

Assessing the Application of Corporate Social Responsibility in Egyptian Travel Agencies

Takwa Mohamed Essawy
Higher Institute for Specific Studies

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Abstract

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The concept of social responsibility emerged to promote a more socially responsible, moral and ethical model of marketing and management. It is an approach that adopts a holistic, integrated view of marketing, considering social equity, environmental protection and economic livability (Maclaran and Parsons, 2009). Companies are aware that sustainable business success and shareholder value cannot be achieved solely through maximizing short-term profits, but instead through market-oriented responsible behavior. In this context, an increasing number of tourism companies have accepted a culture of corporate social responsibility. Tourism has a significant environmental, social and human impact. So it is hardly surprising that the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) should have been to bear, especially in the context of responsible and sustainable tourism (Brown and Hall, 2006). Corporate social responsibility aims at recognizing and responding to evolving forms of accountability between the organization and its stakeholders (employees, customers, government, business partners, and local communities). The past few years have seen a steady growth in the claims of adopting the principles of CSR as a new approach which has led to the creation of many initiatives to address concerns such as environmental conservation, social issues - such as poverty reduction and local and community economic developmentetc- and companies' responsibilities towards their employees. Promoting growth that respects culture and environment and supports the well-being of local communities is a crucial issue for the evolution of modern tourism. This requires increasing the awareness and adopting the responsibility behavior by tourism businesses. Although there are opportunities as well as challenges to adopt CSR strategies in tourism business scale, there is a lack of awareness in Egyptian travel agencies of the meaning, principles, importance, requirements and activities of its applications. Thus, there is a need for tourism industry to be more aware of the meaning of CSR, its principles, benefits and its requirements to move the agenda forward (Momtaz, 2008). This research aims to; 1- Highlight the importance of the application of corporate social responsibility in the tourism sector. 2- Identify the practices of CSR in tourism companies. 3- Determine and analyze the obstacles for the application of CSR in the Egyptian tourism sector 4-Assess the application of CSR in tourism companies to set recommendations to fulfill the effective application to CSR. 5- Provide suggestions for a successful implementation of CSR in Egyptian travel agencies. It is concluded that although most tourists make purchasing decisions based on such factors as price, weather, type and range of facilities and quality, more and more tourists are also concerned about the ethics of travel and more likely to book a holiday with a company that has a written code guaranteeing good working conditions, protecting the environment and supporting the local charities in the tourist destination. The lack of CSR awareness, the absence of governmental support to adopt CSR programs, the lack of the budget that is needed for its activities, rare of experts in CSR field and the disbelief of the management in CSR importance and benefits were considered to be the barriers that affect CSR engagement in tourism companies. Field study indicated that Egyptian travel agencies tend to take some form of corporate social applications but they are not familiar with the real meaning of this term and its practices.

Introduction

Until now, unsullied nature, beautiful landscapes, cultural heritage and a sound infrastructure represent the core elements of the supply side of tourism. To maintain these elements, the resources vital to tourism must be managed in a responsible and sustainable products and services should be encouraged. Therefore, tourism should bear major responsibility for sustainable development and respect for the environment and human rights. In addition, tourism operators and destinations should realize the negative impacts that tourism can have on their product and be aware that the resources that attract tourists need to be protected for long-term business sustainability (Hill and Langan, 2014).

The concept of corporate social responsibility has become a central part of corporate strategies for tourism business. Environmental protection, fair working conditions for employees and contributing to the welfare of local communities are key issues in the strategies of international tourism corporations.

According to Beeton (2006) corporate social responsibility (CSR) is of growing importance to the travel and tourism industry as a part of sustainability tourism development. With an increasing percentage of customers favoring tourism that benefits the local community and the surrounding environment, this issue is an essential one to be addressed by modern progressive management. Therefore, promoting an organization's CSR can be smart business practice. Many of the larger travel companies are starting to include concepts of CSR into their organization and promotional activities. This is particularly the case with the highly competitive airline industry. For example, British airways now includes a section on social performance in its environmental report, where it demonstrates both environmental and community based activities and achievements such as working with communities affected by aircraft noise and sponsoring various environmental and community based awards.

Weinreich (2011) states that social responsibility marketing is the mix between humanistic marketing and ecological marketing, but Kotler and Keller (2006) propose that it is called societal marketing.

Golja and Nizic (2010) suggest that corporate social responsibility has four basic points to improve the responsible tourism; these are ecological sustainability to minimize the environmental impacts of tourist activities, social sustainability to continue functioning without disharmony or social change, cultural sustainability to retain a degree of local cultural identifies in the face of global tourism and economic sustainability to be sufficient to cover the costs of any special measures taken to cater for the tourist and to mitigate the impact of the tourist's presence.

A customer now is increasingly insisting that social responsibility and ethical concerns are necessary to be considered in planning and implementing marketing activities. Therefore, more firms are working to develop a responsible approach to maintain long-term relationships with customers and society (McAlister *et al.*, 2005).

Social responsibility is a principle of sustainable marketing that calls for products that are not only pleasing but also beneficial. Many companies take advantage of societal problems and view them as opportunities. Corporate social responsibility goal is using business to focus mainly on social issues by adding social goals to the demands of serving customers and making profit can be daunting and distracting. In addition to supporting a broad environmental responsibility agenda from eco-friendly products designs to manufacturing processes (Armstrong and Kotler, 2012).

Indeed, it is based on the concept of 'Triple Bottom Line'(TBL) which replaces the financial bottom line and implies that businesses are responsible for the environmental, social and economic effects they produce. This means that TBL theory consists of three elements; profit (traditional measure of corporate profit account), people and planet (it measures the organization's social and environmental responsibilities throughout its operations) (Bals and Tate, 2016).

CSR is defined according to Ferrell and Pride (2008) as an organization obligation to maximize its positive impact and minimize its negative impact on society, thus it deals with the total effect of all marketing decisions on society.

