

Challenges Facing Tour Guide Profession and their Impacts on the Egyptian Guides performance

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Abstract

Tour guides have important roles in the tourism industry, but they face many problems and challenges that may adversely affect their performance and this might affect negatively the tourists' satisfaction and experience. Therefore, it is important to focus on these challenges and difficulties and try to find actual and realistic solutions to them. The current research aims at exploring the different challenges and problems facing tour guides in Egypt. Within this context, two online questionnaire forms were distributed to Egyptian tour guides and experts in the tourism and guidance field (May 2020 to July 2020). It was concluded that different challenges face tour guides in Egypt such as: terrorism, crises and disasters, which greatly impact the tour guide profession; moreover, according to Law No. 121 of the year 1983 concerning tour guides, they are not allowed to combine more than one job as well as some persons practice the tour guide profession without a license, which negatively affects the Egyptian tour guide's image. The research reached a set of recommendations to improve the working conditions of tour guides in Egypt.

Introduction

Historically, the tour guide profession can be considered one of the oldest professions, as tour guides have been around for two and a half thousand years. Today, tour guides have become one of the most significant elements of tourism industry's success (Rabotic, 2010). Tour guides inform, interpret, educate, interact and communicate with tourists about the destination, its history, culture, local/host community and nature in an effective, entertaining and interesting interpretive ways (Overend, 2012; Zillinger et al., 2012; Látková et al., 2018). Recently, tour guides concern with intangible issues such as: social interactions, culture, sustainability, storytelling, education, performance, authenticity, values, knowledge, and memories (Zillinger et al., 2012). This explains how a tour guide could positively or negatively influence the tourists' experience and the tourist destination (Chang, 2014). On one hand, a tour guide cannot succeed in his/ her work without love, passion and enjoyment of this work, as well as the surrounding circumstances and his/ her personal circumstances

should be favorable (Chikuta et al., 2017). On the other side, tourism is considered a global industry sensitive to terrorism, economic downturns, epidemic diseases, natural disasters, pollution, political instability and international conflicts (Zibanai, 2014; Polus et al., 2018). This negatively affects tour guides and makes them think seriously about changing their career.

The research aims at illustrating the importance of tour guide profession as an essential element in the tourism industry, investigating the different challenges facing Egyptian tour guides, exploring the needs of tour guides and finally suggesting practical implications to these challenges. In an attempt to achieve the aforementioned aim, a quantitative research methodology was adopted where two phases of data collection were employed. In the first phase, data on the issue under investigation was collected from various secondary data sources. In the second phase, quantitative data was gathered through distributing two online questionnaire forms to Egyptian tour guides and experts in the tourism and guidance field (May 2020 to July 2020). Data was analyzed by Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS, V. 20).

Literature Review

Tour Guide (Definitions, Characteristics and Types)

According to the Oxford dictionary the guide concept can be illustrated as guiding and showing routes, leading or directing others' way (Moore, 2011); the definition of tour guide is expressed in many ways in the literature such as the person who is responsible for directing and leading tourists during their tour or sightseeing; the person who accompanies visitors, individual tourists or group of tourists during their holiday, interprets historical, cultural and natural sites in an entertaining way in the language of visitors, explains aspects of local culture and enables them to understand the value of this culture and creates favorable image of the destination (Weiler and Black, 2015b; Lin et al., 2018; Dileep, 2019); the local citizen who interprets cultural and natural heritage sites for tourists and visitors in their own language, as well as being licensed by competent authorities to guide tourists for a fee, wage or salary (Cetin and Yarcan, 2017). According to the Egyptian tour guide professional law number 121 issued in 1983, the tour guide can be defined as the person who has the right and authority to offer tour guiding service (*i.e.* explaining and guiding tourists in places of monuments or museums or exhibitions for a fee) by being accepted to the profession in accordance with the provisions of the law (Law N. 121, 1983).

Primary characteristics required for practicing the guiding profession can be illustrated as follows: presentation and communication skills, professional attitude, tolerant, fairness, well-groomed, gentle, humorous, friendly, helpful, outward-looking, instructor, translator, entertainer, providing accurate facts and information, problem-solving, pathfinder, salesperson, decision-maker, proficiency in foreign languages, comprehensive knowledge of the destination and of tourists' culture, full perspective of history and historic sites, to be commitment to continuous learning and personal enhancement, leading and organizing tourist groups, engaging the audience, speaking in a warm, audible, clear voice at a moderate phase, correct posture and eye contact, storytelling (Cohen, 1985; Vlad, 2015; El-Menshawey, 2016; Sandaruwani

and Gnanapala, 2016; Bayrama et al., 2017; Cetin and Yarcana, 2017; Hansen and Mossberg, 2017; Saputra et al., 2017; Kuo et al., 2018; Polus et al., 2018).

