

SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN HISTORICAL AREAS USING THE TOURIST TRAIL APPROACH: A CASE STUDY OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (CHUD) PROJECT IN SAIDA, LEBANON.

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Abstract

Cultural assets are vital aspects for any urban development process. Their importance increases considerably in historical areas, where the richness of cultural heritage has the ability to motivate cultural tourism. This paper emphasizes the sustainable development of urban historical areas based on their potential as cultural tourism sites. It argues that to guarantee the sustainability of any development intervention in these areas, a master planning process must be undertaken to balance all of the aspects of development. It tackles the interconnectedness of these aspects as an approach to their simultaneous development. As a focus of study, this paper raises a question about the ability of a 'heritage trail' – an area of direct interactions between parties sharing in urban development in historic areas – to achieve the sustainability goals of the involved areas. To answer this question, the paper investigates three nodes of interaction stimulated by the heritage trail: conservation and rehabilitation, interpretation, and micro-economic development. To illustrate the validity of the proposed approach, this paper discusses the heritage trail as an approach used in the Cultural Heritage and Urban Development (CHUD) project in the historical core of Saida (Old Saida), Lebanon as a case study.

KEY WORDS:

sustainable development, heritage, conservation, interpretation, cultural tourism, CHUD, Saida