Bhattacharya and Sen (2001), and Earle (2002) state that a successful CSR strategy can produce a number of benefits:

1. Enhancing corporates' reputation, their public image with government officials and other decision makers and raising their brand awareness.
2. Leading to better market performance, in terms of market share and investments that in turn leads to better financial and non-financial performance indicators.
3. Increasing customer loyalty. Companies believe that customers are looking more often for signs of good corporate citizenship.
4. Boosting internal moral employees.
5. Creating differentiated brand positioning by humanizing companies' goods and services, and developing a strong and unique relationship with consumers by establishing brand credibility and creating a sense of brand community (Kasper, 2006).

It is concluded that CSR allows companies to gain the trust of several stakeholders. It sends a message to all stakeholders' groups that this company is a responsible one that can be easily trusted.

It is noted that there is not a philosophy or strategy for choosing the social issues to which CSR practices are directed. In other words, there is not a formal process that is followed by companies when considering social issues (needs) for example, assessing and quantifying the community needs through researches. Thus, companies have to map their internal, external stakeholders and the ministries that have a direct relation with local communities (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Manpower...etc) , then conduct a proactive interviews with these stakeholders in order to identify the priorities needs from the stakeholder's view point.

Filho and Idowu (2009) state that CSR is a cluster concept which overlaps with such concepts as Cause-related marketing (CRM), CRM can be defined as a marketing practice that links a firm's contribution to a designated cause to customers' engaging directly or indirectly in revenue to produce transaction with the firm. It is simply using the social goals as a means to improve people's attitudes towards the company and its products (Ferrell and Pride, 2008). Thus, it is an activity by which a company donates a percentage of revenues to a specific cause based on the revenue occurring during the announced period of support (Keller and Kotler, 2006). For example, American express offered to donate one US cent to the restoration of the statue of liberty. Any cause-related marketing strategy can be considered a corporate social responsibility

strategy as long as the focus is on a cause beneficial to society's well-being. Thus, CSR may use marketing technique such as CRM to enhance business's public image (Asongu, 2007).

It is concluded that cause-related marketing is used by companies that focus on the short-term impact to gain immediate returns, with no consideration for the longer-term impacts. Moreover, it considers one of the CSR communication tools, as it shows the public the company's social responsibility. Cause-related marketing achieves win-win situation for business (profit), society (charity) and consumer (link the purchasing effort into good reason), its campaigns motivate consumers to fulfill their philanthropic duties by buying products/services instead of donating to cause directly (exploit consumers' emotions to achieve benefits). On the other hand CSR encompasses not only what companies do with their profits, but also how these profits are made in a way which goes beyond philanthropy. It addresses how companies manage their economic, social and environmental impacts, as well as their relationships with all stakeholders. Thus, cause-related marketing is a subset of businesses responsibility.

In tourism, as in other economic sectors, responsibility represents a topic which generates a great interest in the international scale. Promoting growth that respects culture, environment and supports the wellbeing of local communities is a crucial issue for the evolution of modern tourism. This inevitably implies the increase of awareness and the adoption of responsibility behavior both by the tourists and the tourism business. In other words, tourism is a phenomenon integrated into a responsibility system.

Manente *et al.* (2014) and Spenceley (2008) support that responsible tourism **RT** can be defined as managing the tourism business in a way that benefits its local community, and environment by emphasis on developing a competitive advantage, assessing monitor and disclose impacts of tourism development, ensuring involvement of communities, encouraging natural, economic, social and cultural diversity, and promoting the sustainable use of local resources. Thus, responsible tourism (RT) is used to describe a certain management approach which is based on the principles of corporate social responsibility, rather than a specific type of tourism (Tassiopoulos, 2008).

In fact, responsible tourism isn't just another form of niche tourism. It is about making all forms of tourism more responsible (Cape Town Responsible Tourism Policy, 2009). This trend implies that tourism businesses that practice responsible tourism will have a powerful competitive advantage over other tourism products (Spenceley *et al.*, 2002).

Manente *et al.*, (2014) state that responsible tourism has become a new way to conceive holidays, a sort of new lifestyle pushing a growing number of tourists to make their travel choices according to values like consciousness, responsible consumption, and respect for the cultural, social, environmental and economic context of the local community.

Today, tourism business is facing new challenges. Globalization has created new opportunities for tourism companies, but it also has increased their organizational complexity giving them new responsibilities. Bringing into focus challenges as climate change, demographic shift and poverty. Tourism business is focusing now on the human development issues which consider all of the main elements contributing to the positive development of humanity (Golja and Nizic, 2010).

Donaldson *et al.*, (2002) assume that companies owe society more than the supply of goods and services, they are accountable for the ecological, environmental, and social costs resulting from their actions and therefore ideally companies have to respond to society's problems even though

they may not be directly responsible. In applying the theory, businesses have to take into account the stakeholder theory, a social reaction view to groups that have a potential to influence or the power to affect a business' decisions and actions. Managers must weigh and balance the interest of stakeholders and shareholders.

Corporate social responsibility becomes a necessity in conducting business. The socio economic approach is the best approach to influence the corporate social responsibility policy: whether desiring to fulfill a moral need, or a strategic or an advantage that the business has. In applying this concept, businesses have a chance to be in control and come up with more favorable programs benefiting the company in the long run as well as benefiting society.

There are different aspects and definitions of the CSR concept: The world business council for sustainable development (WBCSD) in 1999 acknowledges that CSR is "the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of workforce and their families as well as of the local community to human rights, employee rights, environmental protection, community involvement, supplier relations, stakeholder rights and monitoring" (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2004,P.254).

On the other hand, Horner and Swarbrooke (2004) define CSR from tourism perspective as operating a tourism business in a manner that meets or exceeds the ethical, legal, commercial, and public expectations that society has of business.

