

Balancing Urban Tourism With Sustainability and City Development: The Case of Lisbon and Jaipur

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ABSTRACT

This research dives into the complex relationship of urban tourism, sustainability, and city development, using Lisbon and Jaipur as focal points. With urban tourism significantly influencing global urban landscapes, finding a delicate balance between its economic advantages and sustainable urban growth has become essential. Employing a combination of quantitative data analysis and qualitative perspectives from stakeholders, the study aims to evaluate how tourism impacts the sustainability of these distinct cities. The research seeks to uncover challenges, opportunities, and effective strategies, presenting actionable recommendations for policymakers, urban planners, and stakeholders to encourage sustainable urban tourism. Through a comparative analysis of Lisbon and Jaipur, this study contributes valuable insights to the global conversation on aligning tourism expansion with conscientious city development.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The words Urban Tourism refers to the different types of activities tourists engage in while visiting cities, which may include cultural experiences, entertainment, shopping, and business-related travel. It encompasses the infrastructure of the city and the services it offers to the tourists to cater to their needs. (Ashworth & Page, 2011)

With the world's population increasingly concentrated in urban areas, the focus of tourism development has shifted towards cities. Urban tourism, encompassing travel to and within cities for leisure, business, or other purposes, has emerged as a significant driver of economic growth and development in cities around the globe (UNWTO, 2023). This phenomenon presents a unique opportunity for urban policymakers and stakeholders to harness the power of tourism to revitalise local economies, create employment opportunities, and foster cultural exchange.

As highlighted by a World Travel and Tourism Council report (2013), tourism acts as a powerful stimulant for economic activity, generating income, employment, investment, and fostering exports (Blanke, J., & Chiesa, T. 2013.) In the context of cities, this translates to increased revenue for businesses, particularly those within the hospitality, transportation, and retail sectors (Joung & Chen, 2014). Additionally, tourism expenditure contributes directly to government coffers through taxes and levies, enabling investment in critical infrastructure projects, public services, and urban regeneration initiatives (UNWTO, 2023).

Beyond its direct economic benefits, urban tourism fosters job creation, particularly in sectors with high labour intensity like accommodation, food service, and cultural attractions (Page & Doherty, 2018). This can be particularly advantageous for alleviating unemployment, especially amongst young people and those residing in disadvantaged communities (Cohen, 2018). Furthermore, tourism can act as a catalyst for entrepreneurship and innovation, encouraging the creation of new businesses and products tailored to the needs of visitors, thereby diversifying the urban economy, and fostering local economic development (OECD, 2018).

In recent decades, urban tourism has emerged as a significant driver of economic growth and development in cities around the world (UNWTO, 2018). This phenomenon is particularly evident in Lisbon, Portugal, and Jaipur, India, where tourism has revitalised historic city centres, spurred infrastructure development, and created employment opportunities (Rodrigues & Leal, 2019; Sharma & Pathak, 2018). By examining the unique cases of Lisbon and Jaipur, this paper explores the multifaceted ways in which urban tourism contributes to local economies.

Lisbon, a city steeped in history and maritime culture, has witnessed a remarkable tourism boom in recent years. As noted by Rodrigues and Leal (2019), "the number of tourists visiting Lisbon has grown exponentially, reaching a record 4.3 million in 2017" (p. 2). This influx of visitors has spurred economic activity across various sectors, including hospitality, retail, and transportation. Additionally, tourism has played a crucial role in the regeneration of Lisbon's historic city centre, transforming once-neglected areas into vibrant cultural hubs (Rodrigues & Leal, 2019).

Similarly, Jaipur, the "Pink City" of India, has experienced a surge in tourist arrivals, capitalising on its rich heritage and cultural offerings (Sharma & Pathak, 2018). As Sharma and Pathak (2018) point out, "tourism has emerged as a key economic driver for Jaipur, contributing significantly to employment generation, income creation, and infrastructure development" (p. 12). The city's vibrant cultural scene, encompassing magnificent forts, palaces, and traditional bazaars, has attracted tourists not only from India but also from across the globe.

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