

Developing Saint Catherine A Sustainable Tourism Development Prospective

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Abstract

This study demonstrates the general aspects of the current sustainable tourism development situation in Saint Catherine, Egypt, while emphasizing the importance of improving the destination brand image. With its cultural and religious assets. The study clarifies the general situation of St. Catherine before and after implementing sustainable tourism development projects. The methodological approach includes quantitative analysis using the deductive approach theory that was accomplished by distributing a questionnaire to 300 visitors and Egyptians regarding re-visiting St. Catherine following the sustainable tourism development. The findings indicate that sustainable development can protect St. Catherine's culture and authenticity, which were proven to have a strong beneficial influence on visitors' intention to revisit. Sustainability mechanisms help governments develop policies for sustaining development and promoting tourism. Therefore, governments may gain a competitive advantage by developing market-relevant strategies and integrating internal and external stakeholders in strategic planning and implementation.

Keywords: Sustainable development, sustainable tourism, economic, environment, social.

I. Introduction

Sustainability is now widely recognized as a vital component of any sort of development evaluation, including tourism. It is critical for the continued development of the tourism industry in regions because it has a greater main effect on the environmental, social and economic development of local economies and communities since it focuses on balance (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005).

According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN, 2006), the three fundamental dimensions of sustainability environmental, social and economic are

represented as pillars, commonly defined as planet, people and profits. Tourist destinations must take all these pillars into account to stay competitive (Deac & Sonko, 2020) As they act as indicators to achieve sustainable-responsible tourism, which is intended to ensure intra- and inter-generational economic, environmental and social balance (Meyer & Milewski, 2009).

Despite being considered the main factors in preserving the natural beauty and local cultural heritage, as well as supporting the local economy and local residents' businesses, attracting more local and international visitors ,

the utilization of these dimensions in Egypt lacks investigation, especially in St. Catherine.

A sustainable development project is set up for implementation to support, promote and finance tourism in St. Catherine and improve visitors' satisfaction. As well as to preserve the destination brand image and conserve its cultural and religious assets (Ahram online, 2021).

Egypt is getting ready to launch the first phase of the Great Transfiguration Project as it observes the growth of the historic ancient city of Saint Catherine in South Sinai, transforming the region the land of many important religious sites into a true meeting place for the three monotheistic religions, visited by travellers of different faiths. Only through coordinated planning and management will these unique assets be safeguarded for current and future generations (OECD, 2010), establishing adequate sustainable tourism development will help to support, boost and guarantee its success. The project aims to reflect and highlight St. Catherine's spiritual and environmental values, as well as to establish St. Catherine as a brand for products made by Bedouin community es using Sinai's natural resources (Ahram Online, 2022).

St Catherine's governments and authorities are trying to radically reshape the region's image, focusing on sustainability as a competitive advantage in the tourism sector on the one hand and preserving the area's natural heritage on the other.

2. Literature Review

Under the motto "one earth," the United Nations General Assembly agreed to organize the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment in 1972. This is seen as the start of the globalization of environmental concerns. The Conference was the first international environmental conference held by the United Nations, serving an important role in global

environmental governance (Seyfang, 2003). As a result, the Stockholm Conference was a major turning point in attracting wider worldwide attention to environmental challenges. It was the outcome of growing worldwide environmental challenges.

Since the late 1980s, the adoption of a sustainable development philosophy has been widely accepted in the construction and implementation of tourism policies (Liu, 2003).

About two decades ago, the notion and idea of sustainable tourism development were unknown. Until the mid-1990s, the tourism sector was related with sustainable development, since the notion of sustainable tourism development stems from the concept of sustainable development.

In 1998, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) offered the following definition: "Sustainable tourism is tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities" (UNWTO, 2021). As visitors want to enjoy an authentic experience, but if a host community loses its own authenticity, it is only a matter of time until tourists react negatively and decline this destination.

Sustainable tourism development principles and concepts apply to all sorts of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and other tourism sectors. Due to its importance, sustainable tourism development is a crucial part of tourism policies in 101 UNWTO member states (UNWTO, 2019).

