



Cita bibliográfica: Shunnaq, M. & Miettunen, P. (2025). Green Tourism as a Model for Community Empowerment and Bottom-Up Development: The Case of the Village of Shaṭana in Northern Jordan. *Revista Internacional de Turismo, Empresa y Territorio*, 9 (1), pp. 307-321. <https://doi.org/10.21071/riturem.v9i1.18279>.

Green Tourism as a Model for Community Empowerment and Bottom-Up Development: The Case of the Village of Shaṭana in Northern Jordan

El turismo verde como modelo de empoderamiento y desarrollo comunitario: el caso de la aldea de Shaṭana en el norte de Jordania

Mohammed Shunnaq ^{1*}

Päivi Miettunen ²

Abstract

Background: Travelling is one of the world's most dynamic and growing sectors. However, it has negative impacts, including environmental degradation and loss of biophysical and cultural diversity, evidenced by the effects of Covid 19. Objective: This paper aims to establish green tourism as a viable form, especially compared to standard tourism based in a rural village in Jordan called Shaṭana. Methodology: The study included a literature review on sustainable tourism, placemaking theory, and green tourism models, as well as the study of the Jordanian and Middle Eastern context of tourism. Results: Green tourism encompasses cultural intelligence, environmental tolerance, and people's involvement. However, criticisms include greenwashing, low adaptability, and lack of access and control by local people. Conclusion: A green tolerance model for Shaṭana can work with the community dynamics, thus showing how rural tourism can be implemented in Jordan.

Keywords: Green Tourism, Shaṭana, Tourism, Bottom-Up Development, Placemaking, Place Identity, Cultural Trail, Jordan

¹ Yarmouk University, Jordan. E-mail: mshunnaq@yu.edu.jo Id. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8040-2402> *
Autor para la correspondencia.

² Helsinki University, Finland. Email: paivi.miettunen@helsinki.fi Id.Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3879-4195>

Recepción: 10/04/2025

Aceptación: 28/05/2025

Publicación: 30/06/2025



Este trabajo se publica bajo una licencia de Creative Commons Reconocimiento 4.0 Internacional

Resumen

Antecedentes: El turismo es uno de los sectores más dinámicos y en crecimiento del mundo. Sin embargo, presenta impactos negativos como la degradación ambiental y la pérdida de diversidad biofísica y cultural, evidenciada por los efectos de la COVID-19. Objetivo: Este trabajo busca establecer el turismo verde como una forma viable, especialmente en comparación con el turismo tradicional en una aldea rural de Jordania llamada Shaṭana. Metodología: El estudio incluyó una revisión bibliográfica sobre turismo sostenible, la teoría de la creación de lugares turísticos y modelos de turismo verde, así como el estudio del contexto turístico de Jordania y Oriente Medio. Resultados: El turismo verde abarca el respeto a las culturas locales, la sostenibilidad ambiental y la participación ciudadana. Sin embargo, se critica su influencia en la pérdida y banalización de la cultura local, la baja adaptabilidad a las casuísticas locales y la falta de acceso y control por parte de la población local de la actividad turística. Conclusión: Un modelo de sostenibilidad del turismo verde para Shaṭana puede integrarse adecuadamente en la dinámica comunitaria local, de manera que se muestran algunas premisas para implementar el turismo rural en Jordania.

Palabras clave: Turismo Verde, Shaṭana, Turismo, Desarrollo Ascendente, Creación de Lugares, Identidad de Lugar, Ruta Cultural, Jordania

1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the most rapidly expanding international industries; it has a powerful impact on multiple economies, cultures, and societies globally. It plays a crucial role in serving the country's economic interests and easing cultural and diplomatic interaction. However, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted this dynamic industry and presented an unseen challenge to the entire industry due to the temporary stop of all movements and border closures. Such events reveal weaknesses in tourism systems and emphasize that tourism is an integrated sector. Nevertheless, tourism remains a relatively adaptive sector of activity. New tourists are predicted to exceed pre-COVID-19 once international travels resume, reinforcing the sector's recovery (UNWTO, 2023). Although the increase in tourism is also viewed as an economic opportunity, the activity raises concerns regarding its social, cultural, and environmental effects on communities and the social ecology of world heritage sites.

