

INTERNATIONAL MARKETING JOURNAL OF CULTURE AND TOURISM

IMJCT | ISSN: 2790-9220 (Print) | ISSN: 2790-9239 (Online)

*Published by Katara Publishing House • In Cooperation with ARIU & University of Derby***Issue No: 10 | August, 2026**

Sustainable Spiritual Tourism through Jain Ethics: Insights from Pilgrimage Site Management

Aarjav JainEmail: research.aarjav1051@gmail.com**Priya Singh**Email: psingh1@aud.ac.in**Nikhil Singh Charak**Email: nikhil@aud.ac.in

School of Vocational Studies, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University Delhi, Delhi, India

<https://doi.org/10.33001/18355/imjct1036>**Received Date :** 10/07/2026 **I Accepted Date:** 20/08/2026

Abstract

The three core ethical principles of Jainism are Ahimsa (nonviolence), Aparigraha (non-possessiveness), and Anekantavada (pluralism). These values are also responsible for creating peace and sustainability in the tourism industry. This study was conducted to examine how Jain ethical principles can contribute to peaceful and sustainable tourism practices through pilgrimage site management. It is revealed in this study that there is a coexistence of environmental care, faith, and community service within Jain Pilgrimage

sites. Various studies have examined Jain ethics and spirituality but limited attention has been given to understanding how Jain ethical principles are operationalised through pilgrimage site management. The contribution of these principles to sustainable tourism governance is also underexplored. A qualitative document-based approach was used to address this gap. In this approach thematic analysis was employed. Three pilgrimage sites of Palitana/Shatrunjaya, Mangi-Tungi, and Kundalpur were examined. It was found that these sites promote vegetarianism, collective hospitality, environmental care, simplicity and also encourage ethical behaviour, environmental responsibility, and community-oriented tourism experiences. Through the findings practical insights for various tourism stakeholders are provided. Tourism planners, pilgrimage site managers, policymakers, and educators who want to integrate these values in sustainable tourism management can use these insights. It is indicated through analysis that religious ethical principles can provide useful guidance for sustainable tourism governance. It can provide guidance beyond Jain pilgrimage contexts. It is concluded in this study that Jain pilgrimage practices offer useful insights into how ethical principles may contribute to peaceful and sustainable forms of spiritual tourism.

Keywords

Jainism; Sustainable Tourism; Spiritual Tourism; Pilgrimage Sites; Environmental Responsibility; Community-led Hospitality.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent scholarly discourse spiritual tourism is seen as a medium for intercultural exchange, self-reflection and environmentally aware practices rather than just a form of religious travel. Issues related to sustainable development, ethical management and community involvement have gained importance in tourism research as pilgrimage destinations continue to attract large number of visitors. Despite this growth, limited research exists on how strong strategies based on ancient religious ethics can be created for managing pilgrimage sites in a sustainable way (Rana, 2024).

An ethical framework is provided by Jainism that explores this connection through its core principles like Ahimsa, Aparigraha and Anekantavada. These principles also guide personal and social behaviour while simultaneously suggesting ways through which moral values are integrated with responsible tourism practices (Reading, 2019). Recent discussions on Jain philosophy highlight its relevance to contemporary sustainability challenges, particularly in relation to ecological responsibility and peaceful coexistence (Rajan, 2025; Jain, 2024).

These principles are not limited to individuals only as they are reflected in the collective life of Jain communities. Historical and present records clearly show that environmental awareness and restraint are part of their daily activities (Reading, 2019). This includes Heritage preservation, vegetarianism, careful water usage and community-led hospitality. These are the practices which clearly show that faith and sustainability can coexist. Palitana, Mangi-Tungi, and Kundalpur are among the Jain pilgrimage sites that reflect key Jain ethical values. Their management emphasises regulated pilgrim behaviour, cleanliness, controlled commercial activities, and the preservation of sacred spaces (Choksi, 2021; Potdar, 2016).

Despite these observations, there remains a clear research gap in the tourism literature about how these ethical values can be systematically applied at spiritual tourism sites and influence visitor experiences (Jain, 2024). Most existing studies focus either on Jain philosophy and environmental ethics (Dundas, 2002; Mitra, 2019; Rajan, 2025; Jain, 2024) or on broader frameworks of sustainable tourism and tourism governance (Hall, 2008; Bramwell & Lane, 2011), without adequately linking religious ethics to practical site-level management strategies. To address this gap, the present study focuses on three major Jain pilgrimage destinations. These destinations are Shatrunjaya, Mangi-Tungi, and Kundalpur. This study also focuses on how Jain principles of Ahimsa (non-violence), Aparigraha (non-

possessiveness), and Anekantavada (respect for multiple viewpoints) are reflected in practices like environmental protection, community involvement, visitor management, and hospitality services. By doing so, the study adds to the literature on sustainable spiritual tourism. It shows how religious ethical values can serve as practical mechanisms for pilgrimage site management and sustainability-oriented governance.

Against this background, it is examined in the present study how Jain ethical principles shape the functioning, management practices, and visitor experiences at selected Jain pilgrimage sites in India. The aim is to identify the ways in which Jain values are reflected in everyday practices at these destinations and to assess its relevance for sustainable pilgrimage management. To achieve this objective, the investigation is centred on the following research questions:

1. How are Jain ethical values reflected in the everyday practices and management of selected Jain pilgrimage sites?
2. What practical lessons from Jain pilgrimage sites can inform sustainable and peaceful spiritual tourism planning?

The analysis of selected Jain texts and pilgrimage sites provided insights into how spiritual values can guide tourism. This study does not claim broad applicability. Although, an interpretive framework is presented in this study. It is explained how sustainable pilgrimage management can be supported by Jain ethical principles. Moreover, useful insights for other spiritual tourism sites are also provided.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Spiritual Tourism and Religious Pilgrimage

Spiritual tourism is now a significant area of tourism research. It is far beyond religious travel as it also includes different cultural experiences and personal growth. There are religious, cultural and personal reasons that attract visitors at pilgrimage destinations (Timothy & Olsen, 2006). This is the reason that research on spiritual tourism has increased over the decades.

