



Place Attachment and Ethnic Minority's Behavioral Intention towards Cultural Heritage Tourism: A New Measurement Scale

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigated the relationship between Circassian residents' place attachment in Jordan and their willingness to support their cultural heritage as a tourism product. The study also explores the role of perceived tourism contribution in mediating the relationship between place attachment and support for tourism. **Research design, data and methodology:** Based on environmental psychology studies, the current study provided a new scale of place attachment, including knowledge about general and specific cultural features and sense of community. A questionnaire-based method was distributed to 414 Circassian citizens in Jordan using validated and adapted scales from previous research. Updated scales and pretests were also conducted to measure reliability and validity. **Results:** The main findings showed that place attachment had no positive effect on residents' behaviors towards tourism and that the perceived contribution of tourism significantly affected residents' support for tourism. **Conclusions:** The study contributes by exploring ethnic minorities' cultural identity in developing countries, linking place identity to environmental psychology, and adopting a novel measurement approach. We suggested practical implementations for tourism development planners in Jordan to enhance ethnic tourism marketing. Theoretical gaps were discussed, and recommendations for future studies were suggested accordingly.

Keywords: Place Attachment, Ethnic Minority, Circassians, Cultural Heritage Tourism, Business Opportunities, Behavioral Intentions.

JEL Classification Code: L83, Z32, Z38

1. Introduction

Cultural tourism, often known as ethnic tourism, is becoming increasingly significant in the global tourism industry (Park & Chung, 2026; Ishii, 2012). For the past four decades, studies of residents' behavioral intentions toward tourism have received increasing attention. The importance of these studies lies in their close association with sustainable tourism planning. However, ethnic minority

groups have not received the same attention in this field as mainstream residents. Studies in this context have shown attitudes beyond economic impacts to changes in socio-cultural life (Al-Badarneh et al., 2019). These changes could affect residents' behavioral intentions towards tourism in their communities according to the costs and benefits of tourism development and the exchange processes (Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004). In addition to socio-cultural impacts, ethnic tourism presents business and trade opportunities for

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ethnic minorities, primarily through promoting and distributing cultural heritage products. This argument may give importance to similar studies on ethnic minorities in tourist communities due to cultural differences leading to different results. In addition, tourism is usually seen as a source of cultural commodification and modernization that places minorities in denial, choice, or submission to Western cultural trends that dominate market practices (Yang et al., 2013). Another negative reason for this importance is that ethnic tourism is dominated and planned by the mainstream residents of the destination country and sometimes by international tourism companies (Ishii, 2012). However, by leveraging effective distribution networks and trade logistics, ethnic groups can benefit economically while preserving cultural authenticity. These arguments may change the results of some significant factors affecting the trends of minorities towards participation and support for tourism development, such as community attachment and perceptions towards tourism impacts compared to the mainstream residents.

The current study investigates the behavioral intentions of Circassian residents in Jordan, considered the first minority groups to arrive in Jordan in 1868. Circassian culture, including folk art and historical heritage, is characterized by a mixture of Eastern and Western aspects, which gives it the potential to be an attractive product for international tourism. Despite their integral role in Jordanian society, no socio-cultural tourism studies have explored Circassians as an ethnic group. Thus, the current study attempts to understand how Circassian people in Jordan think about their cultural heritage as a tourist product. It uses predictor factors representing place attachment (knowledge about general and specific cultural features and sense of community) that affect perceived contribution and support for Circassian cultural heritage as a tourism product. Accordingly, the current study aims to explore the multifaceted factors influencing the perceived contribution and support for Circassian cultural heritage as a tourism product. This encompasses the impact of knowledge about cultural features and a sense of community on these perceptions. Furthermore, the research investigates the mediating role of perceived contribution in the relationship between place attachment and support for Circassian cultural heritage as a tourism product.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Ethnic Minority: A Tool of Tourism Development