Tourism is faced with various problems that go beyond the health risks that the COVID-19 outbreak unveiled. The industry is continuously linked to environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, and cultural value depletion. These problems have led to popular alternative tourist models, including eco-tourism, nature, and sustainable tourism. These approaches are intended to help reduce the adverse effects that conventional tourism elicits and postulate for enhanced sustainable tourism experiences. However, the adoption of these other models is not without its problems, such as the definition disparity, the level of end-user engagement, and the practicality of the framework (Furqan et al., 2010). Meeting these challenges requires carefully assessing how these models can be incorporated into the existing theoretical conceptualizations of tourism. Green tourism has emerged as a prominent model for addressing the challenges of conventional tourism. Many people consider green tourism as an aspect of branding, as tourism appeals to the principles of environmental protection to visit scarcely explored resorts. It includes concepts like the sustainability of the environment, cultural sensitivity, and pro-interaction between tourists and hosts (Furqan et al., 2010). One can consider it similar to ecological tourism,

where priority is made on sustainability and the use of resources. They both aim to harmonize the interests of the tourists and the welfare of communities and the natural environment (Nogueira & Carvalho, 2024). The Middle East is a perfect example of how detrimental top-down approaches in constructing tourist models are.

In many tourism countries, including Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, and Tunisia, state-run tourism developments have contributed to the exclusion of communities in those places where tourist cultural assets were commodified for economic gains (Berriane, 1999; Gunay, 2008). Many of the projects tend to commoditize culture, which has no appreciation and respect, negatively impacting cultural conservation and the community. The same trend was seen in northern Jordan, where the setting up of several tourist-related projects caused social and economic integration problems for the people. This is because while other facilities were made available, their location was unfavorable, so the community became hostile towards the project (Abu-Khafajah et al., 2015). Another case to be discussed is rehabilitating Ottoman houses in Umm Qais. Although it beautified the site and its historical significance and despite providing gifted owners of the properties mentioned above to new residents, it wrongly evicted people from their homes and barred them from benefitting from the additional economic activities it brought here. There was a lack of proper compensation mechanisms, and other accommodations were also unfit for their use, thus increasing feelings of isolation and rejection (Ababneh, 2016).

These examples illustrate the failure of the centralized approach to tourism development, which often lacks sensitivity to local communities' concerns and fails to offer more than economic benefits. Such methods usually result in degrading economic attractions such as cultural and scenic views of the area. However, this problem can be solved by adopting a community-type/eco-tourism model with small-scale measures addressing economic growth and balancing the impact of tourist activities on the environment and culture. In green tourism, people and organizations of the host community are encouraged to participate in the decision-making processes that affect them to have equal access to the benefits.

A major criticism is what has been described in the industry as a hijacking of sustainability, where destinations are branded as sustainable but not. This erodes trust among the travelers and the host communities, especially when accountability measures are lacking (or poorly developed) (Moscardo & Murphy, 2014).

However, concerns are raised about the scale of green tourism projects and the capacity to boost significant economic returns. Although mass-scaled tourism projects contribute massive income, they usually don't focus on locals' concerns. While green tourism has a lower tendency to produce a maximum value in the shortest time possible compared to other types of tourism, it considers quality over quantity and manageable revenues that can sustain tourism in the long run. Meeting these often conflicting objectives demands creativity and accountability for planning and decision-making processes (Nogueira & Carvalho, 2024).

