



City tourism as a key driver for sustainable development in Cairo Metropolitan: Challenges and opportunities

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Abstract

City tourism has increasingly become a dominant trend in many destinations worldwide. Due to its various benefits across the cities and beyond, many countries have targeted enhancing the tourism profiles of their major cities and/or metropolises to develop them into global tourism destinations. Moreover, many tourism academics and practitioners have contributed to our understanding of the concept and benefits of city tourism on local communities. Nevertheless, most of the available literature to date is based on the experience of cities and metropolises in the developed world, while little attention has been given to this domain in the developing countries. This article aims to investigate the challenges and opportunities of city tourism as a key driver for sustainable development in Egypt with particular emphasis on Cairo Metropolitan area as an urban destination suitable for both long and short breaks. The study depended on both primary and secondary data sources and encompassed two methods of qualitative data collection: observation and interviews. The study concludes by developing a conceptual framework for boosting Cairo Metropolitan into a global tourism city and giving a number of recommendations on how to enhance the tourism profile of urban destinations for the welfare of local communities.

Introduction

Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors and is an essential driver of economic growth and development (UNCTAD 2020). According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (hereafter UNWTO), international tourist arrivals have shown a substantial increase from 25 million tourists in 1950 to 1.5 billion tourists in 2019, despite occasional crises (UNWTO 2017 & 2020). In its long-term forecast "*Tourism Towards 2030*", the UNWTO expected the number of international arrivals to jump to 1.8 billion by 2030 (UNWTO 2011). UNWTO reports have as well affirmed repeatedly the escalating importance of tourism on different scales, especially on economic and cultural aspects. For instance, eight years ago, the World Travel and Tourism Council

(hereafter WTTC) estimates that at 9.1% of global GDP, Travel & Tourism generates more economic output than automotive manufacturing (7.9%), mining (8.0%), and chemicals manufacturing (9.0%) (WTTC 2012). Thus, based on its current massive revenue of more than US\$ 1.7 trillion (10.3% of global GDP) in 2018 (UNWTO 2019), tourism has been, for a long time now, in the "*big business*" league. Moreover, travel and tourism are considered global leading job creators, sustaining 330 million jobs in 2019, which represents about 9.2% of world employment (WTTC 2020), as well as a significant amount of indirect jobs in other sectors such as transportation, construction, catering, handicrafts, and souvenirs (UNCTAD 2020).

In this context, Egypt is one of the first countries to receive Thomas Cook's early organized tours in 1869 (Brendon 1991). Over more than 150 years of tourism, the country has always been a prominent tourism destination. Revising research and reports of national and international institutions (e.g., WEF 2019 & UNWTO 2019) discloses that Egypt has been successfully developing its tourism business for a long time now, where the number of international arrivals increased from 2.0 million in 1989 to more than 13 million in 2019. In its last report, before the spread of the COVID-19, the UNWTO (2020) revealed that Egypt's tourism sector saw a remarkable 21% growth in 2019. The report anticipated that Egypt would exceed the barrier of 15 million international arrivals in 2020 as a result of the political stability as well as the numerous ongoing mega tourism projects (e.g., the Grand Egyptian Museum). Although COVID-19 has definitely held back tourism demand to Egypt, which will surely not meet the earlier expectation for 2020, demand on the Egyptian Red Sea resorts (e.g., Hurghada and Sharm El-Sheikh) is still promising, which will help to mitigate the negative impacts of COVID-19. With a total contribution of 12.7 billion USD in 2018 (World Bank 2020), tourism is undoubtedly one of the main pillars upon which the Egyptian economy is relying on.