Culture, heritage, and tourism amalgamate cultural and natural resources (Lee & Kuag, 2013). Tourism and heritage are based on interrelated resources such as natural

landscapes, historical centers, traditions, music, and peoples and their associated cultures, and the effective distribution of these resources to attract diverse audiences. However, minority and ethnic groups have been a distinguished tourist attraction (Wall, 2017; Bei Huang et al., 2007). For a long time, minority and ethnic groups have maintained their traditions and thus become "a big tourist draw" (Yang & Wall, 2008: 526). Minority and ethnic groups, as a key component of ethnic tourism, are complex and defined from different perspectives. For example, Smith (1977: 2) defined ethnic tourism as "marketed to the public in terms of the 'quaint' customs of indigenous and often exotic peoples." In a broad sense, ethnic tourism denotes visiting minority and ethnic groups to experience their cultural products and lifestyle. In this regard, Harron and Weiler (1992) pointed out that the motivation of ethnic tourists is to enjoy new, unfamiliar, and different ethnic backgrounds. In an exploratory study of the variety and uniqueness of attractions offered by minority populations, Pechlaner et al. (2011) found that minorities' cultural features are an added value and a source of tourist enjoyment. Similarly, Park and Chung (2016) emphasized that the standing of cultural and tourism-focused markets greatly influences intentions to revisit and the promotion through word-of-mouth, making it an essential element for sustainable tourism growth. For ethnic minority groups, highlighting the genuineness and reputation of their cultural heritage can boost their attractiveness as tourism offerings. However, the literature frequently and interchangeably uses the concepts of ethnic tourism, aboriginal tourism, and indigenous tourism.

Minority groups, ethnic communities, and their manifestations have been recognized as tourist assets (Henderson, 2003). Indeed, ethnic and minority groups have been used widely for tourism development in different countries worldwide (Ying & Zhou, 2007). The literature suggests some motives behind the development of ethnic tourism. For example, Lee and Kwag (2013) emphasize that tourism promotes cultural preservation while contributing to sustainable economic development. Ethnic tourism is used for regional development (Yang & Wall, 2008), promotion of cultural diversity (Zhihong, 2007), attracting tourism investments (Yang & Wall, 2008), enhancement and regeneration of traditions (Santos, 2017), effective distribution of cultural assets and consolidation of national identity (Yang, 2013), development of the quality of life, and reconstruction of ethnic identity (Mason, 2020). Shi (2002) pointed out that China has viewed ethnic tourism as a way to alleviate poverty, enhance inter-ethnic integration, and enhance national unity and harmony. Smith (2003: 120) emphasized that tourism was among the strategies for the revival of the culture of native Indian tribes. Cultural heritage tourism is perceived as a key factor in improving the cultural consciousness of minority groups (Yang & Wall,

2009). Hence, ethnic and minority groups should be considered in tourism development, and their associated culture should be used as a diversification source of national tourism.

2.2. Conceptual Framework

2.2.1. Place Attachment and Residents' Behavior

Attachment is a frequent term in the literature as a significant antecedent of residents' perceptions and attitudes toward tourism. However, previous studies have presented different terminologies for this antecedent, such as community attachment (McCool & Martin, 1994; Um & Crompton, 1987), place identity (Wang & Chen, 2015; Hernández Bernardo et al., 2010), and place attachment (Strzelecka et al., 2017; Raymond et al., 2010). The unstandardized terminology is also evident in psychological studies presenting different terms such as place dependence, place attachment, and sense of place. The relations between these constructs are unclear (Lewicka, 2008). Place attachment is the most frequent among all the terms since it has been defined as a tripartite concept. This includes the person (who is attached), the psychological process (how affect, cognition, and behavior relate to attachment), and the object (place characteristics) (Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

More importantly, the measurement of attachment showed apparent differences among scholars. This includes common items such as length of residence and feeling towards leaving the community (McCool & Martin, 1994; Goudy, 1982), having fond memories of the community (Strzelecka et al., 2017), and level of identification with the community (Blešić et al., 2022). Such measures are likely to suit indigenous residents rather than ethnic minorities living in another place a long time ago. Still, place attachment could be measured by the level of pride and uniqueness of place as expressed by residents (Chen et al., 2021).

