

Assessing the Optional Tours in Luxor City

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Abstract

Optional Tours are one of the most important activities in the tourism industry and can provide substantial gains to tourists and tourism businesses as well as host communities. The purpose of this paper is to determine the importance of Optional Tours in tourism industry and to assess the Optional Tours in Luxor city.

This paper assesses the satisfaction of tourists towards Optional Tours and explores the challenges that face each type. To achieve this purpose, researchers used a descriptive-correlation and variances research design. Quantitative techniques presented in questionnaires with tourists and managers of travel agencies in Luxor city also were used. The obtained results of the tourism companies' managers are closer to the same results of the tourists. Optional Tour types with high popularity were the Hot Air Balloon, Horse-Drawn Carriage and Sound and Light Show. However, Bicycle and Golf Tours were of low popularity. Moreover, there were some barriers that face some types of Optional Tours that led to tourists' dissatisfaction. Based upon the results, some recommendations were suggested to develop the Optional Tours to increase tourists' satisfaction.

Key words: Optional Tours; Luxor; Satisfaction; Barriers; Travel Agency.

Introduction

By the end of the 20th century and especially with the beginning of the 21st century, Tourism is gaining more and more significance regarding to the challenges and changing trends (Tezcan, 2004). Proceeding from the idea of tourists' satisfaction, Huh (2002) mentioned that many recent scientific researches and studies about heritage tourism focused on the characteristics of tourists who visited heritage destinations and analyzed the relationship between heritage destinations attributes and tourist satisfaction.

Destinations need now to focus on other types of tourism products which are in line with tourists' demographic characteristics and their behaviour known as "Optional Tours".

Optional is defined as "an adjective which means possible to add if the customer wants" (Dictionary of Leisure, Travel and Tourism, 2006, p.214).

Optional Tours are considered as a type of tourism experience such as adventure tourism, thus it is defined as “a type of tourism experience where a tour operator offers travellers an opportunity to participate tourism activities, as well as a cultural exchange with local people” (Brown, 2005, p. 480).

Although Optional Tours are one of the attractions that are provided in Luxor city nowadays, but still travel agencies focus on marketing and organizing cultural tourism programs.

This paper provides an assessment and exploration approach of Optional Tours in Luxor city by employing questionnaires to explore the level of tourists’ satisfaction and to identify the challenges that face each type of Optional Tour. Generally, this paper attempts to fulfil the following objectives:-

- Identifying the Optional Tours in Luxor city.
- Shedding light on the current situation of Optional Tours and factors that influence visitors’ choice and achieve their satisfaction.
- Analysing the relationship between tourist's demographic characteristics and choosing the type of Optional Tour.
- Highlighting the most important opportunities and challenges which face the implementation of these tours in Luxor city and clarify the steps that must be taken to promote all types of Optional Tours.

Literature review

Travel agencies are more tourist-oriented nowadays than ever before. They have to keep up according to the change of tourists’ needs in order to reach their satisfaction. According to Huhtiniemi (2008) retaining existing tourists is easier than acquiring new ones, so the efforts made to please their customers are worthwhile. Optional Tour is any attraction which set out to attract local and international tourists. It is developed to be more and more attractive and achieve visitors’ satisfaction (Ho et al., 2009).

Yu (2012, p.103) defined Optional attractions and activities as “those are not included in the tour price–participation in these will cost the traveller extra money”.

Thus, the demand for these optional attractions and activities as any tourism ones will depend on both the interest of the travellers and their willingness to pay the extra charge (North Coast Destination Network Inc, 2013).

Guo et al. (2014) mentioned that the importance of Optional Tours for tour operators is to provide additional revenue. As for tourists, the Optional Tours is offering opportunities for tourists to choose activities that they want and adding flexibility to classic packaged tours. This helps in developing tourism projects such as the recent terminal of Aswan International Airport (JICA, 2000).

Moreover, it is considered as a tool for assessing tour guides' performances. According to Huang and Kao (2011), an Optional Tour is one of the non-financial indicators which are used to assess the qualitative performance by the BSC method. Wang et al. (2000) as well as UNESCO (2006) and Muhciñă (2008) reported that the Optional tour has a lot of characteristics such as:-

It is considered as a form of an authentic engagement in the real cultural life of the city.

