

Cultural events as promotional tool of egypt tourism essay



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Tourism is considered to have a great strategic importance for any economy owing to its capacity for job creation and wealth generation. If a country creates an efficient strategic tourism plan and implement it in true letter and spirit, it can be a source of having a competitive advantage. This is the reason that in many countries the governments and tourism stakeholders are putting their heads together so as to enter a commitment for developing this sector. The basic focus of this study is to have an in-depth analysis of various strategic planning approaches on tourism, keeping the main focus on Egypt. By evaluating the different approaches in context of their pros and cons a viewpoint will finally be maintained.

In order to figure out that to what extent the sustainability principles like reflecting community values, ensuring stakeholder's participation, providing mutual benefits to the guest & host and like practices generally and in Egyptian tourism particularly, the study will analyze various strategic plans and related theories and practices too. This will create a better understanding of the Egyptian tourism and the lacuna in their strategic planning.

The study yielded that there were unarticulated strategic plans in the Egyptian tourism that are actually becoming a hindrance in achievement of the desired results. By analyzing the loopholes in current practices major findings are presented and some meaningful suggestions too that will serve as a tool for future betterment and development of Egyptian and general tourism.

INTRODUCTION

The idea of exploring the world and its nature for the sake of deriving pleasure or exploration emerged in the very beginning of humanity. With the development of civilizations, the traveling turned into tourism and today it is taken as a very sophisticated field. Tourism means " Any person visiting a country other than the one in which he/she actually resides and for a period of at least twenty four hours" Today tourism is a fine collection of services, activities and industries that deliver a complete travel experience which includes accommodation, transportation, food establishments , entertainment businesses, retail shops , activity facilities along with hospitality facilities for the tourist individuals or groups who are traveling away from home (Cook et al, 2009).

Tourism can be very lucrative in multi ways. Its economic benefits are translated in to increased job opportunities, economic diversification and higher tax revenue etc. According to World Tourism Organization (WTO), Tourism is presently the world's largest industry that is earning an annual revenue of \$3 trillion and is contributing about 13% to the world's total exports. In United States, tourism provides an employment of over six million job, which makes tourism the country's largest employer (Fodor, 2011).

It is also worthwhile to mention that the benefits of tourism can only be enjoyed if strong strategic tourism planning is made and implemented. While Strategic planning refers to the " Organization's process of defining its strategy or direction where it needs to be, and then making decisions by allocating the organization's resources so as to achieve its very strategy.

Despite of the fact that tourism plays a key role in economic development of <https://assignbuster.com/cultural-events-as-promotional-tool-of-egypt-tourism-essay/>

any country still he lacuna's in the strategic planning, wrong allocation and misuse of tourism resources and non-implementation of strategic plans lead to a great deal of economic losses in context of tourism. So, while it is important to create a viable strategic tourism plan, much important is to ensure its implementation so as to enjoy its associated advantages (Bajwa and Kaur, 2007).

OVERVIEW OF TOURISM IN EGYPT

Egypt is a beautiful country where tourism thrives. If you are keen to become associated with Egypt, then you might like to plan your travels because tourism thrives here. The tourist aspect of Egypt is divided into foreign tourism and domestic tourism (Cook et al, 2009). After revolution due to the change in government, tourism has become even more famous than usual. This is because tourism is a central aspect of the society. With a population of 90 million Egypt receives around 10 to 20 million tourists every year, and that is definitely an astonishing fact. The striking and colossal monuments and traditions of Egypt have given it a never changing image (Fetscherin, 2010). The ancient structures and the prevailing culture have never failed to astonish the people. Egypt is a region of high temperature, still the light and heat makes its deserts even more attractive and desirable to visit. The cool, refreshing turquoise waters sends breezes to the tourists. The famous cruise tours flaunt the romance everywhere and the longest river Nile dazzles the pleasures even more. So if you are planning to have a tour these holidays, make it the tour to Egypt. Not even a single monument of Egypt will leave you disappointed; there is magic in every nook and corner of Egypt (Fodor, 2011).