Scholars have explored the experiences of pilgrimages and motivation of the visitors. They have identified that there is a connection between religion and tourism (Timothy & Olsen, 2006). A need for careful management at pilgrimage sites have been identified as visitor needs with cultural preservation and environmental protection must be balanced (Timothy & Olsen, 2006; Hall, 2008). These destinations bring people from different background together (Shinde, 2015). After reviewing the literature it has been identified that pilgrimage and destination management have received scholarly attention. However limited attention has been given to how religious ethical principles influence tourism management and sustainability practices.

2.2 Sustainable Tourism Governance and Community Participation

Sustainable tourism governance is the way tourism development is planned and managed through which environmental, social, cultural objectives and economic sustainability is achieved (Bramwell & Lane, 2011; Hall, 2011). It does not depend on central decision making only. It encourages collaboration between governments, local communities, tourism organisations, and other stakeholders (Bramwell & Lane, 2011; Hall, 2011).

Researchers consistently identify community participation as a key element of sustainable tourism. As stated by Goodwin and Santilli (2009), involving local communities improves tourism initiatives. Eddins and Cottrell (2013) reached a similar conclusion by emphasising local stewardship and sustainable livelihoods. Bramwell and Lane (2011) further argued that effective governance depends on cooperation among stakeholders and suitable institutional arrangements. Together, these studies suggest that both governance systems and active stakeholder participation are essential for sustainable tourism. However, the role of religious ethical systems as informal mechanisms of tourism governance has received comparatively little attention.

2.3 Faith Based Environmental Ethics

Religious traditions have become an inseparable part of discussions related to sustainability and environmental responsibility (Gottlieb, 2006). Behavioural change is encouraged by faith based ethical systems. This is done through moral values, self-discipline, and collective responsibility instead of formal regulation alone (Gottlieb, 2006). Attitudes towards nature, consumption, and social responsibility can be influenced because of frameworks like this.

Within this broader context, Jainism is recognised for its ethical conduct and respect for all forms of life. Dundas (2002) described Jainism as a religious tradition centred on non-violence and restraint, while Mitra (2019) examined the relationship between Jain philosophy and environmental ethics. These studies collectively suggest that Jain ethical teachings play an important role in encouraging environmentally responsible behaviour through the moral values. Therefore a useful framework is provided by Jain philosophy through which the relationship between spirituality and sustainability can be explored.

2.4 Jain Ethical Principles and Sustainability

Three core principles of Jainism are Ahimsa (non-violence), Aparigraha (non-possessiveness), and Anekantavada (respect for multiple perspectives). These principles are relevant in the discussion of sustainability. Ahimsa is one of the central principles of Jain philosophy. It encourages that no living being is harmed. The importance of non-violence is evident in early Jain scriptures such as the Ācārāṅga Sūtra, which advocates careful conduct towards all forms of life (Jacobi, 1884; Chapple, 1993; Dundas, 2002).

Aparigraha promotes moderation in consumption (Jaini, 1979). The principle emphasises self-restraint and simplicity. These values are related to the responsible resource use and sustainable lifestyles (Reading, 2019). Anekantavada encourages respect for multiple point of view and mutual understanding (Umāsvāti, 1994). Together, these principles provide a value based framework. This framework promotes restraint, responsibility, and coexistence.

The relevance of Jain philosophy in handling sustainability challenges is also explored in the contemporary studies. Reading (2019) examined the Anuvrat Movement as an example of Jain inspired ethical living, while Jain (2024) discussed the relationship between Jain philosophy and sustainability. Overall, the literature suggests that Jain ethical principles can contribute to sustainability. However their application in tourism management and pilgrimage governance has not been widely studied.

2.5 Evidence from Jain Pilgrimage Sites

Several Jain pilgrimage destinations have been examined in the existing literature. Luithle-Hardenberg (2018) explored Jain group pilgrimages at Shatrunjaya and

their role in shaping religious community and sacred space. Choksi (2021) examined tourism development at Palitana, while Potdar (2016) discussed the economic significance of Mangi-Tungi as a Jain pilgrimage destination. Jain tirthas are understood as sacred places and pilgrimage sites, with different categories of tirthas associated with liberation, important religious events, historical figures, and centres of learning (Dundas, 2002; Jaini, 1979). Collectively, these studies show that Jain pilgrimage destinations function as complex religious and tourism spaces. Pilgrimage destinations where spiritual practices, visitor activities, and local development intersect. However, most existing studies focus on individual destinations and specific aspects of pilgrimage activity. As a result, limited comparative research has examined how Jain ethical principles are reflected in the management practices of different pilgrimage destinations.

2.6 Research Gap

The literature demonstrates growing interest in spiritual tourism, sustainable tourism governance, faith based environmental ethics, and Jain philosophy. However, limited research has examined how Jain ethical principles are translated into practical pilgrimage site management strategies. Existing studies have mainly focused on philosophical discussions of Jain ethics (Mitra, 2019; Jain, 2024) or individual pilgrimage destinations (Luithle-Hardenberg, 2018; Choksi, 2021; Potdar, 2016). To address this gap, the present study examines how the principles of Ahimsa, Aparigraha, and Anekantavada are reflected in the management and functioning of Shatrunjaya, Mangi-Tungi, and Kundalpur. This contributes to the understanding of sustainable spiritual tourism and pilgrimage governance.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A conceptual framework which is based on the three core Jain ethical principles is used in this study. These principles are Ahimsa (non-violence), Aparigraha (non-possessiveness), and Anekantavada (respect for multiple perspectives). The ethical foundations of Jain philosophy are these principles and these principles also provide a lens through which the relationship between religious values and sustainable pilgrimage management can be examined (Chapple, 1993; Jaini, 1979; Umāsvāti, 1994).

