Role of Tour Guides in Tourism Promotion and Impact on Destination Image and Tourist Revisit Intention in Egypt: A PLS-SEM Model

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Abstract

Tour guides can be considered to be ambassadors of countries and tourist destinations that play a significant role in ensuring tourist satisfaction, destination image and tourist re-visitation. The promotion of tourist destinations is very much subjected to the performance of tour guides. This study seeks to assess the relationship between the role of tour guides in tourism promotion and its relationship in creating good destination image as well as enhanced tourist revisit intention in Egypt. The above will be investigated in consideration of satisfaction with guided tours as a mediating role. A quantitative methodology through a PLS-SEM model with SmartPls3 (v.3.2.8) was implemented in testing research hypotheses for the study. Data was collected from 380 foreign tourists in Egypt using structured questionnaires. Results have indicated a positive and direct relationship between the role of tour guides in tourism promotion and destination image. Moreover, a direct effect between the promotional role of tour guides and tourist revisit intention has been found. The study has also confirmed the mediating role of satisfaction with guided tours. The significance of tour guides in promoting destination image and tourist revisit intention is highlighted in this study. Determined findings expected to contribute towards improving the performance of tour guides in promoting tourism. The implications of this in consideration of other destinations also discussed.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a multifaceted industry which operates through a collaborative effort between various stakeholders. Tour guides are one of the key stakeholders in the industry as they direct tourists in providing them insight towards a country and its attractions. This is also inclusive of the cultural and traditional backgrounds of a country, offerings provided as well as the laws, rules, regulations and other expected

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behavioural attributes that should be observed (Sanadaruwani & Gnanapala, 2016). Egypt has become a main tourist destination in the Mediterranean Rim particularly due to its natural attractions in conjunction to its historical and cultural heritage. In 2018, the country has hosted (11,346,389 million) international tourists (UNWTO,2019).

On the front line of the tourism industry, tour guides bring extensive benefits for a country with their goodwill and ambassadorship (Ninpradith et al., 2018). The represent the unique history of a country and are the nation's spokesperson for their cultural heritage (Huang et al., 2015). For travel agencies and destinations, they serve as interpreters, information givers, role models, leaders and cultural brokers in addition to being tour and group organisers (İRİG-LER & G-LER, 2016). With their knowledge and interpretations at hand, tour guides play a role in enriching the level of knowledge of individual tourists and are capable of enhancing a trip into a pivotal learning experience (Sanadaruwani & Gnanapala, 2016). Zhang and Chow (2004) have stipulated how tour guides provide tourists with the "moment of truth" which can make or break their respective trip. Hence, providing tourists with a satisfying travel experience can be considered to be a determinant factor for the success of a travel agency that also affects destination image, tourist behaviour and loyalty (Geve et al., 1991). In addition, tour guides contribute to marketing and branding which in turn results in repeat business and the acquisition of new businesses (Alshamaileh et al., 2019).

Studies performed by Modlin et al., (2011) and Zillinger et al., (2012) have evidenced the relationship between tourism promotion initiated by tour guides and the way they conduct their roles i.e. performance. Based on previous literature, early studies have generally examined the performance of tour guides in relation to tourist experience and the competencies of tour guides (McDonnel, 2001; Khornjamnong, 2017; Deng & Pierskalla, 2018; Skinner & Feldman, 2019). Studies investigating their impact on sustainable development have also been performed (Sandaruwani & Gnanapala, 2016; Tătar et al., 2018). To the author's knowledge, very few studies have considered the inter-relationship between the promotional roles of tour guides on both destination image and tourist revisit intention. Little attention has been given in considering the satisfaction of tourists from guided tours as a mediating factor among the other aforementioned variables. The objective of this study is to assess and evaluate the structural relationships between the promotional role of tour guides, destination image and tourist revisit intention. The mediating role of tourist satisfaction as an outcome of guided tours will also be assessed.

There are several contributions of this study to the available body of research in regards to tourism: (1) The current study highlights the role of tour guides in the context of tourism promotion to help develop destination image and reputation among tourists. (2) A PLS-SEM model is developed to examine the inter-relationship between tour guides' promotional role, satisfaction levels with guided tours, destination image and tourist revisit intention. (3) The testing for hypothesised inter-relationships in the model is based on collected data obtained from foreign tourists travelling to Egypt. (4) The mediating effects of satisfaction with guided tours on the

inter-relationship between the performance of tour guides, destination image and tourist revisit intention is examined. (5) Recommendations to improve the performance of tour guides in the context of promoting tourism are discussed.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.The role of tour guides in tourism promotion:

Regarded to be one of the long-standing professions in the tourism industry, tour guides play a critical role in successfully and competently promoting the natural as well as historical wealth of a particular country (İRİG-LER & G-LER, 2016). Without their services, operations for organised tourism is perceived to be difficult (Rabotić, 2010). According to Mak et al. (2011), the aforementioned profession is often neglected despite being attractive and useful thus alluding it to be the 'Cinderella' of the tourism industry. This is likely due to the relevant issues involved through its association with multiple different aspects such as innovation, social interaction, authenticity, politics, culture, etc. (Zillinger et al., 2012). In addition, the job role of the profession is inconsistent owing to it comprising of different duties (Prakash & Chowdhary, 2010). This diversity of duties involved subsequently makes it complicated to outline the proper approach towards tour guiding (Pereira, 2015). The Federation of Turkish Tourist Guides Associations (TUREB) has defined tour guides as individuals that introduce a country to local and foreign tourists in the best manner, assists them during tours, provides them with accurate information and possesses authorised documentation issued by the Culture and Tourism Ministry (TUREB, 2014). In another definition, a tour guide is considered to be any individual who guides visitors according to the language of their selection and interprets the cultural as well as natural heritage of an area. The individual would also mainly possess qualifications which are area-specific and are issued and/or recognised by the proper authorities (WFTGA, 2003).

Tour guides can either be self-employed or employed by travel agencies or organisations. Those self-employed operate as freelance tour guides that semi-autonomously or independently create and effectively market their own tours. Those employed within an agency or organisation on the other hand would conduct predesigned tours (Khornjamnong, 2017). Tour guides promote tourism based on how their different roles are conducted (Bayrama et al., 2017). They generally act as ambassadors that offer hospitality and present a particular tourist destination in such a way that encourages positive destination image and increases tourist revisitation (Prakash & Chowdhary, 2010). They also seek to provide accurate perspectives and a better understanding towards the background of tourist destinations (Tetik, 2016). Scholars have argued about the different roles performed by tour guides. Hence, this study considers established basic roles of tour guides based on previous literature such as those forwarded by Cohen (1985), Ap & Wong (2000), Prakash & Chowdhary (2010), Poudel & Nyaupane (2013), Latkova et al. (2017), Lu, Liujien & Hashim (2018), and Alshamaileh et al. (2019). These basic roles include being a selector, an interpreter/educator, information giver, cultural broker or mediator, pathfinder, leader, tour and group organiser, representative for tourist destination and environmentalists.

The input that tour guides provide in terms of location selection, decisions for points of interests and the setting of itineraries for tours are referred to as *selectors* (Látková et al., 2017). The role of tour guides as *interpreters* has been highlighted by Rabotić (2010). As interpreters, tour guides would lead tourists to different destinations of interests while explaining the context behind their experiences and responding to their questions. To further encourage positive tourist experience, information provided are made more meaningful through creative interpretation in storytelling and by embedding humour in reality. This is in line with findings by Randall and Rollins (2009) that determined personal interpretations encouraging tourism promotions due to the interactions between visitors and their respective tour guides. Emphasising further, Chilembwe & Mweiwa (2014) found that tour guides along with their role as interpreters were capable of leading tourists to attractions or venues they wouldn't have been able to go to on their own due to the lack of knowledge or meaning in relation to the locality.

The role of tour guides as *information givers and educators* for tourists in regards to a variety of topics such as politics, society, culture, etc. has been emphasised in previous literature (Khornjamnong, 2017). In fulfilling the duties for the aforementioned role, tour guides must be capable of articulating the cultural heritage of a certain destination. They must also be aware of the policies, rules, laws and practices of a country or locality in order to enlighten tourists and subsequently enrich their travel experience (Heung, 2010). In Sydney, Australia, tour guides were pivotal mediums for the transference of cultural understanding (McDonnell, 2001). Tour guides would also need to be capable of providing accurate and required information as it satisfies the needs of tourists. This builds the attraction of tourists towards a particular destination as a result (Ap & Wong, 2011). In light of the above, providing accurate information is regarded as an educational role despite it being often associated as an interpretive activity (Látková et al., 2017). Successful tour guides play an important role in publicising and promoting tourism in their country. They achieve this through the information they provide about the destination, by demonstrating their capability and professionalism to show the importance, beauty and diversity of tourism products, and gaining the trust of tourists and dealing with them in a satisfactory manner (Blyablina, 2015).