Tourism is meant to be constructive in nature, benefiting the local community by improving the quality of life for locals and supporting their businesses; this is the main principle of sustainability.

In essence, the main goal of sustainable tourism is to maximize the benefits of tourism while limiting the negative consequences on destinations.

While sustainability principles focus on the environmental, economic and social dimensions of tourism growth, proper monitoring should be performed across these three scopes to guarantee long-term sustainability and the creation of a resilient foundation for the sector. Many of the principles of sustainable tourism are valid and play a vital role in drawing attention to the global nature of tourism and its impacts (Sharpley, 2000).

properly sharing tourism advantages among industry stakeholders and local communities, Make a significant contribution to the opportunities available in the local economy, monitoring and assess the execution of the sustainable tourist development plan at all stages, providing more environmentally friendly services and products options to consumers, increasing local and tourist awareness of sustainability, also Developing tools to evaluate progress in implementing the strategy (Meyer & Milewski, 2009).

2.1 Cultural and religious empowerment impacts on Sustainable Tourism Development

According to the UNESCO-United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, culture is who we are and what shapes our identity and no development can be sustainable without including culture. Culture is an effective promoter and driver of sustainable development's economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Culture and sustainable development are categorized into two ways by the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005):

The development of the cultural sector and its economic dimension (cultural heritage, creative cultural businesses, crafts, cultural tourism, and so on) is also intended to guarantee that culture has a legitimate presence in all public policies, including those concerning education, economics, science, communication, the environment, social equality and international cooperation.

Because of the direct connection that happens between two societies with different cultures, tourism has the tendency to speed up the process of cultural change. Therefore, community participation in the development of cultural tourism must become a practice as the core of the people-centered approach to integrate them into the decision-making process on the development of cultural and heritage resources and in the sharing of all benefits (Magi and Nzama, 2008).

The implementation of sustainable heritage and cultural tourism development principles is critical to the long-term sharing of benefits between tourists and local residents.

Culture and religion assist in the development of sustainable tourism, which can lead to social unity, spiritual support, economic cycle enhancement and improved cultural exchange between the local residents and tourists.

Tourists' choice of destination is often motivated by an interest in the culture of other people's culture. As a result, sacred places serve as transmitters of historical culture and values, resulting in higher tourist traffic and in turn, an increase in the flow of visitors and capital into the region.

Religious sites are visited by non-religious tourists as well as pilgrims because they have cultural, historical and religious value. Religion may be exploited as a cultural resource.

Accordingly, it's hard to differentiate between the religious tourist and the non-religious tourist, as in any religious site, the tourist-worshipper continuum is emerging, whereby people are some combination of both (Dowson et al., 2019).

Sustainable religious tourism relies on both strengthening a relationship-oriented perspective (Beritelli & Laesser, 2011), so that religious tourism should contribute to sustainable growth in terms of delivering a high level of tourist satisfaction, alongside meaningful and unique experiences (Lopez, 2013). According to tourism experts, between 200 and 600 million people travel for religious reasons each year (UNWTO, 2011).

The religious principles and objectives of sustainable tourism development are: monitoring and evaluating the influence of religious cultural development on local sustainable tourism development, Highlighting the religious attractions and symbolism of the destination, Offering authentic tourist experiences that respect and protect religious heritage and culture, as well as supporting local religious festivals, events, and activities to improve the image of the destination.

Moreover, religious tourism is strongly tied to cultural tourism; it is based on the significance of a historical event that occurred in a certain place. Such as: The Holy Family's journey from Palestine to Egypt left a variety of ancient churches, monasteries and tombs. Egypt has many monuments marking the Christian Holy Family during their thirty-month holy journey into Egyptian territory to escape from the oppression of the Romans (Ali, 2013).

Cultural and religious tourism, which is important in attracting both domestic and international visitors, is supporting St. Catherine's growth and sustainable tourism development objectives. This is especially true in

Saint Catherine, an area with a rich cultural heritage and religious attractions.