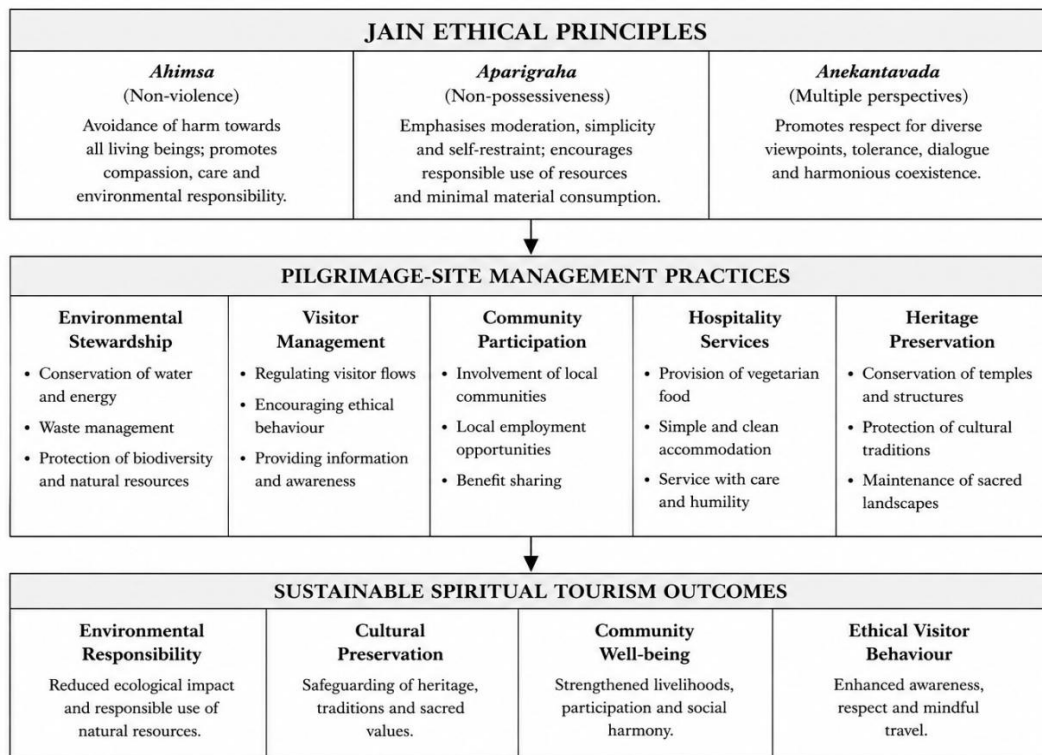
It is illustrated in Figure 1 that Pilgrimage sites are influenced in multiple ways because of the Jain ethical principles. The principle of Ahimsa encourages individuals to avoid harming any living being and promotes the conservation of natural resources (Chapple, 1993; Paul, 2019). Therefore it encourages environmental responsibility. Second principle is Aparigraha which promotes moderation and simplicity in everything (Jaini, 1979; Reading, 2019). The third principle is Anekantavada which says that there should be tolerance, dialogue, and harmonious coexistence (Umāsvāti, 1994). These principles are helpful in shaping practices which are related to environmental stewardship, visitor management, community participation, hospitality services, and heritage preservation.

Through these practices the outcomes of sustainable spiritual tourism are encouraged. For example, environmental responsibility, cultural preservation, community wellbeing, and ethical visitor behaviour. The relevance of Jain philosophy in relation to the environmental and sustainable living is discussed in the previous studies (Mitra, 2019; Rajan, 2025). On the basis of this Ahimsa, Aparigraha, and Anekantavada are used as analytical categories in the present study. It is examined how sustainability is operationalised at Shatrunjaya, Mangi-

Tungi, and Kundalpur. Religious ethics are also linked with pilgrimage governance and sustainable spiritual tourism through this.

Figure 1

Conceptual framework linking Jain ethical principles, pilgrimage-site management practices, and sustainable spiritual tourism outcomes



Source: Developed by the authors based on a synthesis of relevant literature.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses an exploratory qualitative research design to explore how Jain ethical principles are reflected in pilgrimage site practices and sustainable tourism management. A document-based approach is used because it helps in systematic analysis of doctrinal texts, institutional guidelines, and site related documents. This approach helps in understanding how ethical values shape tourism practices and management models (Creswell, 2014; Flick, 2018).

4.1 Data Sources and Selection Criteria

Secondary sources for this study were collected from different categories. This helped in maintaining the relevance and depth of the analysis. Sources which were used included documents related to Jain philosophy, pilgrimage practices, sustainability, tourism management and governance. Duplicate records, non-relevant publications, and sources that lacked sufficient information on the study themes were excluded. Purposive sampling was used to maintain the clarity and focus of the analysis. Jain doctrinal texts, classical scriptures and their authoritative translations were examined to identify the ethical foundations of Jain philosophy. Various site based documents and institutional documents were obtained from different sources. This includes tourism portals, pilgrimage site management platforms, and government sources. Through this policy, visitor guidelines, and management practices at selected pilgrimage sites were understood.

Relevant literature and site related documents were identified through major academic databases. This includes search in Google Scholar, Web of Science, JSTOR, official tourism websites, pilgrimage management portals, and government sources. Keywords which were used are "Jain pilgrimage", "sustainable tourism", "religious tourism", and "pilgrimage governance".