Argandona (2010) suggests that CSR is more than just a management technique or set of practices that tourism companies can choose to embrace or that society imposes on them. It is an ethical concept, thus all companies are responsible for their marketing decisions, and it is a company's understanding of the role it plays in the society based on its current situation, the environment in which it operates, the values it upholds and its awareness of the intended and unintended consequences of its actions.

Crane *et al.*, (2008) suggest that CSR is an important issue for public tourism sector like private sector. So that, public sector organizations face the similar environmental demands, similar claims for equal opportunities for employees, and similar expectation for responsible sourcing as do private companies. So that, public tourism organizations adopt CSR policies, practices and tools very similar to the private sector. Thus, the claim for responsible behavior on the part of public sector has grown. Consequently, tourism governments issue code of conduct to provide a regulatory basis for CSR by tourism companies and take an active role in promoting CSR within their sphere of influence to encourage CSR in tourism sector.

The more a company is committed towards CSR and is able to appropriately disseminate evidences about its efforts, the more customers are likely to trust and reward it, by buying its products.

Horner and Swarbrooke (2004) state that there are four areas of corporate social responsibility of tourism companies to fulfill their marketing responsibility and reduce the adverse impact of their activities. These four areas are customers, employees, environment and communities. Companies have to set to whom they are responsible.

First: Customers

Manente *et al.*, (2014) argue that tourists are likely to consider companies committed to CSR to be more reliable than non CSR-oriented operators and to trust them and buy their products. This because not only tourism businesses that have implemented CSR are committed to protect the

environment and support local community but also to respect consumer's rights, by ensuring tourists' health and safety during the holiday. Tourists are the people who create the business opportunity and companies have a responsibility to serve them in an ethical way. The Global Code of Ethics for tourism states the responsibilities of companies toward their customers, which includes providing quality service, honest and objective information and raising tourists' awareness by educating and informing them about their impact on the environment (Argandona, 2010).

It is concluded that tourism companies have to carry out their social responsibility in all its actions for their customers. They also have to enforce marketing regulations that must be followed to ensure the ethicality of all marketing campaigns.

Second: Employees

The tourism sector has certain special characteristics that affect the nature of the jobs it offers, notably relatively uneducated workforce, low wages, seasonality and a division between local labor in lower level jobs and outsiders in higher level technical and managerial positions. Thus, employers in the sector have certain important responsibilities (Leslie, 2012):

- A- Continuous training: it is important to compensate the lack of education among workforce, initial and ongoing education and vocational training.
- B- Health and safety: a variety of practices have been adopted to promote employee health and safety. Some hotels and resorts take their responsibility by carrying out regular assessments to identify general risks, individual assessments for each position and conducting a survey in order to assess co-worker satisfaction regarding the work environment. Furthermore, Blackman *et al.*, (2005) mention that travel agents are now operating in an increasingly complex legal environment regarding health and safety issues. Employers are required to consult their employees about health and safety arrangements and prepare a written health and safety policy statement, they have also a general duty to provide medical insurance for their worker.
- C- Diversity: companies have to develop an equal opportunity plan or program to offer vacancies for women and handicapped (Probost, 2008).

Third: Environment

Argandona (2010) traces that the environment plays a key role in the tourism industry, as it is often of the main attractions for tourists. It is also a limited resource that is affected by the activities of tourists and tourism businesses alike. Environmental consequences include over-utilization of natural resources, especially water; inefficient use of energy; and inadequate waste management.

A- Energy and water saving: Most resorts and hotels now have efficient heating and air conditioning with a system to automatically turn off the air conditioning or heating when a customer opens the balcony, almost all rooms have a switch or card that turns off the electricity when customers leave the room to avoid wastage. Most tourism resorts are working to reduce their use of water by monitoring daily use and are working to consider the layout and design of its gardens. Most companies try to apply environmental criteria in their policies when selecting new suppliers.

B- Coastal areas: for example, ports try to manage its impact on the environment through a plan to prevent, protect against and investigate oil spills. Some ports have developed an

environmental plan based on ISO 14001 to guide all the work it does, from planning through to implementation, monitoring and final assessment.

Fourth: Communities

Probst (2008) mentions that tourism development can crucially affect the relationship between residents and tourists. Tourism has economic and socio-cultural impacts on the local or host community. Economic impacts include job creation, tax revenues, wages...etc. and also adverse effects, such as higher prices for food and transportation and higher land prices. Cultural differences include different value systems, religious beliefs, lifestyle and traditions.

Philanthropy: Some tourism companies and hotels try to take their responsibilities toward communities by adhering programs that present seven different mechanisms through which the locals can benefit directly or indirectly from tourism. These mechanisms include: 1- employment of the locals in tourism enterprises; 2-supply of goods and services to tourism enterprises by the locals or by enterprises employing the locals; 3-direct sales of goods and services to visitors by the locals (informal economy); 4- establishment and running of tourism enterprises by the poor - e.g. micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), or community based enterprises (formal economy); 5-tax or levy on tourism income or profits with proceeds benefiting poor communities; 6- voluntary giving/support by tourism enterprises and tourists; and 7- investment in infrastructure stimulated by tourism also benefiting the local communities in the locality, directly or through support to other sectors (Golja and Nizic ,2010).

Some hotels adhere programs for donation to support charity organization around the world, volunteer service initiatives, offering scholarships to employees' children and organizing campaigns to collect clothes and toys, blood donations among their employees.....etc.

It is concluded that the most important characteristic of CSR is sustainability. Thus, CSR is not equivalent to charity or philanthropy. Charity is only one part of the bigger program of CSR, charity grants the company instant visibility and publicity, and that could be why some companies are more interested in charity. However, CSR initiatives are investments in community development, charity cannot be considered the tool that leads to community development. Philanthropy events only impact a small number of people, while CSR initiatives usually give back to the whole community.

Research Methodology

Questionnaire is designed to collect statistical data about the application of corporate social responsibility in Egyptian Travel Agencies. The questionnaire aims at identifying the level of awareness of CSR application in the Egyptian tourism enterprises and firms' societal practices in which they are engaged. It also seeks to examine the challenges that face its application. In addition, it aims at assessing the implementation of CSR in the tourism market in order to provide some recommendations and solutions and present them to all stakeholders.

