



An Exploration of the potential for the development of culturally sustainable tourism in Kuwait. [

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In recent decades, sustainable tourism has emerged as an alternative to traditional mass tourism approaches to tourism development, as the latter has struggled to cope with many detrimental impacts to the socio-cultural and natural environments and, indirectly, the broader tourism economy. Tourism is now embracing the principles of sustainability to safeguard and conserve the very resources on which it depends. Sustainable tourism development recognises the importance of the cultural and ecological resources of the local community, which are regarded as essential to achieving better socio-cultural and economic results. The available studies of socio-cultural impacts are mainly based on a Western perspective and there is a dearth of information about Islamic destinations from the socio-cultural angle. The aim of this research is to assess the potential for the development of culturally sustainable tourism in Kuwait, which fills a gap in knowledge. Although Islamic teaching and principles encourage people to travel as well as to be hospitable to guests, doubt exists that the development of tourism will only bring negative socio-cultural impacts for host communities. Islamic destinations have a lifestyle connected with Islamic traditions and cultural values that are often in conflict with the needs of tourism development and leisure activities, which are mainly geared to Western culture. However, tourism development is an effective tool of economic diversification for many Islamic countries, especially in oil-dependent economies, as it can generate substantial revenues through foreign exchange earnings and thereby enable countries to withstand economic fluctuations created by non-renewable crude oil resources. Kuwait is an example of an Islamic destination that depends on oil as the main source of income and it has a unique socio-cultural context that revolves around customs and traditions originating from Islamic religion and tribal roots. Therefore, a culturally sust

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Título: An Exploration of the potential for the development of culturally sustainable tourism in Kuwait. electronic resource].]

Documento fuente: Alrumaih, A., 2015. An Exploration of the potential for the development of culturally sustainable tourism in Kuwait. Doctoral Thesis (Doctoral). Bournemouth University

Nota general: application/pdf

Tesis: Thesis / Dissertation ETD

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