Jain texts like *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* (Jacobi, 1884) and *Tattvārtha Sūtra* (Umāsvāti, 1994) were used for guidance on ethical behaviour. These principles are reflected in pilgrimage sites such as Palitana/Shatrunjaya, Mangi-Tungi, and Kundalpur. It is documented in visitor guidelines, management plans, and tourism reports (Choksi, 2021; Nashik District Administration, n.d.; Jain Mandir, n.d.; Jain Tirth Tourism, n.d.; Gujarat Tourism, n.d.; Vardhman Vacations, n.d.). The majority of contemporary sources were published between 2013 and 2024. Although, Jain scriptures were included because of their foundational relevance. Research questions have been framed with the help of additional context provided by academic studies on spiritual tourism, heritage management and Jain ethics (Choksi & Kapadia, 2021; Potdar, 2016; Eddins & Cottrell, 2013). Insights are also provided into current sustainability practices at these sites with the help of information from NGO reports and brochures (Kalpavriksh, 2024; Vardhman Vacations, n.d.). All sources were gathered online and systematically organised to perform analysis.

In addition, peer reviewed journal articles, academic books and edited volumes were reviewed to examine Jain ethics in relation to existing scholarship on pilgrimage tourism, sustainability, and religious tourism. Together, these sources provided a triangulated body of data that enabled a systematic examination of how Jain ethical principles are reflected in pilgrimage practices and sustainable tourism management. Table 1 presents the document corpus analysed in the study.

Table 1. Document Corpus Used for Analysis

Document Category	Key Sources	Number of Documents
Jain Doctrinal Texts	Jacobi (1884); Umāsvāti (1994)	2
Academic Publications	Choksi & Kapadia (2021); Potdar (2016); Shinde (2015); Eddins & Cottrell (2013); Choksi (2021)	5
Government & Tourism Documents	Gujarat Tourism; Nashik District Administration; Madhya Pradesh Tourism	3
Site-Specific Documents	Jain Mandir; Jain Tirth Tourism; Vardhman Vacations	3
NGO Reports	Kalpavriksh (2024)	1
Total	14 Documents	14

Source: Compiled by the author(s) based on the selected document corpus.

4.2 Case Site Selection

Three sites were purposively selected for this study: Palitana/Shatrunjaya (Gujarat), Mangi-Tungi (Maharashtra), and Kundalpur (Madhya Pradesh). These sites were selected because they are among the most important Jain pilgrimage centres in India and offer well-documented examples of pilgrimage management and religious tourism (Luithle-Hardenberg, 2018; Choksi, 2021; Potdar, 2016). They were not chosen only because of their religious significance. Different geographical regions and pilgrimage traditions within Jainism are represented by these sites, while remaining rooted in shared Jain ethical principles. Each site prioritises different management practices. This includes environmental stewardship, visitor management, community participation, and preservation of religious values. Also, good range of documentary sources, including doctrinal texts, visitor guidelines, tourism publications, management reports, and scholarly literature, is available for all three sites. A comprehensive document-based analysis

was conducted because of this broad range of material. To summarise, these pilgrimage centres provide suitable illustrative cases for examining how Jain ethical principles are reflected in pilgrimage governance and sustainable tourism management.

4.3 Thematic Analysis Procedure

Thematic analysis was used in this study. It helped in identifying repeating patterns and themes across the selected documents used in analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The six phase framework provided by Braun and Clarke was followed. It includes familiarisation, coding, theme development, review, definition, and reporting. The data was theory driven collection of doctrinal texts, site documents, and scholarly sources. Therefore, qualitative coding was done manually instead of using any specialised software. To gain familiarity with the content, all documents were read multiple times. Each theme was connected to the original passages or documents. This provided transparency and allowed the verification of the process.

Jain doctrinal texts like *Tattvārtha Sūtra* and *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* had extensive philosophical discussions. So, the analysis focused on selected chapters, verses, and passages which addressed ethical conduct, non-violence, restraint, simplicity, hospitality, and human nature relationships. This maintained the focus of the analysis while also preserving the doctrinal integrity.

During the analysis, recurring references related to ethical behaviour, environmental care, simplicity, community participation, and ritual discipline appeared repeatedly across the sources and were noted. Based on these repeated patterns, initial open codes were developed. The codes were drawn from concepts, phrases, and discussions found in doctrinal texts, site documents, and academic literature. Similar codes were grouped together and developed into themes.

Multiple sources were used while reviewing themes. This ensured internal coherence and consistency. To support transparency and reduce researcher bias, coding notes and thematic summaries were maintained throughout the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2014). Coding was undertaken by the primary researcher. It was also reviewed against the original documents to ensure consistency between codes, categories, and themes.

As this study relies on secondary sources, the credibility in this study was enhanced by triangulation across doctrinal texts, site documents, and academic literature (Creswell, 2014).

5. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Qualitative thematic analysis has been used in this study to find out how sustainable spiritual tourism is influenced by Jain ethical principles. Various types of data are included like Jain scriptures (Jacobi, 1884; Umāsvāti, 1994), case studies of pilgrimage sites (Palitana, Mangi-Tungi, Kundalpur), infrastructure and visitor perception studies (Choksi & Kapadia, 2021; Choksi, 2021; Potdar, 2016), and tourism reports (Gujarat Tourism, n.d.; Nashik District Administration, n.d.; Jain Mandir, n.d.; Vardhman Vacations, n.d.).