The questionnaire form consists of ten questions which have been arranged in a logical sequence while avoiding obscurity. Questions varied between closed and open questions. The questionnaire form has been designed in line with the objectives of the research.

The data of the study was collected from Egyptian tourism companies through distributing 58 questionnaire forms representing 2.5% of the 2300 tourism companies working in Egypt (category A, according to the Egyptian Travel Agents Association and Ministry of Tourism). This coincides with the scientific percentage used in such studies as mentioned by Malhotra

(1996) who stated that a valid sample should range from 2% to 5%. These forms were distributed correctly by the researcher and successfully recollected (100% valid sample).

Research analysis and findings

Awareness of the Meaning and applications of CSR

The respondents were asked about the application of CSR programs. The vast majority (77.6%) of the respondents did not apply any CSR programs, while only 18.9% (11 companies) of the respondents were familiar with the term of CSR and apply it. As for companies who chose the variable -in progress- were represented with 3.5%. These findings confirmed with **Kasim (2006)** who revealed that many tourism companies didn't apply CSR in their activities because of the characteristics of the tourism sector. This also supported the arguments (**Cape Town Policy, 2009**) that most tourism businesses implementing responsible tourism practices are out limited. It was necessary to determine the attitude of tourism firms toward CSR, thus the respondents were asked about the meaning of CSR.

Table 1

Awareness of CSR Meaning and applications

Variables	Frequency
It is a philanthropic/volunteer activity for the local community	10
It is charity practices for marketing purposes	9
It is the firm's commitment to environment protection laws.	8
It is the firm's commitment towards workers' rights.	6
It is an approach that aims to achieve commercial profits.	4
It is a strategy to deal with stakeholders through transparency and accountability in a way that is consistent with society's welfare.	2
It is practices/policies that are integrated into the overall marketing activities/decisions of the company to reduce the negative impacts on the internal and external environment.	2

*Availability of selecting more than one answer

Table No.(1) showed that 10 companies of the respondents believed that CSR is a volunteer activity to local communities, while 9 firms of the respondents considered that CSR means firm charity practices to their firms' marketing reasons and 8 companies of the total population sample regarded that CSR is a firm's commitment to the environment. As for those who had chosen that CSR means a commitment toward their employees their number was only 6 firms. Moreover, 4 companies of the respondents thought that CSR is an approach that aims to achieve commercial profit. Nevertheless, just 2 companies of the respondents considered CSR as a strategy to deal with stakeholders in a way that doesn't conflict with society's welfare and the same companies' number were familiar with the term as policies that are integrated into the overall marketing activities/decisions of the company to reduce the negative impacts on the internal and external environment.

Firms' Attitude toward Publishing CSR Reports

Disclosing information about companies' CSR performance seems to become one of the most important CSR requirements. The respondents were asked about publishing CSR reports in order to ensure company's integrity and commitment toward giving information about its economic, environmental, social and ethical performance.

The majority of the population sample (82.7%) did not publish CSR reports, while only 13.8% (8 companies) published CSR reports and when they were asked to determine the specific duration for publishing their reports 12.1% specified that they annually publish reports, while 1.7% of the total sample specified that they publish it monthly. Nevertheless, the analysis showed that 3.5% of the total population sample (in progress) plan to publish CSR report annually.

Kinds of CSR Reports

The 8 respondents who stated that they published reports were asked to state the types of these reports. CSR reporting enables firms to consider their impacts of wide range of sustainability issues (economic, environmental, social, customer, employees and supplier management), enabling them to be more transparent about the risks and the opportunities they face.

Data showed that all of the respondents (100%) were interested in publishing more than one report. Most companies concerned with publishing customers report, followed respectively by employees, environmental and finally social reports, but none of them were interested in publishing a supplier management report.

CSR activities

It was necessary to determine the CSR activities/practices that the companies support. Thus, the respondents were asked to determine which program of societal activities the company adheres to.

Table 2

Practices of CSR

CSR activities	Frequency
Workers welfare	28
Charities programs for orphans/poor	27
Environmental program	8
Educational- Health care programs	5
Small and medium tourism projects	3
Training and professional courses for locals	1
No action	30
Others	--

*** Availability of choosing more than one answer**

Table No. (2) clarified that many respondents (30 companies) did not practice any CSR activity, while more than quarter of the population sample (28 companies) believed that their companies supported one or more socially responsible activities. The most common activity among respondents was that the company gives the first preference to workers' welfare than to charities programs for orphans/the poor. These findings came in agreement with Leslie (2012) who revealed that creating and maintaining customer satisfaction depends on the employees and their capabilities, competence and willingness to provide quality service. Thus employers (companies) in the tourism sector take their responsibilities toward their workers. It is followed by the environmental program, it has been noted in the literature that the environment plays a key role in the tourism industry, as it is often of the main attractions for tourists (Argandona, 2010), educational- health care programs, small and medium tourism projects, and finally training and professional courses for locals came the final activity which tourism companies support.

It is concluded that the relative priority of which CSR activity is supported may vary from one company to another. For some companies, employees' responsibility is a key part of CSR, for others social responsibility or environmental responsibility is the core of their activities.

Consequently, this indicated that tourism businesses tend to take some form of CSR action but they are not familiar with the real meaning of this term and its practices.

CSR Obstacles

There are a number of major obstacles hindering the application of CSR practices and policies into tourism companies. Respondents were asked if there were any obstacles confronting the firm's engagement in CSR and societal activities. Responses showed that all the respondents (100%) faced obstacles in implementing CSR in their tourism businesses. It was necessary to identify the factors that act as barriers to help companies overcome these challenges. Table No. (3) illustrated these factors.