According to previous studies, there are various types of tour guides can be reviewed as follows: on-site guides; docents or volunteer guide, personal or private guides; city guides; specialized guides; regional or provincial guides; urban guide; government guide; driver guide; business or industry guide; adventure guide and cruise guide (Cruz, 2008; Chilembwe and Mweiwa, 2014). In this regard, tour guides can be classified as follows: A- On-site Guides: They guide tourists in a specific location or site (*i.e.* building, limited area or an attraction); B-Provincial Guides: They take tourists around the whole country or state and C- National Guides: They tour throughout the entire country, crossing all county or state boundaries. Moreover, these categories include three types: 1- Adventure guides provide guided adventure tours (such as rock climbing, canoeing, diving, etc.); 2- Nature guides present various natural experiences in a specific region (such as hunting reserves, national parks, nature protection areas, trails, zoos,.... etc.); 3- Cultural guides conduct a cultural trip or tour in a particular area (*i.e.*, museums, communities, farms, heritage and historical sites, etc.) (Vlad, 2015; Wheeler and Black, 2015b; Van den Berg, 2016).

The Impact of Tour Guide on Tourists' Experiences

Concerning the relationship between the tour guide and tourists, the tour guide takes the lead of the tourist group, initiates social interaction and reduces conflicts and problems between members of the tour group during their visit; and this creates trust between the tour guide and tourists (Cetin and Yarcana, 2017). The tour guide can be seen as an ambassador of the tourist destination, cultural and social mediator, influencer of the destination's image and decision to revisit (Rabotic, 2010; Bayram, 2021).

Regarding the responsibility of tour guide, there are several tangible and intangible roles that can be explained as follows: providing tourists with information about different tourist places (*i.e.* historical, archaeological, natural and cultural); Knowledge of cultures, customs, and traditions of different countries; explaining cultural and social aspects of the tourist destination as tourists often are not aware of the customs and traditions of countries they visit by helping them to see, hear, smell, taste and feel the culture of a destination; improving destination image and reputation by providing quality services to tourists (Kassawneh et al., 2019; Bayram, 2021). According to the ethical responsibilities of tour guides, they should take into account their professional behavior the principles of honor, honesty, integrity, modesty, dignity and trustworthiness (Sandaruwani and Gnanapala, 2016).

From the previous, it could be concluded that the tour guide has an obvious effect on tourists' experiences, as he/she becomes the link between tourists and local residents; personal and behavioral skills of tour guides contributes to achieving a high degree of tourists' satisfaction and attracting more tourists, which reflects positively on the tourism sector and increases the competitiveness of the tourist destinations (Alazaizeh et al., 2019; Kassawneh et al., 2019). Accordingly, the tour guide is the person who has a great contribution/ has the power/ has the responsibility to make the tourist journeys

successful and enjoyable or boring (Chang, 2014; Chilembwe and Mweiwa, 2014; Çetinkaya and Öter, 2015).

Role of the Tour Guide in the Tourism Industry

According to Cohen (1985), the tour guide has four main roles to play. The instrumental, interactional, social and communicative (Chikuta et al., 2017). The instrumental role includes: providing direction, access, security and safety, organizing, managing and controlling the group, having the right to choose what will be shown and what will not be shown; the interactional role includes: managing relationships between locals and tourists, experiencing different cultures that leads to understanding the local culture (*i.e.* cultural norms, customs, traditions...etc.) and experiencing the daily life of the host community; the social role includes: maintaining cohesion within the group and ensuring entertainment, humor, discipline and morale and finally the communicative role includes: providing information, knowledge and interpretation about different sites, aspects of the destination (orientation tours about the destination) (Bayram, 2021).