Key concepts like non-violence, simplicity, ecological care, community involvement, and rituals have been identified by carefully reading the materials and line-by-line coding of the selected documents. Related codes were subsequently grouped into four overarching themes, each supported by evidence from multiple sources and pilgrimage sites. These findings are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2

Thematic Analysis Linking Themes, Source Texts, and Synthesised Evidence

Theme	Source Texts Used	Synthesised Evidence and Interpretation
Environmental Care Inspired by Ahimsa	Jacobi (1884); Umāsvāti (1994); Choksi (2021); Gujarat Tourism (n.d.); Nashik District Administration (n.d.); Vardhman Vacations (n.d.); Eddins & Cottrell (2013); Kalpavriksh (2024)	The concept of ahimsa is not limited to interpersonal non-violence. It extends systematically to nature and all sentient life. Across the three pilgrimage sites, it is expressed through vegetarian regulations and cleanliness measures at Palitana, water conservation and low-impact accommodation practices at Mangi-Tungi, and ecological care integrated into rituals and site management at Kundalpur. These practices reflect the environmental dimension of Jain ethics in pilgrimage management.
Simplicity and Minimalism from Aparigraha	Umāsvāti (1994); Choksi & Kapadia (2021); Choksi (2021); Potdar (2016); Shinde (2015); Madhya Pradesh Tourism (n.d.); Jain Tirth Tourism (n.d.)	Aparigraha emphasises simplicity, restraint, and non-possessiveness. Across the selected pilgrimage sites, this principle is reflected in the preference for simple amenities, eco-friendly accommodation, modest facilities, limited commercial development, and minimalistic architectural designs. These practices indicate an emphasis on low-impact pilgrimage experiences and restrained resource use.
Pluralistic and	Jacobi (1884); Umāsvāti	Anekantavada encourages respect for

Community-Led Hospitality Guided by Anekantavada	(1994); Jain Mandir (n.d.); Vardhman Vacations (n.d.); Choksi & Kapadia (2021); Jain Tirth Tourism (n.d.)	multiple perspectives and inclusive social relations. This principle is reflected through community-led hospitality practices in which temple trusts and volunteers provide food, lodging, and visitor guidance. Local participation supports the retention of economic benefits within the community while encouraging cooperation and dialogue among visitors and stakeholders.
Rituals Supporting Sustainable Tourism	Jacobi (1884); Umāsvāti (1994); Choksi (2021); Nashik District Administration (n.d.); Eddins & Cottrell (2013); Kalpavriksh (2024)	Jain rituals reinforce ethical conduct, discipline, and responsibility toward others and the environment. Organised pilgrimage flows, cleaning activities, collective prayers, and practices promoting non harmful conduct encourage responsible visitor behaviour and environmental awareness. These rituals contribute to the social and environmental values associated with sustainable pilgrimage management.

Source: Compiled by the author(s) based on thematic analysis of the selected document corpus.

5.1 Environmental Care Inspired by Ahimsa

Non-violence is also extended to taking care of the environment. It is strictly taken care of by pilgrims and site managers actively that no living being and nature is

being harmed in any way. Vegetarian practices are followed, waste is managed carefully, insects are protected, and plants are preserved.

For example, vegetarian zones are enforced and strict cleanliness is also maintained in Palitana, Water conservation and low-impact accommodations are focused in Mangi-Tungi, Ecological care is integrated into rituals and site management in Kundalpur (Choksi, 2021; Gujarat Tourism, n.d.; Nashik District Administration, n.d.; Vardhman Vacations, n.d.). These practices reflect the teachings in Jain scriptures (Jacobi, 1884; Umāsvāti, 1994) and show that environmental care is consistent across sites.

These findings suggest that Ahimsa functions not only as a moral principle but also as a practical mechanism for environmental stewardship. Ecological responsibility is embedded within pilgrimage practices, encouraging sustainable behaviour through ethical commitment rather than formal regulatory enforcement.

5.2 Simplicity and Minimalism from Aparigraha

In the simplicity of these pilgrimage sites, Non-possessiveness (Aparigraha) is visible. There are modest facilities, limited commercial development and pilgrims are encouraged to follow low-impact behaviours.

Pilgrim's preference for simple amenities has been highlighted in the studies and reports. Eco-friendly and minimalistic designs that reduce environmental impact are maintained in Palitana, Mangi-Tungi, and Kundalpur (Choksi & Kapadia, 2021; Choksi, 2021; Madhya Pradesh Tourism, n.d.; Potdar, 2016). Scriptures also encourage simplicity (Umāsvāti, 1994) showing this principle is common across all sites.

The evidence indicates that Aparigraha contributes to sustainability by discouraging excessive consumption and commercialisation. By promoting modest infrastructure and restrained resource use, this principle supports a low-impact tourism model that aligns with sustainable development objectives.

5.3 Pluralistic Hospitality Guided by Anekantavada

Inclusive and community-led hospitality shows pluralism (Anekantavada). Food, lodges and guidance to visitors is provided by volunteers and temple trusts which also encourage dialogue and co-operation.

At Mangi- Tungi, Kundalpur, and Palitana, it is ensured that economic benefits remain local while spiritual values are preserved through community involvement (Vardhman Vacations, n.d.; Jain Mandir, n.d.; Choksi & Kapadia, 2021). This theme emerges across multiple sources and not just one location, also consistent with Jain teachings (Jacobi, 1884; Umāsvāti, 1994).

The findings demonstrate that Anekantavada extends beyond philosophical pluralism and influences tourism governance through community participation and inclusive hospitality. Such practices strengthen social sustainability by fostering cooperation, local ownership, and shared responsibility.

5.4 Rituals Supporting Sustainable Tourism

Sustainability and social responsibility are promoted by structured pilgrimage practices and rituals. Pilgrims participate in communal prayers, cleaning and organised yatra flows which reduce environmental stress and crowding (Choksi, 2021; Choksi & Kapadia, 2021).f

Rituals and structured pilgrimages incorporate ethical, ecological, and social care into visitor behaviour and these practices are visible at Palitana, Mangi-Tungi, and

Kundalpur (Choksi, 2021; Nashik District Administration, n.d.; Vardhman Vacations, n.d.). Mindful and non-harmful conduct is also promoted in Jain texts (Jacobi, 1884; Umāsvāti, 1994), which makes these rituals a recurring and consistent pattern.

A holistic approach to sustainable spiritual tourism is shown by Jain pilgrimage sites. Behaviour of visitor is guided by ethics, environment is protected by ecological care, community hospitality promotes inclusion, and sustainability is reinforced by rituals. These sites exemplify how religion, ecology, and society can work together to inform sustainable tourism practices (Mitra, 2019; Kalpavriksh, 2024).