Table 3

Factors that affect CSR adoption

Responses	Frequency
Lack of awareness of the concept of CSR and its importance	50
Absence of governmental support to adopt CSR programs	38
Lack of the budget that is needed for CSR activities	32
Rare experts in the field of CSR	24
Disbelief of the management that there is a link between CSR activities and the nature of tourism sector	18
The Company's belief that CSR waste time and money	8
Others	3

*Availability of selecting more than one answer

The analysis of the above table No.(3) explained that the lack of awareness of CSR concept and the absence of governmental support (tax reduction, providing loans, reduction of interest on loans, custom facilities, license facilities, land use approvals, arrange training sessions for employees to become more environmentally and socially responsible ...etc.) to adopt the international certifications of CSR, to adopt CSR programs were considered to be the largest challenges that affect CSR engagement. These findings are in line with Dodds and Kuehnel (2010) that stated that most tourism companies find it difficult to organize their core business in a responsible way and to develop the conditions under which a product can be defined as "responsible". They often do not have appropriate knowledge of the destination, understanding and skills in community development and the budget to invest in long-term planning such as a CSR strategy requires. This issue is particularly serious since SMEs represent the majority of tourism industry. While, the company's belief that CSR is a waste time and money was the least influential obstacle (8 companies). Lack of the budget that is needed to implement CSR activities was represented by 32 companies, it seemed to be a significant barrier but was not the greatest. This result contradicts with the present literature by Dodds and Joppe (2005) which stated that the important aspect that limits the adoption of CSR by tourism companies is financial resources and the high costs of reporting and certification systems assessing the business responsibility. Many programs are so costly to run and the costs for the reconfiguration of internal processes are also high.

Rare experts in the field of CSR was represented by less than half of the population sample (24 companies), while disbelief of the management that there is a link between CSR activities and the nature of tourism sector was represented by 18 companies of the total sample and only 3 companies stated that it was due to other barriers, as follows:

1- Customers did not ask for it and CSR is still not in the priorities of the customer demands. Thus, customers still do not include CSR as a dimension of their purchasing criteria. This is actually in contradiction with the literature which found out that tourists are actually willing to pay higher prices for the products/services of socially responsible companies.

2- CSR refers to the owner's vision and there is no clear plan to implement it.

3- There are difficulties in measuring and quantifying its benefits. This result came to agreement with Dodds and Joppe (2005) that stated that there is no effective monitoring and implementation mechanism yet in place for CSR practices. There are also no indications on whether the decisions made on organization involve representatives of local stakeholders, or that tourist guides provide information about local culture, history and customs. This is because of the difficulty to measure the social aspects.

When the respondents were asked an open question about the suggestions to adopt CSR in their firms, only 1 company of the population sample commented that the important concern that is needed to implement CSR is the assistance of the government through providing CSR tools and it requires the effort of the entire players of the market and government. It declared that CSR practices are actually not taxed by the government, and it considered tax exemption to be an incentive for companies to engage in CSR practices.

It is concluded that tourism companies didn't face any pressure from the Egyptian government in order to engage/invest in CSR initiatives, as CSR investments are not taxed. Moreover, Tax exemption would not be the main and great value to the company, since it spends huge budgets on CSR activities.

Environmental Related Practices

When the respondents were asked about their environmental policy, the results indicated the largest part of the population sample (86.2%) did not have attitudes toward environment conservation. While, only 13.8% (8 companies) of the respondents applied environmental conservation policy.

Table 4

The activities of environmental conservation

Responses	Frequency
Monitor/Measure the consumption for saving water, energy and wastes.	5
The Company interests in using of renewable energy sources.	4
Apply environmental impact assessment checklist to assess adverse impacts (new building/construction, daily operations)	1
Organize training sessions to enhance the understanding of the environmental responsibility to its employees	1
Charitable donation for environmental institutes/ projects.	--
Apply purchasing policy for environmentally friendly products	6
Invest a percentage of profit or turnover in species conservation.	--
Others	4

*** Availability of choosing more than one answer**

As shown in Table No.(4), applying a purchasing policy for environmentally friendly products was the most common environmental activity (6 companies of the total population sample), while applying environmental impact assessment checklist to assess adverse impacts and organizing training sessions to enhance the understanding of the environmental responsibility to

its employees were the least common environmental activities. The other related activities were monitoring/measuring the consumption for saving water, energy and wastes and the company interest in using the renewal energy sources, respectively. There weren't any positive responses toward investing a percentage of profit or turnover in species conservation or charitable donation for environmental institutes/ projects. 4 companies of the total population sample stated that their own practices related to environmental preservation as follows:

- 1- Reducing any environmental negative impact, all places visited are to be left as they found them.
- 2- Environment preserving projects, there were three companies stated their projects as follows:
 - Cooperating with the government annually to clean the areas used as a camp for tourists, especially in Bahariya and the White Desert.
 - Organizing a yearly desert cleaning project in the Wadi al-Rayan protected area, and encouraging all staff's firm to participate in such events.
 - Organizing a Nile purification project to clean the water and banks of the River Nile on a yearly basis.
- 3- Using vehicles that are regularly maintained, provided with baskets for rubbish in addition to environmentally friendly exhaust systems, and modernized in order to diminish the carbon fumes released aiming at diminish the negative effect of this harmful chemical substance on the environment
- 4- Encouraging their employees not to smoke during working hours and it is not allowed also for their guests to smoke in the company's vehicles.
- 5- Arranging weekly meeting for department managers to ensure that all operations have minimal impact on the environment. They emphasize reducing noise pollution by ordering their tour drivers to refrain for using their car horns and encourage their staff to go out of their way to pick up trash at tourist sites.
6. Providing advice through their diving guides and tour guides on preservation of Egypt's coral reefs, emphasizing the damage that touching or removing coral reefs does to the ecosystem of the Red Sea.
7. Always offering questionnaires for their customers to improve their services in terms of environmental impact.
- 8-Supporting green and eco- tourism.

Community Related Activities

The respondents were asked to clarify how their firms benefit the local community.