Jordan also analyzes green tourism and its ability or effectiveness in reducing the detrimental effects of conventional tourism on host countries. The problems of failed infrastructure projects in Jerash and Umm Qais have therefore indicated the need to adopt new strategies to

embrace the participatory approach of people in tourism development. The green tourism model, hence, presents a way out of the current out-of-bottom, top-down, non-sustainable way of developing tourism. Therefore, this paper aims to establish green tourism as a viable form, especially compared to standard tourism based in a rural villages in Jordan named , Annu'ayma, Balila, Shatana, and Kitm.

Methodology

This review systematically provides a methodological approach used to review the compatibility of general tourism theories with the particularities of, Annu'ayma, Balila, Shatana, and Kitm. The current study used Ethnographic Observation and a methodological framework. The methodology is outlined as follows:

Ethnographic Fieldwork

Ethnographic fieldwork was considered relevant for the determination of the specifics of, Annu'ayma, Balila, Shatana, and Kitm. During their review, several field visits were conducted to understand the physiognomy of the villages and spatial configuration. These visits showed how the physical environment is factored into the behaviors and daily practices of the community; this made it easier to understand the village's suitability for green tourism.

This exposed the study to interactions between the local people and their environment, enhancing their enrolment in the study. Using ethnographic fieldwork, people and culture in the village were emphasized and established, as well as its potential for incorporation into tourism. This approach corresponds to Abulheija et al. (2009) historical and cultural approach toward Shatana's evolution (Abulheija, 2009).

Methodological framework

This foundation was established through a comprehensive literature search in two vital domains. First, attention was paid to a cross-sectional review exploring , Annu'ayma, Balila, Shatana, and Kitm's community characteristics, background, and past tourism exposure. Culturally and historically, Abulheija (2009) provided preliminary knowledge on the impact of its social context and receptiveness to tourism improvements in the village. These insights helped guide the design of ethnographic fieldwork and ensured the study included details of the mentioned villages. Second, theoretical underpinnings of placemaking and tourism literature were explored to ground the review within a methodological context. Buizer and Turnhout (2011) and Feist (2011) have discussed various ideas of interdisciplinary communities and how they construct and reconstruct their meanings in their setting culturally and emotionally (Buizer & Turnhout, 2011; Feist, 2011).

Lew (2017) elaborated on this by identifying the two forms of place-making interventions: community-initiated and policed-initiated interventions in tourism (Lew, 2019). These studies provided a theoretical foundation that could inform the research and help break down the identification of Shatana with green tourism development. These works provided a vibrant theoretical foundation for approaching the local identity of tourism in Annu'ayma, Balila, Shatana,

and Kitm. The approach was a holistic, which looked at Annu'ayma, Balila, Shatana, and Kitm within the context of the current debates in tourism theory.

Key Informant Identification

The process of conducting the literature review and the first Field Ethnographic visits were helpful for the identification of key informants within the area of reference of Annu'ayma, Balila, Shatana, and Kitm. These informants include the key historical informants, who were familiar with the village's history, cultural informants, and those who had experiences with prior forms of tourism. Their ideas were crucial in identifying Annu'ayma, Balila, Shatana, and Kitm as a civilization and its viable future tourism potential.

The key informants' input regarding the community's social identity and relations to other forces proved helpful. Their comments helped narrow down the theoretical models applied to tourism and the possibility of creating such measures in the selected four villages. This step stressed the role of local stakeholders in decision-making regarding strategies that would suit the community's cultural values.

Integration of Findings

Through this work researcher emphasise on the significance of protecting and instilling Shatana, Annu'ayma, Balila and Kitm's Cultural Heritage by means of sustainable tourism. Cultural and historical uniqueness prevails in every village, if these are preserved well, visitors will want to come to see these things, and at the same time, it will help to keep the village's tradition and value. It is focused on assisting the cultural identity and beliefs of these communities to make it a tourism development that will attract both local and international tourists.

Through a balanced economic and cultural preservation, and with the aim of maximizing the economic benefits while offering a fair treatment and use to the specific cultural heritage from the village, the proposed green tourism model proposes. This approach addresses sustainable tourism issues by incorporating sustainable tourism practices, which seek to protect the social fabric of the communities and travelling in the environmentally and culturally responsible manner.