Knowledge about one's culture is arguably a significant antecedent of perceptions and attitudes toward tourism. Tourism and resident research have used knowledge about tourism impacts to examine differences in attitudes towards tourism development. In this regard, the more residents know about tourism, the more they positively perceive and support it (Andereck et al., 2005; Davis et al., 1988). However, tourism literature has yet to investigate the effect of residents' knowledge about their history and culture on their attitude toward tourism. Place attachment is a process in which community groups become attached to areas through cultural practices they tend to maintain (Scannell & Gifford, 2010). Members who identify themselves with their culture, identity, history, and area resources are more likely to support tourism activities (Palmer et al., 2013; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012). Accordingly, the current study logically argues that one's level of knowledge about one's own

cultural identity and history is an influential factor in one's willingness to support tourism.

To present a theoretical justification, we referred to environmental psychology studies to categorize knowledge about one's culture within place attachment and its significance as an antecedent of behaviors. Among the three dimensions of place attachment definition (Scannell & Gifford, 2010), knowledge about one's culture and history would relate to the psychological process since it includes cognition. Lewicka (2008) referred to various concepts regarding people's relations with places. She hypothesized that place attachment and place identity are predictor factors of people's attitudes toward their history. Cresswell (2004) viewed knowledge and awareness of place as part of place attachment. Cultural features link members to a place, including shared history, symbols, and values. Place as locale could refer to both spatial location and activities occurring in that location (Amundsen, 2015). This is another clarification of the significant role of knowledge about culture in influencing attitudes since ethnic groups live outside their original home and arguably bear high levels of nostalgia. Lewicka (2005) found that people interested in their culture and knowledgeable about their history had more place attachment than others.

The current study examines the influence of respondents' knowledge about their original culture and history through general and specific aspects for more meaningful findings. Based on this new approach and the aforementioned theoretical review, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H1:** Knowledge about general cultural features significantly and positively affects the perceived contribution of cultural heritage as a tourism product.
- H2:** Knowledge about general cultural features significantly and positively affects support for Circassian cultural heritage as a tourism product.
- H3:** Knowledge about specific cultural features significantly and positively affects the perceived contribution of cultural heritage as a tourism product.
- H4:** Knowledge about specific cultural features significantly and positively affects support for Circassian cultural heritage as a tourism product.

A sense of community is defined as "a spirit of belonging together, a feeling that there is an authority structure that can be trusted, an awareness that trade and mutual benefit come from being together, and a spirit that comes from shared experiences preserved as art." (Bourgeois, 2015). Based on the tripartite concept of place attachment, affective place attachment is seen as a sense of community (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2013: 69). A few studies have examined the influence of ethnic minorities' attachment on attitudes towards tourism. For example, Yang et al. (2022) studied the

effect of place identity on innovation attitude using measurement items such as "This place says a lot about who I am" and "I identify strongly with this place". Wang et al. (2020) used place identity as a mediator between tourism impacts and attitude using three common measurement items. Besides the scarcity of studies, there have been no attempts at a theoretical refutation of attachment terms to choose an appropriate measure for ethnic minorities. Thus, we followed the four criteria of McMillan & Chavis (1986) to define the theory of sense of community. The theory is measured in terms of membership (feeling of belonging and personal relatedness), influence (sense of mattering), reinforcement (integration fulfillment of needs), and shared emotional connection (commitment to shared history and other common aspects). This approach is appropriate for the current study since it relates the attachment, perceived contribution of cultural heritage as a tourism product, and support for tourism to the original community of ethnic minorities rather than the current place where they live. Based on this review, the following two hypotheses were formulated:

H5: Sense of community significantly and positively affects the perceived contribution of cultural heritage as a tourism product.

H6: Sense of community significantly and positively affects support for Circassian cultural heritage as a tourism product.