Over its long history in the tourism business, Egypt has witnessed several changes in its tourism strategy due to several factors. For instance, Egypt decided in the mid-1990s to shift from mainly promoting cultural tourism to the Nile Valley destinations (e.g., Cairo, Luxor) to focus more on recreational tourism on the Red Sea to avoid the repetitive terrorist attacks on tourists in the overcrowded valley as well as to respond to the expected demand decline on the Nile Valley sites. As well, in a pursuit to disassociate itself from the negative past of political instability and violence, including terrorism attacks, street demonstrations, public disorder, and enforced curfews, a plan was suggested to rebrand Sharm El Sheikh (Amara 2016). Today and with all the significant changes taking place in metropolitan cities, especially Cairo, it is evident that Egypt is making a new step to revive its main cities to be able to reattract significant tourist demand again after years of declining demand. Such efforts indicate clearly that Egypt still believes in tourism as an essential economic sector.

In this context, and due to its significant, early-mentioned importance and overwhelming contribution, tourism has always been a focal point of research in Egypt. Hundreds if not thousands of papers and studies have been produced to investigate the different aspects of tourism in Egypt. However, to date, what has been written on city tourism in Egypt is still scarce comparing to other tourism topics and comparing to its

importance as a major part of the Egyptian tourism product. In this respect, this study aims to shed more light on city tourism in Egypt by exploring the stakeholder's perceptions regarding the competence, challenges, and opportunities of city tourism as a key driver for sustainable development in Cairo Metropolitan as well as their recommendations regarding the means of promoting city tourism in Cairo Metropolitan as a destination suitable for both long and short breaks. The study will accordingly contribute to the existing body of knowledge on city tourism in developing countries with particular emphasis on Cairo Metropolitan, which may help in any future pursuit to reform the Egyptian metropolitan cities for tourism purposes.

Literature review

Cities, the most sophisticated cultural product for civilized coexistence (UNWTO 2012), are among the most visited places on earth both as attractions in their own right or as primary entry, exit, and transit points for people traveling to and from a vast array of world destinations (Wearing *et al.* 2010). *"Consequently, like market-driven businesses everywhere, cities have become fixated with communicating their special appeal to visitors"* (Haywood, 1997: 169) through the adoption and implementation of a range of strategies that are aimed to specifically mark them as unique and attractive to visitors in what has currently become a crowded global tourism marketplace (Wearing, *et al.* 2010).

Historically, "urban environments have for many years been amongst the most significant of all tourist destinations" (Hayllar *et al.*, 2008: 6) where "towns and cities have functioned as important locations for tourism activities since ancient times with the accommodation and entertainment function of the pre-industrial city" (Page and Hall, 2003:1). Pilgrims in the 14th century visiting cities like Canterbury are one example of early urban tourists. The historic Grand Tour of Europe is another example of an urban tourism experience dated back to the 18th and 19th centuries where the rich used to visit and encounter spectacular towns and cities that represented the melting pots of national culture, art, music, literature, architecture and urban design (Karski 1990).

Cities and towns as tourist destinations have continued to attract visitors into contemporary times. In the late 1970s however, with the economic decline of the cities in the United Kingdom, Western Europe, and Northern America, the phenomenon of city tourism, as a catalyst for enhancing urban economies, has become a demanding urban function for most policymakers and business stakeholders (Baum *et al.*, 2003). Since then, and because of the concentration, variety, and quality of the activities and attributes they can offer, cities have been put on the tourism map of the day (Karski, 1990). Additionally, due to their inherent scale, spatial attributes, and opportunities for a diversified range of experiences, cities have become a central focus as tourist destinations (Law, 1996). Moreover, due to the geographical concentration of services, facilities, and attractions (Shaw and Williams, 1994), the specialized functions they offer, and the range of services they provide, cities have become among the preferable tourist destinations (Page and Hall, 2003) particularly to visitors who often tend to encounter high-profile landscapes that are located outside contrived designed tourist zones but are essential symbols of the city (Stevenson, 2003).

Central to the significance of cities as tourist destinations is the contribution of urban tourism to local economies. Here, it's worth noting that for many cities, tourism is regarded as a relatively significant contribution to the economy. In contrast, for others, it is regarded as central to economic recovery and reclaimed prosperity. In either case, however, tourism has currently become a critical component in the urban development strategies of many cities (Haywood, 1997). Here it is worth mentioning that in many cities where the traditional economic activities have declined, city authorities have put much emphasis on investing in tourism as a means of boosting the image of their city, revitalizing and physically regenerating it, creating new job opportunities, and enhancing the potential capabilities of local residents (Law, 1993). Moreover, raising the tourism profiles of such cities has become a persisting challenge for politicians, tourism stakeholders, and various business interests (Wearing, *et al.* 2010).