Table 5

Community Related Activities

Responses	Frequency
Support programs that measure the company's participation in solving local unemployment and illiteracy problems.	6
Provide benefit-sharing agreements	3
Support/participate in culture, arts and health activities/events.	24
Support charitable donation programs for locals	27
Support pro-poor programs	19
Support volunteer activities	15
Support architectural coordination	0
Invest in infrastructure	0
Employ a percentage of indigenous	0
Set a specific budget for gardening the local communities	0
Participate in facing local emergency crises and disasters.	1
Others	--

***Availability of selecting more than one answer**

As shown in Table No. (5) the most common community related activities among the sample were supporting charitable donation programs for locals and supporting/participating in culture, arts and health activities/events (27 and 24 companies), respectively. The previous analysis showed that almost most tourism companies implemented one of these two activities. While, supporting pro-poor programs was represented by 19 companies of the population sample, support volunteer activities represented as 15 companies, support programs that measure the company's participation in solving local unemployment and illiteracy problems represented by 6 companies of the population sample, provide benefit-sharing agreements was represented by 3 companies, and only 1 company of the respondents participate in facing local emergency crises and disasters.

Finally, investing in infrastructure, employing a percentage of indigenous, setting specific budgets for gardening the local communities, and participating in facing local emergency crises and disasters showed negative results.

Employees' Code of Conduct

The purpose of this question was to verify if the company's code of conduct develops and maintains a standard that is acceptable to the company and its employees, and that is consistent with the overall policies and reflect how the company perceives its image.

The population sample was asked about the employees' code of conduct. It is noted that less than half of the respondents (48.3%) apply employees' code of conduct, while 51.7% of the sample did not adopt it.

It was important to determine the employees related CSR practices in the code of conduct. The analysis showed that the most common items covered in employees' code of conduct are working conditions(28 companies), employees' families health care programs (14 companies), rationing the unfair dismissal for employees(13 companies), non-discrimination and harassment (10 companies), respectively. Finally, the least item was employees' participation in company decisions represented by 2 companies.

It has been noted that the most respondents have adopted activities which are of benefit to employees. Most tourism companies deal with their employees on a basis of respect of their human rights to build mutually beneficial relationships with them. Although most firms are not thoroughly aware of CSR and its practices, they have adopted some CSR activities to serve their employees. One company commented that every year all employees are invited to conduct blood tests and weight measurement as well as the percentage of body fats to provide them the necessary health care.

Firms' attitude toward women and handicapped employment

The population sample was asked about equal opportunities in employing women and handicapped and they were asked to identify the percentage. Results revealed that a percentage of 93.1 did not apply an employment program for women and handicapped. While 6.9% of the respondents had an equal opportunities program for the employment of women and handicapped. When they were asked about the proportion of women and the disabled employment, the ratios ranged between 50% for women and 5% for handicapped, 3% for handicapped, 2% for handicapped while one firm commented that this percentage varies and is not fixed.

Firms' trends related to suppliers policy

Results revealed that a percentage of 82.8 (48 companies) were communicating with their suppliers about the suppliers' policy. While only 17.2% (10 companies) of the respondents did not take action toward the communication with suppliers they deal. Thus, the positive respondents were asked about the application of suppliers' policy.

It was shown that more than half of the population sample (55.2%) ensured that the supplier's policy is effectively implemented through suppliers' meetings. While, self-assessment questionnaires were represented by 20.7% of the total population sample. Results also revealed that audits conducted by an external auditor were represented by 5.2%. Only 1.7% of the firms ensure that the supplier's policy is effectively implemented by audits conducted by the company.

According to the results of the questionnaire which was directed to the Egyptian tourism enterprises, most tourism firms did not apply CSR programs in their businesses. Corporate social responsibility is applied more broadly in the private tourism sector compared to the governmental tourism sector. Although, most tourism companies were not familiar with the real meaning of CSR term and its principles, they tended to practice some form of CSR focusing on philanthropic responsibility and environmental at the first place. They considered CSR as a synonym for charity. Societal marketing and CSR is a relatively growing field in Egypt.

The most common CSR activities supported by tourism companies were workers welfare, charity programs for orphans/poor, environmental program, educational- health care programs, small and medium tourism projects, and finally training and professional courses for locals that came as least activity.

It is noted that the lack of CSR awareness and the absence of the governmental support to adopt CSR programs were considered to be the largest barriers that affect CSR engagement. On the other hand, the disbelief of the management in CSR importance and benefits came as the least barrier that challenged the adoption of CSR in tourism companies.

It has been revealed that although Egypt is considered as one of the most ecologically diverse countries in the world, the largest proportion of the sample did not apply an environmental commitment in managing its operations. Applying purchasing policy for environmentally friendly products was the most common environmental factor which companies implemented,

while applying environmental impact assessment (EIA) checklist to assess adverse impacts and organizing training sessions to enhance the understanding of the environmental responsibility to firms' employees were the least common environmental activities. A small proportion of the sample selected their suppliers depending on their environmental criteria like having an environmental code of conduct and using environmentally friendly products where possible. The largest part of the sample did not apply measuring indicators of environmental criteria in their policies. Providing transparent information about firm's environmental activities came in the first place, while determining a specific budget for environmental prevention came in the least place. Most tourism companies did not adhere to any programs to raise local communities' environmental awareness; the most common environmental activities for raising locals' awareness were participating in local environmental events and providing training sessions on environmental responsibilities. While, the least common environmental activity was programs for waste recycle.

According to the findings, more than half of the sample was not providing appropriate environmental behavior to their customers during their visits and they also did not design an online page for responsible travel. Most tourism firms indicated that they did not assess their environmental practices.

Regarding employees responsibility, field study results indicated that less than half of the respondents applied employees' code of conduct that covered items which are working conditions, family's employees' health care programs, rationing the unfair dismissal for employees, on-discrimination and harassment and finally employees' participation in company decisions, respectively.

