

Egypt Tourism and Its Importance in Sustainable Development Goals

Zheng Haiying¹

¹International Relation School, Jinan University

1076482720@qq.com

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Abstract: Tourism, as one of the four pillar industries in Egypt, which plays a huge impact on Egypt's economic and social fields. When we look at the contribution of Egypt tourism, we usually focus on its direct economic contribution in domestic like GDP and its revenue, while seriously ignored the other social benefits from the tourism that driven by the tourism indirectly, from physical facilities to the metal, and meanwhile ignored the contrition of tourism in global level. Therefore, at first, in this study, the attention of Egypt tourism's contribution will turn into the global level, especially into the tourism's success in Sustainable Development Goals, through the tourism's direct and indirect contribution. Secondly, the trend of Egypt future's tourism development coordinate with the SDG, will be Green Tourism, Economic Empowerment of Women, and Innovation & Digitalization.

1 INTRODUCTION

“Tourism,” according to World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) description to this term, “ is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purpose”(‘Glossary of tourism terms’, UNWTO). Tourism, is not reflected in the “movement of places”, but also one form of “movement of people”. At the mean time, in 21th century, tourism is not only a tool of economic growth, but also an instrument in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, geared towards reducing poverty and fostering sustainable development, for example, tourism is included in three of the 17 universal Goals: Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth; Goal 12 on responsible consumption and production and Goal 14 on life below water.

Egypt is known for its unique ancient cultural landscape and splendid natural scenery--- for example, the majestic and world-famous Giza pyramid complex and Great Sphinx in Cairo, Luxor's Karnak Temple and the Valleys of the Kings, and the splendid desert landscape and the Red Sea. These attract thousands of people from all over the world to Egypt every year. According to the UNWTO's ‘Egypt : Country- specific : Basic Indicators (Compendium) for 2013-2017’ , the Arab

Republic of Egypt received a total of 9.464 million tourists in 2013, among them 73% or 6,976,000 were Europeans (UNWTO, 2019). Furthermore, in 2014, the total number of tourists is 9.878 million, about 83% of inbound tourists came from Europe, and the tourists from Arab countries account for 17% of international arrivals, generating a total of USD 7.2 billion in revenues. According to Egypt's Tourism Satellite Account, there are 1.7 million full time workers serving the tourism industry directly, while 2.2 million workers in other tourism related sectors. Tourism directly and indirectly supports 14.1% of total employment in the country in 2013.

Tourism, as one of the four pillar industries in Egypt, which plays a huge impact on Egypt's economic and social fields. Direct economic benefits of tourism include the generation of foreign exchange, creation of jobs, contribution to revenues and promotion of development. In the mean time, tourism also produce the indirect influence on the economic sectors, improve the infrastructure construction—like hotel, agriculture, handicraft manufacturing. Furthermore, it can improve the condition of transportation, service, financial facilities, cultural facilities, and health facility too, even narrowing the gap of income and employment disparities among regions, and helping to alleviate the poverty and inequality.

Therefore, when we look at the contribution of Egypt tourism, is not contributed to GDP and

revenue, but also to reducing poverty, enhancing the quality of education, improving the situation of good health & well-being, and even in reducing the inequalities and promoting the gender equality etc.

2 THEORETICAL

Tourism, as one form of “movement of people”, for its direct, indirect and induced effect of tourism spending, was closely linked to Sustainable Development Goals. Tourism has the potential to contribute, directly or indirectly, to all of the goals. In particular, it has been included as targets in Goals 8, 12, and 14 on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production and the sustainable use of oceans and marine resources, respectively.

3 METHOD

The method I used in this paper is qualitative method. Here, I gathered data by looking at policy documents and interviewing policy makers of tourism. I also observed tourism building activities in some cities in Egypt.

4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Decent Work and Economic Growth

Tourism is a labour-intensive industry and its employment varies widely sectors. It creates the jobs directly in tourism related industries, like accommodation, restaurant, tourism attractions, shops etc. Tourism directly and indirectly supports 14.1% of total employment in the country in 2013, which means almost 12.66 million people’s carriers are related to tourism, more decent job and less poverty in Egypt society. About 9 million of international visitors arrival has contributed a total of \$ 7.2 billion in revenues, the great contribution of tourism on Egypt’s GDP makes tourism as one of the four pillar industries, and the economic growth is also dependent on tourism deeply.

Distribution of Tourism Revenues in Egypt, mainly in those aspects: Foreign Exchange Earnings; Contribution to Gross Domestic Product, which shows that the basic input for estimating the economic impact is tourist expenditure; the increase of Government Revenues, government receive revenues in the forms of income taxes on tourism enterprises and workers in tourism sector.

4.2. Quality Education

The Quality Education is mainly related to the train capacity on tourism for related industries at various level. In university level, there are only approximately 2000 tourism and hotel graduates every year; in total between 3000 and 3500 students graduate from technical institutes. Although there are many educational institutional of universities and second level in Egypt, even personal requirement in the tourism industry covers the tourism courses, the level and type of education should be examined to special type of work, the quality and quantity in education is still urgently necessary.