Nevertheless, despite the apparent significance of cities as tourist destinations, the study of urban tourism - as a part of the culture of contemporary life (Selby, 2004) that describes not only the phenomenon of visiting a city but also a specific range of tourism development strategies and initiatives that involve the reconfiguration or redevelopment of urban space to attract visitors (Wearing, *et al.* 2010) has been largely neglected until the late 1980s due to the difficulty in identifying tourist and non-tourist use of urban facilities and/or amenities as well as the wide variation in size, function and age of urban areas (Ashworth, 1989).

More recently, however, academic interest in this domain started to increase gradually to reach its peak over the past few years especially with the accelerated concern of various international bodies of which the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre (WHC) are the most remarkable.

Yet, most of the work that has been done in this particular area to date is based on the experience of cities in the developed countries, *i.e.*, the United Kingdom, Western Europe, and Northern America (Ismail, 2008). In this respect, several authors (*e.g.*, Hayllar, *et al.*, 2008; Richards and Wilson, 2007; Law, 2002; Pearce, 1998; Murphy; Judd, 1995; Law, 1993; Law, 1992; *etc.*) have contributed to our knowledge on urban tourism in the developed world and its role in regenerating city centers and inner-city areas, particularly in older industrial cities and/or towns.

In developing countries, however, city tourism and urban models have attracted less attention in comparison to seaside resorts (Oppermann and Chon, 1997). Nevertheless, based on the experiences of several cities in the developing nations (*e.g.*, India, South East Asia, the Carrabin Islands, *etc.*), the existing literature - thought limited - has addressed various vital issues that are of great significance in terms of the benefits of city tourism to developing urban communities. In India, for instance, it has been realized that tourism should exist in cities as part of a concern to secure their heritage assets. In most of the largest cities in developing countries in Southeast Asia, it has been realized that tourism is a means for expanding the consumption opportunities and, thus, contributing to the growth of local economies. In the Caribbean Islands, on the other hand, it has been realized that tourism has strong influences in the process of

urbanization beginning in the port or dock area first, as a node of tourist development area that changes and influences the urbanization of the whole island, and second, as a gateway or hub that allowed tourism activities to exist and then distribute tourists to the entire area of the Caribbean (Eldidamony, 2011).

Central to the contribution of urban tourism to the regeneration of various cities and local communities around the world is "the debate of the role of cities in the growth of global tourism on the one hand, and conversely the role of tourism in shaping more prosperous and sustainable cities and contributing to the well-being, environmental quality and cultural identity of city dwellers worldwide on the other hand" (World Tourism Organization, 2012: 4).

In this respect, it has been suggested that tourism should be positioned as a legitimate backbone for other sectors relating to urban development to project its full potential in the conception of cities on a large scale (World Tourism Organization, 2013). It has also been suggested that tourism is a very important factor in all policies related to urban development as it is not just a strategy to provide a competitive product that meets the expectations of visitors but a means of developing the city itself by providing more and better infrastructures and living conditions to residents (Istanbul Declaration on City Tourism, 2012).

Central to the role of tourism in shaping more prosperous and sustainable urban communities are several paradoxes in the relationship between tourism and cities: one of which is that the more attractive cities become as tourism destinations and the more experienced tourists become in consuming the experience of urbanity, the more difficult it is for cities to distinguish themselves in an increasingly crowded marketplace (Ashworth and Page, 2011).

Research aim

The current study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on city tourism in developing countries with particular emphasis on Cairo Metropolitan, the capital city of Egypt. In this respect, the study aimed at exploring the stakeholder's perceptions regarding the competence, challenges, and opportunities of city tourism as a key driver for sustainable development in Cairo Metropolitan as well as their recommendations regarding the means of promoting city tourism in Cairo Metropolitan as a destination suitable for both long and short breaks. Accordingly, the study seeks to answer two primary questions: (1) As a principal component of the Egyptian tourism product, what is the current situation of the Cairo Metropolitan area? (2) how can we reinforce the area to emerge again as a significant tourist destination and boost city tourism?

