



## The Role of Intangible Values for Historic Places in Stimulating Tourism Investment (Ur City in Iraq-Case Study)

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### ABSTRACT

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The world today glorifies the concept of historical places and their importance, as they enjoy a heritage capital of cultural and economic values that lie in their greatness and beauty and the message they carry as an expression of the civilization and culture of society and its role. In attracting a lot of tourists, especially history lovers who have the culture of learning about ancient civilizations, to try to understand the present. Which makes it a major contributor to supporting the economy, this research aims to provide a platform for understanding how to stimulate tourism investment in historical places by highlighting the dynamism of spiritual values imbued with religious or symbolic meaning and adopting a strategy of (Tourism Marketing for Historic Places), as well as upgrading the cultural treasures in those places. The research found the importance of activating the cultural and economic values that stimulate tourism investment by adopting tourism marketing mechanisms (empowerment, flow, compatibility) in historical places.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

World Heritage sites are a valuable asset for most countries, now viewed as economic engines that help in enhancing livelihoods and wellbeing within the local community through tourism or reviving local cultural values, as the most popular places have become tourist destinations proudly marketed locally and internationally [1]. The UNESCO World Heritage Organization has defined the outstanding universal value of historical places, which means sites of cultural and natural importance that transcend the local to the global context, and of common importance to the current and future generations of all mankind [1]. Iraq possesses large and diverse tourism potentials that need to be developed and activated, therefore, the research seeks to build a comprehensive theoretical framework for the indicators of tourist marketing of historical places by stimulating the moral values in those places as a consensual strategy between the individual and collective authenticity and identity of the place and tourism investment in it.

The research adopted the following steps to achieve the research objective:

- Determining the tangible and intangible values of cultural heritage in historical places and their contribution to stimulating tourism investment.
- Investigate the concept of (places marketing), locally and globally, by raising its cultural and economic value, and search for an effective way to generate economic revenue (brand) in place.
- Applying the indicators of the theoretical framework to an important historical place in Iraq (the city of Ur) to reach the results and conclusions and then recommendations.

## 2. HISTORICAL PLACES

Regarding Historic Urban Areas, UNESCO has stressed the need for a comprehensive understanding of the cultural significance of historical places within heritage management, as they represent:

(a) Historic places are distinguished repositories of values and meanings that focused on [2]:

- Place attachment: Given that those historical areas are places linked to human feelings and his relationship with the place and its past.
- Heritage discourse: Which recognizes the study of potential synergies between the concept of place attachment and the practice of heritage preservation.

The place acquired a more comprehensive meaning on the United States National Register of Historic Places, established in 1966 under the National Historic Preservation Act. The first edition of the Pura Charter, published in 1979, adopted the term "place" as the focus of the heritage sector, as the place as an emotional construct depends on the investment of a meaningful and valuable place (spatial investment). Here, we are in line with the phenomenological studies that view the place as an essential part of our existential security and it is the cornerstone of individual and collective life, physically in terms of the built form and immaterial at the same time in terms of meanings, memories, and practices that build the meaning and value of historical places. Here, the concept of "spirit of place" appeared in the Quebec Declaration (ICOMOS, 2008), an international charter for the preservation of heritage, which expresses the tangible (buildings, sites, outdoor areas, roads) with the intangible (memories, narratives, written documents, rituals, festivals, traditional knowledge, values, textures, colors, aromas, .... etc.) [2].

(b) Historic places are the origin of some of the oldest civilizations, cultures, and religions in the world, characterized by different hidden connotations of spiritual values, meanings, and beliefs, especially concerning religion, which is an important cultural characteristic that is inculcated primarily through the spiritual beliefs of its original religions, and the continuity of sovereignty, what distinguishes it is the interest by realizing that the past is always present. These connotations focused on [3]:

- Authenticity: Authenticity is not necessarily equivalent to the original, as authentic practices or things can be new or alternatives conceived according to old traditions, practices, or craftsmanship.