The majority of tourists spend only a limited time at a particular destination. Those new to a destination would lack local knowledge in regards to the host destination and only possesses a leisurely perspective of tourist activities towards their surroundings. They thus are unequipped to comprehend local values, beliefs, tradition and day-to-day life activities (Rabotić, 2010). Tour guides are the only mediator between a tourist destination and their respective visitors (Weiler & Black, 2015). The important role of tour guides as *mediators* has been emphasised in a study by Skinner & Feldman (2019). By acting as mediators between a particular destination and respective visitors, tour guides enable tourists to perceive and experience cultural differences while deepening their understanding of the local community through social interactions (Khornjamnong, 2017). In addition to establishing interactions with hosts, tour guides are considered to be pivotal in conveying and promoting a

positive image towards local customs, traditions and social life of the community (Huang et al., 2015).

Considering the context of contemporary tourism, the *pathfinder* role of a tour guide is still pertinent in the itinerary of a tour for tourists wanting a deeper exploration of places they visit (Prakash& Chowdhary, 2010). The role is necessary due to the frequently violated social rules and intrusion of privacy acted by tourists (Tetik, 2016; Çetinkaya & Oter, 2016). McDonnell (2001) has also stressed the sense of security in an unfamiliar environment provided by the pathfinder roles of tour guides.

The *leadership* roles of tour guides maintain priority among all other duties and responsibilities (Kruczek, 2013). Through leadership, tour guides are responsible for leading the way and providing safety and security for tourists. They are also responsible for solving any issues that arise throughout the course of a tour during their travels (Blyablina, 2015). With this, they ensure not only the proper operation of a tour but also the luxury of visitors (Larsen & Meged, 2013). According to previous literature by Zillinger et al. (2012), tour guides were described as leaders that makes stops at particular venues or places, perform a mixture of rehearsed and improvised rituals, and attend to tourists in terms of directions and points of interests (Kruczek, 2013). Tour guides must be able to initiate intercommunication and minimise conflict within a tour group. Hence, in undertaking the role of leadership, it is necessary that tour guides equip themselves with emotional intelligence and the skills for the management of group dynamics as well as conflict resolution (Cetin & Yarcan, 2017).

Tour guides also act as *representatives* of a tour destination along with its unique history and distinctive cultural heritage (Blyablina, 2015). Through the role, tour guides have included unique attractions that would interest tourists. This includes spending extra time on interesting local activities and providing tours to villages for tourists to experience cultural dances (Chilembwe & Mweiwa, 2014). The role of tour guides as representatives is key towards ensuring tourist satisfaction and revisit intention (Modlin et al., 2011; Cetinkaya & Oter, 2014). As *organisers*, tour guides are responsible for the management of the tour. This includes arranging the itineraries, deciding points of interests, ensuring the comfort and safety of tourists, and ensuring that the members of a tour stay together (Cetin & Yarcan, 2017). Attention to detail is a major part of the profession for tour guides due to many variables involved in organising a tour. Examples of variables requiring their organisation and coordination skills include the operating times of museums or exhibitions, making arrangements for lunch, handling possible monetary issues, assessing journey time, confirming bookings, etc. (Tetik, 2006). They are also responsible for organising the facilitation of tourists to non-publicised areas by either directing them to or making arrangements with other services that may interest them (Chang, 2014). With this, tour guides can be considered to be promotional tools in indirectly promoting a particular country. By ensuring the leadership and organisation of guided tours as well as the transmission of information to tourists, the success of guided tours can be accomplished. This would subsequently increase the confidence of potential tourists in expressing their willingness to revisit a destination and promote them among their peers with their experience. Oppositely, carrying out the

roles in an unprofessional manner will only lead to decrease in tourist revisitation and a bad image of the country and its community (Kuo et al., 2016; Cheng et al., 2019).

Tour guides would encourage tourists to safeguard cultures of the local community and natural areas. With this, tour guides play a role as *environmentalists* by demonstrating the importance of sustainability and preserving natural heritage for future generations (Poudel & Nyaupane, 2013). They must exhibit a spectrum of intellectual, emotional as well as spiritual linking between visitors and the surrounding environment (Francis et al., 2019). By conveying an understanding and appreciation for the natural and cultural environment, observing and setting an example for ecological and socially appropriate behaviours, contributions towards the sustainability of a particular tourist destination can be encouraged (Juandi et al., 2018). The aforementioned role undertaken by tour guides would not only promote tourism in general. Sustainable tourism in particular would also be promoted thus reflecting a positive image of a country as a destination that encourages sustainable tourism (Francis et al., 2019).

With the above, it can be implied that a tour guide is associated with a variety of professional roles that develops tourism promotion. By taking on the multifaceted role, focus should be placed in mitigating any potential issues in order to attract more visitors to a tourist destination and subsequently develop destination image. The way tour guides exact their responsibilities and duties would be an influential factor for the perception of tourists towards both the guide as well as destination (Sandaruwani & Gnanapala, 2016). Tourists being offered the best services by a tour guide would return home and promote the tours through word of mouth. Hence, the performance of tour guides would overall not only influence the experience of past and current visitors but potential visitors as well (Hu, 2007). In other words, tour guides on the front line of the tourism industry are responsible for the impression and general satisfaction of offered tour services for a tourist destination (Rabotic,2010).

2.2. **Tour guides, destination image and tourist revisit intention:**
Based on literature review relevant to tour guides, it has been found that many studies emphasised that the significant duties carried out by tour guides in the tourism industry contributes the development of destination image in a particular country (Blyablina , 2015; Kuo et al., 2016; Feldman & Skinner, 2018; Ninpradith et al., 2018). The beliefs, ideas or perspectives individuals hold towards a country defines its image (Perpiña, Camprubí & Prats,2019). This implies that a country is assessed based on the knowledge individuals have (Demanche, 2003). With this, improvements in the reputation of a destination along with its image are influenced by the complex promotional role that tour guides undertake (Zhang & Chow, 2004). Therefore, it can be accepted that tour guides are a factor in the representation of a destination be it positive or negative (Temizkan & Tokay, 2016).

 The performance of a tour guide is in practice established based on the functions that tourist guides fulfil. Aside from managing and organising tours for tourists, they would also possess an immense amount of knowledge about a particular destination (Hwang & Lee, 2019). In addition, they would also interact with the tourists under

their care throughout their entire journey while providing them with a safe, interesting and gratifying experience (Min, 2012). Competencies in terms of communication would facilitate the interactions between tour guides and their fellow tourists. This would therefore impact the success of a tourism experience and subsequently destination image (Cohen, 1985; Pyke, 2013; Prayag et al., 2017). The promotional roles performed by tour guides are not limited to just during the tour. The interests of potential tourists can be attracted by utilising the internet and providing information about a tourist destination. Tour guides have established websites to advertise Malawi as a tourist destination through which potential tourists can make bookings. This is believed to have contributed to the marketing and tourism in the country (Chilembwe & Mweiwa, 2014). In another study, tour guides were regarded as a supportive tool by tourists from France in regards to the image they associate with Jordan as a tourist destination (Alshamaileh et al., 2019). The building and development of destination image is emphasised by not only their promotional role but their leadership, interpretation and education, ability to transfer information, mediation as well as representation (Chilembwe & Mweiwa, 2014). With all the roles they undertake, tour guides are influential throughout every stage of the tourist experience in a destination along with the destination image formed. With the above, the following is hypothesised,

H1: The role of tour guides in promoting tourism positively affects destination image.

Modelling destination loyalty of tourists maintains relevance in terms of research in the tourism industry (Zhang et al., 2014). The aforementioned loyalty has been commonly measured based on tourist revisit intention and recommendations (Prayag et al., 2014). Tourist behaviour based on revisit intention refers to the willingness to return to and recommend a particular tourist destination. Expressing positively in regard to a tourist experience is also under the scope of behavioural intention (Deng & Pierskalla, 2018).