2.2 Saint Catherine protectorate

Sinai is regarded as one of Egypt's most important tourist destinations; it is distinguished by its unique geographical structure, which attracts travellers from all over the world. South Sinai has a delightful climate all year, which attracts a large variety of tourists. It also has a lot of historic, religious and cultural heritage tourism, as well as recreational, nature-based and ecotourism. Religious relics are plenty in St. Catharine, including the St. Catharine monastery, Moses Mountain and the Prophet Haroun Shrine. This is in addition to several tourist sites.

In 1988, the St. Catherine area in Egypt's South Sinai Governorate was declared a natural protectorate and it is considered to be Egypt's largest and one of the most important natural protectorate regions.

Therefore, the government and the concerned authorities have developed a plan to achieve comprehensive, sustainable tourism development for the region. The proper implementation of sustainable tourism development projects in it will increase the efficiency of the entire region and turn it into a top-ranked tourist destination.

As any destination needs to ensure that it has 'appeal' and offers travellers a superior experience compared to its competitors (Dwyer & Kim, 2003). St. Catherine features a variety of tourist attraction components that are extremely important and valuable, serving as a significant factor in improving the region's tourism image and encouraging it to flourish in a sustainable manner in order to enhance the use of its competitive advantages.

The region is a rare gem for cultural and religious tourism with international value, as it includes a

number of important sites for the three monotheistic religions -(Judaism, Christianity and Islam)- as well as an outstanding example of Byzantine architecture found only in a few places around the world.

Moreover, it is an important ecological location since it includes over half of Egypt's unique flora, such as medicinal plants, poisonous plants, as well as a considerable amount of Egypt's endemic fauna. All of these features highlight the numerous factors influencing S. Catherine's competitive advantage, resulting in a magnificent tourism destination that provides a remarkable tourism experience and an important tourist site worthy of conservation.

2.3 Dimensions of Sustainable Tourism Development

Sustainable tourism development includes social, economic and environmental dimensions (Andereck, Valentine, Vogt, & Knopf, 2007; Buckley, 2012; Saarinen, 2006). Sustainable development dimensions act as indicators to achieve sustainable-responsible tourism, which is intended to ensure intra- and intergenerational economic, environmental and social balance (Meyer, Milewski, 2009).

As reported by the United Nations Conference on Environment & Development (UNCED,1992) "Countries could develop systems for monitoring and evaluation of progress towards achieving sustainable development by adopting indicators that measure changes across economic, social and environmental dimensions."

Through a responsible management strategy, the implementation of these three dimensions may improve the region's operation in attaining the sustainable development plan. Currently, significant efforts, time, funds,

approaches and plans are being applied to accomplish optimal sustainable tourist development in St. Catherine in order to increase environmental, social, and economic well-being.

2.3.1 Dimension of Environmental Protection

The existing literature on competitiveness suggests that to be competitive, a destination must be sustainable from an environmental perspective (Ritchie & McIntosh, 2000), highlighting the significance of sustainable environmental development.

The mountain ecosystem in the region supports a surprising amount of biodiversity, as the region is home to around 1,000 plant species, representing almost 40% of Egypt's total flora (State information service, St. Catherine national park). In addition to 46 reptile species, 15 of which are unique to Egypt(State information service, 2016). As a result the tourism industry has a direct interest in sustainable development (Murphy, 1985; Murphy, & Price, 2005).

The Minister of Environment emphasizes her ministry's plan to protect Saint Catherine's rich natural heritage. According to her, the ministry is improving the area's infrastructure in order to preserve its natural beauty and economically profit on the mountains' entertainment. (Daily News Egypt, 2020).

2.3.2 Dimension of Social Development

The social dimension refers to how tourism contributes to the social welfare of a destination as well as how the tourism sector contributes to the social wellbeing of tourists and locals. . It is also related to people and their living conditions, such as culture, education, health, violence and leisure among other aspects (Costa, Rodrigues, & Gomes, 2019).

Local residents also benefit from the region's tourism growth and development, which improves the quality of their life as they benefit from the returns and profits. As tourism can improve the quality of life in a host community by increasing employment opportunities, tax revenues, economic diversity, festivals, restaurants, cultural activities, and outdoor recreation opportunities (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005).