- Character: An essential characteristic embodied in a place that makes it distinct from other places and therefore deserves constant special attention.

- Compatibility: The acceptance of new practices or designs with an existing context, without harming or undermining the original content.

- Cultural heritage: The practice of preserving properties that are of important cultural value.

- Preserving the identity: respecting the various local customs and traditions that witnessed societal distinction, and preserving them in a way that does not hinder societal progress.

(c) Historic places are what generations of people have made of the places in which they have lived, characterized by familiarity by making the present familiar, reaffirming and validating current traits and actions through their resemblance to the past, and identity, through the ability to remember and identify our past, which gives meaning, purpose and value to the existence, guidance, through distinctively recalling the past for the lessons it teaches, enrichment, through a beloved past that enriches the world around us, and escape from alternatives to an unacceptable present despite strengthening the acceptable present [4].

- Masom (Year) suggests that "the ability of a site to convey, embody or stimulate a relationship or reaction to the past is part of the essential nature and meaning of heritage objects." This is partially related to relatively intangible notions such as the idea of collective memory and the feeling that physical remnants of the past can embody, represent and motivate it. The argument is that the ability to connect to the past is important because, among other things, it "gives meaning, purpose, and value to existence" [4].

### 3. TOURISM INVESTMENT

Tourism investment is one of the vital and effective mechanisms that contribute to the tourism industry, which in turn develops the economic growth of the country as well as cultural differentiation, and as follows:

(a) Tourism investment is the exploitation of natural resources from distinct sites, climate, different capabilities, and distinguished services for tourists, making these sites points of attraction and securing all requirements for that in terms of promotion and marketing to ensure their protection and development [5].

(b) Tourism investment is considered as the investment development of tourism that meets the needs of tourists and host sites as well as protecting and providing future opportunities [6, 7].

(c) An industry consisting of several tourism activities, and

each activity is not considered an independent industry, but when they meet, a tourism industry occurs [8].

(d) Heritage investment encourages the efficient use of built assets and land, maximizing the benefits of adaptive reuse of assets that would otherwise be neglected or underutilized. This approach consists of investing in the preservation and management of heritage assets, infrastructure, and service delivery to engage the local communities living in the vicinity of the heritage assets, institutional strengthening, capacity building, and promoting an enabling environment for job creation and local economic development, as well as an adaptive reuse.

### 4. CULTURAL HERITAGE IN HISTORICAL PLACES

(a) Cultural heritage describes a dynamic and ever-growing group of assets that have strong and expressive aesthetics. The idea was first formalized in Italy in the 1960s by the Franceschini Commission to represent important assets of civilization, history and culture that, under their recognized artistic value, belong to society and are promoted and protected, accordingly [9].

(b) Heritage is originally something very personal (individual heritage), but it can be something whose "value" can be shared at a local, regional or national level (collective heritage) by developing its relationship with certain local communities, giving people a certain "value" for something that enables them to have a sense of identity [10].

(c) The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage recognizes that the intangible cultural heritage or the so-called "living heritage" is the main driver of our cultural diversity and that its preservation ensures the continuation of creativity. It manifests itself in oral traditions, language, performing arts, social practices, rituals, and ceremonial events, knowledge, and crafts. As such, it is passed on from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by societies and groups, in response to their environment and their interaction with nature [4].

### 5. THE CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC VALUE

(a) Cultural value is a concept that reflects several different dimensions of value, not all of them may be present in a particular case, and the meaning of each of them may differ from one case to another. This value can be classified into (Aesthetic, symbolic, spiritual, social, historical, authentic, and scientific values) of a building or heritage site. It is a fundamental issue in heritage economics and cultural capital theory, by adapting and reusing landmarks for contemporary needs [11]. According to heritage policy documents, cultural values that are embodied through attributes of both, tangible and intangible heritage, including historical, archaeological, architectural, textile, material, technological, aesthetic, scientific, spiritual, religious, social, traditional, political, identity, artistic, relative technical and rare values, in addition to aspects associated with human activities that include [12]:

- Values of originality: Judgments of originality can be linked to form, design, materials, substance, use, function, tradition, techniques, location, setting, spirit, feeling, and other internal and external factors. The place is valued for its good because it is real, not fake, and because it is unique. The important accompanying feature is that the site has integrity,

defined differently in different circumstances, which must be protected. Protecting site integrity, regardless of its interpretation, may be an important constraint imposed on project decision-making when cultural value is taken into account [13, 14]

- Social values: They generate interest in safeguarding heritage properties. It relates to traditional social activities, compatible use in the present, contemporary social interaction, and social and cultural identity [15, 16].

- Historical value: It is knowing what happened in the past. It also includes the history of aesthetics, science, and society. A place may have a historical value because it is impacted or influenced by a historical character, event, stage, or activity. It helps establish identity by providing a connection with the past and revealing the origins of the present [16, 17].

- Identity values: The identity is in continuous evolution for cultural heritage properties, in their historical character, in both present and past values, and their physical fabric. It can also include age, tradition, continuity, memorial, mythical, wonder, sentimental, spiritual, religious, symbolic, political, patriotic, and national [13, 15, 18]

- Spiritual values: The spirit of a place is defined as the physical (buildings, sites, landscapes, roads, objects, settlement patterns, land-use practices), and non-material elements (memories, narratives, religious beliefs, written documents, rituals, festivals, traditional knowledge, values, textures, colors) [19].

(b) Economic value is an important task that allows heritage, in addition to its historical, artistic and cultural values, to indicate the “valorization” of heritage assets and try to make these assets productive (a source of income). This goal can be achieved through the promotion of cultural tourism (encouraging the use of cultural assets and landscapes by promoting them as tourist attractions). If heritage assets are protected and maintained, they represent capital assets whose productivity may create both cultural and non-cultural externalities, with the latter including external factors related to social, economic and production contexts [9]. Economic value is classified into two main categories [5, 6]:

- Use values: These values are divided into direct and indirect use. Benefits of direct use can include entertainment, educational activities, inspiration and knowledge. The benefits of indirect use can arise in the form of improved community image, sense of place, and social interaction. The so-called option value can also be linked to the possible future use of the services provided by the heritage sites.

- Non-use values: A preliminary classification of non-use values associated with heritage sites can be determined. They can be described as altruistic values, where well-being increases from the knowledge that others who live will benefit from the site; bequest values, increased well-being associated with the knowledge that future generations will benefit from the site; Existence values, associated with welfare improvements from the knowledge that a heritage site, its services and collections, exist even if the individual does not experience the benefit of use now or in the future.

## 6. TOURISM MARKETING FOR HISTORICE PLACES

Marketing concept refers to:

(a) Product development and support, customer targeting, and market identification and development. The development and implementation of a well-developed marketing plan

should be an important aspect of a successful cultural heritage tourism programmer [20].

(b) Identifying and satisfying human and social needs “Profitably satisfied” by creating, offering, and exchanging products and services of value with others [21].

(c) A purely commercial instrument that seeks to increase shareholder value. However, McLean (2002) considers marketing as a tool to promote the goals of heritage features in terms of preservation and collection [22].

Tourism has been recognized as the most effective marketing process for heritage, and heritage tourism has emerged which is a practice in which people visit heritage sites within a country or travel abroad to historical places of interest to see centuries-old heritage and experience heritage monuments, gardens and traditional places recognized by UNESCO, archaeological societies and others. It is an economic driver designed to attract visitors to an area based on the unique aspects of the area's history, landscape, and culture. This could not only enhance regional and local pride but is also a good source of income for the community and creates job opportunities [20]. One of the most important principles adopted by it is the marketing of heritage brands as tourist attractions, and the reuse and renewal of development through innovative transformation that will generate social and economic benefits (preserving cultural resources, authentic visitor experience, stimulating revenue from cultural resources, maintaining and maintaining those places) [2].