It has entailed risks.

It is delivered on tourists' demand and is dependent on time factor Dorobanțu et al. (2012). Kotler et al. (2010) added that:

It is the most exciting and popular for all types of tourists' tours and requires a high performance of physical effort.

It resembles any service provided by travel agencies as marketing them is influenced by both general and specific characteristics.

Travel Agency and Optional Tours

Travel agencies not only considered as the main source of travel information for most travellers but also a provider of a variety of services that are quite important for travellers (Hui and Wan, 2005). Richey et al. (2010) mentioned that travel agencies improve their product development in the market by collaborating with partners to satisfy consumers' needs.

Huang (2008) stated that travel agencies have to innovate and develop new products to gain competitive advantage and services to reach consumers' satisfaction.

Innovation is at the heart of any successful company's agenda (Brackenbury, 2004). Optional Tours consider a form of innovative products which their effects are reflected on customers, companies and host community. Tour guide and tour leader play an important role not only in the selection of attractions, Optional Tours or shopping (Wang et al., 2002) but also in the achievement of customer satisfaction (Chan et al., 2015).

They can guide tourists to buy Optional Tours or to go shopping stores to get more commissions (Wang et al., 2010), so their role becomes a double-edged sword. Alexander (2002) and Page (2007) clarified that the work of travel agencies especially retailers is based on commissions as they are not a part of the sale contract which is between the tour operator or supplier and the customer. Optional Tours are one of these activities which travel agencies can get their commission. Thus, Optional Tours is considered one of the travel agency's survival factors in Luxor city.

Optional Tours in Luxor City

Luxor is considered one of the large famous centres in the world as it contains many historical sources (Kamar, 2014). It has one-sixth of the world's monuments and third of Egypt's monuments (Luxor official website, 2016). Travel agencies market and implement several historical tourism programs despite of selling a lot of Optional Tours t. From which:

Sound and Light Shows:

Each year, thousands of tourists visit Egypt to watch the magnificent Sound and Light Shows especially at the sites of monuments. These shows used state-of-art technologies to imagine and bring to life the mysteries of the Pharaonic Egyptian civilization (Hawass, 2009).

Sound and Light Show dates back to 1972 at Karnak temple where the biggest paranoiac temples at Thebes city (Misr Company for Sound and Light, 2010). These shows are presented in eight languages. Tourists can get a free wireless headphone for translation in case the show is in different language from their original one (Misr Company for Sound & Light, 2016).

Hot Air Balloon Tours:

Hot Air Balloon is “a very large balloon which rises into the air as the air inside it is heated, with people travelling in a basket attached underneath” (Dictionary of Leisure, Travel and Tourism, 2006, p.152). Hot Air Balloon Tours have charming nature especially in Luxor. In the early morning, tourists go to the launch point to ride Hot Air Balloon which is one of the most breathtaking ways to see archaeological sites (ETA, 2017).

There are many Hot Air Balloon_companies that organize trips such as Hodhod Solayman, Magic Horizon, Horus Balloon, Sky Crouse, Viking Air Balloon and Sinbad.

The average number of trips is four flights a day in the early morning (Tourist Information Centre, 2016).

Horse - Drawn Carriage Tours:

Horse - Drawn Carriage Tours are one of specifically designed outdoor experiences in mountain and open areas which hold attractions for numerous types of tourists (Vujko and Plavša, 2011).

Horse – Drawn Carriage was used to stroll between parks to escape from the crowds (Henry Ford., 2010). Tourists prefer a walking tour or a Horse-Drawn Carriage Tours in archaeological sites to get a true feel for this unique historic district (UNWTO, 2012).

A lot of tourists who visit Luxor prefer to have their city tours to Karnak Temple for example in the evening for Sound and Light Shows by using Horse - Drawn Carriage. Moreover, they like to use it to discover the East Bank of Luxor (Maher, 2013).