A definition for 'destination loyalty' has been found in a study by Nguyen (2015). It has been indicated that tourist revisit intention, willingness to extend the length of travel and willingness to recommend a destination to other potential tourists is a measure of destination loyalty. Previous study by Chan et al. (2015) has confirmed the contribution of tour guides towards a higher propensity to revisit a particular destination and recommend it as a tourist destination to other individuals. This is in agreement with the study done by Mak et al. (2011) in regard to the high behavioural intentions found in relation to the performance of tour guides in guiding tourists. With the above, this study will consider tourist revisit intention as a measurement based on the propensity of tourists to repeat their visit to a destination and recommend it to their network of family and friends. Therefore, the following is hypothesised,

H2: The promotional role of tour guides in promoting tourism positively affects tourist revisit intention.

2.3. The mediating role of tourist satisfaction with guided tours:
Satisfying and retaining past and current customers is one of the most important goals of tourism service providers between competitive businesses (Leguma, 2013). As a

crucial aspect in the tourism industry, tourist satisfaction with tour guide services is a predominant factor contributing to the overall satisfaction of the tourist experience (Ninpradith et al., 2018). Satisfaction towards tour guides is referred to as the overall evaluation tourists attribute to the various services provided by tour guides (Hwang & Lee, 2019). A tour guide is therefore pivotal in providing the appropriate services in consideration of the individual needs and desires of travellers (Geva and Goldman, 1991). With the fulfilment of aforementioned needs and preferences based on the performance of tour guides, satisfaction is subsequently encouraged (Kruczek, 2013).

Guided tour is a special product within tourism that comprises of numerous components that are planned and presented by tour operators (Bowie & Chang, 2005). Examples of these components include pre-arrival services, accommodation and the arrangement for restaurants, transportation services as well as tour guides (Xu & Chan, 2010). The direct relationship between the performance of tour guides and tourist satisfaction has been determined (Lin, Lin & Chen, 2017). This is in agreement with a study done by Lu et al. (2018) that demonstrated the positive and significant influence of tour guide performance on tourist satisfaction. In Hong Kong, a general satisfaction of international tourists towards the professional skills, customer relationships/empathy and communication of local guides were found (Wong, 2001). The same conclusions were reached by Huang et al. (2010) that determined the performance of tour guides in fulfilling their roles for domestic and foreign tourists being tantamount to the satisfaction of clients. Likewise, a positive and significant influence between tour guide performance and tourist satisfaction with guided tours has been found by Pereira (2015). This only further emphasises the required commitment and responsibility tour guides should have towards encouraging tourist satisfaction especially considering their continuous contact with tourists under their care throughout the duration of a particular tour. With the above, it is hypothesised that,

H3: **The role of tour guides in promoting tourism positively affects tourist satisfaction with guided tours.**

Destination image can be improved based on the relationship between the performance of tour guides and respective tourist satisfaction (Pereira, 2015). This would justify the positive correlation determined between tourist satisfaction and destination image (Aliman et al., 2016). Maintaining a high level of tourist satisfaction towards the performance of guides they experience was noted to establish positive attitudes towards tourism products and services offered (Chi & Qu, 2008). On the other hand, inappropriate behaviours exhibited by tour guides and partners would undermine efforts towards tourist satisfaction. These behaviours include making demands for unreasonable fees, misrepresenting the tourism services offered, disseminating inaccurate and false information to tourists, physical and emotional harassment, etc. (Pathirana & Gnanapala, 2015). With the above, the following is hypothesised,

H4: Tourist satisfaction with guided tours positively affects destination image.

In the context of travel and tourism, it has been agreed that satisfaction towards travel experiences successfully leads to destination loyalty (Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010; Meng & Han, 2018). The extent of the aforementioned destination loyalty can be reflected based on tourist revisit intention and their willingness to recommend the tourism services they were offered (Sun, Chi & Xu, 2013). This is emphasised in previous relevant studies that have demonstrated the likelihood of tourists in recommending a tourist destination to other potential travellers based on their satisfaction (Chen & Tsai, 2007). It was also evident that they were also most likely to repurchase offered tourism products or services while encouraging others to become new customers (Cetinkaya & Oter, 2014; Kumar et al., 2013). Oppositely, tourists exhibiting low satisfaction were more likely to return home and portray their negative experiences via word of mouth (Chen & Chen 2010). Generalising the above, loyal customers would act as advertising agents spreading word about tourism products or services to their network of friends, relatives and other potential travellers (Zhang, 2014). Hence, it can be hypothesised that,

H5: **Tourist satisfaction towards guided tours positively affects revisit intention.**

The factor of tourist satisfaction should not be neglected when overseeing the influential relationship between tour guide performance and destination image as well as tourist revisit intention. This is due to the direct correlation between tourist satisfaction and the experience they attain during a tour. A particular tourist would still give negative feedback based on their experience with tour guides despite how scenic and beautiful the destination they have visited is. In consideration of the above, this study will take into account tourist satisfaction towards guided tours as a mediating variable in the inter-relationship between tour guide performance, destination image and tourist revisit intention (Pereria, 2015). Previous literature is generally in agreement regarding the contribution of tour guide performance on tourist satisfaction. Tourist satisfaction would in turn positively influence revisit intention and destination loyalty (Huang et al., 2010; Chang, 2014). Overall, a high level of satisfaction would give way to: (1) positive destination image being established, (2) increase in tourist revisitations, (3) positive recommendations for tourism products and services, and (4) reduction in customer complaints which would otherwise undermine the reputation of a tourism agency or organisation (Cetinkaya & Oter, 2014). It can be emphasised that the satisfaction of tourists with guided tours is a contributing factor towards developing destination image and increasing tourist revisit intention (Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010; Nisco et al., 2015; Chan et al., 2015). In demonstrating this, empirical-based discussions are hence required by considering tourist satisfaction with guided tours as a mediating variable in the relationship between the promotional role of tour guides, destination image (post-visit) and tourist revisit intention. The following are therefore hypothesised,

H6: Tourist satisfaction with guided tours mediates the relationship between the promotional roles of tour guides and destination image.

H7: Tourist satisfaction with guided tours mediates the relationship between the promotional roles of tour guides and tourist revisit intention.

A graphical representation demonstrating the theoretical framework with respect to the different hypotheses developed for the study is shown in Figure 1.
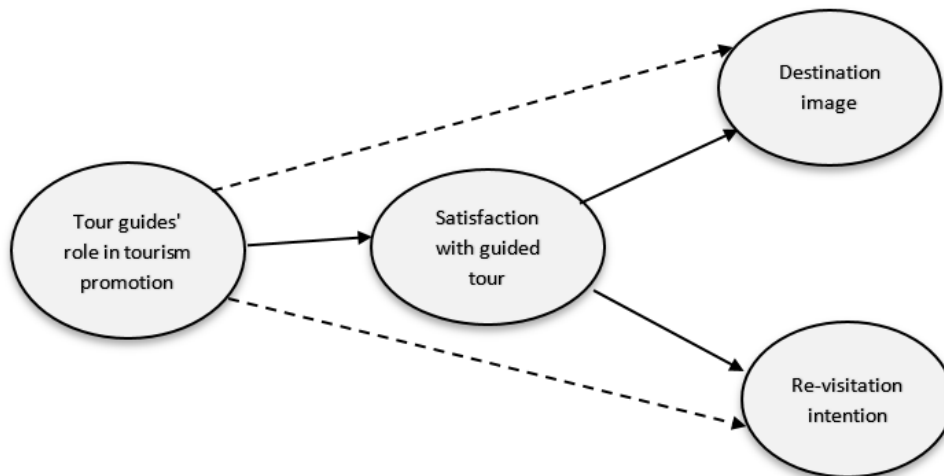

Fig.1. Theoretical framework and hypotheses

Note: Dashed arrow lines indicate indirect relationships between variables.

3. METHODOLOGY

A quantitative method was implemented in this study to assess and evaluate the influence of the promotional roles of tour guides on destination image and tourist revisit intention while considering tourist satisfaction with guided tours as a mediating variable. In carrying out the investigation, the dimensions of destination image and tourist revisit intention were examined from the perspective of the tourists. A survey comprising of a structured questionnaire was mainly utilised for data collection as it is the optimum method available to observe the attitudes of tourists and their perspective in regards to the roles carried out by tour guides in the context of tourism promotion.

3.1. Sampling and Data Collection

An empirical study was conducted in Egypt for the testing of the theoretical model. Tourists with experiences gained from tours managed by Egyptian tour guides were sampled from the population which consisted of foreign tourists undertaking services for guided tours in the country.