2. Results

Building a Green Tourism Model for Annu'ayma, Balila, Shatana, and Kitm

Green tourism is consonant with the general goals of forming the "green economy" and "green politics" to counteract globalization and modernization's social and ecological effects. Concerns like global warming, population explosion, and environmental pollution depict the gloom of the world as being uncontrolled industrialized. As for the positive impact, green tourism is expected to promote the rural economy, decrease the emigration rate in rural zones, and introduce rural people to Art and culture. For instance, a community participating in tourism can learn other crafts, such as housekeeping, sanitation, and intercultural relations (Boiko, 2020).

Cultural and Social Integration in Annu'ayma, Balila, Shatana, and Kitm

Although Shatana, Annu'ayma, Balila, and Kitm have had limited interaction with other cultures as a result of outmigration and those very traditional social structures, there have been isolated encounters with the neighboring region. Challenges that face tourism development include such gender segregation in public spaces, which resulted in the failure of government initiatives in the past on cultural grounds. Infrastructure gaps that prevent visitors from staying in Shatana and Kitm longterm, in particular, lack hotels and restaurants, and health care facilities (Boiko, 2020). The strength of a village would prevent that from happening but indeed, a sustainable tourism approach would be to do low impact activities that are aligned with each specific villages strengths. Heritage centers could be made of Shatana's historic homes and churches; Annu'ayma and Balila, with better infrastructures, can host visitors. There are opportunities for the creation of eco or agritourism experiences in some of Kitm's olive farms. An economic benefit without losing the traditional values would be achieved through a decentralized tourism model, wherein the accommodations are located in more developed areas while leaving the local culture intact.

Proposed Activities for Green Tourism

Green Tourism is a tool that can be used by the rich cultural and historical heritage of Shatana, Annu'ayma, Balila, and Kitm to support sustainable tourism. Different traditions, agricultural practices and historical landmarks of every village are cause of attractiveness for domestic as well as international visitors if the same are preserved graphically and properly presented.

Traditional cooking experience, which in this case would be making khabīṣah (shatana's preserved grape jam) could be a part of this culinary tourism initiative. During the summer, its multi stage process, from pressing grape juice to layering and preservation for winter, was witnessed and participated in by the visitors. Kitm and Balila, also famous for olive farming, could provide olive picking experiences, and then olive oil pressing demonstrations to people who wish to relate to the region's agricultural traditions.

Further tourist opportunities for increase can be achieved by walking and cultural tours which will guide visitors in historical sites, ancient ruins, traditional architecture in Annu'ayma and Balila. Items like Ottoman-era buildings and archaeological landmarks such as the Alhindawi Chamber might prove to have something to offer to the region about its past in Annu'ayma. The Roman and Greek historical remains of Balila are a tourism business opportunity, with tourists venturing on archaeological tourism, where they go and explore ruins and know about the ancient settlements of the village.

Community celebrations could also be served as cultural tourism. Through dabkah performances, visitors would experience Jordanian customs, music, and dance especially through professional events such as weddings, baptisms, and traditional feasts. They also could have joined hands-on culinary workshops which try to prepare some iconic Jordanian dishes like mansaf.

Integration into a Cultural Trail

The cultural route could include Shatana, Annu'ayma, Balila, and Kitm in northern Jordan tied to the key historical and archaeological sites in the region (Zbucha, 2014). The proposed trail might link the villages to cultural festival and traditional architecture hub such as Al-Husn and to a Roman ruins site at Abila which is replete with Byzantine churches, painted caves, and ruins. In addition, the trail could stretch to Umm Qais (Gadara), a deserted Roman city with aqueducts, remnants of ancient structures and grand vistas of the Jordan Valley, at which point the inhabitants might have chosen to retreat.