Golf Tours:

Hudson (2009) and Gazley (2010) stated that Golf Tourism is one of the fastest growing trends in tourism industry and falls under the umbrella of sport tourism. Kim et al. (2005) mentioned that Golf Tourism is a form of segmentation with specialization in new forms of travel markets and the need to this kind is greatly increased in the recent years. Royal Valley golf club is considered a wonderful golfing experience.

It is situated in the East Bank of Luxor and 8 Km from Luxor's International airport. There are a lot of spread green lands, blue water lakes and several surrounding landscapes areas (Golf Luxor Website, 2016 a). There are other additional facilities, including Club rental, Power carts and Pull carts (Golf Luxor Website, 2016 b).

Bicycle Tours:

Bicycle Tourism is considered one of the activities which attract the growing consumer interest in fitness and experiential travel. It is one of the most important success factors of tourism companies that support all cycling abilities (WTM, 2014). It targets many segments such as children (Auchapt, 2012) and considered an important activity to generate foreign currency and create more jobs (UNWTO, 2014).

Downward and Lumsdon (2001) clarified that supplementary requirements such as good scenery, guidebooks, maps and food outlets are from the most important things in the process of developing Bicycle Tourism.

Research Methodology

The design used for this research is a descriptive-correlation research design. The research was designed and carried out including the variables, research instrument, population and sample selection, validity and reliability. Moreover, it includes data collection, data analysis and response rate. Quantitative approach based on two questionnaires that were developed and directed to tourists and managers who worked at travel agents in Luxor.

The quantitative approach is used because it is appropriate to gain a deeper and detailed understanding of the regarding issue. In this concern, Creswell (2014) mentioned that quantitative methods include the operations of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and writing the results of a study.

Moreover, Hair et al., (2003) clarified that the major advantage of the quantitative paradigm is the possibility of gaining an objective and precise assessment of the social phenomenon or human behaviour by using numbers.

The target population for this study was tourists who visited Luxor during 2015 until 2016 (N = 369674). The sample selection was a convenience sample of the tourists that visited Luxor the last two years where the questionnaire was directly administered. This number of visitors used by the researcher to calculate the sample size by the equation of Stephen Sampson:-

$$n = \frac{N \times p(1-p)}{\left[\left[N - 1 \times \left(d^2 \div z^2 \right) \right] + p(1-p) \right]}$$

n : sample size

N: population size

Z : confidence level at 95% (standard value of 1.96)

E : error proportion =0.05 .

p: the probability (30% – 60%) or =50%.

The output of the equation was 384 tourists, 324 tourists of them returned the survey questionnaires which formed the sample unit. Regarding questionnaire, they were distributed to 60 of tourism companies' managers in Luxor to elicit their perception of the problems encounter for the Optional Tours in Luxor.

They were measured on a five point scale which are 5 = strongly Agree; 4 = agree; 3 = neutral; 2 = disagree; and 1 = strongly disagree. The descriptive statistics mean and standard deviation were calculated for each item in each of these scales. Moreover, some of statistical models such as correlation, ANOVA and ANCOVA Coefficients were used. In addition, Cronbach-Alpha was used to verify the reliability of these tests. Data have been analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0.

Results and Discussion

Tourists Perception of Optional Tours

Personal demographic characteristics were presented by using frequencies and percentages for all variables, including: age, gender, and length of stay, income. Thirty five percent (n= 113) of the respondents were female. The remaining 65% (n =211) of the respondents were male. Regarding the age of the study participants, the largest group (n=221, 68%) was in the 20-40 years age group. The second largest group (n=55, 17%) mentioned that their age was over 40 years. A very small proportion (n=48, 15%) indicated that they were in younger age group less than 20 years.

The largest group of respondents (n=175, 54%) clarified that they preferred to stay in Luxor city from (3 to 5) nights. One-third of the sample (n=127, 39%) of respondents mentioned that they plan to stay less than 3 nights.

A small portion of all respondents (n=18, 6%) clarified that they prefer to stay for longer than 6 nights, and the remaining sample (n=4, 1%) selected that they prefer to stay for longer than 10 nights. Regarding the income of visitors, the largest group of respondents (n=243, 75%) reported that their income is less than 10000 \$, which indicated that the largest market share in Luxor is economically low.