2.2.2. Perceived contribution of cultural heritage as a tourism product

The perceived contribution of tourism has been widely undertaken as a variable that affects residents' behavioral intention toward tourism, where most studies used it in terms of social exchange theory (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Harrill, 2004; Perdue et al., 1990; Milman & Pizam, 1988; Pizam, 1978). Yet, many studies have discussed the inadequacy of social exchange theory in explaining residents' behavior rationale and unexpected findings. To fill the gap, some studies have supported the theory through other predictor factors such as knowledge about tourism (Perdue et al., 1990), community attachment (Jurowski et al., 1997), distance to tourist attractions (Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004), and power theory (Kayat, 2002). In a recent study, Gannon et al. (2021) argued that such attempts failed to examine the possible indirect influence of the perceived tourism impacts on residents' attitudes. The latter study revealed that perceived impacts significantly influenced the effect of community attachment, attitude, and involvement on residents' support for tourism development. Based on this review, the following hypotheses were proposed:

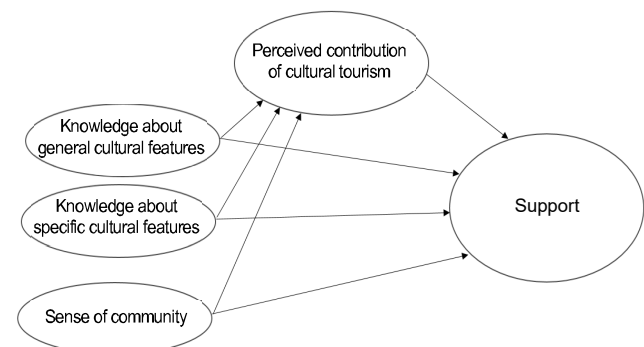
H7: Perceived contribution of cultural heritage as a tourism product significantly and positively affects support for

Circassian cultural heritage as a tourism product.

H8: Perceived contribution of cultural heritage mediates the relationship between knowledge about general cultural features and support for Circassian cultural heritage as a tourism product.

H9: Perceived contribution of cultural heritage mediates the relationship between knowledge about specific cultural features and support for Circassian cultural heritage as a tourism product.

H10: Perceived contribution of cultural heritage mediates the relationship between sense of community and support for Circassian cultural heritage as a tourism product.



Source: Own

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.3. Circassians

Although historians differ about the ancient history of the Circassians, most of them agree on their Greek origins. Others also believe that the origins of the Circassians are from the south of the Caucasus and the Black Sea, and they were called Adyghas since the fifth millennium BC. Circassians converted to Christianity in the Byzantine era until they converted to Islam in the seventeenth century through waves of immigration to Turkey. In 1868, the first group of Circassian immigrants arrived in Jordan in the center of the current city of Amman, and that area was named the Shapsoughs, the name of the first Circassian tribe to arrive in the region. During that period, the Ottoman Empire, which controlled the region, worked to distribute the Circassians to Amman, Jerash, Sweileh, and Rusaifa for security reasons (Hagandoga, 1982).

The Circassian life system was characterized by tribal rule, where each tribe was headed by a chief belonging to an ancient family. His powers were linked to many political and social affairs, such as declaring war and prosecuting violators of the Circassian system and traditions (Adyghe Khabaza). One of the most important Circassian customs is complete obedience to parents and respect for the elderly and guests. Women also have special respect, as it is shameful to see a

woman chopping wood, for example, without taking the pruner from her hand and completing the work instead of her. Circassians have distinctive traditional costumes associated with folklore, especially marriage rituals and traditional Circassian dance (Macky, 1979).

3. Research Methods and Materials

3.1. Questionnaire Design

A questionnaire-based survey was designed based on an in-depth literature review that undertakes residents' behavioral intentions toward supporting tourism development. However, the nature and circumstances of the study sample (a minority group) could play a significant role in the findings. As clarified in the literature section, we formulated the items for the three independent variables representing place attachment to fit an ethnic minority. For the mediator (perceived contribution) and the dependent variable (support), we formulated the items to reflect the Circassian cultural heritage as a potential tourism product. In addition to the demographic factors, the questionnaire consists of six sections. Table 1 shows the questionnaire design, where the scales for each section were adopted from well-established previous research.

Table 1: Questionnaire Design

Section	References
Knowledge about general cultural features	(Amundsen, 2015; Hagandoga, 1982)
Knowledge about specific cultural features	(Hagandoga, 1982)
Sense of community	(McMillan & Chavis, 1986)
Perceived contribution	(Guri et al., 2021; Kayat et al., 2013)
Support for tourism	(Suansri, 2003; Silberberg, 1995; Perdue et al., 1990)

Unlike most previous studies, the current study considers knowledge about one's culture a key determinant of respondents' perception since the sample represents minority groups who were integrated into a different community long ago. Further, general and specific items were formulated for more reliable responses. Similarly, general and specific items for the section (support for tourism) were formulated. Apart from the previous studies, some items (e.g., the value system known as Adyge Khabaza) were added based on a theoretical review of the social life of the Circassians.