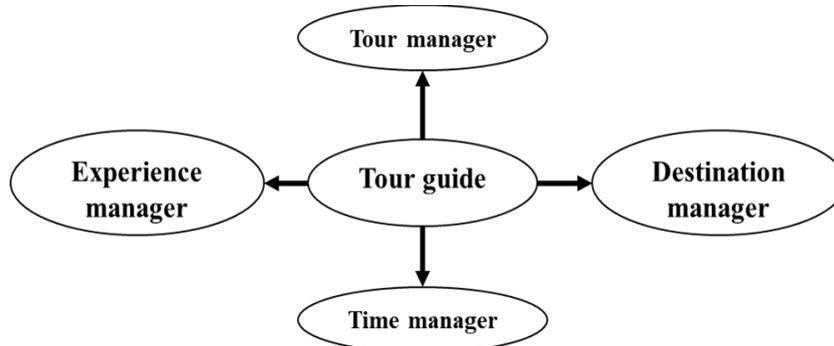


Fig.1. Managerial Roles of Contemporary Tour Guide

Source: Weiler and Black, 2015a and Weiler and Black, 2015b

From Figure (1), there are four managerial roles of the contemporary tour guide that can be illustrated as follows: **Tour manager:** Organizing, managing and controlling the group; **Experience manager:** Managing relationships between locals and tourists, experiencing different cultures, facilitating memorable experiences for tourists (Weiler and Black, 2015a; Çetinkaya and Öter, 2016); **Destination/ resource manager:** Focusing on the sustainability of the host environments, communities and destinations, intervening and controlling what tourists see, hear and do (Weiler and Black, 2015b; Çetinkaya and Öter, 2016) and **Time manager:** Time allocated for tour guiding is very important; thus the tour guide should be more careful about tours' and visits' time, which ranges from half a day to two days or more (El-Menshaway, 2016).

Tour Guide Profession in Egypt (Conditions and Prerequisites)

As a consequence to the significant role of the tour guide in the tourism industry, tourist organizations/authorities in different destinations/ countries issued regulations and instructions to organize tour guides' profession (Kassawnh et al., 2019), for example in Egypt: Tour guides cannot practice the profession without obtaining the license from the Ministry of Tourism as well as there are some prerequisites to obtain

the license can be detailed as follows: The tour guide should be Egyptian nationality; have a good reputation; prove his/her medical fitness; have a university degree from an Egyptian university, or the equivalent from one of the foreign universities; not be less than 21 years old; should pass successfully the exam that held by the Ministry of Tourism (with exemption for those who obtain a bachelor's degree or post-graduate diploma in Tourism Guidance from Egyptian universities); should not be employed in the government or public bodies or public sector unless getting an approval of the work on grant leave without pay and finally the tour guide should not have been judged, unless he/she has been rehabilitated (Law N. 121, 1983).

Challenges Facing Tour Guide

Despite tour guides have a notable impact on tourists' experience and satisfaction in the tourism destination (Melia, 2017), they can be seen as the most affected persons in the tourism industry; tourists blame them for many problems during their tours; they also expect from the tour guides to handle all the obstacles they encountered in the tourism destination (Prakash et al., 2010b; Prakash et al., 2011; Çetinkaya and Öter, 2016). Tour guides always work under great pressure, they are required to have many competencies, personal, communication and negotiation skills as well as to be able to communicate information in an interesting and interpretive way; at the same time maintain good relations with employers and tourists, they have also to adhere to rules, laws and regulations of the country to ensure they continue to work (Prakash et al., 2010b). Tour guides face many challenges and difficulties due to their profession conditions that can be detailed as follows: 1- Seasonality, part-time work and casual employment conditions that greatly and negatively affect the amount of work and available income; 2- Freelance nature and self-employed 3- Unsocial working hours; 4- Low and minimal wages as well as inadequate and difficult working conditions (Nyahunzvi and Njerekai, 2013; Melubo and Buzinde, 2016; Ababneh, 2017; Melia, 2017; Shidende, 2019). Information Technology (IT) could be another challenge for tour guides, it could reduce/ minimize tourists' need for a guide because of the countless mobile apps and websites related to tourism and travel (Melia, 2017).

Methodology

The research studies the challenges and problems facing tour guides and their impacts on tourists' experience in Egypt. Two online questionnaires were adopted to collect data and were distributed to reach a large number of Egyptian tour guides and experts in tourism and guidance field (May 2020 to July 2020). Two hundred and fifty questionnaires were sent, and two hundred and thirty-three (n = 233) valid questionnaires were received, representing 93.2% response rate from tour guides. On the other side, ninety-seven (n= 97) valid questionnaires were received out of a total of 110 questionnaires distributed, which represents a response rate of 88.1% of experts in tourism and guidance field. The questionnaires were based on pilot survey concerning challenges facing Egyptian tour guides and it was adapted from previous studies Nyahunzvi and Njerekai (2013); Magdy (2016); Ababneh (2017); and Shidende et al., (2019). The questionnaire applied a five-point Likert scale (ranging from “strongly disagree (1)” to “strongly agree (5)”). The questionnaire covered seven main aspects: Tour guides and experts demographic data (gender, age,

experience years, and license language); Challenges facing tour guides (political, economic, legal, social, and technological challenges); Strengths of guidance profession; Weaknesses of guidance profession; Opportunities for guidance profession; Threats of guidance profession; and Procedures to be taken to enhance guidance profession. Data was analyzed by Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS, V. 20).