In order to improve the level of tourism service quality, Egypt Ministry of Tourism try to improve the skillset, educational curricular and ethic of tourism to meet the labor market needs. To improve

and elevate the skillset of the workforce in the tourism sector, cooperate with the private sector, Technical and Vocational Education Training, donors and supporting civil society organization to conduct training courses to improve the skill level of employees ; ensuring that quality and quantity of workforce meets labour market needs; linking the educational curricular to the needs of the labour market.

4.3. Responsible Consumption and Production

To promote the tourism development and infrastructure development, expand Egypt's current capacity of 89,993 hotel rooms to a total of 238,114 rooms by completing the ongoing construction of 55,121 rooms in touristic areas as well as fostering the construction of additional 183,000 rooms subject to the Ministry's Tourism Development Authority; enhance the existing infrastructure in TDA's touristic areas, including 168 water desalination stations, 226 sewage treatment stations and 508 electric generators and stations, 478 kilometres road work. The tourism accommodation development in Red Sea, Upper Nile, and South Sinai sub-regions areas, will help to minimize the regional disparities in the level of development and to get better distribution of tourist flow.

Beside that, update the hotel classification criteria according to international standards ; improve the international health and food safety standards of hotels in collaboration with independent internationally accredited audit firms and the Ministry of Health.

4.4. Conserve and Sustainable Use of Oceans, Seas and Marine Resources

In Egypt tourism, Red Sea has a sustainable development. The Red Sea project utilized a wide variety of outreach approaches and mechanisms to connect with the array of stakeholders involved with managing, developing, supplying, and participating in tourist activities and enterprises.

The achievements has been made in Red Sea's tourism development, for example, ecologically sensitive zoning plans developed for and adopted in TDA lands south of Marsa Alam; increased appreciation and understanding of sustainable tourism, including a development plan and standards for the Southern Red Sea Region; introduction of environmental management systems for hotels and resorts, including Green Globe 21 certification of

seven properties; development of standardized Environmental Impact Assessment screening forms for coastal development, including a tracking system for EIA approvals and monitoring; promotion of "best practices" for water, sanitation, energy, solid waste, and landscaping.

4.5. The Trend of Egypt Tourism Development

Egypt, as a tourism country, the tourism development's trend will mainly turn to Green Tourism, Economic Empowerment of Women, Innovation & Digitalization.

Even if Egypt has a relatively sustainable tourism development now, there still have lots of environmental problems in tourism, existing industries facilities, tourism projects, companies operating in the oil and gas sector, infrastructure projects and other projects which would have an impact on the environment. The main problems are such as solid waste; fluctuation of ground water level; air pollution; water pollution and biodata. Solid waste is the main problem in tourism areas and historical spots, the use of handcrafts and plastic bags impose a great threat to the environment. Air pollution is mainly caused by many large- and middle-sized buses for tourist transportation and travel are operated in tourism areas and historical spots, which not only have an bad effect on the people life, but also for the ruins and the historical assets, even for the local environment.

To develop Egypt's Green Tourism, the Ministry of Tourism decide to branding Egypt as a responsible destination with recognized environmental and social sensitivities to meet future demands on green tourism products and service. For the Green tourism, Egypt government will increase the hotel sector's green competitiveness through global recognition, and link the green tourism standards to the "New Norms " currently developed for hotel ratings, and also encourage the investments in Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy technologies.

To develop Economic Empowerment of Women in tourism, it's great importance of increasing the workforce of women in tourism sector. For this, it's necessary to improve the female's education level in Egypt, to cooperate with tourism faculties to address the low school-to-work transition, to provide the anti-harassment training at the workplace, and to change the women's social position. The National Council for Women has also launched its National

Strategy for Women Empowerment 2030. This Strategy focus on empowering women to accelerate the achievement of sustainable development, as well as promoting gender equality in all fields of life.

To develop Innovation & Digitalization, Egypt try to encourage innovative and digital solutions for the tourism sector to enhance its competitiveness. In the era of global technology, it's very necessary to put the high technologies into tourism fields for its sustainable development. Therefore, need to collaborate with business innovation centers to create an enabling environment for innovative start-ups, and to collaborate with academic institutions to conduct joint start-up competitions, more importantly need to collaborate with international institutions to enhance productive inter-linkage between MSME and large businesses in the tourism industry.

5 CONCLUSION

The Government of Egypt is committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. This commitment is reflected in the framework of Egypt's national strategy, "Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030." The SDG is not only a strategy for the government, but also a plan for all stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society and international organizations. Tourism as a form of "movement of people", is not only related to the tourist destination, but also the country's tourism related sectors, such as the local government, different industries related to tourism, the stakeholders, the local community and also the international organizations.

Tourism as one of the four pillar industries in Egypt's economy, through tourism direct and indirect contribution, we can tell that tourism play an very important role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, towards reducing poverty, providing the decent jobs, and fostering sustainable development etc. The government programs in infrastructure, particularly those in housing, energy and water, are ensuring that Egypt makes considerable progress towards achieving the SDGs, particular in long term.

When we look at the trends of Egypt tourism development, which is also closely linked to Sustainable Development Goals. Egypt government try to development the Green tourism, Economic Empowerment of Women, and Innovation & Digitalization, which means that Egypt will put the

element of green, equality and technology into its tourism development, to be more sustainable.

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