Egypt's socio-political and economic situation has taken the Egyptian tourism towards many problems. The financial crises that the country is facing is creating hindrances for it in the maintenance of its tourism spots, in addition to this, the instability in political conditions, poor use of natural resources, inefficient strategic planning and lower foreign investment in the country are few of the issues that are leading the tourism towards great decline (Woodside and Martin, 2007).

The political turmoil in Egypt has driven away the foreign tourists from the country. The country is suffering a loss of multi billions due to this weak political condition has effected the Egyptian tourism directly. Since the whole tourism starting from luxury tour operators down to vendors in Cairo bazar is getting down on graph in terms of tourism. The effect gets even badly when the stakeholder tourism countries restrict their tourists traveling to Egypt, being a victim of political instability and creating room for further insecurities for the tourists. The result is that the country is facing lower tourism leading to a decline in foreign investment in the country and ultimately a decline in the job opportunities for those working in the tourist spots in Egypt. The tourist spots are not maintained the way they used to be. The poor strategic planning is also depicting in the form of slower rebound, much slower than was expected which is again becoming a cause of decline in Egyptian tourism. The Egyptian government in particular and World Tourism Organization in general are responsible to take up the matter seriously and bring their heads together so as to make an effective strategic plan for the betterment of tourism condition in Egypt (Smith et al, 2008).

TOURISM PLANNING IN EGYPT

Tourism is a fast growing industry that contributes largely to the economy of any country. It has proven to be a rescuer for many countries who lack resources, but are enriched with beauties. But, sometimes there are real mismanagements and perceived fears that attribute to poorly organized or weak tourism ventures. To handle these mismanaged ventures, the government of the host country designs a Tourism Strategy that aim to provide extensions and ensures the implementation of all the strategic plans and boos the coordination firmly between the public and private sectors relating tourism. These strategies need to follow the principles set by the government. The action plan of tourism strategy needs to cover all the aspects of the country. The highlights need to be projected well before the tourists so that there are more chances for the future arrivals. Since tourism have always been a massive participator in the economy of an enriched a touristic country, every country seems to have its Tourism Strategic Plans. But, each nation has its own aspects to flaunt (Huxham and Vangen, 2010). The use of cultural aspects is too likely to be important, because culture is something rare in every country. A country which is not enriched with beauties, but has a real and a number of cultures followed fascinates the tourists to have more tours. This can also referred to as Culture Tourism which involves the subset of such a tourism that has the host region's culture. Culture may include lifestyle of the natives, history, architecture, historical monuments and definitely the traditions (Fitzgerald et al, 2012).

Tourism has a long history in Egypt and has always been a growth sector in the very country. This is due to Egyptian natural and cultural resources, a

desirable climate and locations that make it even wonderful to the tourists. These attributes provide Egypt an outstanding potential for further tourism development, creating revenues throughout the country from its tourism sector and distributing them across the socio-economic levels. Thus tourism provides Egypt a capacity to influence its economic development to a great extent than any other industry (Ritchie and Hudson, 2006). The particular potential of tourism has long been understood by the Egyptian government as well as the private sector tourism operators and investors, which has led to the creation of services and facilities to meet a variety of market demands. The basic approach behind development in Egyptian tourism is of course boosting the economic development for the country, however there are some other approaches that evolved overtime, let us see them in detail (Weaver and Lawton, 2007).

The tourism in Egypt was mainly encouraged keeping in view the economic approach the country can derive out of it. As tourism played a great role in boosting the Egyptian economy much more than any other sector. The economic development in terms of increased growth inn job creation, higher export earning also became possible due to tourism since tourism has now become the biggest export earner and an increasingly important item on the balance of payments for Egypt. Moreover, the foreign currency receipts from international tourism also raised too high. The development of tourist resorts, more facilities by tour operators and hotels for tourists created new avenues of jobs for many communities residing near the tourism spots in Egypt (Timothy, 2011).

But despite of the multi benefits that arose out of tourism, there were certain drawbacks too that Egypt faced. Mainly at present times when the country is going through the worst political turmoil, The tourism sector has effected badly in terms of lower tourist flow leading to reduced employment rate and lower foreign investment in the country. Thus the economic boom has now to face a great set back due to the political conditions (Yuksel and Yuksel, 2006).

