

# Local tourists' perceptions of tourist destinations' competitiveness: a comparative study of the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Oman

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – Destination competitiveness is a significant contributor to tourism growth, performance and development. The current research intends to test the effect of the dimensions of the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) on destination competitiveness in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt and Oman and how competitiveness influences tourism performance and development.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The perspectives of 460 responses were collected from the UAE, 457 from Egypt and 301 responses from Oman. Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was utilised to measure the research model relationships.

**Findings** – The results showed that the competitiveness index components are significantly contributing to destination competitiveness and that this competitiveness is predicting both tourism performance and development.

**Originality/value** – This study developed and empirically tested the effect of an integrative model of the competitiveness index on destination competitiveness from the perspective of local visitors in three Muslim and Arab nations. This study gives scholars valuable perceptions into how socio-cultural variations between residents and locals in various nations might result in significantly diverse behaviours.

**Keywords** Competitiveness, Tourism performance, Tourism development, Arab countries

**Paper type** Research paper

## Introduction

Countries with economies in transition often concentrate on tourism as a means of development (Andrades and Dimanche, 2017) and tourism destination competitiveness (TDC) is the key driver of tourism flows, gross domestic product (GDP) and income (Bazargani and Kilić, 2021). This prompts countries to do more to maintain competitive status in the tourism market (Kunst and Ivandić, 2021; Martínez-González *et al.*, 2021; Shariffuddin *et al.*, 2022). TDC is a multi-faceted concept (Bazargani and Kilić, 2021; Martínez-González *et al.*, 2021), and as tourist destinations are made up of a varied range of actors (Martínez-González *et al.*, 2021),