Depending on the route, it could carry Irbid, the region's capital, with museums, historical monuments, and lodging, serving as a strategic hub for tourists visiting the area. A glimpse into the Jordan Valley's agricultural landscapes and bursting rural communities could also be a part of this experience, emphasizing the Balila and Kitm's flourishing of farming traditions, rooted in the production of their olive oil and their seasonal crops.

By embedding these villages into a wider cultural and historical perspective, they become more visible, foster regional cooperation in tourism, and thereby generate regional economic benefits that would be unified. Another aspect is that a well structured tourism route would positively lead to full marketing project which would position northern Jordan as a leading ecological heritage in tourism (Zbucha, 2014).

Transportation and Coordination

Functional and success of the cultural trail is based on the key factor of accessibility. However, despite this, Shatana, Kitm and Balila do not have formal transportation infrastructure such as bus stations and, as a result, public transport is unreliable. The larger and more developed, annu'ayma, despite its better connectivity, still does not have sufficient transportation access for tourists.

To fill this gap, local taxi drivers could make transportation provided on call that will move people between the stations. For fairness of pricing for tourists, the Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with regional stakeholders, could have set up standard transport fares (MoEnv, 2020). They could also receive mobile applications that connect tourists to local drivers to increase convenience and access. It also establishes the possible transport solutions that will facilitate the ease of travel by visitors who visit the villages and other cultural sites in the region.

Building Tourism from the Bottom Up

Due to the natural, historical and cultural resources of Shatana, Annu'ayma, Balila and Kitm, they are of high potential for rural and cultural tourism in northern Jordan. But tourism initiatives will only be successful if the community participates. For tourism to be sustainable, residents should recognize that there are also upsides in terms of economic opportunities and downside of not, leaving issues of culture and cultural heritage alone. Tourism may well become unsuccessful or disruptive if there is not local engagement.

The past tourism project failures can best be avoided by taking a bottom up approach. For instance, international artists were brought to Shatana Art Workshop (2007–2009) that ultimately failed due to low people participation and lack of long term local goals (Ciecko, 2009; Toukan, 2021). Other villages can also point to the same lessons, in cases where cultural tourism initiatives have not resulted efficaciously, as the reasons include far from community ownership and planning.

For long term success, the local development council for the four villages should comprise of community leaders, elders, chiefs, religious figures, and muštrār as subpropriate. Given this office, the council could join with regional stakeholders to formulate a single tourism strategy with equal economic dividends while protecting the cultural character of each village.

Conflict Resolution and Funding

Internal conflicts imply that tourism can't be developed without includes effective mechanisms of dispute resolution. This being the case, revenue from tourism to all four villages ought to be fairly shared in order to forestall squabbles between the families and business owners selling to tourists. Disputes could be meditated through local arbitration councils that would ensure tourism development continues as a unifying force instead of factionalising.

Local businesses should be supported by strategic funding of tourism more than they are displaced by it. USAID, JAICA, KOICA, and GIZ could fund the infrastructure development, training programs and business investment. Furthermore, Yarmouk University may collaborate with local communities to benefit from research, expertise, and capacity building on sustainable tourism within the area.

Marketing and Long-Term Sustainability

Therefore, an overall marketing approach should try to include Shatana, Annu'ayyma, Balila and Kitm as a fundamental component of a cultural and eco-tourism network (Nogueira & Carvalho, 2024). There are unique attractions in each village that can be featured in regional tourism campaigns.

- Shatana for its Christian heritage, historic churches, and rural traditions
- Annu'ayyma for its Ottoman-era landmarks, vast green spaces, and educational institutions
- Balila for its Roman and Greek ruins, olive oil production, and ancient stone structures
- Agricultural tourism potential, seasonal crop harvesting and close-knit community traditions for the purpose of providing kitm for.

These villages could thereby contribute to Jordan's national tourism strategy in the form of rural tourism, regional tourism, and cultural heritage and ecotourism.