After the final draft was completed, a questionnaire pretest was conducted. It is a practical tool for assessing participants' understanding of the questionnaire items and, therefore, the quality of responses (Converse & Presser, 1986). Ensuring that the concepts of the items are understood

similarly among the respondents was taken into account. As a prelude to this step, the questionnaire was translated into Arabic based on the respondents' mother tongue. The questionnaire was reviewed by three professors in tourism and social anthropology to determine the appropriateness of the concepts. Finally, a professor of Arabic language reviewed the questionnaire to select standard terms correctly and understandably.

3.2. Sampling

To guarantee the representativeness of the sample, two steps were taken into account: 1. An estimation of the total number of the Circassian people in the given period (the whole population) through official statistical channels. 2. Using Madow's (1968) formula with a 5% error and 95% confidence coefficient.

$$n = \frac{N \cdot E}{\sqrt{N} + E}$$

n= the wanted respondents N= all population
E= reliability 0.05.

The total number of Circassian people in Jordan is approximately 125,000. Based on Madow's (1968) formula, the minimum sample size should be 383. For more representativeness of the sample, 513 questionnaires were distributed, of which 414 were valid for analysis.

3.3. Data Collection

Following the pretest of the questionnaire items, a pilot test was conducted by distributing 31 questionnaires, and a general descriptive question was added about which term respondents had difficulty understanding. Through this question, it was noted that three observations were repeated on the items, as their wording was modified. The questionnaire was distributed taking into account all demographic factors.

Table 2: Demographic Factors

Category	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	150	36.2
	Female	264	63.8
	Total	414	100
Age	Under 21 years	104	25.1
	From 22 to 35 years	114	27.5
	From 36 to 50 years	97	23.4
	From 51 to 65 years	51	12.3
	65 years and above	48	11.7
	Total	414	100
Education Level	Secondary school or less	3	0.7
	2 years diploma	62	15.0
	BA	67	16.2
	MA	241	58.2
	PhD	41	9.9
	Total	414	100

Category	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Place of Residency	Amman	392	94.7
	Irbid	8	2.0
	Jarash	5	1.2
	Zarqa	6	1.4
	Other	3	0.7
	Total	414	100
Marital Status	Single	148	35.7
	Married	252	60.9
	Other	14	3.4
	Total	414	100
Income (Per Month)	Less than 400	132	31.8
	From 401 to 700	115	27.8
	From 701 to 1000	100	24.2
	From 1001 to 1300	50	12.1
	More than 1300	17	4.1
	Total	414	100
Occupation	Public sector	165	39.9
	Military	41	9.9
	Private sector	165	39.9
	Retired	43	10.3
	Total	414	100

The sample was randomly extracted from all the Circassian people in Jordan from December 2021 to the end of February 2022. About 65% of the questionnaires were distributed face to face, in addition to using Circassian groups on Facebook pages. Most of the sample was selected from Amman, Zerqa, and Jerash, where most Circassian people live.

4. Data Analysis and Results

4.1. Descriptive Analysis

The mean and standard deviation were calculated for the descriptive analysis of all the study variables. The mean shows the central tendency of the data, while the standard deviation indicates the variability in the data (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). The mean values are described as follows: 1-1.80 "very low," 1.81-2.60 "low," 2.61-3.40 "moderate," 3.41-4.20 "high," and 4.21-5 "very high."