## 7. THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF THE APPLICATION

### 7.1 Research methodology

The study conducted in this research adopted a qualitative approach due to the exploratory nature of this study, based on the Critical Realism ontology, to search for the detection of hidden structures.

### 7.2 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of the research was formulated from the indicators derived from the previous proposals and categorized into three main terms, as shown in Table 1.

### 7.3 Practical framework

Ur city was chosen as a practical study in the research because of its important physical and moral values. The indicators were measured based on a proposal submitted by the Italian Organization on Bonn Bear, Office of the Specialized Architect Carlo Leopardi (2019), for the development and investment of these places, as will be explained later.

#### 7.3.1 The historic city of Ur

Ur is one of the most important historical places located in the Dhi Qar Governorate in Iraq (the Sumerian city of Tel Al-Maqi). It is considered one of the oldest known civilizations in the history of the world (Figure 1). In 2016, the ancient city of Ur and other sites in Dhi Qar Governorate were included in the World Heritage List, as it is an important landmark in Iraq and is a destination for tourists coming to it. It is represented by the presence of the ziggurat building, the royal cemetery, the

Temple of Dibalmakh, the house of the Prophet Abraham, peace be upon him, and the house of Enkhdwana and other important monuments that have not been discovered yet [23].

A proposal was submitted for the development and investment of these places by the Italian organization, On Bonn Bear, Office of the Specialized Architect Carlo Leopardi 2019. The proposal is part of a broader intervention plan sought and prepared by the Iraqi government as part of its move to respond to the requirements of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO, including the proposal to establish a

path for tourists and a service center. The idea of creating a visitor path involves the transfer of all services for visitors (checkpoint, car parking, visitor center, shuttle light electric wheels, helipad) from the center, and then the move to the archaeological area through the shuttle electric light wheels and they complete the visit by walking on a wooden path prepared to reach the ancient buildings, with the addition of wooden islands that allow the tourists to stop in groups to contemplate all the important buildings, as well as furnishing the path with signs of protection, guidance and indications.

**Table 1.** Tourism marketing of historic places

Stimulating values		The possible values	
Cultural value X1	Spiritual values X1.1	Emphasizing the spirit and identity of the place X1.1.1	Re-imagining the place by activating cultural events, performances and festivals that tell and embody the story, memory and belief of that historic place in line with the spirit of the age. Reviving religious rituals and events
	Symbolic values X1.2	An essential trait embodied in a place that makes it distinct X1.2.1	Simulating the spirit and history of historical monuments
		Continuity of the importance of the historical place X1.2.2	Adding structural elements that strengthen and highlight that value and coexist with it Demonstrate importance through visual and kinetic axes
	Historical values X1.3	Impact, effect, event, stage, historical activity X1.3.1	Identification, by providing a connection to the past and revealing the origins of the present
	Original values X1.4	Form, design, materials, use, function, tradition, technology, spirit and feel	Site integrity protection
		Encouraging the use of cultural assets and landscapes by promoting them as tourist attractions Communication and continuity with the identity and the dominance of the local character while imparting the spirit of the age (creativity)	
Economic value X2	Social values X1.5	Activating traditional social activities compatible with the present through the establishment of cultural and recreational areas	Revitalization of urban space Providing job opportunities for residents Achieving identity, familiarity and richness with the place
		Direct use X2.1.1	Providing fun, educational activities, inspiration and knowledge
		Indirect use X2.1.2	Improving community image, sense of place, and social interaction
	Use values X2.1	Option value X2.1.3	Possible future use of services provided by heritage sites
		Altruism values X2.2.1	Take advantage of the site to achieve the welfare of the community
Marketing mechanisms X3	Non-use values X2.2	Testament values X2.2.2	Increased well-being associated with knowing future generations will benefit from the site associated with welfare improvements from the knowledge that the heritage site, its services and collections, exist even if the individual does not experience the benefit of use now or in the future
		Existence values X2.2.3	
	Enabling X3.1	Special X3.1.1	Providing tourist accommodation areas such as hotels, temporary housing, traditional industries, cultural and recreational areas Adaptive reuse of landmarks for contemporary needs Directing the kinetic and visual paths towards the tourist destination Creating new jobs that coexist with the existing ones
		Institutional X3.1.2	Activate the tourism investment law Encouraging the private sector Accreditation of World Bank Organizations to Support Funding Participation in decision making
		Social X3.1.3	Providing job opportunities for residents through activities offered to tourists Activating traditional crafts, cultural and training activities
	Flow X3.2	Activating heritage tourism through tourism programs and trips that encourage community participation Activities that help social interaction and achieve a sense of familiarity with the place	
	Compatibility X3.3	Accept new practices or designs with an existing context, while also not harming or undermining the original content	