However, (n=46, 14%) of all respondents reported that their income is between 10000-30000\$. Also, (n=30, 9%) selected that their income is between 30000-50000\$ and the remaining group (n=5, 6%) clarified that their income is more than 50000\$. Over third of the sample (n=128, 40%) that have visited Luxor chose Sound and Light Tour.

Closely linked to the question on the type of tour they have been selected, (n=94, 29%) respondents have chosen Balloon Tour. Other respondents have selected Carriage tour (n=60, 19%).

Another very small portion of the sample (n=26, 8%), and (n=16, 5%) have selected the golf and bicycle tours. These data seem to suggest that the golf and bicycle tours have encountered a challenge.

Thus the tourism companies in Luxor and the ministry of tourism should stand on the reasons for the deterioration of the situation for both golf and bicycle tours and the reluctance of tourists to choose these types of tours.

The test result in table (1) explained the relationship between the type of tour selected and demographic dimension. The p-value < 0.05 for the gender, age and length of stay dimensions. However, the p-value > 0.05 is for the income dimension. There is no statistically significant difference between the income and the type of the selected tour.

Moreover, a strong relationship was found between the type of tour and the length of the stay indicating that selecting tour type is depending on the visitor length of stay.

Thus, there is a significant relationship between the type of tour selected and gender, age and length of stay dimensions.

Table 1 Correlations Tests Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Type					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	81.461(a)	9	9.051	8.088	.000
Intercept	78.665	1	78.665	70.297	.000
Gender	6.368	1	6.368	5.691	.018
Age	8.440	2	4.220	3.771	.024
Income	6.277	3	2.092	1.870	.135
length of Stay	56.445	3	18.815	16.813	.000
Error	351.379	314	1.119		
Total	1860.000	324			
Corrected Total	432.840	323			

a R Squared = .188 (Adjusted R Squared = .165)

As seen in table 2, the overall means and standard deviation of satisfaction with the tour type currently being used as perceived by the visitors of selected sample. This is measured by the five types “Sound and Light Shows”; “Hot Air Balloon”; “Horse-Drawn Carriage”; “Golf Tour” and “Bicycle Tour” in addition to “Barriers of Optional Tours”.

Table 2 Overall means and standard deviation for the Optional Tour types and visitor satisfaction

Tour Type	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sound and Light Shows	128	3.21	0.77
Hot Air Balloon	94	3.56	0.56
Horse-Drawn Carriage	54	3.53	0.82
Golf	32	2.94	0.86
Bicycle	16	2.73	0.64
Barriers of Optional Tours	324	2.58	1.05

Table 2 shows the various facts of Optional Tours in Luxor. The fact that yielded the highest mean in terms of popular tour type is the Hot Air Balloon ($X=3.56$, $sd=.56$) that have successfully explained and covered the main purposes of the level of satisfaction. This is followed by having enough criteria in assigning Horse-Drawn Carriage ($X=3.53$, $sd=.82$); then Sound and Light Shows ($X=3.21$, $sd=.77$). The lowest rated items in terms of unpopularity tour type were Golf tour ($X=2.94$, $sd=.86$) and Bicycle Tour ($X=2.73$, $sd=.64$). Moreover, Barriers of Optional Tours ($X=2.58$, $sd=1.05$) have indicated moderate satisfaction of the barriers encounter the Optional Tour.

The difference in means of satisfaction is due to the presence of some problems that face the tourist in each type of Optional Tour. For Sound and Light Shows, respondents ($n=128$, 39%) strongly disagree (item scores 1.50 or less) with the lighting systems used during the show and declared that they were unclear and unattractive.

They pointed out that the linguistic terminology were not easy. They also clarified that the audio systems used during the show were clear and strong. Regarding the free wireless headphone for translation, they also pointed out that they were not appropriate.

For the Hot Air Balloon, respondents ($n=94$, 29%) strongly disagree with the accessibility of its launch point. They clarified that they prefer to book it by tour guide not by the tour leader.

Respondents agree with its price and declared that they were suitable. Regarding safety procedures they pointed out that they were adequate.