Geographical approach was aimed at shedding light on tourist areas. Certainly, the tourism bring changes to the landscape in the form of changing tourism facilities, establishment of new tourist resorts and making related developments. For the very purpose the geologists and geographers investigated the area in detail so as to understand the impact of these developments on the social and cultural aspects of Egypt. The planning helped Egyptian tourism to a long way as better resorts, tourism facilities were established which helped to attract more tourists to the country and ultimately achieve the tourism goals. The creation of new facilities opened new job slots for many of Egyptians however the same political issues tarnished the whole practices since a fall in tourism led to losses of theses tourists spots and a sudden unemployment too. In the same way while planning for creation of new facilities for tourists a very important aspect was neglected which was the displacement of the residents of those areas. They were not properly compensated thus a positive approach provided room for a socio- economic issue (Timothy, 2011).

The cultural approach in Tourism Strategies Planning is also must because cultural tourism is becoming popular throughout the world. The recent OECD <https://assignbuster.com/cultural-events-as-promotional-tool-of-egypt-tourism-essay/>

report has enlightened that part of cultural tourism is playing a vital role in the developments of many countries. Since cultural tourism takes away the tourists from their normal pace and introduces them to the different cultural side of the world, it provides solidification to the culture of host country and to the cultural deprivation of the tourists (Bajwa and Kaur, 2007). This is the reason why the use of cultural aspect has been made essential in the strategic planning of the tourists. Countries including Turkey, Romania, Lebanon, Tunisia, Kenya, India and many others are gaining a lot of finance from their tourism sector because of the cultural aspect. Thus the realization of the objectives envisaged that the need of adding more cultural aspects to the Action Plan of tourism has become must now. There are long term strategies with more investments (Bajwa and Kaur, 2007). Proper organizations and the maintenance of culture are important. The factor which attracts the tourists to your country needs to be maintained very now and then because it's actually playing a role of a receptive which cannot afford to get old. However, different structures are also being planned to add few more cultural monuments in the country that can assure the future income. The chapter of 'land development pattern' in every country's strategic planning of tourism needs to involve culture also (Smith, 2009).

Analyzing the different approaches that were considered and adopted in the strategic planning of Tourism in Egypt, it is well established that the most profitable industry in Egypt is tourism which is very energetic source and way to earn maximum foreign exchange. Euromonitor report shows the increasing trend which is near about \$10 Billion in every year for the last consecutive three year. From the record of 2010, it is estimated that 14

million tourists came from outside the Egypt, to enjoy major holidays in around Red Sea Area. Euromonitor also predict that 18% increase in economic recovery from the tourism market. Another happening in 2010 was also cause of popularity of tourism marketing in Egypt is decreasing value of Egyptian pound. Economist, students, families and foreign tourists will definitely identify that this will promote tourism in foreign countries as with depreciation of Egyptian pound, tourism expenditure goes down. But depreciation of Egyptian pound cause another problem and that is increasing price of imported goods. This may cause high inflation which can be source for increasing price in local products (Lee et al, 2012).

Proper tourism planning was made after the spring revolution in Egypt which starts from the January 2011 with the protest against govt. More than one million tourists leaved the Egypt due to this revolution. Occupancy rates for hotel industry continuously decreasing. Above all, most of the foreign airlines canceled contracts with the Egyptian airports. Corruption was on high place. Zuhair Garranah, former tourism minister of Egypt was sent to jail due to illegally issued the licenses for building tourism sites. Actually this revolution was take placed against such corruption and then proper look after was made to the tourism department in Egypt (Fitzgerald et al, 2012).

Very first step in tourism planning was the removal of corrupt officer from the tourism department to protect the important and profitable natural heritage of Egypt. Good lesson was learned from this action is that save the heritage for the future generation (Falkheimer, 2007). Further they then made rules and regulation for the management of sustainable Egyptian tourism spots. Under the newly developed department of tourism, lots of <https://assignbuster.com/cultural-events-as-promotional-tool-of-egypt-tourism-essay/>

sites were reserved, i. e. northern beach along the lake Qarun, Mosque of Ibn Tulun, Dahab, Siwa Oasis, Museum of Egypt, Red Sea Reef, and Giza's Pyramids. Another action was made under the Mubarak's government. Ministry of tourism issued an order to make the Lake Qarun a prime land to proper shape as a tourist resort (Richards, 2006).