Tourism outcomes should be evaluated seasonally in order to facilitate gradual improvements so that they are long term sustainable with a community feedback and visitor experience (Nogueira & Carvalho, 2024). By continuous assessment and adaptation, the region would be able to set up a tourism model that would sustain itself and thus act as a benefit both to the people of the region and to the overall economy.

3. Discussion

Shatana, Balila, Annu'ayma and Kitm are useful case studies for the relationship between place and identity and rural tourism in Jordan. As all villages have different cultural and historical identity, based on agriculture, architecture and local tradition, they are perfect for introduction of sustainable tourism. Shatana is famous for its Christian heritage and historic churches, but Annu'ayma and Balila boast Ottoman buildings and Roman ruins and Kitm has agricultural landscapes and olive production.

This paper integrates theoretical and empirical perspective with ethnographic observation to examine the community driven tourism with focus in local engagement and sustainable practice.

Placemaking and Local Identity

Placemaking theory allows for reading across these villages in terms of culture and social fabric—identity building is perceived to be bottom up, based on collective memory, and one that is reflective of the connections between culture and the environment (Buizer & Turnhout, 2011; Lew, 2019). In each village, the historical and ancestral ties to the land shape local identity, with residents maintaining traditional architecture, agricultural practices, and social structures.

In his article, Nogueira and Carvalho (2024) consider that 'place identity' is generated by people's emotional and physical links from these arounds. In Shatana his presence is seen in old churches and in the agricultural traditions; in Annu'ayma and Balila, in Ottoman and Roman building influence; and in Kitm in the olive groves and pastoral landscapes. Therefore, the preservation and integration of all these elements is essential so that the community-led initiatives are linked to cultural values within the tourism planning.

Tourism and External Perceptions

Inherent in tourism is local and external interactions that influence how visitors perceive a destination (Nogueira & Carvalho, 2022). Shatana's historical homes, agricultural landscapes and Christian heritage, as well as the Roman remains in Balila, and Ottoman areas of Annu'ayma and the farming of Kitm all contain examples of rich cultural narratives that tourists can be drawn to. But there have been challenges for the development of rural tourism – commercialization and cultural commodification. Too much focus on economic tourism risks losing local traditions, what Sen and Silverman (2014) and Chatelard (2003) call cultural erosion and loss of authenticity. Therefore, tourism planning aims to strike a balance between the economic and cultural preservation, meaning that each village should be reserved to keep its identity and be open to outside participation.

Bottom-Up vs. Top-Down Approaches to Tourism Development

Centralisation of tourism, with the Petra and Wadi Rum projects being the clout of traditional tourism in Jordan, has been the standard and local communities have not been participants in decision making (Chatelard, 2003). While using this approach has brought revenue to the company, it has been criticized for overlooking cultural and social concerns.

On the other hand, a bottom up model based on community participation is much more appropriate for villages like Shatana, Annu'ayma, Balila and Kitm. As Lew (2019) has claimed, community driven tourism leads to stakeholder ownership for a long term sustainability. From Kitm and Balila and adjacent villages residents especially value autonomy from external influence and hence, bottom up models of integration of tourism into existing lifestyle are more effective. Local businesses could work with government agencies, and village leaders, elders and other representatives to form a regional tourism council to create culturally sensitive community lead tourism initiative.

The Role of Green Tourism in Shaṭana

Green tourism is an alternative to mass tourism that aims at preserving cultures, being environmentally responsible and a part of the community. Green tourism initiatives could include across Shatana, Annu'ayma, Balila and Kitm.

- Historic sight walking tours including Ottoman and Roman ruins in Annu'ayma and Balila
- Folk dance, storytelling and Jordanian feasts in cultural workshops
- For example, olive harvesting and visits to local bread making demonstrations in Kitm.
- Traditional weaving, pottery and cooking skills to be shown in handicraft markets

It also allows direct cultural exchange where the residents communicate stories, traditions and day life of theirs with visitors (Sen & Silverman, 2014). This guarantees authenticity of local heritage and generates a mutually beneficial relationship between the guests and the residents.