Regarding Horse -Drawn Carriage, respondents ($n=54$, 17%) declared that private roads for it were not paved. They also clarified that the drivers of these carriages did not follow the traffic instructions during driving. Moreover there is a clear conflict in price of these tours between service providers (carriage owner) and travel agencies. They prefer to book the Horse-Drawn Carriages Tour by tour leader.

For the Golf Tour, the majority of respondents (n=32, 10%) clarified that its price was not suitable and Golf Luxor Club wasn't accessible. They also clarified that the assistance of guide during practicing golf is not important. They pointed out that they did not prefer to book Golf Tours by tour guide and they are not going to buy these Tours in their next visit.

For the Bicycle Tours, respondents (n=16, 5%) clarified that the rental process of bicycles were not easy and bicycles were not in a good condition.

They pointed out that all bicycle tours' equipments were not available and trails of bicycle were not paved.

They disagree with booking the Bicycle Tours by tour leader and they said that they were not going to buy Bicycle Tours in their next visit. Generally, respondents do not like either the ways of booking the Optional Tours or their prices.

Regarding the security and safety procedures during tours, they were neutral. An independent t-test was used to determine if significant differences existed in the perceptions of Optional Tours selected and the barriers of Optional Tours.

The output of the Partial Correlation Analysis is quite straightforward and only consists of a single table. The first half displays the zero-order correlation coefficients, which are the three Person's Correlation Coefficients without any control variable taken into account.

Table 3 Correlations

Control Variables			Sat	Type	Barr
-none-(a)	Sat	Correlation	1.000	-.181**	-.073
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.001	.190
		df	0	322	322
	Type	Correlation	-.181**	1.000	.013
		Significance (2-tailed)	.001	.	.820
		df	322	0	322
	Barr	Correlation	-.073	.013	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.190	.820	.
		df	322	322	0
barriers	Sat	Correlation	1.000	-.180**	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.001	
		df	0	321	
	Type	Correlation	-.180**	1.000	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.001	.	
		df	321	0	

a Cells contain zero-order (Pearson) correlations.

The zero-order correlations seem to support that a higher level of Optional Tours satisfaction increases buying this type of Optional Tour.

Both are moderate association of $r = -0.181$, which is highly significant $p < 0.001$. However, the variable of the barriers of Optional Tours is not significantly correlated with both tourist satisfaction and the type of Optional Tours ($r = -0.73, 0.13$) and p . value ($0.190, \text{ and } 0.820$).

The second part of table (3) shows the Partial Correlation Coefficient between the level of satisfaction and the type of Optional Tours when controlled for the baseline of the barriers of Optional Tours. The Partial Correlation Coefficient is now $r = (-0.180)$ and significant $p = 0.001$.

The observed bivariate correlation from table (3) between the level of satisfaction and the type of Optional Tours is almost completely explained by the correlation of both variables with the baseline barriers of Optional Tours. The partial correlation between both variables is moderate ($r = -0.180$) and significant with $p = 0.001$.

Therefore, it is clear that both variables are independent and there is a significant relationship between tourist satisfaction of Optional Tours and selecting the type of the tour.

The findings indicated that there's difference between the means of tourists' satisfaction and barriers of Optional Tours which affected the type of Optional Tour selected. The ANOVA's F-test of significance results in $p < 0.001$ for the barriers of Optional Tours and $p < 0.001$ for tourists' satisfaction. The ANOVA does not explain specifically which means were different from one another. For determining that, researchers follow up with multiple comparisons (or post-hoc) tests.

The results of all pair wise comparisons using the LSD shown that Group 1(Barriers) differed from Group 2(Satisfaction) by the following:-

Sound and light significant with both Golf and Horse-Drawn Carriage, P value = ($0.021, 0.007$). Balloon significant only with Golf, P value = (0.000).

Golf significant with all the variables (Sound and Light, Balloon, Horse-Drawn Carriage and Bicycle), P value = ($0.007, .000, .000, .009$). However, Group 2 (satisfaction) was significantly with all the variables except for groups (Balloon and Horse-Drawn Carriage), P value = ($.517$).