Data was collected with the assistance of Category (A) travel agencies as they predominantly organise tours led by tour guides to various historical, cultural, recreational and other tourist attractions in Egypt. This not only eases the process of data collection but also mitigates the focus to any one specific tourist attraction. This would subsequently ensure diversity in terms of the opinions formed by tourists on different tours. Managers of travel agencies, especially those located in Cairo and Alexandria were the main points of contact for the study. The two aforementioned regions are prime locations for the majority of travel agencies in Egypt (n=1287). This represents 68% of the total number of travel agencies in the country (ETAA, 2018). The purpose of the study was expressed, and permission was requested from

the managers for the facilitation of contacts with the tour guides they have assigned to guide foreign tours in different tours to various attractions. Appointments were set to meet with the tour guides in order to disclose the purpose of the research and request them to distribute questionnaires among the foreign tourists that they guide during tours. To evaluate a large number of guided tours, tour guides were asked to place focus on small excursions such as day trips.

The process for data collection was performed from December 2019 to March 2020. The designed structured questionnaire comprises of a 5-point Likert scale which ranges from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) as a method of rating responses for participants. No names were required from the respondents as the identification or rating of the participating tour guides was unnecessary. This ensured that the data gathering process was not perceived as a menace by the tour guides and the data collected would be performed at a group level. Completed questionnaires were collected from collaborating tour guides within a few days to the following week from the date of distribution. Out of the 940 questionnaires handed to tour guides through the aid of their respective travel agencies to be distributed among tourists, 512 questionnaires were successfully received. Among these, 380 questionnaires (a response rate of 40.4%) were processed to remove any missing data and incomplete respondent profiles before being implemented in further analysis. It shall be noted that there was difficulty in obtaining an accurate count for the number of foreign tourists taking part in guided tours. Despite this, the obtained sample size was sufficient in order to derive a conclusion (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the sample size of the study should exceed 318 tourists to obtain a significance level of 0.95 and an error rate of 0.05.

3.2. Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was divided into five different sections. Section (1) oversees the demographic profiles of foreign tourists based on the received responses in regards to their socio-demographic characteristics. Preliminary question was asked regarding the reasons for which tourists join guided tours in Egypt. The sections that followed were constructed based on the review of previous literature.

The different responsibilities undertaken by tour guides which includes selector, interpreter, information giver, mediator, pathfinder, leader, representative, environmentalist and organiser were taken as indicators for the role of tour guides in tourism promotion (Hsu et al., 2009; Chilembwe & Mweiwa, 2014; Nguyen, 2015; IRIG-LER & Guler, 2016; Cetinkay & Oter, 2016; Lu et al., 2018). Section (2) examines the above roles in relation to the tour guides promoting tourist destinations in Egypt. Tourists participating in the survey will evaluate the aforementioned roles based on attended tours.

Adopting Huang et al. (2010) and Nguyen (2015), Section (3) assesses the satisfaction of tourists with guided tours. Section (4) considers research by Nisco et al. (2015) to examine the perceived post-visit destination image exhibited by post-visit to previously attended guided tours. Section (5) was constructed based on research by Sun et al. (2013), Huang et al. (2014) and Prayag et al. (2017). The section evaluates

tourist revisit intention using the tourist's propensity to recommend destinations to family, friends or other potential travellers as a measure.

The developed questionnaire was reviewed by professionals in tourism studies and modified accordingly for improvements before being distributed. In December 2019, a pilot test was performed among 35 foreign tourists taking part in guided tours in Egypt. The pilot test would serve to eliminate any potential weaknesses and flaws in the initial draft of the questionnaire and ensure that forwarded questions were understood to create reliable responses (Zikmund et al., 2013). Further improvements including the rephrasing of some questions were made to the questionnaire following the pilot test.

3.3. Data analysis techniques

In the initial steps, descriptive statistics such as calculations for frequencies, percentages and mean values were derived to summarise the demographic information in regard to the respondents using SPSS v.26. This assisted in overseeing multivariate analysis for the study (Hair et al., 2011b).

A variance-based structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) has received considerable attention in the areas for marketing and management (Hair et al., 2019). This is attributed to its ability in handing problematic modelling issues that usually occur in the field of social sciences such as non-normal distribution (Hair et al., 2014). With the above, PLS-SEM with SmartPLS v.3.2.8 was used in this study to examine the inter-relationships between different variables based on estimations made for the measurement model and structural model. PLS-SEM was particularly used due to; a) the theory being under-developed (Agag, 2019), b) PLS-SEM can be used with fewer indicators, c) makes the assumption that all measured variance (and errors) is beneficial for the explanations or predictions of causal inter-relationships between different variables, d) PLS is a convenient SEM technique used to examine the mediation of hypotheses (Afthanorhan, 2014; Benitez et al., 2020), and e) PLS-SEM is typically implemented when an analysis is concerned with a theoretical framework being assessed based on a prediction (Hair et al., 2019).

3.4. Sample Profile

The profile of the respondents taken from the 380 questionnaires is summarised as shown in Table 1. In terms of gender, the majority of the participants were females (n = 218 i.e. 57%) with the remaining 42.6% being male. Considering the nationality of participants, a high proportion of respondents were Americans (35.5%). This was followed by tourists from Asia and the Pacific (26.8%), Europe (20%), Middle East (8.7%) and Africa (8.9%) successively. In terms of age, 34.2% of the total samples represented customers aged 46 and above. Those aged between 36 and 45 were associated with the least proportion in terms of age (20%).

In consideration of the educational background of respondents, the majority of tourists (51.1%) held a university degree with 29.2% of them holding a high school diploma. The remaining percentage of 19.7% represents respondents holding a masters or doctoral (PhD) degree. In terms of monthly family income, 33.7% of the tourists have an income between 4,000 USD and 5,000 USD a month. 15.5% of the

total respondents attribute to having a high income of above 5,000 USD a month. It shall be noted here that the statistics for income do not accurately reflect the actual household income of respondents as it is usually undisclosed information. In regards to marital status, 39.2% of the respondents were married with 30.5% of them being single. 24.7% of the respondent were married with children while the remaining 5.5% were unspecified.

Table 1
Profile of respondents consisting of foreign tourists in Egypt

Item	Frequency	%	Item	Frequency	%
Gender			**Age**		
Male	162	42.6	18-25	82	21.6
female	218	57.4	26-35	92	24.2
Nationality			36-45	76	20
Africa	34	8.9	46 and More	130	34.2
Europe	76	20	**Educational background**		
Middle East	33	8.7	High School	111	29.2
Americas	135	35.5	University Degree	194	51.1
Asia and the Pacific	102	26.8	Master/ PhD Degree	75	19.7
Family monthly income			**Marital status**		
Less than 2000$	47	12.4	Single	116	30.5
2000$ - less than 3000$	52	13.7	Married	149	39.2
3000$ - less than 4000$	94	24.7	Married with children	94	24.7
4000$ - less than 5000$	128	33.7	other	21	5.5
5000 and more	59	15.5			

Survey results in relation to the reasons for which tourists join guided tours in Egypt is graphically presented in Figure 2. It is shown that the majority of the tourists prefer joining guided tours in order to obtain better interpretations of visited sites (93.2%). This is followed by those who wish to have a well-planned trip (89.7%), those that do not know the local language (85%) and those who desire to learn more about Egypt (80.8%). However, 77.9% of tourists were characterised by respondents who felt anxious in venturing independently.
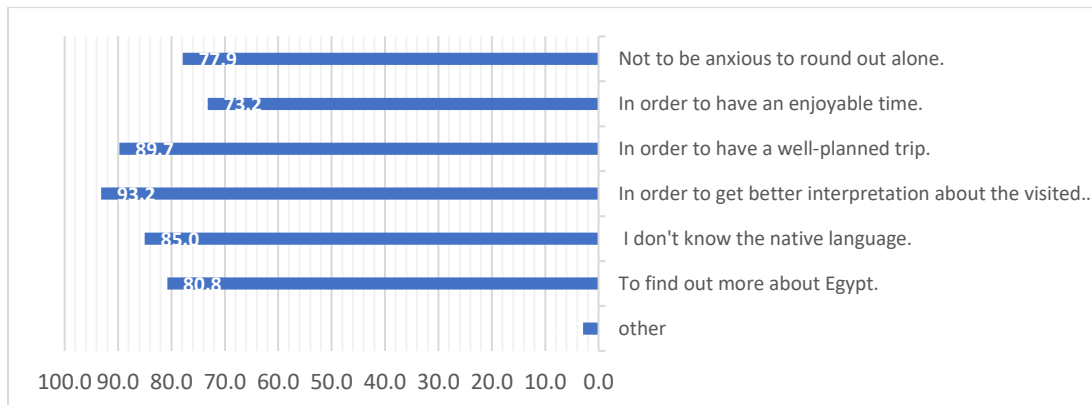