Data Validity and Reliability

Table 1

Reliability Coefficient for the Two Questionnaires

Population	Cases Valid	N of Items	Reliability Coefficient (Alpha)	Validity Coefficient
Experts	97	43	.890	.943
Tour guides	233	43	.817	.903

Table (1) shows that Reliability Coefficient for both questionnaires (experts and tour guides) is .890 and .817, and Validity Coefficient is 94.3% and 90.3%. This proves the validity and reliability of both questionnaires (Ursachi et al., 2015).

Table 2

The Constructs Reliability Analysis using Cronbach's Alpha Test for Experts and Tour Guides Questionnaire

Dimensions	Experts	Tour Guides
Challenges	.792	.675
Strengths of guidance profession	.710	.577
Weaknesses of guidance profession	.693	.577
Opportunities for guidance profession	.599	.464
Threats to guidance profession	.600	.528
Procedures to be taken to enhance guidance profession.	.853	.586
The Total Questionnaire	.943	.903

Table (2) illustrates that Cronbach's alpha values for both experts' and tour guides' questionnaires for the overall research statements are between .464 and .853. According to Taber (2018), these values are acceptable and sufficient.

Descriptive Statistics

Respondents' Profile

1- Experts

Concerning experts' specialization, 51.5% of the experts are tourism experts, while 48.5% of them are specialized in guidance. From Table (5), it can be noted that 53.6% of the experts are male experts, while 46.4% are female. Regarding their years of experience, 36.1 % of experts have 21 to 30 years of experience and 26.8 % of them have 5 to 10 years of experience.

2- Tour Guides

The responses of the tour guides regarding their gender (as shown in **Table 3**) indicated that 76.8% of the tour guides are males and 23.2% are female. Concerning their years of experience, 46.4% of the tour guides have 11 to 20 years of experience and 32.6 % of them have 5 to 10 years of experience. Their license language varied between English, German, Spanish, Italian, French, Chinese, Russian, Polish, Dutch and Japanese, and the majority of them are English licensed tour guides with a percentage of 50.2%.

Table 3

Profile of Respondents

Demographic Data		Experts (N=97)		Tour Guides (N=233)	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	52	53.6	179	76.8
	Female	45	46.4	54	23.2
Experience	5 to 10	26	26.8	76	32.6
	11 to 20	19	19.6	108	46.4
	21 to 30	35	36.1	27	11.6
	More than 30	17	17.5	22	9.4

Challenges Facing Tour Guides in Egypt

Table 4

Political, Economic and Social Challenges Facing Egyptian Tour Guides

Challenges	Experts		Tour Guides	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S. D.
There are a lot of intruders on the guidance profession.	3.9	1.1	4.29	.967
Foreign guides with temporary translation permits.	3.9	1.1	3.78	1.48
Practicing the profession of tour guide without a license, which affects negatively on the image of the Egyptian tour guide.	4.02	1.1	4.42	.922
The guidance profession has been negatively affected by political and economic instability (<i>i.e.</i> terrorism, aircrafts accidents, financial crisis....etc.).	4.75	.49 1	4.89	.362
The guidance profession is deeply affected by natural disasters and epidemics (<i>i.e.</i> COVID-19)	4.75	.54 4	4.50	.842

From **Table (4)**, it can be noted that both experts and tour guides agreed that the guidance profession has been negatively affected by political and economic instability ($M= 4.75$, $SD=.491$ for experts and $M= 4.$, $SD=.362$ for tour guides), this is followed by " the guidance profession affected deeply by natural disasters and epidemics " ($M= 4.75$ and $SD=.544$ for experts and $M= 4.50$ and $SD=.842$ for tour guides). In addition to practicing the guidance profession without a license is considered a major challenge facing Egyptian tour guides ($M= 4.02$ and $SD=.1.1$ for experts and the $M= 4.42$ and $SD=.922$ for tour guides). Both experts and tour guides confirmed that intruders on the guidance profession is also a challenge facing tour guides ($M= 3.9$ and $SD= 1.1$ for experts and $M= 4.29$ and $SD=.967$ for tour guides); and finally

foreign guides with temporary translation permits may have a negative impact on the guidance profession (M= 3.9 and SD= 1.1 for experts and M= 3.78 and SD=1.48 for tour guides) This result is compatible with Magdy (2016), who pointed out that foreign labor working in guidance profession and earning high salaries, which negatively affect Egyptian tour guides. Accordingly, the challenges facing tour guides could be classified into: political, economic and social challenges (*i.e.* competition with senior guides, no fixed salaries, hard job to maintain a family, crises badly affecting the profession..... etc.) (Prakash et al., 2011).