Regression analysis for the effect of barriers and satisfaction on the variety of types of Optional Tours

The two independent variables (barriers and satisfaction) are significantly explaining the variance in types of Optional Tours. The R square indicates the extent or percentage of the independent variables that can explain the variation in the dependent variable.

In this study, independent variables (barriers and satisfaction) can explain 33% of the variations in dependent variable (types of Optional Tours). However, it has still left 67% unexplained in this study. In other word, both barriers and satisfaction represent 33% of the variables that affect the variety of types of Optional Tours.

Table 4 Coefficients (a)

Model		1(Constant)	Sat	Barr
Unstandardized	B	3.888	-.044	.000
Coefficients	Std. Error	.626	.013	.027
Standardized				
Coefficients	Beta		-.181	-.001
t		6.215	-3.287	-.010
Sig.		.000	.001	.992
95% Confidence	Lower Bound	2.657	-.071	-.053
Interval for B	Upper Bound	5.119	-.018	.052
Collinearity	Tolerance		.995	.995
Statistics	VIF		1.005	1.005

a Dependent Variable: Type

Table (4) has shown the regression coefficients, the intercept and the significance of all coefficients and the intercept in the model. The study clarifies that the linear regression analysis estimates the linear regression function to be $y = 3.888 + (-.44) * x$.

This means that an increase in one unit of x results in a decrease of (.44) units of y.

According to previous results, achieving the satisfaction of tourists is a very important factor to increase the demand of Optional Tours, thus Tourism companies should prepare programs that integrate all kinds of Optional Tours with reasonable price.

Travel Agencies Perception of Optional Tours

Tourism managers' questionnaires were distributed to 60 of tourism companies' managers in Luxor. Managers explained their opinions through the items of the questionnaire. They agreed about the role of marketing to increase selling some types of Optional Tours.

Table 5 Overall means and standard deviation for the Optional Tour types

Tour Type	mean	standard deviation
Sound and Light Shows	3.8983	0.02144
Hot Air Balloon	3.8033	0.01532
Horse-Drawn Carriage	2.725	0.12329
Golf Tours	2.233	1.2263
Bicycle Tours	2.258	0.1489

Table 5 shows the various types of Optional Tours in Luxor. The variables that yielded the highest mean in terms of popular tour type is the Sound and Light Shows. They have successfully explained and covered the main purposes of the level of satisfaction. Sound and Light Shows ($X=3.89$, $sd=.02$) is followed by having enough criteria in assigning Hot Air Balloon ($X=3.80$, $sd=.01$) then Horse-Drawn Carriage ($X=2.72$, $sd=.012$). The lowest rated items in terms of unpopular tour types were Golf Tours ($X=2.23$, $sd=1.22$) then Bicycle Tours ($X=2.25$, $sd=.14$).

Managers ($n=60$) agreed (item scores between 3.50 and 4.49) about the role of marketing to increase selling these types. It is found that there is a strong relationship between marketing, tour guide, tour leader and their website.

They also pointed out that the price and quality are very important to sell this kind of tours. These indicated the importance of this type of Optional Tours for the tourism companies.

Respondents agreed (item scores between 3.50 and 4.49) that low commissions and the existence of another intermediary (hotels and providers themselves) were major challenges which face their company in the implementation process.

Managers (n=60) were neutral (item scores between 2.51 and 3.49) neither agree nor disagree with marketing of Horse-Drawn Carriage. They were also neutral with coordination and cooperation with providers that must be permanent. Moreover, they were neutral for the existence of other intermediary (hotels and providers themselves) as well as Quality.

Tourists were not attracted to this type of tours. This is due to their deep cost which negatively affects the interest of companies in marketing and selling them. Respondents also disagree that website is the best way for marketing the Horse-Drawn Carriage Tours. Moreover, they disagree (item scores between 1.51 and 2.5) that the marketing of Golf Tours/ Bicycle Tours is from their important priorities in their company.

They also pointed out that their companies did not depend on tour guide or tour leader in marketing those tours and brochures didn't contain enough information about the Golf Tours or Bicycle Tours. Moreover, coordination and cooperation with providers is not permanent.

They agreed that low commissions, the existence of other intermediary (hotels and providers themselves) and quality of those tours are the greatest challenges that face their company in the implementation process.