These findings indicate that rituals operate as informal governance mechanisms that regulate visitor behaviour and reinforce sustainability values. Through repeated participation, pilgrims internalise norms related to environmental care, discipline, and collective responsibility.

5.5 Cross Case Comparison and Transferable Lessons

There are common patterns identified after the comparison of Palitana/Shatrunjaya, Mangi-Tungi, and Kundalpur. Environmental stewardship was demonstrated at all the three sites. This was inspired by the principle of Ahimsa. Simplicity was encouraged by Aparigraha whereas community participation and ritual practices that encourage responsible visitor behaviour reflected Anekantavada. These similarities suggest that Jain ethical principles can be applied to pilgrimage management practices.

All the three pilgrimage sites share common features. However, each site prioritises different aspects of management practices. At Palitana, attention is

given to vegetarian food practices and visitor behaviour. This creates a more structured system for maintaining ethical standards. In contrast, Mangi-Tungi focuses more on environmental conservation through measures such as water management and low-impact infrastructure. At Kundalpur, religious practices are closely connected with environmental care and community involvement. These differences suggest that the same Jain ethical principles can be put into practice in different ways depending on the needs and context of the pilgrimage site.

Several lessons for sustainable tourism management were identified after the cross comparison of the three sites. First, ethical principles can support formal tourism regulations. They encourage responsible visitor behaviour and reduce the need to depend only on enforcement measures. Second, active involvement of local communities can further support social sustainability. It will help in maintaining cultural traditions and heritage. Third, when responsible behaviour towards nature can be integrated into routine activities and management practices. This will help in the achievement of environmental sustainability. Overall, the findings demonstrate that religiously inspired ethical approaches can provide valuable guidance for sustainable tourism governance in both pilgrimage destinations and broader tourism settings.

5.6 Analytical Synthesis of Findings

It is indicated through the findings of this study that internalised ethical discipline rooted in Jain philosophy is significant as sustainability at Jain pilgrimage sites is achieved with the help of this discipline and not externally imposed tourism policies. Core principles such as Ahimsa, Aparigraha, and Anekantavada function as behavioural frameworks. Environmentally responsible and socially harmonious tourism practices are promoted at Jain pilgrimage sites as conventional regulatory

mechanisms are replaced by moral values which makes Jain pilgrimage sites ethics driven tourism systems.

Common patterns of environmental care, simple living, community-led hospitality, and ritual discipline are evident across selected pilgrimage sites which are Palitana, Mangi- Tungi and Kundalpur. These shared practices indicate that similar sustainability approaches are followed across different sites and they are not unique to a single destination. Together, they suggest a transferable framework for sustainable spiritual tourism based on Jain ethical principles. The findings also indicate that religious values can play an important role in supporting sustainable tourism practices.

The analysis suggests an alternative perspective on sustainability is provided by Jain pilgrimage sites. Ecological responsibility, social inclusion, and peace-building are integrated into everyday religious practices. It also indicates that ethical belief systems may support sustainable tourism management. However, further empirical research is needed to evaluate their long term effectiveness.

6. DISCUSSION

It is highlighted in this research that religious ethics are significant for shaping sustainable tourism. This also extends beyond their conventional understanding as only cultural and spiritual ideals (Timothy & Olsen, 2006). It is also revealed in the results of this study Jain ethical values are significant in shaping how spiritual tourism is experienced or managed. The findings reveal that when religious philosophy is embedded in site management and visitor behaviour, it can create sustainable patterns of travel and pilgrimage. The findings of this study also support the argument that faith traditions can contribute in the global sustainability. It can be done by encouraging moral responsibility and ecological care (Reading,

2019; Jain, 2024). An interpretive framework is also provided through the analysis. Through this framework, spiritual discipline can contribute to environmental and social sustainability in the pilgrimage settings.

A key interpretation from findings is that sustainability within Jain pilgrimage sites is not a new concept. It is already present deeply in the world's faith view (Dundas, 2002). Concepts such as Aparigraha, Ahimsa, and Anekantavada are not only philosophical ideas. They are practical principles also which influence behaviour, management, and community engagement (Umāsvāti, 1994). This finding supports the theoretical argument that religion can act as a framework for influencing how people connect to nature and one another and behavioural transformation. Previous researchers have also suggested that self-regulated and low-impact tourism practices can be led by ethical and spiritual awareness (Reading, 2019).

It is also revealed in the analysis that shared responsibility and community participation can support the long term success of these sites. Food, accommodation, and visitor management is actively managed by local trusts, volunteers and families. The documents suggest that economic benefits remain within the community, reducing external dependence and promoting social harmony through this participatory structure. There are clear similarities between community-based tourism and the management approach adopted at Jain pilgrimage sites (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009). It shows that inclusive management can be naturally led by spiritual motivations, even without external enforcements.

Informal tools for governance can include rituals and discipline. A culture of care can be created through these informal tools like rhythm of prayers, the cleanliness drive, and the calm order of pilgrim movement. It will also reduce dependence on formal policies. These awareness and restraints are produced through everyday practices. These are also the key qualities of sustainability (Luithle-Hardenberg,

2018). Therefore, the analysis suggests that Jain tirthas show softer, value driven form of regulation. This can also help in inspiring other heritage destinations.

From a policy point of view, the findings suggest that when religious values are linked with sustainability rules at pilgrimage sites, it will make rules more effective. People are more likely to support and follow these practices when principles such as Ahimsa and Aparigraha are included in site management.

As this study relies solely on secondary sources, the findings should be interpreted with appropriate caution. The analysis shows how Jain ethical principles are reflected in pilgrimage management practices, but it does not empirically verify their sustainability outcomes. Instead, the reviewed documents point to potential environmental, social, and management benefits. Future research could build on these findings through field visits, visitor feedback, and sustainability indicators to assess their practical impact.