Fig.2. Reasonings of tourists for joining guided tours

4. Assessment of Measurement Model
4.1.Partial Least Squares Analysis
4.1.1.Outer Model Analysis

According to Shin (2015) and Hair et al. (2019), two different types of validity: 1) convergent validity, and 2) discriminant validity were considered to appraise the measurement model. The items loading for each construct in the reflective measurement model were initially examined to ensure that each indicator has a satisfactory loading for the respective latent construct. Based on earlier researches conducted by Cheah et al. (2019), Henseler et al. (2015) and Ramayah et al. (2017), item loading above 0.7 would provide a sufficient level for item reliability. Table 2 illustrated that all factor loadings exceed the threshold value of 0.7 except for two items under the construct of tour guides role in tourism promotion (TGRITP) which has been removed. The aforementioned items include the roles of tour guides as an environmentalist and selector which exhibited factor loading values of 0.479 and 0.418 respectively. As shown in Table 2, the loading values of retained items range between 0.704 and 0.939 with each loading being significant at the 1% level ($p <$ .001).

The following step in assessing the reflective measurement model is examining internal consistency reliabilities using Cronbach's alpha (α) and composite reliability (CR). In achieving a reliable measurement model, the determined (α) should be above the value of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). The composite reliability (CR) subsequently used in evaluating the internal consistency reliability of construct measures should also be 0.70 or higher (Afthanorhan, 2014). Most research has argued for the reliability of (CR) compared to (α) since deficiencies in the latter measure can be overcome (Ramayah et al., 2017). Cronbach's alpha gives a less accurate measure for reliability as the considered indicators are unweighted. It is related to the number of indicators and may sometimes reduce the reliability of the construction (Sijtsma, 2009). On the other hand, items are weighted based on individual indicator loadings for the constructs when (CR) is implemented. This results in the higher reliability observed compared to Cronbach's alpha (Hair et al., 2011b) and is implied based on the high values obtained from composite reliability (Diamantopoulos et al., 2012).

The convergent validity of each construct measure was then addressed for the evaluation of the reflective measurement model. This validity explains the extent to which the items indeed interpret the construct which they are supposed to measure (Shin, 2015). In evaluating the convergent validity of different constructs, the average variance extracted (AVE) was used as a metric (Ramayah et al., 2017). An adequate AVE value should be 0.50 or higher to achieve the convergent validity (Diamantopoulos et al., 2012; Afthanorhan, 2014; Hair et al., 2019). Considering Table 2, the results determined for reliability and convergent validity meet the statistical requirements. With all the values of the indicator loadings exceeding 0.7, both the (α) values and (CR) were greater than 0.7. The AVE for all the constructs were determined to be higher than 0.5. This complies with all the suggestions derived from previous literature as previously discussed.

Table 2
Results for reliability and convergent validity of different constructs

Constructs	Items		Loadings (>0.7)	Alpha(>0.7)	Rho_A	CR(>0.7)	AVE(>0.5)
Destination image (DI)	DI.1	Egypt as a tourism destination has a variety of tourist attractions.	0.843	0.802	0.810	0.870	0.628
	DI.2	Egypt is characterised as an interesting tourist destination.	0.782				
	DI.3	Egypt is a safe tourist destination.	0.833				
	DI.4	Egypt has lots to see and do for tourism.	0.704				
Re-visitation intention (RI)	RI.1	Egypt should be recommended as a tourist destination to individual social networks.	0.913	0.906	0.907	0.941	0.842
	RI.2	Willingness to revisit Egypt in future travels is encouraged.	0.939				
	RI.3	Length of stay within Egypt should be extended in future travels.	0.900				
Satisfaction with guided tour (SWGT)	SWGT.1	Satisfaction with guiding services received.	0.761	0.780	0.788	0.857	0.601
	SWGT.2	Satisfaction with tourism services received.	0.761				
	SWGT.3	Satisfaction with the performance of tour guides.	0.811				
	SWGT.4	Satisfaction with the overall tour experience.	0.767				
Tour guide's role in tourism promotion (TGRITP)	TGRITP.1	The tour guide was able to manage and coordinate events taking place during the tour.	0.785	0.942	0.944	0.953	0.744
	TGRITP.2	The tour guide provided required information to assist in the understanding of a tourist destination accurately.	0.901				
	TGRITP.3	The tour guide managed the tour in a professional manner.	0.870				
	TGRITP.4	The tour guide executed their duties as a representative of the tourist destination.	0.894				
	TGRITP.5	The tour guide was able to explain details of different aspects of the tourist destination that was not known and would not have been able to be interpreted without their accompaniment.	0.915				
	TGRITP.6	The tour guide enabled understanding of the tourist destination through interactions established between hosts and guest.	0.834				
	TGRITP.7	The tour guide provided a sense of security in an unfamiliar environment.	0.831				

In analysing the outer model, the discriminant validity was subsequently analysed to empirically oversee the extent a particular construct is definitely novel and differing from other constructs in the structural model (Kock & Verville, 2012; Henseler et al., 2015). Based on Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion, the determined squared roots of AVEs for each construct should be higher than the highest squared correlation in comparison to any of the other constructs. A correlation matrix and the corresponding square roots of AVEs for different constructs in this study are tabulated in Table 3.

Table 3
Discriminant validity (Fornel-Larcker criterion) for different constructs in a correlation matrix

Constructs	DI	RI	SWGT	TGRITP
DI	**0.792**			
RI	0.535	**0.917**		
SWGT	0.671	0.646	**0.775**	
TGRITP	0.615	0.732	0.662	**0.862**
Note: Boldface values indicate the square roots of AVE				

Considering Table 3, the square root values of AVE for all latent variables exceed the correlations related to their respective variable. A second methodology in assessing discriminant validity is through the examination of the cross loadings of the indicators. As claimed by (Henseler et al., 2009), this methodology establishes that a construct's value in indicator loading exceed that of the cross loadings on other constructs.

Table 4
Discriminant validity for different items determined through cross-loading

Items	DI	RI	SWGT	TGRITP
DI.1	**0.843**	0.462	0.578	0.482
DI.2	**0.782**	0.497	0.611	0.570
DI.3	**0.833**	0.358	0.458	0.384
DI.4	**0.704**	0.342	0.441	0.479
RI.1	0.480	**0.913**	0.583	0.651
RI.2	0.488	**0.939**	0.612	0.691
RI.3	0.504	**0.900**	0.584	0.673
SWGT.1	0.480	0.518	**0.761**	0.499
SWGT.2	0.518	0.460	**0.761**	0.444
SWGT.3	0.512	0.638	**0.811**	0.645
SWGT.4	0.583	0.351	**0.767**	0.433
TGRITP.1	0.508	0.607	0.548	**0.785**
TGRITP.2	0.549	0.684	0.602	**0.901**
TGRITP.3	0.578	0.652	0.613	**0.870**
TGRITP.4	0.548	0.620	0.589	**0.894**
TGRITP.5	0.500	0.652	0.568	**0.915**
TGRITP.6	0.511	0.583	0.525	**0.834**
TGRITP.7	0.510	0.612	0.543	**0.831**

Other researchers have implemented the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations in evaluating discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2019). The determined cut-off value of HTMT should be lower than 0.85 to indicate discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2019; Franke and Sarstedt, 2019). The HTMT ratios for different constructs are tabulated in Table 5. As shown, all HTMT values were determined to be lower than 0.85 thus confirming appropriate discriminant validity. In analysing the measurement model, the multicollinearity between endogenous variables should be absent before underoing SEM analysis (Chin, 1998; Cassel et al., 1999). Confirming the above can be estimated through statistical analysis for VIF (variance inflation factors) which should be valued to be lower than 5 (Rigdon, 2012; Martínez-Navalón et al., 2019). A threshold VIF value of 3.3 was also proposed by Kock (2015) in another study. The VIF values of all measurements obtained from this study was determined to be in the range of 1 – 1.780 i.e. below the threshold values proposed in aforementioned studies thus confirming the absence of any multicollinearities. with the above, all measurements indicating suitable discriminant validity.