Challenges to Implementing Green Tourism

In fact, however, there are several challenges to green tourism in these villages despite its potential. Lack of facilities – However, villages like Shatana and kitm don't have good travel and accommodation amenities which restrict people from visiting. The problem of outmigration of youth—aging population and urban migration are reducing the available human resources for the management of tourism. External Promotion Dependence – Many residents continue to believe that governments must take action from the top down, therefore, capacity building programmes are needed to encourage self determination among the community in tourist ownership. Greenwashing Risks – When substitutes for more sustainable forms of travel and tourism are touted as 'green', there is a danger in giving the impression that programmes of this sort are in fact being implemented, without actually being (Moscardo & Murphy, 2014). To avoid this, clear policies, sustainability norms and transparent marketing have to be instituted.

Opportunities for Community-Driven Tourism

However, there are enormous opportunities to add value to the community tourism of those four villages. Restoring old stone houses in Shatana and Annu'ayyma for use as guest accommodations in heritage tourism could be one such way.

- Olives pressing in Balila and Kitm could be recruited as agricultural tourism opportunities to tie locals with olive oil farming traditions.
- The locally driven tourism projects could be supported by regional and international NGOs through the provision of funding, training and technical assistance.
- University partnerships based on Yarmouk University could involve research, documentation, and marketing.
- Segmentation to the market could bring in the extremely diverse tourist: Gulf tourists seeking cooler summer climates and the Western tourist interested in Christian heritage sites.

A competitive advantage gained by these villages in Jordan's rural tourism sector would require developing targeted tourist attractions, tailored travel experiences, and improved hospitality services.

Maintaining appropriate balance between economic development and cultural preservation is a central concern in tourism development. Research indicates that the successful tourism strategies should include embedding local traditions and heritage into commercial activity (Chatelard, 2003; Lew, 2019).

Balancing Economic and Cultural Goals

By integrating some traditional practices into tourism experiences, this balance can be achieved in Shatana and some other places called Annu'ayyma, Balila and Kitm. For instance: Visitors can be made interactive local bread making, olive oil production, for example. Using the music, dance, and storytelling traditions as features of the seasonal festivals, they would not only strengthen cultural pride but also attract some population as visitors. Services of renovated heritage homes as eco-friendly accommodations to offer authentic experiences for the lodgers as well as maintain the architectural integrity. Through combining cultural heritage with tourism interventions, these villages can create sources of revenue and sustaining the identity of the same, thus making the village economy long lasting and healthy.

4. Conclusion

This study has highlighted the opportunities that Annu'ayyma, Balila and Kitm and Shatana's local providers might seize their culture and materials for the sustainable development of this sector from the bottom up. Thus, the native culture in the village makes the fundamental basis for sustainable tourism development, protecting the natural environment and preserving the traditions of early settlers. In this way, Shatana follows a bottom-up approach, which contrasts

with the top-bottom approach that characterizes many traditional models of tourism, thus maintaining the centrality of the community in the process of tourism. By incorporating traditional sectors, for instance, baking bread and producing olive oils, among other activities in tourism development, there would be a healthy balance between the economic benefits and culture in a region as it is more meaningful and productive for residents and tourists. By adopting the proper strategic goal and planning, it will be possible to make Annu'ayma, Balila and Kitm and Shaṭana into a model of how presenting cultures and providing for tourism preserve rural Jordan's environment and customs.

Future recommendations

The implications of this study are helpful for sustainable tourism development, especially in rural areas like Annu'ayma, Balila and Kitm Shaṭana. Thus, the value of the bottom-up approach is illustrated in this review, and community-centered initiatives based on cultural and material practices will be valuable with proper respect for environmental standards. It finds that the combined application of green tourism and placemaking presents a scalable best practice for achieving sustainable economic development in partnership with cultural sustainability and biodiversity conservation. In future studies, governments and development agencies should adopt such capacity-building prospects to endow the local populations with requisite skills that will enable them to take charge of tourism initiatives. Further, developing partnerships between regional stakeholders, NGOs, and policymakers will also help share assets and ideas about the effective and efficient implementation of sustainable tourism. Further studies should reveal the possibility of applying this model in other rural areas and define how different cultural and climatic conditions affect the usage of the community-based tourism development model. There is also a need to focus on metrics on such projects' socio-economic and environmental results to ensure incremental improvement and sustainability.