Due to high response from the local and foreign tourists, it was necessary to make a proper long term plan for the promotion of tourism. Under the plan made by the Egyptian ministry of tourism, increase the size and capacity of tourism in Egypt to attract the tourist outside the Egypt and become competitive all over the world (Hede and Rentschler, 2007). Linking with the capacity of tourism spot in Egypt, ministry also made a decision about increase the hotel facilities near the tourism sites and developed the attraction of foreign tourist toward the non-traditional spots of Egypt. Plan to be made for promoting tourism in Egypt contains several goals, including furnishing 240, 000 hotel for the tourists, earning more than 12 billion revenue from tourism, attracting more than 15 million tourists and capturing 150 tourism nights and producing 1. 2 million jobs for the public of Egypt (Lee et al, 2012).

Keeping in view the political turmoil and its after effects the Egyptian tourism has faced particularly, the Egyptian government has laid down a fresh strategic plan having aim of increasing tourist arrival to Thirty million by 2017. The growth rate is desired to have a target of increasing the tourist flow in the country by 11. 6 million with a revenue of \$ 11 billion by the end of year 2013. This new strategic plan addresses the impact of economic crises that is causing a negative impact on Egyptian tourism and the <https://assignbuster.com/cultural-events-as-promotional-tool-of-egypt-tourism-essay/>

measures that are to be taken on war footings so as to revive and increase tourism in Egypt. The basic focus is on taking measures like promotion of boosting relations with the leading travel agencies around the world, increased allocation of budget for tourism promotion and making all out efforts to improve the country's image so as to achieve the tourist and revenue targets (Schofield and Thompson, 2007).

SUCCESS OF CULTURAL EVENTS AS PROMOTIONAL TOOL OF EGYPT

It is decided that for promoting “ Green and Sustainable development in tourism” Ministry of Tourism will establish a separate department. This decision was taken by the Mounir Fakhry Abdel Nour minister of tourism to promote friendly environment approaches in tourism sector. In early 2009, the ministry of tourism starts an initiative to transmute Sharm into a green city for the tourists that is according to guidelines given by the World Tourism Organization. For this purpose, they hire Bose International to develop green city (Weaver and Lawton, 2007). For sustainability in tourism industry, Government made contract with media to promote safe and healthy advertisement to the outside the Egypt so tourists come and analyze by their self. Cultural events are useful tools to promote safe tourism in the world said by one official of tourism ministry. As cultural events are helpful to gather public with unity so we can use our cultural events in order to wash the label of unsafety and insecurity from our country, he added. In 2012, Belly dancing world cup was an event which helped most to make an impact of safety in living and enjoying Egypt sessions and picnic points. Although this was not traditional cultural event but this is useful event and helped to

make good and peaceful impression. Abu Simbel Festival equally promoted as a peaceful cultural event among whole world (Fitzgerald et al, 2012).

Another effective method to make sustainable tourism industry is coupled the cultural events with sessions. Ministry of tourism make ordered to hotels and resorts to develop low cost budget for tourists in the sessions of cultural events to promote. Government is trying to give more facilities to the foreign as well as local visitors to collect more strength to realize the world about sustainable situation in Egypt. For promoting peaceful and sustainable environment for tourism, regional events are promoted on country level to get tourism on high. Irrespective of religion, race and cultural, people are encouraged to celebrate events collectively. Egypt government is also making efforts for encouraging worldwide festivals in his country for supporting its tourism industry. Guests from other countries are specially invited on special events. These steps are really helped in promoting sustainable tourism (Richards, 2006).