Research Methodology

To achieve the study's overall aim, an exploratory case study methodology that included two phases of data collection and analysis was employed. The first phase aimed at collecting data from secondary sources, including relevant published articles, textbooks, official reports, and internet websites. The data gathered in this phase was intended to contribute to the study's theoretical background on city tourism as well as to the development of the afore-mentioned conceptual framework for boosting city tourism in Cairo Metropolitan. The second phase, the primary stage, aimed at gathering rich

qualitative data and involved interviewing a conveniently selected sample of four official tourism experts, five local tour operators, and seven tour guides regarding the contribution of the various attractions/sites in Cairo Metropolitan to the city's tourism profile on the one hand and the country's tourism profile on the other hand.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the 12 experts, each interview lasted between 30 to 40 minutes, and the interviewees were assured of the confidentiality of their names and the positions they hold. The interviewees were also confirmed that the information they give would only be used for scientific research. The interviews were semi-structured to provide participants the opportunity to express their ideas and perceptions regarding the issue under investigation to the most, and follow up questions were often addressed whenever felt appropriate to enrich the data collected. The interviews were conducted in Arabic. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and translated into English. Each interviewee was given as specific code of reference, and the study themes were manually identified and interpreted in a qualitative descriptive manner. The interview checklist includes several questions regarding the current situation of Cairo Metropolitan area as a part of the Egyptian tourism product, its capability to attract tourist demand independently, the need for reinforcing its attractiveness. However, interviewees were allowed to elaborate wherever possible.

This phase of the study also depended on the participant observation method that involved the observation of and interaction with site representatives and members of the local community in the visited areas in their natural daily settings. In this stage of the study, careful, objective field notes about what has been seen and/or experienced in the areas being investigated were recorded. Data derived from the informal conversations that have taken place with site representatives and local residents in the regions visited were also recorded to enrich the process of interpretation. The data gathered from the field study was then subject to analysis and interpretation.

Results and discussion

Evidence derived from the interviews carried out with the tourism official experts, tour operators and tour guides included in the study sample in phase one of the field study revealed that the concept of city tourism in Egypt is apparently far beyond the tourism potentials of various cities across the country's territory. The experts' interviews revealed that two types of cities are still attracting most of the tourists and tour operators' attention. First, the frequently visited coastal cities that encompass a wide range of beach resorts and recreational amenities in the Red Sea and the Sinai Peninsula, such as Hurghada, Safaga, and Sharm El-Sheikh. Second, the major must-visit cultural tourism incubator cities such as Luxor and Aswan. Apart from these two types, a number of remarkable Egyptian towns - thought rich in heritage assets and tourist amenities - are rarely visited as tourist destinations/attractions in their own right, particularly when it comes to international visitors such as Cairo Metropolitan, Alexandria, Al-Fayoum, Minia for instance. This could be interpreted by the global change in tourists' concepts, who are now bestowing more of their visits time for visiting distinguish mostly local sites, which can enhance their social experience of the hosting community rather than visiting metropolitan cities. For a long time now, Egypt has been focusing its promotional activities on specific cities – mostly Red Sea resorts –

rather than others. Interviewers notify that these cities are often offered as optional visits within specified programs today.

Even though Greater Cairo Metropolitan is one of the cities which is known worldwide for its numerous attractions, evidence derived from the interviews indicates that the capital city is not an exception from the previously mentioned situation. The Egyptian capital city, which is known as well as "the city of the thousand minarets" is also famous for having two of the nation's six cultural world heritage sites: "Memphis and its Necropolis" – the Pyramid platforms from Giza to Dahshur – and "Historic Cairo", one of the world's oldest Islamic cities with its traditional mosques, schools, baths, fountains, and hospitals. However, it is unfortunate for the experts to record that even the Greater Cairo Metropolitan is mostly offered now as an optional tour for tourists directly arriving at Sharm El Sheikh or Hurghada.