The region is characterized for its Bedouin history. It is reflected in the habits, traditions and handicrafts that the region has preserved to this day. Because of its uniqueness, the Great Transfiguration Project serves as the foundation for bazaars offering Sinai local products medicinal plants.

Because the success of any development depends on local community's active support (Lee & Jan, 2019). It is necessary to take advantage of the local residents of Sinai, who are recognized as a symbol of the S. Catherine region's intangible cultural heritage and a true gem that should be capitalized on by supporting them in fully engaging in development.

2.3.3 Dimension of Economic Development

The St. Catherine region is important to Egypt's economy because of its strategic location and the availability of several natural, cultural and local heritage components.

The "Great Transfiguration" project is intended to be the new economic core of eastern Egypt. Among the many benefits of the project are the creation of job and investment opportunities, as well as the establishment of hotels and restaurants in the region and the establishment of others to serve visitors, all of which contribute to generating income and diversifying tourism products, thus strengthening the region's work and economy.

Conservation and management share similar ideas as sustainable development, yet encompasses a more proactive stance that includes continued economic growth in an environmentally friendly manner (Murphy & Price, 2005). Sustainable tourism, when planned and managed properly, may also enhance revenue and be a source of prosperity for the residents.

Due to the sustainable development happening, the destination and brand image will be reinforced and the number of people who desire to visit the region will be increased accordingly. Since the three dimensions are interrelated, a holistic approach is required for sustainable tourism development (Murphy & Price, 2005) by taking into account the preservation of the environmental, social and economic features of the region.

2.4 14 Projects are proposed for sustainable development in Saint Catherine

The idea of sustainable development has lately gained popularity in South Sinai. In order to safeguard St. Catherine's priceless natural and cultural heritage, the government is working extremely hard.

A reference to that, The Great Transfiguration project was introduced by the government in 2020. It is a government initiative that consists of 13 plans for the development of South Sinai in collaboration with regional stakeholders. Funded by the New Urban Communities Authority . The project depended mainly on the use of clean, renewable energy sources and the preservation of green spaces (Ahram online, 2022). The project includes the implementation of 14 important major projects

Also, among the sustainable tourism development projects, the establishment of a new city council, police station, parking lot, as well as

establishing a road for camels and another one for tourists hiking Mount Musa is planned. Only electric cars will be permitted to enter the monastery. Olive trees are also used to support and expand the region's vegetation cover. The project also connects the area to the remaining coastal territory between El-Tor, Sharm El-Sheikh, and Dahab by constructing highway roads in St. Catherine to facilitate travel between them (Ahram online, 2021). The "Great Transfiguration Project" intends to benefit local residents living in the region, by offering employment chances and improve their quality of life.

2.5 The role of governmental bodies in Saint Catherine

The Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency's Nature Protection Sector is in charge of managing the St. Catherine area (EEAA). The General Organization for Antiquities, a division of the Ministry of Culture, is in charge of the cultural features of the St. Catherine region as well as those outside of it.

The Ministry of Housing and Utilities is the authority responsible for project implementation, The Central Agency for Reconstructions is the authority responsible for project management, and The New Urban Communities Authority is the financier of the S. Catherine project.

It is crucial that the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Housing, Utilities, and Urban Communities fully coordinate and unify their efforts to ensure that the environmental aspects of the region are taken into account, respecting the limits of the ecosystem and not exceeding them due to development adhering to the "go greener" plan.

Governments have given sustainable tourism development considerable priority, which has

resulted in the implementation of various projects aimed at meeting the environmental, social, and economic needs of the area. As they have a crucial part in establishing and enforcing rules and practices that safeguard natural heritage and the environment for future generations to enjoy (Shaalan, 2005). In order to constantly monitor, follow and implement the sustainable tourism plan, the government's policies are therefore considered to be an essential component within the sustainability concept.

3. Materials and methods

This study is based on quantitative analysis, which was completed through the distribution of a questionnaire to 300 tourists and Egyptians. Regarding the choice of visiting Saint Catherine following the sustainable tourism development happening.