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis

Variable	Item	Mean	SD
Knowledge about general cultural features	Question: How do you rate your knowledge about the following Circassian cultural aspects?	Av: 3.58090	Av: 0.7015
	History	3.47829	0.2415
	Customs and traditions	2.92618	0.5718
	Traditional costume	4.10618	0.9305

Variable	Item	Mean	SD
	Traditional festivals	3.39371	0.6916
	Mother tongue	3.72271	0.7817
	Traditional food	3.85833	0.9929
Knowledge about specific cultural features	Question: How do you rate your knowledge about the following Circassian cultural features?	Av: 3.9257	Av: 0.8137
	The value system known as (Adyghe Khabaza).	3.87829	0.8415
	Features of respect for women, such as the descent of men from horses and the fact that women are a source of protection in some cases.	3.57326	1.1768
	Features of respect for older people, such as standing up when mentioning one of them, even in his absence.	4.20635	0.8305
	Features of respect for the guests.	4.0449	0.4049
Sense of community	Question: How much do you agree with the following statements?	Av: 4.5217	Av: 0.5211
	I am proud as a member of the Circassian community.	4.97838	0.6415
	I am more important to Circassian people than other people.	3.89241	0.4728
	Circassian society is cohesive, and people meet the needs of others.	4.40983	0.5413
	I am committed to shredding Circassian history and cultural aspects.	4.80618	0.4292
Contribution of cultural heritage as a tourism product	Question: How much do you agree with the following potential contributions of Circassian culture as a tourism product?	Av: 3.9448	Av: 0.6557
	Local promotion of Circassian culture	4.14125	0.7921
	International promotion of Circassian culture	3.73691	0.4386
	Increased knowledge of my own culture	4.22713	0.9172
	Pride in Circassian culture	3.54328	0.3965
	Reviving Circassian culture	3.89812	0.6331
	Good business	4.12211	0.7577
Support the use Circassian culture as a tourism product	Question: If an initiative to use Circassian culture as a tourism product is adopted, how much do you agree with the following statements?	Av: 3.8671	Av: 0.7465
	I accept this initiative.	3.77829	0.9415
	I am willing to support this initiative.	2.97814	0.4718
	I am ready to present and implement ideas for this initiative.	4.20618	0.7305
	I support the idea of establishing a museum of Circassian history for tourists.	3.69371	0.6861
I Support the idea of setting and implementing a regular	3.92271	0.7916	

Variable	Item	Mean	SD
	agenda for festivals and exhibitions that reflect Circassian cultural aspects for tourists.		
	I support integrating tourists with Circassian families through organized programs to learn about Circassian life, customs, and traditions.	4.62357	0.8615

All the study variables scored high means. For the place attachment variables, the highest was for the sense of community (mean = 4.5217, SD = 0.52117); the second highest mean was scored for knowledge about specific cultural features (mean = 3.9257, SD = 0.81307), followed by knowledge about general cultural features (mean = 3.5809, SD = 0.70125). The mediating variable (perceived contribution) also scored a high mean (mean = 3.9448, SD = 0.65597), as well as the dependent variable (support) (mean = 3.9448, SD = 0.65597).

4.2. Measurement Model

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed for the appropriateness of the questionnaire items. The measurement model shows how hypothetical constructs and latent variables are measured regarding observed variables and validity and reliability (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). CFA indicated that the chi-square (χ^2) value of the model was 2367.842, with 742 degrees of freedom ($p < 0.05$), which implies that the measurement did fit the data well. The other model fit indices used were the χ^2/df ($2367.842/742 = 3.191$; threshold less than 3 for a profound viewpoint or less than 5 for acceptable criteria), the Incremental Fit Index (IFI) of 0.86, Tucker- Lewis Index (TLI) of 0.84, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of 0.85, and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of 0.081 threshold less than 1 for acceptable criteria. Based on these fit indices, the measurement model fits the sample data well (Hair et al., 2010). All of the indicators of the factor loadings exceeded 0.50, thus constituting evidence of convergent validity (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Indeed, while the measurement reached convergent validity at the item level because all of the factor loadings went above 0.50, all the composite reliability values exceeded 0.60, demonstrating a high internal consistency for the latent variables. In addition, since each value of AVE exceeded 0.50 (Hair et al., 2010), the convergent validity was proved.