(a) Location map of Ur city, Iraq



(b) Site plan, Temple/Palace complex



(c) The historic city of Ur



(d) Temple/Palace complex

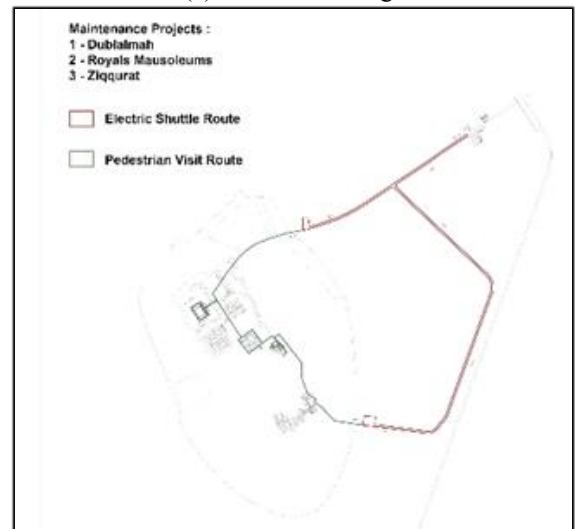


(e) The Ziggurat

addition of the second phase of development, which is the completion of an annex building that can be used as a local museum and public library [24, 25].



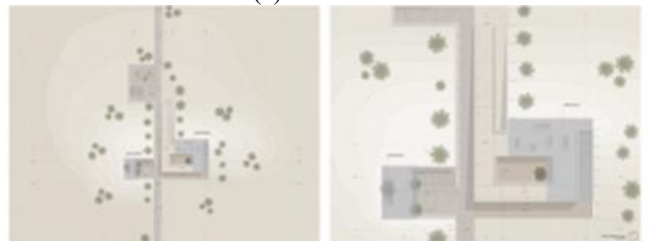
(a) Central buildings



(b) The developed route



(c) Elevations



(d) Site plan

**Figure 2.** The proposal of the Italian Organization on Bonn Bear /the service center path and its components [24]

**Figure 1.** The city of Ur and the historical buildings in it [24]

The service center includes two new buildings of urban style inspired by the idea of the ziggurat as a building and from the Iraqi houses in terms of the open inner courtyard between the two buildings and the low-rise building, as well as the use of materials close to the materials available in the area, (Figure 2). The project has been designed in such a way as to allow the

## 8. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 8.1 Detailed analysis

#### 8.1.1 The first main term (cultural values)

(a) The first sub-term (spiritual values). The results showed the achievement of possible values of (25%) within the



spiritual values by emphasizing the spirit and identity of the place (re-imagining the place through revitalizing cultural events and performances that narrate and embody the story, memory and belief of that effect in line with the spirit of the times and the revival of rituals and religious activities). The reason for this is the suspension of some important development projects in Iraq due to wars and political and economic conditions.

(b) Second sub-term (symbolic values). The results showed the achievement of possible values of (62%) within the symbolic values by emphasizing a basic feature embodied in a place that makes it distinctive that emulates its spirit and history, and the continuity of the importance of the historical place by adding structural elements that strengthen the value and coexist with it, as well as the visual and kinetic axes.

