



# Sustainable Cultural Tourism in Heritage Areas

A thesis

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## II. ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with sustainable cultural tourism, particularly in heritage areas. The importance of heritage areas, which are exposed to severe deterioration, lies in several economic and social aspects in addition to their impact on the community.

While tourism development has contributed to the country's economic growth, for cultural heritage, the thrust of the tourism industry is to make the most of the country's non-renewable resources. This thesis identifies three key objectives required for creating sustainable tourism development which are: studying the features of cultural heritage areas in different general views, achieve sustainable tourism in cultural heritage areas through studying a group of selected strategies and finally finding a quantitative technique in order to evaluate and assess the tourism operations in heritage areas leading to sustainability of tourism.

There is a great necessity to maintain and reserve the important culture heritage areas for the future generations. Therefore, the concept of sustainability of tourism in culture heritage areas is discussed through a number of strategies. Carrying capacity, one of these strategies, is studied in detail as concerning its definitions, components and indicators. There are several international frameworks followed for measuring carrying capacity. Since all these frameworks provide qualitative results and inaccurate numbers, the need for a method to provide quantitative accurate results appeared. Thus, the selected methodology has emerged depending on the quantity and not the quality. The accuracy of the selected method and its possibilities appear to give more accurate results than others in order to estimate the total carrying capacity to achieve sustainability in culture heritage areas.

Finally, The calculation of total CC of an area is intricate owing to the process of integrating the impacts on incompatible components such as ecological and social impacts which provide qualitative results. Thus, the study tries to resolve this problem by adopting a quantitative method that converts all the indicators and components of CC into a common unit of impact assessment based on the percentage of people recognizing the impact. The results obtained from the study show the percentage of decline in the component CC and total CC from their original values. This enables the pinpointing of factors that are adversely affected by tourism, which in turn leads to suitable mitigation measures.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Heritage, Cultural Heritage Tourism, Sustainable Development.