Table 5
Discriminant validity for different constructs obtained by the determination of HTMT ratio values

Constructs	DI	RI	SWGT	TGRITP
DI	0	0	0	0
RI	0.614	0	0	0
SWGT	0.837	0.754	0	0
TGRITP	0.695	0.792	0.759	0

4.1.2. Structural model and hypotheses testing

Having the measurement models meeting all the necessary requirements and the absence of multicollinearity already confirmed, the assessment of the structural (inner) model was pursued. Based on previous literature, the overall fit of the model was examined through the evaluations of different criterions. This includes the coefficient of determination (R^2), the statistical significance of path coefficients (β with P-values), the effect size (f^2), cross-validated redundancy (Q^2) and standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) (Hu et al., 1992; Chin, 2010; Sharma et al, 2019; Cheah et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2019, Benitez et al., 2020). Initially, the amount of variances in latent constructs can be indicated from R^2 values (Henseler et al., 2009; Hair et al., 2017) of the three endogenous variables considered in this study i.e. destination image, tourist revisit intention and satisfaction with guided tours. It represents the proportion to which variation in dependent variables can be described from predictor variables (Hair et al., 2010). Generally, R^2 values would range between 0 and 1 with higher values indicating higher amount of variances. Based on Cohen (1988) criterion, (R^2) values of 0.27, 0.13 and 0.02 in PLS-SEM would imply substantial, moderate and weak levels of variances respectively. However, achieving a R2 value of 0.10 is deemed satisfactory (Raithel et al., 2012, Lohmoller, 1989; Falk & Miller, 1992).

Results obtained for the structural model is graphically presented in Figure 3. It can be observed that destination image, tourist revisit intention and satisfaction with

guided tours is associated with high R2 values of 0.502, 0.583 and 0.438 respectively. In examining the results obtained for dependent variables in the model, it can be concluded that a suitable percentage of explained variance is represented. The level of explained variance is therefore satisfactory especially considering that this study has only considered one predictor variable.
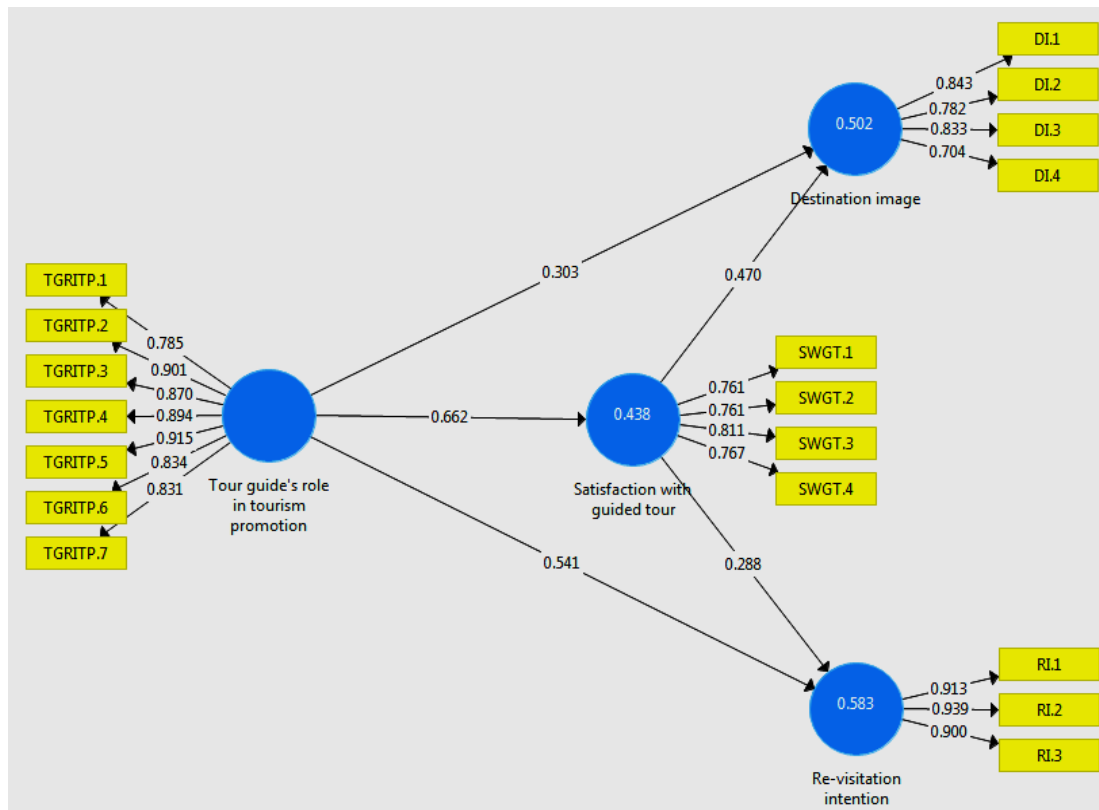

Fig.3. Results of the structural model test.

In estimating path coefficients, bootstrapping with a re-sampling of 1,000 iterations was performed (Davison & Hinkley, 1997) with the results obtained being tabulated in Table 6. Generally, all seven hypotheses were accepted. Destination image was found to be positively influenced by the role of tour guides in tourism promotion (β = 0.303, t-value = 5.042, p < .001) thus supporting hypothesis 1 (H1). The positive influence of the role of tour guides in tourism promotion on tourist revisit intention was empirically evident based on the statistical significance of path coefficients (β = 0.541, t-value = 10.969, p < .001). Hypothesis 2 (H2) is therefore verified. Satisfaction with guided tours was determined to be positively influence by the roles of tour guides in tourism promotion (β = .662, t-value = 22.745, p < .001) therefore supporting hypothesis 3 (H3). The same positive influence of satisfaction with guided tours can observed in relation to destination image (β = .470, t-value = 7.994, p < .001) and tourist revisit intention (β = .288, t-value = 5.996, p < .001), thus supporting hypotheses 4 (H4) and 5 (H5) respectively.

Table 6

Results obtained for different path coefficients of the structured model

Path coefficients	Standardized β	Sample Mean (M)	S. D (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values
SWGT -> DI	0.470	0.473	0.059	7.994	0.000
SWGT -> RI	0.288	0.289	0.048	5.996	0.000
TGRITP -> DI	0.303	0.301	0.060	5.042	0.000
TGRITP -> RI	0.541	0.542	0.049	10.969	0.000
TGRITP -> SWGT	0.662	0.663	0.029	22.745	0.000

*Note: * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001*

A mediation test was successively performed to assess the indirect effect of the independent variable (TGRITP) on the dependent variables (DI and RI) through the satisfaction with guided tours (SWGT) as a mediating variable (M). Hypothesis in relation to mediation is generally tested according to the method proposed by Baron & Kenny (1986). Depending on the results obtained, observations for either a partial or full mediation can be made. In the absence of the mediating variable, the direct effects of the role of tour guides in tourism promotion (TGRITP) i.e. the independent variable on destination image (DI) and revisit intention (RI) i.e. the dependent variables have been previously investigated. There, significant effects of TGRITP were found on both destination image (β = 0.620, t-value = 17.740, $p < .001$) and revisit intention (β = 0.732, t-value = 25.067, $p < .001$).

Thereafter, bootstrapping of the indirect effects and total effects for the relationship between TGRITP, DI and RI in consideration of SWGT as a mediating variable were subsequently determined. Results of the bootstrapping tabulated in Table 7 shows significant indirect effects of TGRITP on both DI (β = 0.311, t-value = 7.487, $p < .001$) and RI (β = 0.191, t-value = 5.985, $p < .001$) under the mediation of SWGT.

Table 7

Indirect effect of the role of tour guides in tourism promotion (TGRITP) on destination image (DI) and tourist revisit intention (RI) through the satisfaction with guided tours (SWGT) as a mediating variable

Specific indirect effect					
Paths	Standardized-β	Sample Mean (M)	S. D (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values
TGRITP -> SWGT -> DI	0.311	0.315	0.042	7.487	**0.000**
TGRITP -> SWGT -> RI	0.191	0.191	0.032	5.985	**0.000**

For the confirmation of hypothesis 6 and 7, a bootstrapping procedure was also implemented to determine lower and upper levels of confidence to confirm the mediation for the mediating variable (Tofighi & MacKinnon, 2016; Ramayah et al., 2017). The subsequent results obtained tabulated in Table 8 imply mediation effects in the role of tour guides in tourism promotion on destination image and tourist revisit

intention. Considering the results, it can be concluded that with t-values > 3.29 and *p* < .001 the mediation effect of SWGT is statistically significant. This therefore verifies hypothesis 6 (H6) and 7 (H7).