Table 5

Legal, Legislative and Syndicate Challenges Facing Egyptian Tour Guides

Challenges	Experts		Tour Guides	
	Mean	S. D.	Mean	S.D.
The lack of life insurance for tour guides.	4.24	.824	4.89	.362
The licensed tour guide does not get social support.	3.66	1.06	4.5	.842
The medical insurance for tour guides is insufficient.	4.17	.799	4.03	.927
Tour guides are not allowed to combine more than one job according to Law No. 121 of 1983.	4.06	.969	4.9	.130
Tour guide's fees are not appropriate.	4.09	.967	4.65	.882
The tour guide's license is canceled if not renewed at a certain time or if the insurance is not paid.	4.22	.852	3.43	1.52
The punishments for violating the provisions of Law No. 121 of 1983 are minor (suspension from work for a short period, a small fine)	3.97	.793	3.94	1.44
The role of the tour guide syndicate is insufficient.	4.13	.969	3.93	1.38
Low annual subscription value of the syndicate and limited financial resources of the syndicate.	4.13	.955	3.67	1.52

According to **Table (5)**, it can be revealed that “the lack of life insurance” is considered the most significant challenge facing Egyptian tour guide from the experts’ point of view with M= 4.24 and SD= 0. 824; while tour guides pointed to “they are not allowed to combine more than one job according to Law No. 121 of 1983” as the most challenge they face with M= 4.9 and SD= .130. “The tour guide’s license is canceled if not renewed at a certain time or if the insurance is not paid” is the second challenge from the experts’ opinion (M= 4.22 and SD= .852); while the second challenge according to tour guides was “the lack of life insurance” (M= 4.89 and SD= .362). The medical insurance for tour guides is insufficient came as the third challenge according to experts (M= 4.17 and SD= .799); whereas tour guides referred to their fees as inappropriate (M= 4.65 and SD= .882). These results are compatible with Melubo and Buzinde (2016) who disclosed that low salaries, inappropriate training and poor health insurance coverage are the main challenges faced by tour guides. It is apparent that there are many challenges that affected guidance profession especially legislative and financial problems such as: Strict tourism laws and regulations as well as low and unstable income (Weiler and Black, 2015b; Ababneh, 2017)

Table 6
Technological Challenges Facing Egyptian Tour Guides

Challenges	Experts		Tour Guides	
	Mean	S. D	Mean	S.D.
Tourists use digital interpretation instead of guides.	3.91	1.09	4.60	.681
Tourists use modern applications in archaeological sites.	3.91	1.15	3.68	1.03

Regarding technological challenges facing Egyptian tour guides (as shown in **Table 6**), experts and tour guides agreed that using digital interpretation is the most significant challenge (M= 3.91 and SD=1.09 for experts; and M= 4.60 and SD=.681 for tour guides) which is consistent with Dileep (2019) who mentioned that recently there are many technological developments (*i.e.* mobile applications, global positioning system GPS, geographic information system GIS, and destination management system DMS) that enable tourists to visit tourism destinations, sites or attractions without the need for tour guides.

The Strengths of the Tour Guide Profession

Table 7
Strengths for Guidance Profession in Egypt

Strengths	Experts		Tour Guides	
	Mean	S. D	Mean	S. D
Interesting job that allows learning about many cultures and countries.	4.75	.544	2.88	1.398
Profitable career in case of economic and political stability.	4.4	.809	3.00	1.28
A humanitarian profession having many friends from different countries around the world.	4.52	.780	4.03	1.08
Large numbers of young tour guides.	4.22	.852	3.7	1.28
The availability of a large number of tourism and hotels faculties in Egypt.	4.16	.993	4.79	.515

Table (7) shows strengths for guidance profession in Egypt, experts mentioned “interesting job that allows learning about many cultures and countries” with M= 4.75 and SD= 0. 544; as for tour guides “the availability of a large number of tourism and hotels faculties in Egypt” was chosen with M= 4.79 and SD= 0. 515. Experts and tour guides indicated to “a humanitarian profession having many friends from different countries around the world” as a second strength point (M= 4.52 and SD=.780 for experts and M= 4.03 and SD= 1.08 for tour guides) which is compatible with Prakash et al., (2010a), who stated that there are several strengths in the guidance profession including interacting with tourists and making friends; learning about different cultures; and high income. The third strength point chosen by experts was “profitable career in case of economic and political stability” with M= 4.4 and SD= 0. 809; while tour guides pointed to “large numbers of young tour guides” with M= 3.7 and SD= 1.28.