(c) Third sub-term (historical values). The results showed that the possible values were achieved by (50%) within the historical values by emphasizing the historical event and its impact on identifying (linking with the past and revealing the origins of the present).

(d) Fourth sub-term (authentic values). The results showed achieving the possible values by (75%) within the original values by emphasizing the form, design, materials, use, function, traditions, techniques, spirit and feeling, protecting the integrity of the site, encouraging the use of cultural assets and landscapes by promoting them as tourist attractions, communication and continuity with the identity and the dominance of the local character while imparting the spirit of the age (creativity).

(e) Fifth sub-term (social values). The results showed the achievement of possible values by (50%) within the social values by emphasizing the activation of traditional social activities compatible with the present through the establishment of cultural and recreational areas, revitalizing urban space, providing job opportunities for residents, achieving identity, familiarity and wealth with the place.

### 8.1.2 The second major term (economic values)

(a) First sub-term (use values). The results showed that the possible values were achieved by (66%) within the use-values, including direct use by providing recreational and educational activities, inspiration and knowledge, and indirect use by improving the image of society, sense of place, social interaction, and the value of the option represented in the potential future use of services provided by heritage sites. Which has a role in raising the value of society and its advancement, both at the cultural level (identity and familiarity with the place) and the economic level (providing job opportunities)

(b) Second sub-clause (non-use values). The results showed that the possible values were achieved by (58%) within the non-use values, including the values of altruism by making use of the site to achieve the welfare of the community, and the values of the will that are represented by increasing the welfare associated with the knowledge that future generations will benefit from the site, as well as the values of existence associated with welfare improvements from knowing that the heritage site, its services and collections, exist even if one does not experience the benefit of using it now or in the future.

### 8.1.3 The third main term (marketing mechanisms)

(a) The first sub-term (empowerment). The results showed the achievement of possible values by (66%) within the empowerment at the spatial level by providing tourist

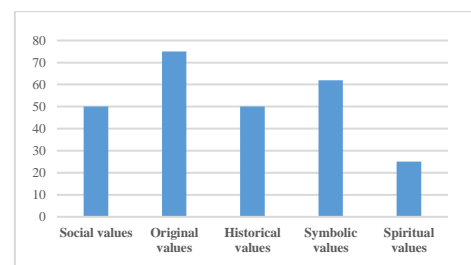
accommodation areas such as hotels, temporary housing, traditional industries, cultural and recreational areas, adaptive reuse of prominent landmarks for contemporary needs, defining kinetic and visual paths towards the tourist destination, creating new jobs that coexist with the assets, and the institutional level through activating the tourism investment law, encouraging the private sector, accrediting the World Bank organizations to support financing, and the societal level through participation in decision-making, providing job opportunities for residents, offering activities for tourists, and activating traditional crafts and cultural and training activities.

(b) Second sub-term (flow). The results showed that the potential values were achieved by (75%) within the tourist flow through activating heritage tourism (tourist programs and trips that encourage community participation), and activities that help social interaction and familiarity with the place.

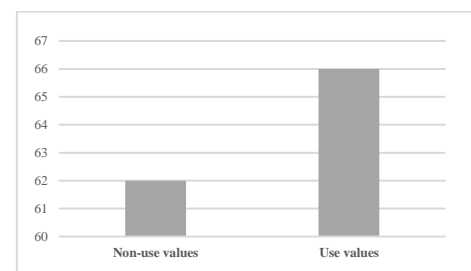
(c) Third sub-term (compatibility). The results showed achieving (75%) feasible values within compatibility by accepting new practices or designs with an existing context, while also not harming or undermining the original content, As the work was carried out outside the boundaries of the archaeological buildings and adherence to the regulations of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Antiquities.