Table 8
Results obtained for bootstrapped confidence interval for the confirmation of mediation effects of the mediating variable SWGT

Hypotheses	IV>M	M>DV	Indirect Effect	SE	*t-value*	Bootstrapped Confidence Interval		
	Path a	Path b				95% LL	95% UL	*Decision*
H6	0.662	0.470	0.311	0.041	7.589	0.231	0.392	Mediation
H7	0.662	0.288	0.191	0.033	5.777	0.126	0.255	Mediation

It can be confirmed that the mediating variable SWGT partially mediates the effects of TGRIP on DI and RI. As SWGT enters the model, the effect of TGRIP on DI and RI seen is still significant despite the beta coefficient of TGRITP in relation to DI reduces from 0.620 to 0.303 and from 0.732 to 0.541 in relation to RI. The *β* value reduces more noticeably when SWGT is introduced as a mediator between TGRITP and DI. With the above, TGRITP has significant effects on both DI and RI regardless of the presence of the mediating variable SWGT. Moreover, SWGT can mediate the effect of TGRITP on DI more than on RI.

Thereafter, cross-validated redundancy was evaluated through the Q2 test (Urbach & Ahlemann, 2010; Cheah et al., 2019). Based on the Q2 value obtained, a model will be considered to have predictive relevance when the value exceeds 0 (Arquero, del Barrio-García, & Romero-Frías, 2016). The test performed for Q^2 (= 1 – SSE/SSO) showed values above zero thus implying the adequate ability for the model considered in this study to make predictions. In examining the strength and impact of exogenous latent variable on endogenous latent variable, the effect size (f^2) can be implemented (Roldán & Sánchez-Franco, 2012; Benitez et al., 2020). Based on the value obtained for effect size, values higher than 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 would represent small, medium and large effect sizes respectively (Cohen, 1988). With this, TGRITP was found to have a small effect size on destination image (f^2=0.104) and a large effect size on tour revisit intention (f^2=0.394). The satisfaction of tourists with guided tours gave the largest effect size with a value of 0.780. On the other hand, SWGT has a medium effect size on DI (f^2=0.250) and a small effect size on RI with a value of 0.112.

With the previous parameters established, the overall fit of the model considered in this study can be evaluated by implementing Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) (Henseler et al., 2015; Hair et al., 2017). Previous studies have indicated SRMR values smaller than 0.080 would imply an acceptable model fit with no occurrence of model mis-specification (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Ramayah et al., 2018; Benitez et al., 2020). In this study, a value of 0.072 for SRMR was determined thus justifying sufficient fit of the data to the hypothesised model represented in Figure 1.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge relevant to the performance of tour guides by being one of the first studies to construct a structural model via

PLS-SEM that describes the inter-relationship between the role of tour guides in tourism promotion, destination image and tourist revisit intention under the mediation of tourist satisfaction with guided tours. Furthermore, the inter-relationship was examined in the context of foreign tourists in Egypt. This has not been explicitly examined in tourism research despite its significance in the tourism industry. With that, the current study therefore makes an important and novel contribution towards tourism research.

Professional tour guides are influential throughout all the stages of a tourist experience in a particular destination and the subsequent development of its image (Temizkan & Tokay 2016). In the context of tourism promotion, this study concludes that the roles undertaken by tour guides has a significant and direct effect on destination image. This is in agreement with a study performed by Pereira (2015) that verified a positive effect of tour guide performance on the image of a destination perceived by tourists. This is only further emphasised by Chang (2014) that determined the attitudes of tour guides has a positive effect on the credibility of destination image. In opposite to the above, the local economy will suffer as a result of negative destination image due to the tarnished attractiveness of a particular destination and subsequently hindrance in terms of destination promotion.

The most important role undertaken by tour guides in the context of tourism promotion is as the interpreter. Having achieved the highest loading factor (0.915), this only emphasises the reasonings why foreign tourists in Egypt take part in guided tours. They have expressed the need to obtain better interpretations in regards to the points of interest they visit (see Figure 2). With the above, it is only necessary to consider that the role of the interpreter is the most important role that needs to be undertaken by tour guides in promoting the country's tourism. The role of the interpreter being key to the tourism industry has been previously forwarded. This result is consistent with Kao et al. (2015) that noted that capable of either making or breaking the industry, the aforementioned role is an influential factor on tourist satisfaction which subsequently influences destination loyalty. Thus, it can be implied that interpretations can be considered to be the main medium in the process of introducing or presenting destinations for visiting tourists. This allows the tourists to interact more closely with the destination they visit. As mentioned by Pearce (2005), the quality of the experiences visitors gained can be improved making interpretation more valuable in comparison to simple relaying of information. In line with this, interpretation is also noted to be a critical component for tourism as it comforts tourists by making them feel at home and subsequently increase their intentions to revisit (Rabotić, 2010). They will also be recommended their network of family and friends to make the same visits.

The role of tour guides as information givers and representatives also achieved high loading factors valued at 0.901 and 0.894 respectively. Gaps in information exhibited by tourists can be filled by way of tour guides taking the role of information giver/educator. Tour guides assist visiting tourists understand the locations they visit as they are equipped in knowledge with a wide range of topics such as politics, economy, society, culture, etc. From the perspective of tourists, this would therefore

undoubtedly aid the promotion of a tourist destination. With the high loading factor obtained for the role of representatives, it can be implied that the role is pertinent towards the development of destination image. This has been evident from the issues brought into focus by tour guides in attracting more visitors to a destination (Hu, 2007; Modlin, 2011; Kou et al., 2016).

The TGRITP construct for the roles of tours guides as an environmentalist (0.502) and selector (0.0418) were removed due to their low values. Different tourists exhibit different motivations and demographic characteristics that form their behaviour towards respective travels. Considering the role of the environmentalist, it may imply that the environmental aspect of a tourist destination or experience is not the main justification for the visiting tourists. A high loading factor in regards to the role may be achieved if the study focussed on eco tours joined by tourists that place focus on the environmental aspect of their travels. The first role of tour guides is the selection for points of interest at a tourist destination and setting the itinerary for tours (Látková et al., 2017). However, it is the travel agencies or tour guides who may schedule the itinerary for tour guides to follow. It is also worth noting that travel agencies have begun to co-create tourism experiences by involving tourists in planning tours and determining the activities as well as points of interests (Campos et al., 2015).

Findings from this study demonstrate significant influence of TGRITP on tourists revisit intention. This is in agreement with a previous study by Çetinkaya & Öter (2016) that determined a high level of impact between tour guides and the study's respective respondents in revisiting Istanbul. A high level of satisfaction was exhibited by international tourists participating in guided tours in Istanbul as they return home. They would therefore be potential candidates in terms of customer loyalty in the future. Hence, it can be deduced that the performance of tour guides is pivotal in accomplishing customer satisfaction and subsequently customer loyalty. Negative perspectives on the political, religious and cultural aspects of a particular destination only strengthens perceptions of risk in security for potential tourists. This would subsequently influence the likelihood of tourist visitations. The high level of behavioural intentions including tourist revisit intention and word of mouth intentions exhibited by tourists in association with the roles of tour guides observed in previous studies would only emphasise the above further (Ap & Wong, 2001; Huang et al., 2010; Temizkan & Tokay, 2016).

Results obtained in this study also statistically evidences the significant influence of the different roles undertaken by tour guides on the satisfaction of tourists with guided tours. A high degree of satisfaction towards guided tours based on the role of tour guides was found in Sydney, Australia (McDonnell, 2001). In China, the performance of tour guides was considered the most important factor influencing the satisfaction of domestic and especially foreign tourists in packaged tours (Huang et al., 2010). Tour guides are considered to be responsible for the general impression and satisfaction with provided services in a particular destination (Wong, 2001). In a more precise context, the satisfaction expressed is dependent on the performance of tour guides (Huang et al., 2010, Lin et al., 2017 and Lu, 2018). Despite the above, a previous study done by Geva and Goldman (1991) found that the performance of tour

guides did not significantly affect the satisfaction of tourists originating from Israel to Europe and the United States. This is an unexpected finding as it is generally acknowledged that tour guides are responsible for the individual needs and preferences of tourists they are guiding. They are therefore responsible for the satisfaction exhibited by tourists as a subsequent effect.