The Weaknesses of the Tour Guide Profession

Table 8

Weaknesses for Guidance Profession in Egypt

Weaknesses	Experts		Tour Guides	
	Mean	S. D	Mean	S. D
Personal relationships have a great role in guidance profession.	3.90	1.12	4.19	.853
The small number of tour guides working in rare languages.	4.13	.880	4.68	.558
The lack of a strategy to organize an important profession such as guidance profession (the necessity of coordination between the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Ministry of Higher Education)	4.09	.981	4.07	.979
Many tour guides changed their career and moved to other fields.	4.21	.895	3.76	1.17
Seasonality of the tourism activity	4.47	.780	4.48	.761

Table (8) illustrates weaknesses for guidance profession in Egypt, seasonality of the tourism activity is the most notable weakness, according to experts, with $M=4.47$ and $SD= 0.780$. This result is compatible with Dileep (2019) who stated that a tour guide profession is a part-time job due to the seasonality of the tourism activity; whereas tour guides believed that “the small number of tour guides working in rare languages” represents a major weakness with $M= 4.68$ and $SD= 0.558$. Experts also thought that “many tour guides changed their career and moved to other fields” as a prominent weakness ($M= 4.21$ and $SD= .895$); as for tour guides, their second choice was “seasonality of the tourism activity” ($M= 4.48$ and $SD= .761$). Experts referred to “the small number of tour guides working in rare languages” with $M= 4.13$ and $SD= 0.880$; while tour guides indicated to “personal relationships have a great role in guidance profession” as the third weakness ($M= 4.19$ and $SD= .853$).

Opportunities for the Tour Guide Profession

Table 9

Opportunities for Guidance Profession in Egypt

Opportunities	Experts		Tour Guides	
	Mean	S. D	Mean	S. D
New tourism markets.	4.25	.722	3.88	.978
Using new technology in the guidance profession positively, as tour guides market themselves through the tourist websites (<i>i.e.</i> Vayable and ToursByLocals)	4.39	.615	4.58	.618
Domestic tourism (local citizens need tour guides on their tours in museums and archaeological sites)	3.82	.911	4.49	.657

Concerning opportunities for the guidance profession in Egypt (as shown in **Table 9**), experts and tour guides agreed that using new technology positively in guidance profession would be a great opportunity for guides to market themselves ($M= 4.39$ and $SD=.615$ for experts; and $M= 4.58$ and $SD=.618$ for tour guides) which is consistent with that Ozbek (2017) who found that modern technology has a positive impact on the service quality of guides. Experts pointed to “new tourism markets” as a good opportunity for the Egyptian destination as well as tour guides ($M= 4.25$ and $SD= .722$). Domestic tourism was the second choice for tour guides ($M= 4.49$ and $SD= .657$).

Threats Facing the Tour Guide Profession

Table 10

Threats Facing Guidance Profession in Egypt

Threats	Experts		Tour Guides	
	Mean	S. D	Mean	S. D
Guidance profession affected greatly by crisis, political instability and terrorism.	4.86	.381	3.80	1.01
Competition with foreigners and intruders to work in the guidance profession.	4.06	.983	4.05	.917
New technology could a threat facing tour guides.	3.94	1.1	3.37	1.10
Many tourists are interested in recreational tourism instead of cultural tourism.	4.04	.928	4.87	.372

From **Table (10)**, it is apparent that there are many threats facing guidance profession in Egypt. Experts revealed that guidance profession affected greatly by crisis, political instability and terrorism with $M= 4.86$ and $SD= 0.381$; as for tour guides, they believed the major threat they face is “many tourists are interested in recreational tourism instead of cultural tourism” with $M= 4.87$ and $SD= 0.372$. Both experts and tour guides agreed that “competition with foreigners and intruders to work in the guidance profession” is one of the most important threats to the guidance profession ($M= 4.06$ and $SD=.983$ for experts; and $M= 4.05$ and $SD=.917$ for tour guides) which is consistent with Prakash et al., (2011) they stated that among threats facing tour guides is competition with senior guides, unlicensed guides and foreigners. The third threat, according to experts, is “the interest of many tourists in recreational tourism instead of cultural tourism” with $M= 4.04$ and $SD= 0.928$, and according to tour guides is “guidance profession affected greatly by crisis, political instability and terrorism” with $M= 3.80$ and $SD= 1.01$.