Overall it is revealed that a moral foundation and potentially useful framework is provided by Jain philosophy. This framework helps in understanding of the sustainable spiritual tourism. The outer responsibility and inner discipline are connected simultaneously. This suggests that spiritual tourism may be both socially responsible and environmentally conscious. Especially, when it is guided by ethical principles.

7. IMPLICATIONS

This study suggests sustainable ways of managing pilgrimage sites which may be shaped by practically using main Jain ethical values such as Ahimsa, Aparigraha, and Anekantavada. In reference to Ahimsa, various non-violent and environment-friendly practices like serving only vegetarian food, protecting local animals and maintaining proper waste segregation systems can be focused on by planners

(Chapple, 1993; Mitra, 2019). In this way the behaviour of the visitor is more aligned with the idea of peaceful coexistence with all living beings.

Aparigraha also guides how buildings and facilities are developed at holy sites. Waste and unnecessary expansion is avoided by encouraging eco-friendly and simple construction and using local materials. Through this type of planning both natural surroundings peaceful atmosphere of the pilgrimage is protected. The damage that often comes with too commercial or crowded places with large tourism projects is also controlled.

With the help of Anekantavada, temple trusts, community groups and local officials work together in tourism management as this principle supports the idea of respecting different point of views and cooperation. Residents and visitors both benefit equally as this teamwork make the decision making fair and open. A sense of trust and shared responsibility is also created.

Some useful policy ideas can be suggested through these findings. First, Jain based environmental and moral values can be included in the planning by tourism authorities. Second, tourism and hospitality training should include basic lessons on Jain ethics and sustainability because of which both workers and volunteers will understand how these values can be used in daily management.

Jain pilgrimage places will become living examples of how religion is able to support peace, social care, and environmental protection if these ideas are applied properly. These insights may also be useful for spiritual tourism destinations that want to promote sustainable development.

It is revealed in the findings that the emphasis should not be on enforcement of rules only. The sustainable policies at pilgrimage destinations are more effective

when they are aligned with local ethical traditions. Jain ethical principles can be used by tourism planners and heritage managers for designing visitor guidelines, participatory structures used for governance, and low-impact infrastructure models that can encourage cooperation.

At pilgrimage sites, these values can be applied in different ways. Visitor guidelines can reflect Ahimsa by promoting vegetarian food, protecting the wildlife, encourage waste segregation, and avoid activities which harm the environment. Modest construction can show Aparigraha. Low-impact infrastructures can be encouraged. There can be use of local materials, controlled commercial development, and efficient use of resources. Anekantavada can be reflected by involving various stakeholders in the decision making process. This can include temple trusts, local communities, volunteers, and public authorities. Jain ethical values can also be incorporated into staff and volunteer training to promote responsible visitor behaviour, respect for local culture, and environmental awareness.

These findings may also benefit tourism training providers and educational institutions. The reason is that they can develop ethics-based material. The material can include information about sustainable pilgrimage management, community participation, environmental care, and value based visitor engagement. Through this, ethical principles can be translated into practical management skills that are relevant to pilgrimage, heritage, and tourism settings.

8. CONCLUSION

This study suggests that Jain pilgrimage sites provide an interpretive example of how spiritual traditions and sustainability goals may align. Visitor behaviour and community participation are some of the factors which show a blend of cultural,

ethical and environmental values. The findings indicate that sustainability oriented practices may emerge when religious and moral values influence pilgrimage management and visitor behaviour. An inherent environmental ethic is shown through everyday rituals like waste control, resource conservation and community-based hospitality.

The findings suggest that India possesses considerable potential for peace-oriented and spiritual tourism initiatives informed by ethical values. If official tourism planning integrates these approaches, it may help in reducing environmental pressure, creating local employment and encouraging collective stewardship among residents and pilgrims. This model can also be adopted for better sustainable heritage management if temple trusts, local bodies and academic institutions work together.

It is suggested in this research that technological and policy innovation are not sole factors on which future of sustainable tourism in India depends but encouraging harmony with nature through the revival of ethical traditions is also important. The analysis suggests that faith and sustainability can be mutually reinforcing. Jain pilgrimage practices can offer useful insights into the relationship between ethical values and sustainable tourism management.

This study proposes an interpretive framework through which Jain pilgrimage sites can be understood as ethics-based governance systems. Systems where sustainability oriented practices are encouraged through internal moral discipline rather than external control. Core Jain principles such as Ahimsa, Aparigraha, and Anekantavada guide visitor behaviour, resource use, and community involvement. As a result, Jain tirthas can be understood not only as religious spaces but also as

potentially useful examples of sustainable spiritual tourism that promote peace, environmental responsibility, and social harmony.

8.1 Limitations of the Study

This study is based entirely on secondary sources which include Jain doctrinal texts, academic literature and institutional documents. As a result the findings should be interpreted as conceptual insights rather than empirical evidence. The study does not include field observations, interviews, surveys or other forms of primary data collection that could validate how Jain ethical principles are applied in practice. In addition, sustainability outcomes are interpreted qualitatively and are not evaluated using quantitative environmental, social, or economic indicators.

8.2 Future Scope of Research

Future research can strengthen this work by adopting field-based approaches such as interviews, surveys and participant observation to examine how Jain ethical principles influence pilgrimage management in practice. Comparative studies involving other religious pilgrimage traditions may also provide a broader understanding of the relationship between ethical values and sustainable tourism. Also quantitative assessment of environmental performance, visitor behaviour and community outcomes would help evaluate the practical effectiveness of ethics-based approaches to sustainable tourism management.

References

Bramwell, B., & Lane, B. (2011). Critical research on the governance of tourism and sustainability. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 19(4–5), 411–421. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2011.580586>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>

Chapple, C. K. (1993). *Nonviolence to animals, earth, and self in Asian traditions*. State University of New York Press.