It is very interesting in Egypt that no matter what is the religion and race, everyone take active part in cultural events. At the time of festival, gatherings covered the Abu Simbel Temple at the time of sunrise to eyewitness the light stirring crosswise the temple inside stone and turn on enlightening the Ramses, Ra and Amun's statues. Numbers of cultural events in Egypt are associated with tourism spots and sites. In Egypt, peoples with the support of government, celebrate events. Tourists are also encouraged to participate in these events. Main sites, for those Egypt is famous, are Pyramids and Nile River. Interesting thing is both are associated with cultural

events. These events are celebrated with large numbers of visitors inside the Egypt and outside the Egypt (Humphreys and Gerald, 2011).

Wafaa Al Nil is enthusiastically celebrating River Nile in mid of September since ancient times. The main parts of these events are painting competitions for young generation and children and poetry, music competition and concerts (Licciardi and Amirtahmasebi, 2012). Pharaonic Wedding festival celebrated in November since Pharaonic era. Group weddings take place in this event in the Karnak Temple with royal Pharaonic style and dresses. With the help of struggles made by the govt. and ministry of tourism, now tourists are specially visit Egypt for participating in Events (Lee et al, 2012).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The development of Egyptian tourism can said to be as old as the Egyptian civilization itself is. A major reason of attraction in Egyptian tourism lies on its rich culture, which is blended with thousands of years history. Ancient Egypt is the world's earliest civilization founded on earth. Egypt, since so many years has managed complex and stable culture that is influenced by Europe, Africa, Middle East and Asia. After the end of Pharaonic era, Hellenism was latter influenced and latter Christianity and after Islamic revolution, Islamic culture mix up in Egyptian culture (Schofield and Thompson, 2007). But there are many other considerations and plannings that made Egyptian tourism alive since long. Most important among them are the socio-economic approach, geographical approach and the cultural approach. The Socio-economic approach basically stresses the need to take tourism as a tool to earn better revenues through the government and <https://assignbuster.com/cultural-events-as-promotional-tool-of-egypt-tourism-essay/>

private sector efforts for creating better tourism facilities, thus attracting more tourists towards Egypt (Mason, 2008). Tourism is contributing the most part of revenue in Egyptian economy. The approach has remained successful a long way, however the political instability in the country has affected the very approach badly and the Egyptian tourist stakeholders are trying harder to revive the lost position by making new strategic plans (McKercher et al, 2006).

The geographic approach was a successful approach but the displacement of the residents made a big flaw in the very plan. It was badly being criticized by the Egyptian communities themselves so the success of this approach is also considered questionable (Smith, 2009).

Last but not the least, the Cultural approach. Now while studying Egyptian culture, newer elements are also influenced including the western culture with Islamic culture as Islam is official religion of Egypt (McKercher et al, 2002; Woodside and Martin, 2007). Egyptian economy is mostly based on tourism industry. To earn revenue and take good advantage of tourism spots and places, tourism ministry made long term plan for promoting tourism worldwide in Egypt (Sangar, 2007). In the plan, detailed policies were made to establish integration of tourism with cultural values and made close relation between festivals, events and tourism spots. For better planning, research was made to develop accurate statistics and results showed that expected growth only in cultural tourism was 10 to 15 percent every year. It should be focused that some tourists spend their entire vacations on cultural events or nature, but many others set cultural events as a longer part of

their vocations (Kotler et al, 2009). Thus cultural approach has remained ever successful.

Lots of struggles already made by the Egyptian ministry of tourism but still many other things they should have to do for the better promotion of tourism in country. Suggestions are many but with most possible and effective thing to be done urgently with low cost and low efforts are these; they should try to convince their hotel industry to reduce charges and increase facilities in the events days for specially foreigners. They must promote their regional events and festivals on country level for capture more intention of tourists (Woodside and Martin, 2007). For the previous losses due to political turmoil, it is necessary to make efforts for safety and security of tourists. Egypt government should try to held world level events in hi country to promote culture and tourism in worldwide. Special invitations should be made to the friend countries so they come and enjoy and then go back and give positive response about Egypt. Egypt country tries to convince the documentary film industry to make films on traditional events and places in Egypt so that people, outside the Egypt, realize what Egypt is all about (Jago, 2010).