A moderate level of significant effect in the satisfaction of tourists with guided tours on destination image perceived by tourists was statistically evidenced. In one study, the satisfaction of tourists with guided tours on destination image remains significant despite showing weak effects (Pereira, 2015). However, providing visiting tourists with a satisfying travel experience is an essential component encouraging the business success of a company and destination image (Lu et al., 2018). Findings by Nisco et al. (2015) supports the positive influence that tourist satisfaction of guided tours has on the image of a tourist destination. With the above, it can be asserted that tourist satisfaction with guided tours is able to influence destination image.

A low level of significant effect in the satisfaction of tourists with guided tours on tourist revisit intention was found. As discussed previously, some travel agencies are responsible for the planning of itineraries and services available to tourists. In other words, the responsibilities carried out by travel agencies would ensure a good quality of service (Chang, 2014). This would imply that the satisfaction of tourists with guided tours are not solely limited to the performance of tour guides or their role in tourism promotion. However, with the high positive associations found between tourist satisfaction and overall destination loyalty in previous literature (Nguyen, 2015), it can be established that the findings of this study is in agreement with the positive influence that the satisfaction with guided tours has on future behavioural intentions for revisitations (Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010; Chan et al., 2015; Han, Kim & Kiatkawsin, 2017).

Regarding the mediating effects of tourist satisfaction with guided tours, this study evidences a partial level of mediation in regards to the inter-relationship between the role of tour guides in tourism promotion, destination image and tourist revisit intention. It can therefore be implied that the satisfaction with guided tours enhances the image of a particular country or destination based on the positive attitudes exhibited by visiting tourists. This is further emphasised considering the proven positive correlations found between tourist satisfaction and destination image (Chi & Qu, 2008; Wang & Maxwell, 2010). Through the influence of tour guide performance and subsequent tourist satisfaction, destination image can be created, modified and even enhanced (Leguma, 2013). By developing tourist satisfaction via the performance of tour guides, the desire of tourists to revisit a particular destination is also encouraged. This was evident based on a study performed by Nguyen (2015) that found positive associations between destination loyalty of foreign tourists and increase in the satisfaction of tourists with guided tours. With the above, the satisfaction of tourists with guided tours can be taken as an important mediating factor between the role of tour guides in tourism promotion and both destination image and tourist revisit intention. This would thus ensure positive development of destination image and tourist revisit intention for tourist destinations in Egypt.

In concluding this study, it is only evident that tour guides are the heart and soul of the tourism industry. They contribute to multiple factors encouraging the success of the industry by delivering high quality services that have the potential to increase tourist satisfaction. On the front line of the industry, they are the key players in the development of destination image and the behavioural intentions of tourists.

6. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

There are several suggestions that could be proposed in the interest of improving the behaviours and performance of tour guides in Egypt to maintain the country's destination image in the eyes of tourists and increase tourist revisit intention.

Basic formal courses and continued professional training should be introduced by the relevant authorities such as the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Antiques, travel and tourism agencies, hotels, university faculties and other institutions. Ease of access towards institutions offering the courses or training should also be ensured. The courses or training should focus on issues involved in tour guiding and the development of skills for tour guides. These include contents that foster destination knowledge, professional work ethics and attitudes, communications skills (including proficiency in various languages), organisation, collaborative skills, empathy and understanding, problem solving, adaptability and ability to improvise. Courses or training in terms of technical knowledge in regards to the destinations and available attractions should also be included. Potential tour guides should possess an understanding of the background culture of visiting tourists, common encountered issues and the management of a culturally diverse group of individuals while maintaining a sincere and caring attitude towards providing tourism services. This should also be included as part of training or even as part of certification/licensing assessments.

Incentives should also be provided as a motivation for individual tour guides to undergo professional training. Some incentives can include offers for a secure and permanent employment at travel and tourism agencies. A reasonable salary system established based on the professional skills and work abilities of tour guides should be established by travel and tourism agencies. With this the salary will provide an incentive for tour guides to maintain their performance. By considering feedback obtained from tourists participating in guided tours, reasonable bonuses can also be rewarded for the accountable tour guides thus encouraging them to work harder. There is also a need for tour guiding to be established as a formal field or profession by the relevant authorities. In doing so, they can mandate individuals to possess a valid accredited license in order to operate as a tour guide. There is also a need to promote greater awareness and participation of services offered by tour guides among the community in order to improve the professional image and status of tour guides.

 The performance of tour guides should be continually monitored based on feedback reviews received from tourists participating in a tour. It is only necessary to have a proper means for the monitoring of tour guides. Monitoring can be integrated throughout the license renewal process in addition to performance-based evaluation

report sheets or recommendation from travel agencies. This would also ensure an optimum quality in regards to provided services.

Tour guides should be conscious of their roles as the representatives of a particular country or destination. Hence, they should provide services with the best possible efforts to exceed expectations of tourists by considering their particular needs, desires as well as cultural differences. They should also recognise their responsibility in entertaining tourists, offering interpretations or insights to different attractions and facilitate ongoing tour activities at the same time as maintaining quality standards of service. Tour guides should be equipped to be adaptable and be up-to-date with changing times and advancements in technology to oversee their potential benefits in enhancing tourist experience or their roles in tourism promotion. It is recommended that tour guides encourage tourists participating in their tours to give feedback for future improvements in terms of provided tourism services. With the facilitation of travel and tourism agencies providing the best itineraries and tours, tour guides should carry out their responsibilities and promote their destination in order to ensure success in the tourism industry for the upcoming year.

7. LIMITATIONS

There are associated limitations with this study. Data collected in this study only considers tour guides employed in travel and tourism agencies in Egypt. Hence, research taking into consideration different samples of tourists in multiple tourist destinations around the world can be done in a future study. The convenient sampling approach implemented in this study is a common methodology used in the field of tourism. However, the results obtained from the approach is not representative of the entire population. It is therefore recommended to consider a greater range of sampling in future studies. There are other mediating variables that may play an influential role in the inter-relationship between the role of tour guides in tourism promotion and both destination impact as well as tourist revisit intention. This includes the professionalism of tour guides, travel purposes and the background profile of tourists. Hence, it is only recommended to consider these aspects for studies in the future. Studies should also be performed considering different categories of tours i.e. ecological, historical, recreational, sightseeing, religious, etc., as a background context in examining the influence of the role of tour guides in tourism promotion on destination image and tourist revisit intention. Lastly, additional future studies can consider the background characteristics and attributes of tour guides such as their level of education, experience, age, income and gender in examining the influence of the role of tour guides in tourism promotion and the quality of services offered during a tour.

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دور المرشدين السياحيين في الترويج السياحي وأثره على صورة المقصد ونية إعادة الزيارة بالتطبيق على مصر: نموذج PLS-SEM

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معلومات المقالة	الملخص
الكلمات المفتاحية	يعد المرشدون السياحيون سفراء داخليين للدول والوجهات السياحية لما لهم من دور مهم في الترويج للمقاصد السياحية وتحقيق رضا السائح عن الجولة السياحية. مما يسهم بشكل كبير في إعطاء صورة ايجابية عن المقصد السياحي ونية إعادة الزيارة للمقصد. ومن هنا تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم العلاقة بين دور المرشد السياحي في الترويج السياحي كمتغير مستقل وتأثيره على الصورة السياحية ونية إعادة الزيارة للمقصد كمتغيرات تابعة، مع الأخذ في الاعتبار رضا السائح عن الجولة السياحية كمتغير وسيط **Mediator**. تم اختبار فرضيات الدراسة وتحليل البيانات إحصائيا من خلال **PLS-SEM Model** باستخدام برنامج (v.3.2.8) **SmartPLS3**. تم جمع البيانات من 380 سائحًا أجنبيًا في مصر باستخدام الاستبيان. أشارت النتائج إلى وجود علاقة إيجابية ومباشرة بين دور المرشدين السياحيين في الترويج السياحي وصورة الوجهة ونية تكرار الزيارة للمقصد. كما أظهرت الدراسة التأثير المهم لرضا السائحين عن الجولات السياحية كمتغير وسيط. وقد أوصت الدراسة بضرورة الاهتمام بالتدريب المهني للمرشدين السياحيين وإكسابهم المهارات المختلفة التي تمكنهم من نجاح جولاتهم السياحية والترويج السياحي لمصر، وكذلك ضرورة التقييم المستمر لأدائهم بناءً على التعليقات الواردة من السائحين المشاركين في الجولات السياحية.
المرشد السياحي؛ الترويج السياحي؛ الصورة السياحية للمقصد؛ نية إعادة الزيارة ؛ الرضا بالجولة السياحية	
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