Conclusion

The Optional Tours for tour operators are very important because they provide additional revenue. As for tourists, the Optional Tour offer opportunities for them to choose activities that they want and add flexibility to the classic packaged tours.

Optional Tours are considered a form of innovative product which their effect is reflected on customers and companies host community. Therefore, travel agencies in Luxor exert efforts to market and sell Optional Tours such as Sound and Light Shows, Hot Air Balloon, Horse-Drawn Carriage, Golf, and Bicycle Tours beside its classical historical tours

This paper provides an assessment and exploration approach of the Optional Tours in Luxor to explore the level of tourists' satisfaction and to identify the challenges that face each type of Optional Tours. Quantitative approach based on two questionnaires were developed and directed to tourists and the managers of travel agents in Luxor.

The target population for this study was tourists who visited Luxor during 2015 until 2016 (N = 380) and travel agencies' managers (N=60) in Luxor. The Descriptive statistics mean and standard deviation were calculated for each item in each of these scales.

Moreover, correlation, ANOVA, ANCOVA Coefficients were used,. In addition, Cronbach-Alpha was used to verify the reliability of these tests.

Results referred that Hot Air Balloon, Horse-Drawn Carriage and Sound and Light Shows were the most popular types of Optional Tours. However, the lowest popularity was Bicycle and Golf Tours. Moreover, there were some barriers in some types of Optional Tours that indicate dissatisfaction of tourists such as the high price of Optional Tour, security and safety procedures during tours and the ways of booking them. The managers' survey showed their lack of interest in this type of tours and the lack of the marketing orientation to sell them.

Based upon both the literature review and the field study findings, the following recommendations could be suggested: An annual marketing activity plan should be developed with resources allocated by each participating Optional Tours' providers to support those tours.

Moreover, the governorate needs to develop its website that features all Optional Tours in Luxor and enhance content / structure of web site to facilitate more engagement with tourists. Planners also can establish a website for each type of Optional Tour after the successes examples of Misr Company for Sound & Light and Golf Luxor. Both websites can be part of a portal aimed at promotion of Optional Tours in Luxor.

Continuous monitoring is needed of social, environmental and economic impacts of the development process including information about the users to achieve high level of satisfaction and avoid the negative impacts. Travel agencies need to encourage tour guide and tour leader to play a correct role to guide tourists to choose Optional Tours and activities instead of guiding them to go to shopping stores.

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تقويم الرحلات الإختيارية فى مدينة الأقصر

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ملخص

الرحلات الإختيارية واحدة من أهم الأنشطة وعوامل الجذب الفريدة والمتنوعة فى صناعة السياحة ويمكن لها أن تحقق مكاسب كبيرة لكل من السائحين والشركات السياحية فضلاً عن المجتمعات المضيفة. الغرض من هذا البحث هو تحديد أهمية الرحلات الإختيارية فى صناعة السياحة وتقييم الرحلات الإختيارية فى مدينة الأقصر. يقيم هذا البحث رضا السائحين عن الرحلات الإختيارية، ويكشف التحديات التي تواجه تطبيق كل نوع. استخدم الباحثون الارتباط الوصفى والتباين لتحقيق هدف البحث. تم استخدام الأسلوب الكمي من خلال استبيانات للسائحين ومديري وكالات السفر الموجودة فى مدينة الأقصر. كانت تحليل النتائج لاستبيانات مديري وكالات السفر هي أقرب كثيراً لنتائج استبيانات السائحين. خاصة فيما يتعلق بشهرة وانتشار بعض الرحلات الإختيارية مثل رحلات البالون والحنطور وعروض الصوت والضوء. على عكس ذلك، تعتبر رحلات الجولف ورحلات الدرجات هي أقل أنواع الرحلات الإختيارية شهرة. علاوة على ذلك، هناك بعض العوائق التي تواجه وتشير إلى عدم الرضا من السائحين. بناء على النتائج، تم اقتراح التوصيات لتطوير الرحلات الإختيارية وتحقيق رضا السائحين.

الكلمات الدالة: الرحلات الإختيارية، الأقصر، الرضا، العوائق، وكالات السفر.