3.1 Survey Design

To guarantee data accuracy and objectivity, the questionnaire was divided into six sections, with a total of 41 structured questions. The questionnaires were created with the following objectives in mind: Determine the main reasons for choosing St. Catherine. To determine the various factors that visitors consider while choosing a desirable destination, to determine the intention to revisit the destination following the implementation of sustainable tourism development and Identify the satisfaction of visitors to St. Catherine's environmental, social and economic dimensions for sustainable development purposes.

3.2 Data Collection

The questionnaire provided valid quantitative data, which was then coded, entered, processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The analysis method and descriptive statistics measures were included in

the statistical analysis. The results of the study were represented using tables and charts. The targeted sample size for the questionnaire was 300

people. Online tourism platforms (e.g., social media such as Twitter, tourism and travel-related groups on Facebook, as well as tourism blogs).

4. Data analysis

Table 1. Respondents' profile.

Variable	Percentage	Number
Gender		
Male	56.33	169
Female	43.67	131
Age		
16 – 25	36.2	109
26 – 35	34.2	103
36- 45	11.0	33
46 – 55	10.6	32
56 – 65	6.3	19
+ 65 years	1.7	4
Education level		
High School	14.0	42
Bachelor's Degree	68.8	207
Master's Degree	12.5	37
Ph.D. or higher	4.7	14
Previous Visit		
Yes	65.6	197
No	34.4	103
Means of Transport		
Bus	60.9	183
Air transport	35.7	106
Car (own, friends)	3.4	10
Duration		
1 Night	8.0	24
2-4Nights	54.7	164
5-7Nights	32.9	99
8 Nights>	4.4	13
Travel Schedule		
Tailored by travel agency	50.0	150
Self-made	50.0	150

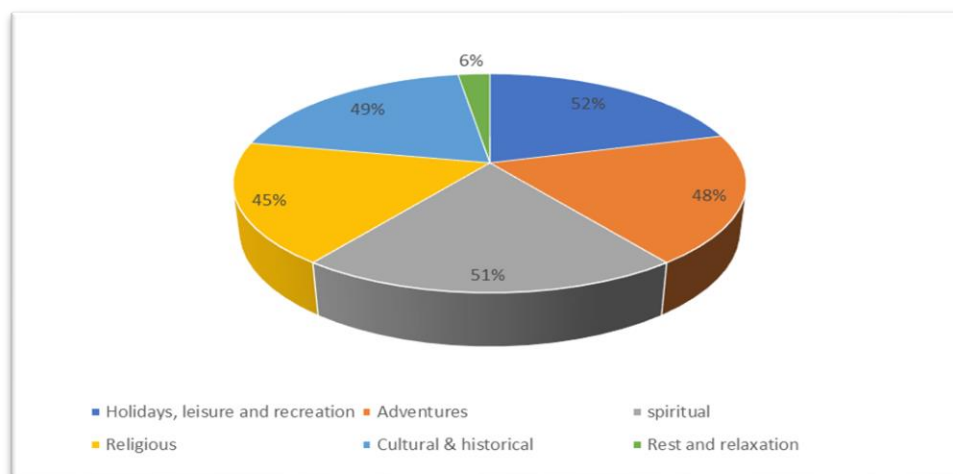


Fig.1. Main purpose of the visit

Identifying respondents' primary and main reasons for travelling assists in determining the preferred type of tourism for the large majority of visitors to St. Catherine, providing for greater attention to promoting and sustainably developing this type of tourism.

