbourhood's negative image.

- The host community / the destination

The discussion was directed to understand the strength, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities (SWOT), making the host community part of a thriving heritage marketing strategy. The respondents agreed the community in Al-Shujaiya has a conservative culture, and the traditions have a strong presence in the neighbourhood's daily life. The prevailing rules urge people to honor strangers and be kind to them. However, that does not prevent some people from harmful and burdensome interactions with outsiders. The respondents emphasized the importance of non-governmental organization programs to encourage the local community to develop and increase tolerance of outsiders/visitors.

According to one participant, when recalling and reviving traditional festivals associated with old myths and traditions, such as the *El montar* festival, some religious and political parties are expected to challenge them. When the PNA was established in 1997, the ministry of culture devised a plan to revive the annual celebration of *El-Montar* Thursday through a cultural event. The event has resulted in a conflict between some religious people and the festival organizers. On the other hand, the participants accepted one community strength encompassed the high percentage of educated residents, elevating the likelihood of their participation in neighbourhood regeneration.

8.1. Group Discussion Summary

SWOT helped frame the results of the group discussion. It provided salient insight into the varying characteristics of the challenges and opportunities capitalizing on heritage sites in Al-Shujaiya as tourism destinations as a critical factor in Al-Shujaiya regeneration. The following matrix represents the internal and external factors in realizing heritage tourism-led neighbourhood regeneration.

Table 3 Internal and External Factors Realizing Heritage Tourism-Led Regeneration

Factor	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threats
The product	Rich of historical buildings (S1) Unique and competitive heritage presenting in El-montar hill (S2)	Inconvenient accessibility due to the location of Al-Shujaiya open market (W2) area stigmatized with social violence (W3) Absence of tourist facilities (W4) /Heritage buildings are Situated in crowded deteriorated residential areas. (W5)	Private sector involvement in area development (O1) NGOs Involvement (O2) Modifying building rules and the Land-use plan (o3)	Continuity of the current political situation (T1)
The consumer	A high percentage of undergraduate students and educated people (S1) The area is the original root of most Gaza families (invoking visitors nostalgia (S2)	Negative public image in consumer perception (W1) Poverty and unaffordability to pay for vesting (W2).	International visitors. (O1) Economic improvement in Gaza Strip (O2)	Establishing tourism projects in other neighborhoods. (T2) visitors feeling insecure and unease
The community	Dealing with outsiders generously. (SI) Sense of pride and potential to participate in area development (S2) Rich of skilled Labors.	Substantial bonding capital impeding interactions with outsiders(W1) intolerant with freedom of dressing. (W2) Religious parties opposing the revival of <i>the El-Montar</i> myth (W3)	The increasing interest of NGOs in community outreach programs. (O1)	Dispute between community leaders in what to preserve and what to not preserve. (T1) An explosion of conflicts between families in the neighborhood. (T1)

Based on Table 3, the researcher formed primary guidelines for a heritage tourism strategy based on SWOT analysis, resulting in four conceptually distinct groups: strength-opportunities (SO), strength-threats (ST), weakness-opportunities (WO), and weakness-threats (WT). The SO recommendations denoted internal strengths to capitalize on external opportunities (optimal case), while the WO recommendations seek to eliminate internal weaknesses, leveraging external opportunities. ST tactics, on the other hand, involve using strengths to avoid or reduce external threats. However, WT guidelines represent defensive strategies aimed at reducing internal weaknesses and external threats. The primary benefit of this strategy engenders the recommendations are structured based on the impact of internal and external factors incorporated in the principal component of heritage tourism marketing.

Table 4 Suggested Heritage Tourism Marketing Strategy in Shujaiya

Marketing component	SWOT Indicators	Guidelines
Product/heritage Assets	SO	Inviting NGOs and the private sector to participate in all stages in the proposed heritage marketing strategy
	ST	Focusing on Local tourism in the first stage of the marketing strategy
	WO	Changing building rules and land use plans to solve accessibility problems and improve built environment/offering incentives to public sectors to invest in tourism facilities.
	WT	Central government interventions to invest in conserving heritage and offer subsidies for heritage buildings owners
Consumer/Visitors	SO	Establishment of small hotels and facilities to serve international tourism
	ST	Establish a public forum through social networking sites that include the educated groups to take care of the heritage of the Shujaiya neighbourhood. Establishing an association of families with ancient origins in the Shujaiya neighborhood. Its goal is to provide material and moral support for heritage sites in the neighborhood.
	WO	Encourage NGOs to organize free or discounted trips to heritage sites in the neighborhood and to promote the media to reduce the impact of stigma
	WT	Increase the police presence in the neighborhood and adopting a community policing strategy to cope with any prospected clan conflicts.

	SO	Invite landlords to donate lands for the sake of NGOs for constructing tourism facilities buildings. launching conservations projects depending relying on community participation
Host community	ST	Invite local representatives to join an enlarged association overseen by the municipality to preserve heritage and promote heritage tourism in the community.
	WO	NGOs leading a discussion forum aiming at discussing the religious dimensions of reviving the el-Montar annual festival and to discuss whether or not there is a conflict between Islam and reviving heritage for the intention of boosting tourism
	WT	Postponing activities invoking problematic issues with the community till the late stages of the strategy

Based on Table 2, community participation remains a critical component in most of the suggested guidelines derived from SWOT analysis. The community represents the problem and the solution for the area regeneration. Heritage tourism can contribute to the regeneration in El-Shujayia if tourism occurs within a holistic approach that does not exacerbate but instead eases social disputes. In addition, improving the infrastructure and providing tourism facilities remains essential for promoting the area as a tourist destination.

9. CONCLUSION

Can heritage tourism be used to help degraded neighbourhood regeneration? To summarize the study's key goal, this research epitomizes a first step toward understanding the interrelationship between heritage tourism and social capital in deprived neighbourhood regeneration. More analytical input and empirical evidence are needed to assess how tourism impacts social capital.

However, the study results remain subject to several limitations and qualifications; additional investigations are needed to promote heritage tourism marketing in the Al-Shujaiya neighbourhood. Experts need to investigate the local community's willingness to participate in developing their heritage sites through a questionnaire survey. Furthermore, scholars must assess visitors' needs through a comprehensive questionnaire survey. Due to the lack of information on the examined topic, the researcher invited the key actors and representatives of the central government bodies responsible for heritage preservation. Accordingly, the qualitative data collected through the FGD was exploratory. Future research could undertake a survey questionnaire to evaluate visitors' attitude and willingness to visit the neighbourhood and the local community's desire to participate in developing their neighbourhood as a tourist destination.

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