The Impact of the Challenges on the Guidance Profession

There is no doubt that tour guides have a great influence on tourists’ satisfaction and the challenges they face can negatively affect the tourism experience (Melia, 2017).

Table 11

Impacts of Challenges Facing Tour Guides

Respondents	Impacts	Mean	S. D
Experts	Affecting tour guides’ performance	3.83	1.15
Tour guides	Changing their career	3.43	1.44

From **Table (11)**, experts agreed that challenges facing tour guides have a negative impact on their performance and thus negatively affect the tourists' experience, with $M= 3.83$ and $SD= 1.15$. This result is consistent with Ababneh (2017) who concluded that there is a strong relation between tour guides' working conditions and the tourists' experience, as they have a significant impact on visitors' experience as well as the tourism destination image. It also explains tour guides' responses towards changing their career as they agree to change their career with $M= 3.43$ and $SD= 1.44$. This is consistent with Weiler and Black (2015b), who illustrated that there is an increasing rate of tour guides changing their career and turning to other working fields, and also with Anđelković et al., (2017), who indicated that tour guides are not satisfied with their work and they will be satisfied in another work.

Procedures to Enhance the Tour Guide Profession in Egypt

Table 12

Procedures to Enhance Guidance Profession in Egypt

Procedures	Experts		Tour Guides	
	Mean	S. D	Mean	S. D
Responding to the tour guides' demands regarding their rights (<i>i.e.</i> medical and life insurance - raising their daily wage..... etc.)	4.43	.703	3.52	1.14
Penalties in case of violating the provisions of Law No. 121 of 1983 should be reconsidered and strengthened.	4.25	.759	3.81	.920
Activating the role of the Tour Guides' Syndicate, especially in crisis's times.	4.51	.624	4.21	.936
Providing financial support to the Tour Guides' Syndicate.	4.40	.700 6	4.78	.592
Reducing taxes on the tour guides until the tourism activity flourishes again.	4.45	.761	4.91	.357
Providing rare language courses for tour guides at reasonable prices.	4.60	.615	4.70	.581
Periodical inspections to verify tour guides' licenses and to arrest violators who do not have a license to practice the guidance profession	4.36	.837	4.70	.690
Raising tour guides' daily fare / tariff.	4.50	.687	4.90	.327
Awareness campaigns for tour guides about (appearance: personal hygiene and appropriate clothing – improving their language – updating their archaeological and historical information - not focusing on commissions, gifts and rewards regardless of the interest of tourists)	4.62	.676	4.68	.703

From **Table (13)**, it can be noted that there are many procedures to enhance guidance profession in Egypt. Awareness campaigns for tour guides about (appearance: personal hygiene and appropriate clothing – improving their language – updating their archaeological and historical information - not focusing on commissions, gifts and

rewards regardless of the interest of tourists) was the most important procedure according to the experts ($M= 4.62$ and $SD= .676$); while tour guides believed that “reducing taxes on the tour guides until the tourism activity flourishes again” should be the first procedure to take ($M= 4.91$ and $SD= .357$). According to experts, they indicated to “providing rare language courses for tour guides at reasonable prices” as the second procedure with $M= 4.60$ and $SD= .615$; on the other hand, the second choice for tour guides was “raising tour guides’ daily tariff” with $M= 4.90$ and $SD= .327$. The third procedure, from experts’ point of view, was “activating the role of the Tour Guides’ Syndicate, especially in crisis’s times” with $M= 4.51$ and $SD= .624$. As for tour guides, they pointed to “providing financial support to the Tour Guides’ Syndicate” as the third procedure, with $M= 4.78$ and $SD= .592$. According to Shidende et al., (2019), there are many procedures to improve tour guides’ profession, including enforcement of regulations (i.e. licensing procedures, certification, and training); tour guides should update their knowledge; provide forms for tourists to evaluate the tour guides’ knowledge, attitude, communication skills, and experience.