Regarding the suppliers' responsibility, results of the questionnaire revealed that the vast majority of tourism firms communicated with their suppliers on the firms' suppliers' policy during suppliers meetings and contractual terms, while presentation through the web-page/newsletters represented the least choice.

Conclusions

CSR is not a tourism fashion; it is a marketing and management tool from the side of the tourism business to the society and the government. It helps the government in achieving its desired responsibility towards the society and it helps the sectors in need in the society to share in the benefits that the tourism sector is enjoying. Thus, it is very important for societies, businesses, governments and stakeholders.

Any tourism organization whether public or private, regardless of its size and limited resources, should take into account its social, environmental, communal and employees' responsibility in every decision it makes from sales, distribution, to marketing and product design.

Although most tourists make purchasing decisions based on such factors as price, weather, type and range of facilities and quality, more and more tourists are also concerned about the ethics of travel and more likely to book a holiday with a company that has a written code guaranteeing good working conditions, protection of the environment and support of local charities in the tourist destination.

Any activity that helps to improve the society or that does well to any level of the community will have its future positive impact. This positive impact could be direct on the level of gaining a

competitive advantage and enhancing the image and reputation of the tourism company. It could be indirect on the level of saving environmental and human resources.

Adopting corporate social responsibility in the tourism industry requires that all stakeholders play a critical part for setting of policies, practices and programs that steer business operations. Therefore, stakeholders are not only beneficiaries but also partners in developing and implementing societal programs.

CSR is found on the basis of the acknowledgment of tourism businesses that they need to understand and manage the business' wider influence on society for the benefit of both the company and society as a whole.

CSR is a relatively growing field in Egypt. Most tourism companies were not familiar with the real meaning of CSR term and its principles and yet there is no clear plan for implementing CSR in tourism businesses.

Recommendations

Recommendations directed to governments

1-Governments have to provide the frameworks which enable the implementation of the responsible business activities. 2- Governments can hold awareness campaigns about CSR to increase the awareness of CSR meaning, activities and benefits, providing incentives (tax reduction, providing loans, reduction of interest on loans, custom facilities, license facilities, land use approvals,...etc.) to adopt the international certifications of CSR. It is recommended for the Egyptian government to increase the percentage of tax exemption in order to compensate companies for their expensive social investments. 3-Legislate for corporate social responsibility reporting and develop clear guidelines to follow by the tourism sector distributed through industry associations to provide measurable criteria by which companies and destinations can be compared, and offer tourism guidelines reporting 4- Egyptian government has to activate the role of the Egyptian corporate responsibility center (ECRC) which has a role in spreading awareness about societal marketing and in providing a variety of CSR services to empower companies in Egypt and help them comply with CSR principles.

Recommendations directed to travel agencies

1-Embed the culture of the responsibility into the company by setting fair salaries criteria, regular training for internal and external stakeholders, cooperating with other firms, establishing an ethical codes, reviewing customer opinions regularly and involving transparency that will increase the commitment level of all stakeholders and customers.2- Companies have to work hand in hand with the government and collaborate with other stakeholders, including NGOs, experts.....etc for the interest of the society to help them with the implementation of the CSR projects; this is because NGOs are well-integrated among local communities.3-Use CSR as a new marketing tool to optimize tourism benefits by using "Responsible Tourism" as part of the firm's marketing strategy and showcase the company's progress to the existing and potential customers and publicize the enterprise's plan of action / list of guidelines and include this information in promotional material.

The Egyptian tourism firms can apply societal marketing practices through

1- Environmental Responsibility

Apply environmental policy or follow best practice guideline that includes the following items;

Organize training sessions to enhance the understanding of the environmental responsibility of firms' employees, Publish and inform companies' customers regularly about the firm's environmental activities, risks and opportunities (report the corporate environmental progress), Set environmental criteria for selecting firm's suppliers (deal with suppliers that have environmental certification like ISO 14001, 14064, 50001, blue flag...etc). Raise guests' awareness about their potential impact on the environment through company's website. Stop arranging trips, especially in ecologically sensitive areas and discourage activities that harm eco-system. Control company's employees not to smoke during working hours and prohibit guests not to smoke in their vehicles. Arrange weekly/monthly meeting for department managers to ensure that all operations have minimal impact on the environment. Use or rent vehicles that are environmentally friendly exhaust systems and modernized in order to diminish the carbon fumes released aiming at diminish on the environment. Modify computers, monitors, fax machines and scanners to be energy star compliant. Set a monitoring system for daily use of energy sources, Companies have to take its responsibility by using the following items:

- A- Energy and water efficient equipment; here are a few examples: replace the exit light with LEDs, use of an HVAC system which monitors and controls, comfortable temperatures efficiently (Heating, Ventilating and air conditioning), use light and water sensor system independent on employees' numbers, save energy using photo cells (solar energy), use plants that takes less amount of water and independent of its watering drip irrigation system,
- B- Eco-friendly cleaning supplies that are non-toxic and safe for the environment and people,
- C- Recycling bins for plastic and paper cups,
- D- Printers, copiers that have double-sided printing capabilities and papers that are environmentally preferable,
- E- Paints that do not contain any heavy metals or toxic substances, pesticides chemicals paint.

2-Local communities' responsibility

Support and participate in projects which aim at alleviating poverty for examples: Build houses with all necessary infrastructures like electricity, waste water treatment sewerage, renovate houses, installing water taps and latrines in houses in poor areas in tourism communities. Establish a community services center, which includes a bakery, polyclinic, training centers, nursery and school as the center will be used to generate income, provide training sessions for craft workers to improve their skills and designs. Support projects aimed to improve and increase the income of women who are micro-entrepreneurs in poor areas. Use the handmade local products in the brushes tourism companies and hotels to support and develop national/local industries and to provide a direct source of income for the locals to feel interest on them and keen to promote tourism. Take leadership in social initiatives ,perhaps the first company to conduct campaigns to educate consumers (tourists) on what CSR really means, would gain a greater advantage as it will always be associated in the minds of consumers with the concept of CSR. Set a specific budget for gardening the local communities in tourist places, provide information to tourists to respect the culture and traditions for local communities. Engage in philanthropic activities and give money for all charitable causes like orphans marriage. Coordinate with tourism Authority of tourism (ministry) and its department to provide programs and sessions for locals to raise their educational and health awareness and raise the awareness about tourism importance and its potential positive impact for them. Report firms' social

responsibility progress. Set social criteria for selecting firm's suppliers (suppliers that depend on locals on import organic food and vegetables).