4.1 Analyze traveler-oriented survey forms according to dimensions sustainable tourism development.

Satisfaction of visitors is widely considered as a crucial factor of destination sustainability and competitiveness (Iniesta-Bonillo et al., 2016; Jarvis et al., 2016; Sukiman et al., 2013) and is also regarded as an essential objective and indicator of success in tourism destination management (Mazanec et al., 2007), or one of the greatest sources of a destination's competitive advantage (Kozak, 20020). The following tables show the results of St. Catherine's visitors' level of satisfaction

Table.2. The overall Environmental image perceived by visitors

Environmental statements	The results of determining the level of satisfaction based on the overall environmental image of visitors' visits to Saint Catherine											
	Very dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Indifferent		Satisfied		Very satisfied		Total	
	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%
Environmental safeguarding	4	1.3	29	9.6	61	20.8	161	53.3	45	15	300	100

Landscape beauty	4	1.3	10	3.6	83	27.6	114	37.9	89	29.6	300	100
Natural recreational activities	8	2.7	10	3.6	102	33.9	137	45.5	43	14.3	300	100
General cleanliness	6	2	94	32.2	116	38.9	54	17.9	30	10	300	100
Noise level	15	5	80	26.6	103	34.2	79	26.6	23	7.6	300	100
Pollution rates	16	5.3	79	26.2	118	39.6	71	23.6	16	5.3	300	100

Table.2. shows that while visitors were satisfied with environmental protection, landscape beauty and natural recreational activities, they were

dissatisfied or indifferent with general cleanliness, noise level and pollution rates.

Table.3. Shows the overall Social image perceived by visitors

Social statements	The results of determining the level of satisfaction based on the overall social image of visitors' visits to Saint Catherine											
	Very dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Indifferent		Satisfied		Very satisfied		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Hospitality of locals	14	4.7	18	6	25	8.6	168	55.8	75	24.9	300	100
Accessibility of Bedouin handicrafts	6	2	38	12.6	112	37.6	116	38.5	28	9.3	300	100
Professionalism of tourist site employees	14	4.7	28	9.3	115	38.5	116	38.5	27	9	300	100
professionalism of Bedouin tour guide	12	4	37	12.5	104	34.6	68	28.6	61	20.3	300	100

Local restaurants/shops facilities	16	5.3	64	21.7	116	38.5	88	29.2	16	5.3	300	100
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According to Table 4.4, the majority of visitors are satisfied with the hospitality of local residents. However, there is a need to provide a greater number of local Bedouin tour guides due to the satisfaction of a large number of visitors with the service provided by them, as well as the need to increase the efficiency of employees in

tourist areas to ensure complete visitor satisfaction.

In addition, more local shops and restaurants are required to enhance the quality of visitors' trips and to revitalize St. Catherine's unique local handicrafts, cultural activities and traditions.

Table 4.4 Shows the overall economic image perceived by visitors

Economic statements	The results of determining the level of satisfaction based on the overall economic state of visitors' visits to Saint Catherine											
	Very dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Indifferent		Satisfied		Very satisfied		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Value for Money at the Destination	8	2.7	26	8.6	27	9	191	63.8	48	15.9	300	100
Number of available local businesses	2	.7	36	12	162	53.8	86	28.9	14	4.7	300	100
Quantity of locals involved in tourism jobs	10	3.3	33	11.2	133	34.3	103	44.2	21	7	300	100
Existing hotels and restaurants' quality and quantity	12	4	46	15.5	86	28.6	138	45.8	18	6.1	300	100
The diversity of tourism products and services	20	6.7	16	5.8	135	45	51	16.9	78	25.9	300	100

Table 4.5 shows that visitors are satisfied with the destination's value for money, but there is a need to improve the quality and quantity of hotels and restaurants in Saint Catherine, as well as include a greater number of local residents in the region's tourism business and provide more diverse tourism products and services.

Data was gathered and presented using statistical analysis. The findings indicate that visitor satisfaction has a direct impact on the choice of destination. A study of visitor satisfaction supported this. Comparisons were conducted between the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of services and products received during their last visit. quality of accommodation

Table.5. displays the relative frequency distribution survey form results.

services, services provided by tourism employees and other tourism-related services, such as the destination's value for money, infrastructure, tourism site services, access to local residents' restaurants and shops, accessibility of local handicrafts, professionalism of Bedouin tour guides, etc.

The majority of respondents tended toward the positive side of the questionnaire. In other words, being satisfied with what they have experienced shows that the tourist is influenced by all the factors of the destination's services and thus influences his decision to visit. Satisfaction may directly influence the choice of destinations.