Referring to the contribution of Cairo Metropolitan to the Egyptian tourism profile, interviewees argue that tourists are visiting a relatively limited number of sites in Cairo comparing to the long list of attractions it has. The list of visits is almost confined to visiting the Giza Pyramids, the Sakkara complex, the Egyptian museum, Al-Mouez Street, the Citadel, and Al-Refai, Al-Sultan Hassan and Ahmad Ibn Toloun Mosques, as well as the mosque of Amr Ibn Al-As and the Coptic complex in Al-Fustat area. The interviewees claim that apart from these attractions, which can broadly be described as traditional and must-to-see, more attention should be given to the development and promotion of Islamic and Coptic attractions in Historic Cairo. The interviewees assume that the importance of these less-visited attractions relies on (1) their contribution to the narration of the history of a remarkable period of the Egyptian cultural background, (2) their potentiality to reinforce the Greater Cairo Metropolitan tourism profile and to upraise the city's appeal which may result in transforming it into a global tourism city for both long and short breaks.

In this respect, the interviewees indicated that Al-Fustat area, for instance, encompasses various attractions that are rarely visited by tourists even though they are located near the frequently visited attractions: the Hanging church, Abu Serga church Saint Mercurius Velopatir (Abu Seven), Ben Ezra synagogue, the Coptic museum and Amr Ibn Al-As mosque that often come on top of the tourism itinerates of Cairo Metropolitan tours after the Giza Pyramids, the Citadel and the Egyptian museum. Examples of such less developed sites include the mosques of Abo Al-Saoud Algarhy, Mohamed Al-Soghaier, and Hassan El-Sweedy, the tombs of the seven girls, and the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization. Thus, the current efforts for developing Al-Fustat area, in particular, is a giant step towards utilizing these long-neglected Egyptian tourist assets; nevertheless, it is so early to assess the result of such efforts on tourism demand for Cairo Metropolitan area.

Similarly, the interviewees indicated that the road - that is commonly referred to as "Al-Saleeba Street- which links between the Sultan Hassan and Al-Refaai mosques in Al-Qalaa district and the Sayeda Zeinab mosque in the Sayeda Zainab district is an example of a marginalized Islamic heritage incubator indicating that although Al-Saleeba street encompasses a wide range of Islamic attractions that are of great historical value (e.g., Sabil Um Abbas, the mosque of Ahmad Ibn Touloun, the mosque,

and khanqah of Amir Sheikhan Alamry, the mosque, and school of Qainbay Almohammady, the Sabil-Kuttab of Sultan Qaitbay, the mosque and school of Amir Taghri Bardy, the mosque of Ladjin Alsayfi, the mosque and madrasa of Slaro and Singer Algawly, the cruciform madrasa of the Amir Sarghatmish, the Alkhodery mosque, the Amir Seif El-Dein Taz Palace, *etc.*), it has neither encountered adequate urban development projects nor has been subject to concerning tourism development initiatives.

The interviewees further added that despite the Al-Saliba street's full potential to compete - as an open museum- with the frequently-visited Al-Mouez street, most of the attractions mentioned above located along with it as well as some other valuable Islamic treasures that locate in the surrounding area such as Qubbat Afandina, the second largest cemetery in the world after Taj Mahal, Beit El-Sennari, the base of the scientific board of the French conquest of Egypt where the first European study of Egypt (*Le description de l'Egypte*) was conducted, Fatima Al-Shaqra mosque, Temraz El-Ahmady mosque, Dawoud Pasha mosque, Yusuf Agha mosque, *etc.* are hardly visited by tourists except for Ahmad Ibd Touloun, Al-Sultan Hassan and Al-Refai, mosques and Bayt Al-Kretlia museum (Gayer Anderson museum). Nevertheless, it's worth noting that based on interviewing the museum representative of Bayt Al-Kretlia, it has been indicated that tourists do not visit the museum as an attraction in its own right, but just because it happens to be quite close to the frequently visited Ibn Toloun mosque.