Choksi, T. M. (2021). *Development of tourism at Palitana: A Jain pilgrim center* (Master's dissertation). Veer Narmad South Gujarat University. <https://vnsgu.ac.in/iqac/naac/c1/c13/c134/files/1EXiX5tGnyyKP1HxUPbnYtHBbycXBsQiG.pdf>

Choksi, T., & Kapadia, A. (2021). *Evaluation of infrastructure facilities and perception of pilgrims at Palitana*. **International Journal of Applied Research**, 7(3), 284–289. <https://www.allresearchjournal.com/archives/2021/vol7issue3/PartE/7-2-87-349.pdf>

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Dundas, P. (2002). *The Jains* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Eddins, E. A., & Cottrell, S. P. (2013). *Sustainable development and sustainable livelihoods frameworks: Theory and practice in volunteer tourism*. *The International Journal of Sustainability Policy and Practice*, 9(1), 47–60. <https://doi.org/10.18848/2325-1166/CGP/v09i01/55415>

Flick, U. (2018). *An introduction to qualitative research* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Goodwin, H., & Santilli, R. (2009). *Community-based tourism: A success?* ICRT Occasional Paper No. 11. International Centre for Responsible Tourism (ICRT), Leeds.

Gottlieb, R. S. (Ed.). (2006). *The Oxford handbook of religion and ecology*. Oxford University Press.

Gujarat Tourism. (n.d.). Palitana and Shatrunjaya Hill, Bhavnagar. <https://www.gujarattourism.com/saurashtra/bhavnagar/palitana-and-shatrunjaya-hill.html>

Hall, C. M. (2008). *Tourism planning: Policies, processes and relationships* (2nd ed.). Pearson Education.

Hall, C. M. (2011). A typology of governance and its implications for tourism policy analysis. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 19(4–5), 437–457. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2011.570346>

Jacobi, H. (Trans.). (1884). *Ācārāṅga Sūtra*. In F. Max Müller (Ed.), *The Sacred Books of the East* (Vol. 22). Oxford University Press.

Jain Mandir. (n.d.). Shri Digamber Jain Siddha Kshetra Mangi Tungi, Taluka-Satana, District-Nashik (Maharashtra). <https://www.jainmandir.org/Temple/Shri-Digamber-Jain-Siddha-Kshetra-Mangi-Tungi%2C-Taluka-Satana%2C-District-Nashik-%28Maharashtra%29>

Jain Tirth Tourism. (n.d.). Shri Digamber Jain Siddha Kshetra Kundalpur (Damoh), Madhya Pradesh. <https://www.jaintirthtourism.com/madhya-pradesh-jaintirthkshetra/shri-digamber-jain-siddha-kshetra-kundalpur-%28damoh%29%2C-madhya-pradesh-tirthkshetra-in-damoh.php>

Jain, T. K. (2024). *Sustainability, the science of living and Jain philosophy*. SSRN Electronic Journal. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4843440>

Jaini, P. S. (1979). *The Jaina path of purification*. University of California Press.

Kalpavriksh. (2024). *Kalpavriksh annual report 2023–2024*. <https://kalpavriksh.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Kalpavriksh-Annual-Report-2023-2024.docx.pdf>

Luithle-Hardenberg, A. (2018). Jain group pilgrimages on foot: Defining sacred territory and religious community at Shatrunjaya. In U. Luig (Ed.),

Approaching the sacred: Pilgrimage in historical and intercultural perspective (pp. 159–199). Edition Topoi.

Madhya Pradesh Tourism. (n.d.). Kundalpur, Damoh.
<https://www.madhya-pradesh-tourism.com/destination/Kundalpur-Damoh-96>

Mitra, P. (2019). Jainism and environmental ethics: An exploration. *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research*, 36(1), 3–22.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40961-018-0158-6>

Nashik District Administration. (n.d.). Mangi-Tungi Temple.
<https://nashik.gov.in/en/tourist-place/mangi-tungi-temple/>

Paul, K. B. (2019). *The ecology of Ahimsā: Deconstructing the transition of Ahimsā from being a religious vow to an environmental ethos.* *International Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 33(1), 71. <https://doi.org/10.5840/ijap201987119>

Potdar, M. B. (2016). Economic status of Jain pilgrimage tourism centre: Mangitungi in Nashik district of Maharashtra. In *Proceedings of the National Seminar on Geo-Social Perspective of Natural Resources in India* (pp. 143–150). Krantisinh Nana Patil College, Walwa.

Rajan. (2025). *Essential unity of Jainism and sustainability: A holistic philosophy to humanistic and ecological crisis.* *Journal of Human Values*, 31(1), 61–84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09716858241301302>

Rana, V. (2024). *Eco-friendly explorations: A guide to sustainable tourism in India.* *International Journal of Renewable Energy and its Commercialization*, 10(2), 1–6. <https://journalspub.com/publication/ijrec-alljournals/article=14685>

Reading, M. (2019). The Anuvrat Movement: A case study of Jain-inspired ethical and eco-conscious living. *Religions*, 10(11), 636.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10110636>

Shinde, K. A. (2015). Religious tourism and religious tolerance: Insights from pilgrimage sites in India. *Tourism Review*, 70(3), 179–196.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-10-2013-0056>

Timothy, D. J., & Olsen, D. H. (Eds.). (2006). *Tourism, religion and spiritual journeys.* Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203001073>

Umāsvāti. (1994). *That which is: Tattvārtha Sūtra* (N. Tatia, Trans.). HarperCollins.

Vardhman Vacations. (n.d.). *Mangi Tungi Jain Yatra – A divine pilgrimage to Moksha*. <https://vardhmanvacations.com/jain-temples-tour-india/mangi-tungi-jain-yatra.html>