Proposed sustainable tourism development projects in St. Catherine	Relative frequency Distribution according to Tourists' opinions on Sustainable Tourism Development proposed projects											
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Renovation of infrastructure	20	6.6	16	5.7	51	16.9	135	44.9	78	25.9	300	100
Developing superstructure and infrastructure contributes to higher living standards for both locals and visitors.	10	3.3	24	8	77	25.6	142	47.2	47	15.9	300	100
Supporting the authorities' sustainable	20	6.6	14	4.7	80	26.6	131	43.8	55	18.3	300	100

environmental plan													
Residents' involvement in tourism development issues and activities	10	3.3	22	7.3	91	30.6	120	39.9	57	18.9	300	100	
New investment in St. Catherine will provide more jobs for local people	14	4.9	24	8	99	32.9	95	31.6	68	22.6	300	100	
local recreation programs will be expanded in a more organized and responsible manner	10	3.3	24	8	93	30.9	117	38.9	56	18.9	300	100	
Offering local food and drink where possible.	16	5.7	37	12.3	76	25.2	1.5	34.9	66	21.9	300	100	
supporting responsible development as it has a vital role in St. Catherine's economy	14	4.7	20	6.9	103	34.2	118	39.2	45	15	300	100	
Government was right in applying sustainable tourism development in St. Catherine	12	4	24	8	37	12.6	83	27.6	144	47.8	300	100	
Recommending St. Catherine to friends and/or family regarding the sustainable tourism development announced.	8	2.7	28	9.3	35	11.6	69	22.9	160	53.5	300	100	

Table 4.5 shows the results of the questionnaire distributed to St. Catherine visitors, with the majority agreeing / strongly agreeing on the proposed sustainable tourism development plan

projects in St. Catherine. The responses are beneficial to the destination, with 229 people saying they would recommend St. Catherine to family or friends.

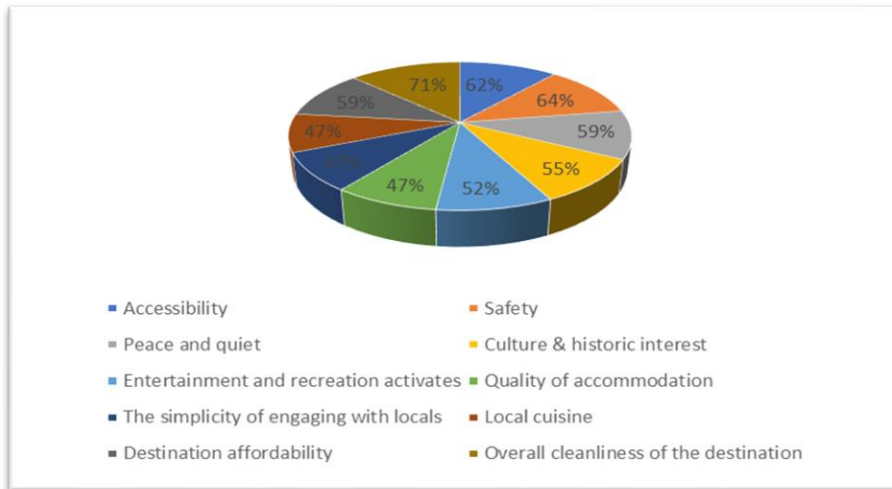


Fig.2. main characteristics affecting visit

Fig. 2 shows that the majority of tourists choose the destination for its general cleanliness in order to enjoy its beauty, but it is difficult to choose a majority share in other characteristics for the choice of St. Catherine asg the remaining characteristics were closely selected by the majority.

Conclusion and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine and clarify the significance and necessity of the great transfiguration project that the region is attempting to launch in order to fully develop the region in a sustainable tourism manner, as well as achieving balance between all the three dimensions. This project is a huge strength and a push for the St. Catherine region.