Moreover, the interviewees referred that central to the contribution of Historic Cairo to the city's tourism profile, is the contribution of "Al Mouez Le Din Allah Street", the oldest main street of the Fatimid capital Cairo, which encompasses a vast array of frequently visited Islamic attractions that are of great historic significance starting from Bab El Fotouh northwards passing through El- Hakem Mosque, Beit El-Sehemi, Al-Akmar mosque, and Kalawoon group as well as a variety of important Islamic antiquities. The interviewees further referred that despite receiving considerable attention from the Egyptian tourism authority in terms of the conservation and development of the valuable historic assets it encloses, the potentials of Al Mouez street are not fully utilized in terms of boosting the tourism profile of the city. This has been regarded to the fact that the frequently visited Al-Mouez street, which is often promoted as one of the must-to-visit sites in Cairo Metropolitan itineraries, encompasses an array of attractions that receive less consideration in terms of urban and tourism development on the one hand and are hardly visited and/or even commercially promoted as part of the city's tourism product on the other hand.

Evidence derived from the participant observation process and the accompanying informal conversations with members of the local community and site managers in the areas that encompass the less-visited sites reveals that apart from a limited number of Islamic attractions that are subject to sustainable urban development initiatives, many of the existing heritage assets - particularly in Historic Cairo - are marginalized and undervalued either in receiving proper consideration in terms of urban development and conservation or in being enclosed in the city's tourism map as an added value to the city's and the country's tourism product.

In this respect, it has been observed that many of those attractions/sites are subject to various environmental threatening challenges that may eventually lead to their deterioration if not giving specific official consideration. Additionally, it has been quite noticed that the level of cultural awareness of the local residents in the areas encompassing the less-visited sites are quite limited compared to those in the areas that contain the more-visited sites either in terms of their appreciation of the cultural value of the various historical attractions they are surrounded with and the accompanying benefits tourism may provide to them or in terms of their unpleasant attitude towards strangers visiting the area that may result in unsuccessful visitor experiences and hence, unpleasant image for the destination in a way that hinders the anticipated contribution of the area to the city's Cultural tourism product.

Moreover, it has been noticed that apart from the frequently-visited sites/attractions in Cairo-Metropolitan, most of the Islamic religious sites in Historic Cairo merely exist in a management vacuum where none is too bothered to achieve specific targets.

As for the means of boosting city tourism in Cairo Metropolitan, evidence derived from the interviews with the tourism officials revealed that various aspects should be considered to promote Cairo Metropolitan as a destination suitable for both long and short breaks. These aspects may be classified into the following three domains: First, creating supportive and enabling environments for the growth of tourism in the city through (a) the coordination and development of amenities, facilities, products, and services that support delivering quality experiences for visitors on the one hand and enhancing the residents' well-being on the other hand. (b) The establishment of a local tourism committee that brings together the various tourism stakeholders in Cairo Metropolitan to set long and short-term objectives for sustainable tourism development in the city; Second, creating a positive image of the city among visitors, tourism investors, and local residents through (a) Introducing promotional materials for visitors and event planners. (b) Providing comprehensive information on the city's attractions, facilities, and amenities either through a professional visitor website or through specialized travel and tourism magazines. (c) Working closely with travel writers, national and international press, trade media, and local media. (d) Sending press releases to all major news organizations to announce that the city is "open for business"; Third, raising the tourism profile of the city through (a) Branding the city as a tourism destination in its own right, (b) utilizing the city's tangible and intangible resources to the most (c) increasing local residents' awareness of the ample benefits of tourism to their local communities.

Conclusion

The study concludes that promoting city tourism in Egypt is, by all means, an opportunity to reactivate the local Egyptian economies, which in turn contributes to the enhancement of the country's national economy that has encountered several drawbacks since the 2011 revolution. Nevertheless, despite its various socio-economic benefits, limited consideration has been given to city tourism in Egypt to date. Besides, the study concludes that city tourism in Egypt is apparently far beyond the tourism potentials of various cities across the country's territory.