4.3. Structural Model

The SEM analysis revealed that knowledge about general cultural features directly, positively, and significantly affected support ($\beta = 0.090, t = 1.962, p = 0.05$);

thus, H1 was accepted. However, the effect of knowledge about specific cultural features on support ($\beta = 0.019, t = 0.031, p = 0.618$), sense of community on support ($\beta = 0.077, t = 1.466, p = 0.143$), general knowledge on the perceived contribution ($\beta = 0.046, t = 1.082, p = 0.279$), specific knowledge on the perceived contribution ($\beta = 0.063, t = 1.726, p = 0.745$) were all insignificant. Thus, H2, H3, H4, and H5 were rejected. Sense of community directly, positively, and significantly affected the perceived contribution ($\beta = 0.517, t = 9.100, p = 0.000$); thus, H6 was accepted. The effect of perceived contribution on support was positive and significant ($\beta = 0.817, t = 19.649, p = 0.000$), which means that H7 was accepted. The coefficient of determination (R^2) for the endogenous variables for the perceived contribution and support was 0.174 and 0.546, respectively, which indicates that the model does moderately account for the variation of the proposed model.

Table 4: Hypotheses Test

Research Proposed Paths	Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Result
H1: General knowledge → Support	0.090	1.962	0.050	Supported
H2: Specific knowledge → Support	0.019	0.031	0.618	Rejected
H3: Sense of community → Support	0.077	1.466	0.143	Rejected
H4: General knowledge → Perceived contribution	0.046	1.082	0.279	Rejected
H5: Specific knowledge → Perceived contribution	0.063	1.726	0.745	Rejected
H6: Sense of community → Perceived contribution	0.517	9.100	0.000	Supported
H7: Perceived contribution → Support	0.817	19.649	0.000	Supported

To test the mediating effects of the perceived contribution, the direct effect of the three independent variables on the perceived contribution and the indirect effect through the mediatory path of support were considered. It was found that perceived contribution mediates the relationship between specific knowledge and support and between sense of community and support. Thus, H9 and H10 were supported. Meanwhile, perceived contribution did not mediate the relationship between general knowledge and support. Consequently, H8 was rejected.

Table 5: Mediating effect of the perceived contribution

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Result
H8: GK → PC → S	0.046	0.000	0.046	Rejected
H9: SK → PC → S	0.019	0.021	0.032	Supported
H10: SOC → PC → S	0.077	0.422	0.499	Supported

GK = General knowledge, SK = specific knowledge, SOC = sense of community, PC = Perceived contribution, S = Support

5. Discussion

This study proposes a new model to examine the effect of place attachment on ethnic groups' support for cultural heritage as a tourism product and the mediating role of the perceived contribution of cultural tourism between place attachment and support. Place attachment was categorized into knowledge about general and specific cultural features and sense of community. While general knowledge had a significant effect on support, the effect of specific knowledge was insignificant on both support and the perceived contribution. It seems that respondents with more knowledge and interest in Circassian culture are more sensible and bear worries about using their culture as a tourism product in a different setting. Palmer et al. (2013) applied the identity theory to investigate residents' support for tourism and found that social identity and personal advocacy are significant to tourism promotion and personal involvement. Similarly, Nunkoo and Gursoy (2012) found that residents' identity is crucial in supporting local tourism. These findings are inconsistent with the current study regarding specific knowledge and consistent regarding general knowledge. Despite the argument that ethnic minorities are marginalized and, in different cases, lag behind other community groups in tourism development and heritage valorization (Palmer, 2007), Circassian people in Jordan have the same privileges and living conditions as others. This would explain the significant effect of general knowledge.

The study revealed an insignificant effect of sense of community on support for Circassian cultural heritage as a tourism product. This finding is inconsistent with most previous studies that revealed a significant effect of sense of community, with its various terms, on attitude (Lee et al., 2014; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Mccool & Martin, 1994) and consistent with few ones (McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Lankford & Howard, 1994). This unexpected result could be due to the new measurement of sense of community that followed the four criteria (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Another possible explanation is that, according to (Yang & Wall (2009), ethnic people strongly perceive authenticity, and most of them perceive that ethnic tourism increases cultural commodification and makes ethnic culture less

valuable. On the contrary, sense of community significantly affected the perceived contribution. This contradiction could be because perception does not express actual practices and initiatives related to the distribution and promotion of cultural heritage and, therefore, does not create worry about cultural commodification.