## 8.2 General analysis

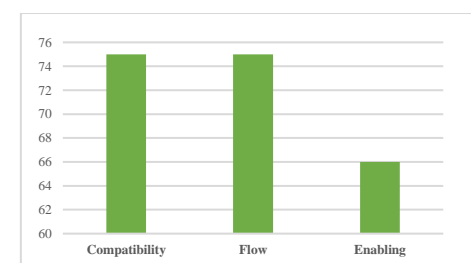
In general, and based on the theoretical framework provided by the researchers, the results of the analysis showed that the proposed development of the city achieved the following ratios for each item: cultural values (58%), economic values (62%), marketing mechanisms (75%), as shown in Figure 3.



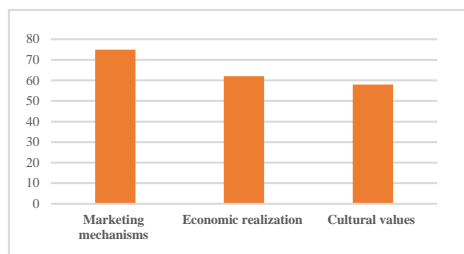
(a) Cultural values realization ratios



(b) Economic realization ratios



(c) Marketing mechanisms realization ratios



(d) The theoretical framework items realization ratios

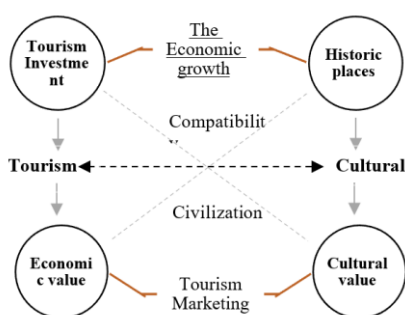
**Figure 3.** Results of the analysis of the proposed development of the historical city of Ur

## 9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The historical places in Iraq possess great potential and motives as successful tourist attractions. The research presented an approach to deal with historical places by activating their cultural and economic values and their role in stimulating tourism investment, promotion, and marketing of those places as a strategy to conserve and protect natural, historical, and cultural resources and providing viable economic opportunities for local communities through the adoption of tourism marketing mechanisms (empowerment, flow, compatibility), As well as adopting the brand as an effective way to generate economic revenues and an identity that distinguishes spatially. as can be seen in Figure 4 and 5.



**Figure 4.** Theoretical and practical research indicators



**Figure 5.** The relationship between historical places and tourism investment

The research recommends preserving the historical places, highlighting their values, working on special legislation to revive them, encouraging tourism investment by activating the partnership between the public and private sectors. The research also recommends introducing the marketing system as a business strategy in relevant institutions, monitoring the

financial allocations necessary to promote these places, improving the reality of tourism services, and activating tourism activities in a way that secures the establishment of the developed tourism industry.

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## APPENDIX

Practical application in research samples			
Note 1: The weight assigned to the impact of each variable is as: 1= weak impact, 2= medium, 3+ good, and 4+ strong impact.			
Note 2: The statistical equation to standardize the values of the indicators (percentage relative frequency)			
Main item	Sub-item	Code	The weight assigned to the impact of each variable
X1	X1.1	X1.1.1	1
	(1*4=4)		25%
	X1.2	X1.2.1	2
		X1.2.2	3
	(2*4=8)		5
			62%
	X1.3	X1.3.1	2
	(1*4=4)		2
			50%
	X1.4		3
	(1*4=4)		3
			75%
X1.5		2	
(1*4=4)		2	
		50%	
Secondary Singular effect value (6*4=24)			14
			58%
X2	X2.1	X2.1.1	3
		X2.1.2	2
		X2.1.3	3
	(3*4=12)		8
			66%
	X2.2	X2.2.1	3
		X2.2.2	1
		X2.2.3	3
	(3*4=12)		7
			58%
Secondary Singular effect value (6*4=24)			15
			62%
X3	X3.1	X3.1.1	3
		X3.1.2	3
		X3.1.3	2
	(3*4=12)		8
			66%
	X3.2		3
	(1*4=4)		3
			75%
	X3.3		3
	(1*4=4)		3
		75%	
Secondary Singular effect value (5*4=20)			15
			75%