The study further concludes that many cities in Egypt are rarely visited as tourist destinations in their own right despite their richness in heritage assets and tourist amenities. Moreover, it concludes that Cairo Metropolitan is by no means an exception to the current situation of urban tourism in Egypt. The study also finds that tourism in Cairo Metropolitan is faced by various challenges, including the marginalization of a vast array of attractions in Historic Cairo and the underestimation of the value of such attractions. In this respect, limited consideration has been given to the conservation of such valuable attractions as well as to the enhancement of the level of awareness of the local residents in surrounding areas. The study further concludes that to enhance city tourism in Cairo Metropolitan several parameters should be considered including the creation of supportive and enabling environments for the sustainable growth of tourism in the city, the creation of a positive image of the city among visitors, tourism investors, and local residents, and raising the tourism profile of the city.

Recommendations

Establishing a Local Tourism Organization (LTO) or a Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB) to be directly responsible for planning, developing, and managing the city's various tourism attractions, activities, and/or facilities with particular consideration to the less advantaged areas as in the case of Historic Cairo's less-visited attractions. This proposed body will work under the supervision of the Ministry of Tourism; however, it is also expected to serve the interests of the different tourism stakeholders across the city, including tourism officials, travel and tourism business representatives, host communities, and local residents, political members, etc.

Improving the city's amenities to cater to the needs of both international and domestic visitors as well as local residents through the involvement of concerned planning, institutional, and regulatory bodies.

Improving access to the city's various tourist attractions by maintaining the physical condition of the roads leading to such attractions as well as by providing suitable transportation facilities that make these attractions easily reached, especially in the case of tourist sites that are located away from the city's main transportation networks.

Attracting visitors to the city by offering affordable subsidized packages that include hotel accommodations and bargain airfares and by forming partnerships between the country's national and/or local carriers and the various accommodation premises across the city.

Organizing festive publicity events and hosting exhibitions and trade shows to promote the city and attract visitors to it.

Enhancing the capacity of the national institutional bodies—both public and private—to perform their key functions effectively, efficiently, and sustainably.

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سياحة المدن كمحفز للتنمية في مدينة القاهرة

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المخلص

أصبحت سياحة المدن اتجاهاً مهماً وذلك على نحو متزايد في العديد من الوجهات السياحية حول العالم، وذلك نظراً لفوائدها المختلفة سواءً للمدينة السياحية ذاتها أو للدولة ككل. وعليه، فقد سعت العديد من المقاصد السياحية إلى تعزيز الإمكانات السياحية لمدينتها الرئيسية وذلك بهدف تطويرها لتصبح وجهات سياحية متكاملة قادرة على جذب وخدمة السياحة بشقيها الدولي والداخلي. علاوة على ذلك فقد ساهم الجهد البحثي للعديد من الأكاديميين والخبراء السياحيين في فهمنا لمفهوم وفوائد سياحة المدن على المجتمعات المحلية. ومع ذلك، فإن معظم المؤلفات المتاحة حتى الآن تستند على دراسات تمت لمدن وعواصم في العالم المتقدم، بينما لم يتحقق الاهتمام ذاته لدراسة هذا الجانب في الدول النامية. وعليه تهدف هذه المقالة إلى دراسة تحديات وفرص سياحة المدن كمحرك رئيسي للتنمية في مصر مع التركيز بشكل خاص على منطقة القاهرة الحضرية كوجهة مناسبة للإجازات الطويلة والقصيرة. وقد اعتمدت الدراسة على مصادر البيانات الأولية والثانوية واشتملت على طريقتين لجمع البيانات النوعية: الملاحظة والمقابلات. واختتمت الدراسة بوضع عدد من التوصيات حول كيفية تعزيز مكانة مدينة القاهرة كوجهة سياحية مميزة.

معلومات المقالة

الكلمات المفتاحية

السياحة؛ المدن؛ المدن الكبرى؛ الإجازات القصيرة؛ التنمية المستدامة.

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