This results in embracing the need to implement sustainable tourism development in the destination of St. Catherine to improve tourism flow, enrich cultural resources, build and develop sufficient tourism services, stabilize prices, obtain safer and more responsible environmental protection laws, increase the desire to revisit, become a recommendation for family travel. As well as achieving the goal of sustainable tourism development through environmental, social, and economic development without harming or putting any pressure on them.

A better understanding of visitor needs and desires is provided by the study on visitor characteristics and perceptions of tourism destinations, which can improve the planning approach for St. Catherine's sustainable tourism development plan. And acknowledge the significance of the developments that are being implemented in the area right now to serve and

satisfy the demands of many visitors. In order to achieve a successful development of the region, there are so many plans and ideas that have been presented and expanded in terms of tourism growth and sustainable development. The necessity of both local residents and visitors to have a positive perception and attitude has been emphasized by authorities and experts.

Governments should collaborate with local communities to produce sustainable development rules that include a variety of local cultural mannerisms as part of a visitor's experience and ensure that they are properly reflected. They should engage with local residents to gather their feedback on culturally acceptable interpretations of sites and train tour guides to provide tourists with a meaningful and realistic view of the region. The major purpose is to encourage tourists to value and appreciate the region because they understand its uniqueness.

5.1 Theoretical contribution

The first study to discuss the necessity of sustainable tourist development in its three environmental, social and economic dimensions, which is currently in progress in the region of Saint Catherine and the first of its kind in Egypt, The importance of the St. Catherine's area was discussed, along with the urging to preserve it and the importance of achieving tourism sustainability due to the historical, cultural and religious value of the region, taking into consideration spreading awareness among the local population, their participation and benefiting from it in an organized and sound manner.

The study also provides important insights into the necessity of careful preservation and responsible marketing of the St. Catherine protectorate as a tourism destination, attracting particularly unique visitors seeking new experiences in an unspoiled environment, along

with the importance of using conservation approaches for natural and cultural destination resources and may thus have significant implications for researchers and practitioners alike.

5.2 Managerial Implications

The study discussed and the results showed the need to raise the level of efficiency and tourism services within the region of Saint Catherine and the necessity of sustainable development, especially at the environmental, social and economic levels, as well as the level of its impact on the satisfaction and willingness of visitors to re-visit the destination and become attached to it.

In order to maintain the long-term sustainability of St. Catherine tourism industry, decision-makers should opt for moderate plans and strategies that demand a balance between all three significant structural indicators to gain a competitive advantage.

The authorities and stakeholders needs to directly communicate with the local residents of the region and involve them in the development process to sense its importance, as well as spread their culture and local heritage in the right way to the visitors. Making tourism more sustainable needs economic agents, governments, residents and tourists to take responsibility (World Summit on Sustainable Development, Cape Town, 2002), As tourism, when planned and done properly, it can last a long time.

The findings of the study can be used practically to improve support for sustainable tourism development in regions and areas without subjecting the redistribution to the randomness of measurement errors due to the different dimensions, which affect satisfaction with the experience rather than satisfaction with overall destination performance.

The results can be used to support strategic decisions, particularly for local planning, investment, and destination management, in order to sustainably develop tourism destinations, not just on a local level but also for regional and national comparability. Tourism authorities can utilise the results to construct a tourism development plan and destination marketing techniques, which must be based on relevant data and proper analysis.

5. Limitations and Further studies

As the literature review shows, there is a lack of studies for not using different approaches to study visitor satisfaction. Therefore, as a potential gap in the current literature, it deserves a deeper and closer analysis using a variety of methodologies. By applying different approaches, it may reflect different segments of visitors, their needs and expectations. Finally, the different types and variations in the destination's offerings should also be taken into consideration in future research of sustainability impacts on the destination's visitors' satisfaction. Only descriptive analysis was used in this research; no predictive or prescriptive analytics, which are also important for destinations to successfully benefit from big data and operate effectively.

At each step of sustainable development, interviews with investors are required to learn more about investors' perspectives and expectations, since research has revealed varying insights into stakeholders' and visitors' requirements and expectations. Finally, it is important to keep in mind that no pressure should be placed on or harm should be done to any of the three dimensions of sustainable tourism since doing so would limit the growth of the others.

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