Findings and Conclusion

The research revealed the influence and importance of guidance profession for the tourism destination as well as for tourists. It showed that the tour guide has four important roles: an active, interactive, social and communicative role. The research also focused on investigating challenges facing tour guides in Egypt and their impacts on tourists’ experience. It was noted that the responses of the experts and tour guides were close, and there was no significant difference between them. According to the results, the research concluded that there are political, economic and social challenges that affected negatively the guidance profession. The most important of which are political and economic instability; natural disasters and epidemics and practicing the guidance profession without a license. The research also illustrated the legal, legislative and syndicate challenges including: the lack of life and medical insurance; tour guides are not allowed to combine more than one job according to Law No. 121 of 1983; and their fees are not appropriate. The research findings clarified technological challenges such as using digital interpretation and mobile applications instead of tour guides in historical and archeological sites. Concerning experts’ and tour guides’ opinions, there are many strengths for guidance profession among them are: it is an interesting job that allows learning about many cultures and countries; there are a lot of tourism and hotels faculties in Egypt; having many friends from different countries around the world; and a profitable career in case of economic and political stability. They also explained weaknesses for guidance profession, such as: seasonality of the tourism activity; the number of tour guides working in rare languages is not sufficient; and personal relationships have a great role in guidance profession. Opportunities for the guidance profession have also been demonstrated, including: tour guides can positively use new technology to market themselves; focusing on new tourism markets and finally domestic tourism as an alternative to international tourism. Experts and tour guides stated that there are many threats facing guidance profession, such as: crisis, political instability and terrorism; many tourists are interested in recreational tourism rather than cultural tourism; and competition with foreigners and intruders. The results showed that experts agreed that the

difficulties and challenges facing tour guides have a negative impact on their performance, which is reflected negatively on the tourist's experience, as well as many tour guides tended to change their working field as a result of these challenges. The research concluded that there are many procedures to enhance guidance profession in Egypt. They can be detailed as follows: Awareness campaigns for tour guides about (appearance: personal hygiene and appropriate clothing – improving their language – updating their archaeological and historical information...etc.); reducing taxes on the tour guides until the tourism activity flourishes again; providing rare language courses for tour guides at reasonable prices; increasing the daily tariff for tour guides; activating the role of the Tour Guides' Syndicate, especially in crisis's times in addition to providing financial support to the Syndicate.

Recommendations

Based on the results, some recommendations to enhance the guidance profession and improve the working conditions for tour guides in Egypt, can be summarized as follows:

1. There is a need to amend to the provisions of Law No. 121 of 1983 concerning tour guides (especially articles related to canceling the license and combining two professions).
2. It is necessary to activate the role of Tour Guides' Syndicate, especially in times of crises and disasters.
3. Tourism companies are required to pay the daily fees specified for tour guides.
4. Adequate and sufficient life and medical insurance should be provided for tour guides.
5. Periodic interviews should be conducted with tour guides to find out their demands and problems and try to solve them.
6. Periodic inspections must be carried out to arrest those who practice the profession without a license.
7. Taxes on tour guides have to be reduced, especially after the COVID 19 pandemic and the cessation of tourism activity for a long time.

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التحديات التي تواجه مهنة الإرشاد السياحي وأثرها على أداء المرشدين السياحيين بمصر

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المخلص

يقوم المرشدون السياحيون بأدوار مهمة في صناعة السياحة من بينها: تقديم المعلومات التاريخية والأثرية بطريقة مشوقة، سفراء للمقاصد السياحية، حلقة الوصل بين المجتمع المحلي والسائحين... إلخ، ولكنهم في ذات الوقت يواجهون العديد من المشاكل والتحديات التي قد تؤثر بشكل سلبي على أدائهم وبالتالي على رضا السائحين وتجربتهم في المقصد السياحي. لذلك من المهم التركيز على هذه التحديات والصعوبات ومحاولة إيجاد حلول فعلية وواقعية لها. يهدف البحث إلى استعراض التحديات والمشكلات المختلفة التي تواجه المرشدين السياحيين في مصر. في هذا السياق، تم توزيع استمارتي استقصاء عبر شبكة الإنترنت على المرشدين السياحيين المصريين والخبراء في مجالي السياحة والإرشاد (في الفترة من مايو 2020 إلى يوليو 2020). وخلص البحث إلى أن هناك مجموعة من التحديات السياسية والاقتصادية والاجتماعية والقانونية والتكنولوجية التي تواجه المرشدين السياحيين في مصر مثل: الإرهاب والأزمات والكوارث وإلغاء ترخيص مزاوله المهنة وغيرها، كما توصل البحث إلى مجموعة من التوصيات لتحسين ظروف عمل المرشدين السياحيين والارتقاء بمستوى الأداء المهني لهم.

معلومات المقالة

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