On average, place attachment had no positive effect on residents' behaviors towards tourism. This general finding could be justified since positive behaviors based on place identity are formed when physical and social resources meet residents' needs in their residential environment (Wang & Chen, 2015), and Circassian people were asked about their original place identity that they left more than 150 years ago. In this regard, Relph (1976) stressed the importance of a long and deep experience in the place to accurately recognize the essence of the place, including the landscapes and personal involvement. Human and physical dimensions form the perceptual unity of place (Shamai, 1991).

The perceived contribution of cultural heritage tourism, including its distribution and accessibility to broader audiences, significantly affected support for tourism. This finding reinforces the proposition of social exchange theory in terms of the positive impacts of tourism (Perdue et al., 1990; Ap, 1990; Andereck et al., 2005). This is to say that respondents who believe tourism contributes to the economic conditions of people and cultural authenticity are willing to support tourism. On the other hand, perceived contribution had an insignificant mediating effect on the relationship between general knowledge and support and a significant mediating effect on the relationship between specific knowledge and sense of community and support. This means that general knowledge about Circassian culture affected support regardless of the perceived contribution. Specific knowledge and sense of community could only significantly affect support if respondents who see that cultural heritage tourism has positive contributions are willing to support tourism. This finding is consistent with the study of Chang et al. (2022), who revealed that the perceived impacts of tourism mediated the relationship between knowledge about tourism and residents' support for tourism development. Gannon et al. (2021) also demonstrated that the perceived impacts of tourism significantly mediated the relationship between community attachment and support for tourism development. This shows the importance of the perceived contribution factor as a mediator since specific knowledge and sense of community had an insignificant direct effect on residents' support.

Finally, the number of rejected hypotheses may reflect the role of cultural or circumstantial factors unique to the sample or the nature of this research. For instance, the lack of significance for Specific Knowledge that affects respondents' support (H2) could be due to differing priorities

within the study population.

6. Conclusions and Implications

The study findings showed that respondents with more knowledge about their culture and place attachment were unwilling to support tourism. Thus, planners and businesses must understand minority groups' frustration through a systematic agenda to involve them in tourism activities. Nunkoo and Gursoy (2012) suggested that resource-based occupational identity could influence residents' behavioral intentions towards tourism. Still, residents' worries about using cultural heritage as a tourism product should be intelligently assessed. Awareness campaigns could be made to guarantee that ethnic tourism, as in many countries, is employed for cultural and economic development, business opportunities, and heritage preservation (Yang & Wall, 2009). It seems that persuading Circassians to present their culture as a tourist product is more straightforward than for ethnic minorities in other countries because they enjoy the full benefits of citizenship and socioeconomic gains in Jordan.

Results also indicated that the perceived contribution of cultural tourism positively affected respondents' support for tourism. Effective distribution channels for cultural tourism offer an excellent opportunity to promote Circassian culture as a tourism product. According to Wall and Xie (2005), the existence of a minority population is widely promoted, although they are not involved enough in tourism activities. However, the role of governments in promoting ethnic tourism is necessary as key players in regulating and shaping ethnicity in tourism development. Ethnic identity could be strengthened through arts, performances, festivals, and other cultural features. Ethnic cohesion is another way to encourage ethnic groups to promote their culture as a tourism product.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the existing literature in many aspects. First, it is within the few studies conducted in developing countries. Second, it undertakes the study variables with relation to the original cultural identity of the ethnic minorities rather than the current residency place, unlike most previous studies. Third, it referred to environmental psychology studies for a new measurement approach of place identity. However, place identity had an insignificant effect on residents' behaviors due to some human dimensions of the place, as May (1970: 210) argued, although the respondents showed a good level of place identity. From a business perspective, cultural tourism provides an untapped potential for minority groups to capitalize on their cultural heritage as a sustainable trade opportunity. Obviously, further studies are needed to clarify the current study findings. Mccool and Martin (1994) argued

that residents who choose to live in a place become attached to it rapidly. Thus, we recommend a study comparing the attachment to the original and current place, including its cultural components. Living in a highly developed tourist destination also influences respondents' behavior. Additionally, because older minority residents are more concerned about traditional culture (Yang & Wall, 2009), we recommend examining the effect of demographic variables on residents' behavior toward tourism.

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