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Degree: PhD.

Title of Thesis: The Role of Geotourism Sites in Enhancing Egypt Competitiveness

Supervision Committee: 1- Prof. Dr. Suzan Bakri Hassan Soliman 2- Prof. Dr. Ghada Mohamed Wafik Abu Bakr

Department: Tourism Studies

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ABSTRACT

Recently, the increasing demand of tourists for the quality of services and experiences, lead to new special forms of tourism have appeared such as ecotourism or geotourism which sustainable and nature-friendly forms of tourism. As well as, enhancing competitiveness and profiling on the international tourism market is currently a very important issue for Egypt. However, Archaeological and cultural heritage of Egypt is world-known, but its geological heritage is yet to be revealed. Geotourism is not well known in Egypt, although the country possess plenty of geosites could promote this branch of tourism. As well as, the term geosite and geoheritage is not applied widely in Egypt, although there are many valuable geological areas that represent a unique and easily accessible geologic feature. Therefore, this study has made to identify the role of geotourism sites in enhancing the tourism competitiveness of Egypt.

This study adopted a quantitative and qualitative research (mixed method) to achieve the aim and objectives of the current study. This study applies the case study approach in four case studies in Fayoum and Greater Cairo including; Jebel Qatrani Area, Hassana Dome Protected Area, Petrified Forest Area, and Wadi Degla Protected Area. Multiple sources of data collections were including questionnaire and direct observation. The current study sampling was used two types of sampling including; a convenience sample for official staff and snowballing sampling for experts. The total number of distributed questionnaires was 250 copies. The final returned questionnaires were 190 copies with 76% response rate.



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The results reported revealed the importance of indicators of competitiveness including; created resources, site management, situational condition and endowed resources. It showed that the majority of created resources variables not available in the study geotourism sites (JQA, HDPA, PFA, and WDPA) and it need more attention from those responsible for managing these sites. It also reported that situational conditions of geotourism sites such as, camera not available in JQA, HDPA and PFA, but it available in WDPA. As well, the results reported that the majority of geotourism sites were accessible from all direction. So, anybody can enter at any time and get out at any time without being controlled. There is a lack of security procedures in place to protect visitors in JQA, HDPA, PFA, and WDPA. The results revealed that there is unique diversity in geological and geomorphological in the study geotourism sites (JQA, HDPA, PFA, and WDPA). The results reported that geotourism competitiveness indicators are an important driver of competitiveness for developing geotourism sites. It also, showed that the demand for geotourism sites will enhance tourism competitiveness.

A major contribution of this study is to identify the role of competitiveness indicators in increase the demand of geotourism sites and enhances the tourism competitiveness in Egypt. This study is the first research that talking about the competitiveness of geotourism sites in Egypt. It added to the growing geotourism sites literature through its review of the pervious academic research, generation of new ideas and interpretation of rich data collected from the different sources.

Keywords: Geotourism, Geotourism sites, Geology, Geomorphology, Competitiveness, Egypt