3-Suppliers Responsibility

Firms have to set a suppliers policy and should communicate its suppliers' policy, through suppliers meeting, web page and contractual terms, support hotels and restaurant where possible to use local products to support long-term maintenance of eco-systems and agriculture for future generations. This policy will prohibit the use of toxic synthetic pesticides and fertilizers irradiation, sewage sludge and genetic engineering.

4-Employees

Set employees' code of conduct which includes regular training to raise the employees' skills, avoid discrimination between employees, involve all employees in company's CSR practices to feel loyal and proud of their companies, set a policy to develop an equal opportunities program in order to employ women and handicapped, offer suitable working conditions (hours, overtime, incentives, salaries, health care program and family medical insurance.....), don't downsize during economic, tourism and political crisis, provide questionnaires to make sure of employees satisfaction about working conditions and employees code of conduct.

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تقييم تطبيق المسؤولية الاجتماعية للشركات السياحية المصرية

تقوى محمد عيسوي

المعهد العالي للدراسات النوعية

المفص

معلومات المقالة

الكلمات المفتاحية

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اكتسب الدور الاجتماعي للقطاع الخاص أهمية متزايدة في الآونة الأخيرة، وخاصة بعد تخلي الحكومه عن بعض ادوارها في المجتمع ، فأصبحت لشركات القطاع الخاص دوراً محورياً في عمليات التنمية الاقتصادية والاجتماعيه .وقد ادركت الشركات في الآونة الأخيرة انها عباره عن كيانات اقتصاديه ترتبط بالمجتمع الذي تعمل فيه، وأنه كلما تحسنت ظروف المجتمع الاجتماعي والأقتصادي ازدادت فرصتها في التوفيق بين تحقيق الأرباح التجارية المنشودة والعمل في بيئه أفضل من ناحية وتحسين جودة الحياة والحفاظ على المجتمع من ناحيه أخرى، وذلك باعتبار أن المؤسسة والعمل جزء لا ينفصل عن المجتمع، فكما للشركات الحق في تحقيق أرباحاً فيقع عليها واجب ومسئولية اجتماعيه تجاه من يحقق لها هذه الأرباح وهو المجتمع ككل. وتتلخص مشكلة الدراسة في نقص وعي قطاع الأعمال السياحي المصري بمفهوم وتطبيقات وفرص وأهمية المسؤولية الاجتماعية، حيث تخلق برامج تطبيق المسؤولية الاجتماعية للشركات السياحية العديد من الفرص التسويقية كتحسين سمعة المنشأة وصورتها الذهنية أمام عملائها وصناع القرار والمؤسسات الحكومية، كما تؤثر بالإيجاب في حجم المبيعات وضمن ولاء المستهلكين وتحقيق ميزة تنافسية في السوق السياحي. ولكن تواجه هذه الشركات العديد من العقبات والتحديات لتبني برامج المسؤولية الاجتماعية، ولعل أهم هذه العقبات هو قصور وعي الشركات العاملة في المجال السياحي بمفهوم المسؤولية الاجتماعية وفوائدها، وأنشطتها بتطبيقاتها الواسعة والمختلفة، حيث لاتزال نظرة الشركات محدودة للمسؤولية الاجتماعية وقصر أنشطتها علي الأعمال الخيرية، ولذلك يعد خلق البيئة المواتية للمسؤولية الاجتماعية للشركات بمثابة الخطوة الأولى لضمان نجاح تطبيق ما هو مطلوب من ذلك المفهوم. وقد حاولت الدراسة إلقاء الضوء علي أهميه تطبيق برامج التسويق المجتمعي في صناعة السياحة، والتعرف علي الممارسات والبرامج الخاصة بالمسؤولية الاجتماعية للشركات السياحية، وتحديد وتحليل العقبات التي تواجه تطبيق المسؤولية الاجتماعية في القطاع السياحي المصري، هذا بالإضافة إلي تقييم مدى تطبيق الأنشطة الخاصة بالمسؤولية الاجتماعية في شركات السياحة المصرية والتوصل الي مجموعة من التوصيات والاقتراحات الموجهة لكافة الجهات المعنية بتفعيل آليات المسؤولية الاجتماعية في شركات السياحة وإعداد نموذج عملي لكيفية تطبيق محاور المسؤولية الاجتماعية في وكالات السفر والسياحة المصرية. وقد تم توزيع استمارات الاستقصاء على شركات السياحة المصرية (فئة أ) لتقييم مدى تطبيق هذه الشركات لأنشطة المسؤولية الاجتماعية في محافظتي القاهرة والجيزة، باعتبارهم أكبر محافظتين في جمهورية مصر العربية ونظراً لتمرکز أكبر عدد من شركات السياحة بهم من خلال تصميم وتوزيع استمارات استقصاء موجهة إلى شركات السياحة المصرية فئة (أ) حيث تم توزيع عدد 58 استمارة بما يمثل 2.5% من مجموع عدد شركات السياحة المصرية بشكل عشوائي، للتعرف علي مدى وعي الشركات السياحية بمفهوم وتطبيقات المسؤولية الاجتماعية وكذلك التعرف علي برامج المسؤولية الاجتماعية التي تطبقها وكالات السفر والسياحة، ومدى تحمل المؤسسات السياحية لمسئولياتهم تجاه المجتمع .