Acknowledgments:

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the support given to us by Yarmouk University, Jordan, which granted permission for one of us to travel and stay in Finland for a two-month stay. At the same time, we would like to express our appreciation to Helsinki University, Finland, for its hospitality and the help of Dr. Lahelma, Antti. A while we collaborated on this article. We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Bill Young for his invaluable comments and insightful suggestions on this paper. His expertise and constructive feedback have significantly enhanced the quality of our work, and we deeply appreciate the time and effort he dedicated to supporting this research.

References

MoEnv, M. o. E. (2020). *Tourism Sector Green Growth National Action Plan 2021–2025*.
<https://www.sustainability.gov/pdfs/ggi-jordan-tourism.pdf>

- Ababneh, A. (2016). Heritage management and interpretation: Challenges to heritage site-based values, reflections from the heritage site of Umm Qais, Jordan. *Archaeologies*, 12, 38-72.
- Abu-Khafajah, S., Al Rabady, R., & Rababeh, S. (2015). Urban heritage 'space' under neoliberal development: a tale of a Jordanian plaza. *International Journal of heritage studies*, 21(5), 441-459.
- Abulheija, H. K., Ronza; and Mubaideen, Walaa. (2009). *Analysis for Contemporary Arts and Culture Center in Shatana*. Jordan University.
- Berriane, M. (1999). Tourism, culture and development in the Arab Region. *Supporting Culture To Develop Tourism, Unesco's World Decade For Cultural Deveelopment Research, Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*, 303-319.
- Boiko, V. (2020). Green tourism as a perspective direction for rural entrepreneurship development. In. Lviv-Toruń: Liha-Pres.
- Buizer, M., & Turnhout, E. (2011). Text, talk, things, and the subpolitics of performing place. *Geoforum*, 42(5), 530-538.
- Chatelard, G. (2003). Conflicts of interest over the Wadi Rum reserve: were they avoidable? A socio-political critique. *Nomadic Peoples*, 7(1), 138-158.
- Ciecko, A. (2009). Digital Territories and States of Independence: Jordan's Film Scenes. *Afterimage*, 36(5), 3.
- Feist, H. R. (2011). *Social spaces, rural places: ageing-in-place in rural South Australia*
- Furqan, A., Som, A. P. M., & Hussin, R. (2010). Promoting green tourism for future sustainability. *Theoretical and empirical researches in urban management*, 5(8 (17), 64-74.
- Gunay, Z. (2008). Neoliberal urbanism and sustainability of cultural heritage. 44th ISOCARP congress,
- Lew, A. A. (2019). Tourism planning and place making: place-making or placemaking? In *Tourism Planning and Development* (pp. 142-160). Routledge.
- Moscardo, G., & Murphy, L. (2014). There is no such thing as sustainable tourism: Re-conceptualizing tourism as a tool for sustainability. *Sustainability*, 6(5), 2538-2561.
- Nogueira, S., & Carvalho, J. M. (2024). Unlocking the dichotomy of place identity/place image and its impact on place satisfaction for ecotourism destinations. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 23(1), 1-19.

- Sen, A., & Silverman, L. (2014). Embodied placemaking: An important category of critical analysis. *21st century studies: Making place: Space and embodiment in the city*, 1-18.
- Toukan, H. (2021). *The politics of Art: dissent and cultural diplomacy in Lebanon, palestine, and Jordan*. Stanford University Press.
- Zbучea, A. (2014). Territorial marketing based on cultural heritage. *Management and Marketing*, 12(2).