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Research Title:

Qatari Desert ... Our Window Towards Globalization ...

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Dedication

To the land on which we live...

To the land where we drink its water and breathe its air...

To the land where we grow up...

To the land which deserves all the words of thanks as gratitude...

To our beloved country... Qatar...

Abstract

Sustainable tourism has recently become the most effective economic sectors in many countries and Qatar is one of them. So, Qatar adopts some programs to develop this kind of tourism such as the event which is held in Doha in 2017 on the theme of ‘Sustainable Tourism – a Tool for Development’.

No doubt that the 2022 World Cup, which will be hosted by Qatar as the first Middle Eastern country, is a golden chance to introduce Qatar as a tourism country because hundreds of thousands of fans will visit Qatar to watch the matches as well as visit the tourist places and move between the places easily by using the Metro which links between the cities in Qatar.

In addition, the championship will be held in autumn, so the nice weather will enable the tourists to watch the matches, visit the archaeological places and museums, do recreational activities and enjoy the desert nature which has attractive activities – that nature, many Europeans lack it in their countries.

Thus, Qatari Desert will be one of the most beautiful deserts they have ever seen in their lives, taking in their accounts to respect nature, respect culture and respect the host, as Talib Al- Refai – the Secretary General for World Tourism Organization that follows to the United Nations– said.

(<http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2017-08-10/world-tourism-day-2017-celebrated-theme-sustainable>, n.d.)

Tourist Media is one of the main factors for promoting this sector. It plays a positive role in presenting a distinctive image of tourist places through advertisements about tourist facilities and services.

Hence, Qatar has the basic elements of the tourism industry. It has attractive and cultural places, modern transportation and hotels as well as the services that all tourists need. (عبد القادر حماد، ناصر محمود عبد، 2013)

So, this research draws some useful guidelines for the future sustainable tourism in Qatar.

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Introduction

Qatar has many attractive tourism elements. It has a lot of historical and cultural sites which are an important element in bringing tourists. In addition to that, it enjoys with security and stability, modern transportation and hotels which provide high quality of services and facilities.

Tourism in Qatar includes historical tourism such as Al- Zubara Castle, religious tourism as the Museum of Islamic Art, the cultural tourism as Katara and the sports tourism as the 2022 World Cup that will be hosted by Qatar.

Whether tourism is domestic or international, it enables visitors to enjoy tourism places as well as nature while they preserve this nature and respect the culture of the country and the host, too. This is called Sustainable Tourism.

Qatar has been interested in sustainable development in all areas, including tourism, because it has a great impact on economic growth as a part of Qatar Vision 2030 towards a sustainable and diversified economy where tourism is one of its keys.

So Qatar is one of the fastest growing countries in the world and it has been able to put its mark on the map of domestic and international tourism.

No doubt that hosting Qatar to the 2022 World Cup is a real chance to develop sustainable tourism and to introduce Qatar more.

Hence, this research, which deals with desert tourism in Qatar, will be an important addition to the history of Qatari tourism industry.

Research Problem

Despite the interest of Qatar in sustainable tourism as one of the main pillars of economic progress, it has been noted that there is a lack of tourism projects especially for ‘deserts’, to be as an attracted place for tourists from abroad especially from countries that lack a desert environment.

Research Question

How to invest the Qatari Desert in making sustainable tourism projects and increasing the number of local and foreign tourists?

Research Hypothesis

If sustainable tourism is implemented, it will have a significant impact on economic growth as well as jobs creation and reduction of unemployment. It also introduces Qatar heritage to many visitors so they will explore the amazing desert and other places in Qatar.

The Importance Of The Research

Sustainable tourism is one of the most important economic activities in these days because of its great benefits in terms of providing jobs for a large number of people, and also the financial profits that are earned by the state.

As predictions indicate that oil will be over by 2050, this will urge us to create renewable development resources. One of the most important resources is sustainable tourism which is a major source of income for many countries.

There is no doubt that Qatar is keen to become one of the most sustainable countries in the world, taking into account the security stability in Qatar which is one of the basic requirements to attract tourists.

On the other side, Qatar hosts the 2022 World Cup which is a golden opportunity to introduce the domestic tourism there.

Hence, this research discusses the ways to make sustainable tourism in the desert and to make it as a point to attract tourists, taking into consideration the 2022 World Cup and hundreds of thousands of visitors will come to watch the matches.

Research Objectives

1. To focus on the importance of sustainable tourism in economic growth.
2. To focus on the utilization of desert and make distinguished tourism projects there.
3. To focus on developing this new style of tourism in other areas in Qatar.
4. To focus on the development of eco- friendly tourism so that visitors can enjoy the wonderful nature, and at the same time they maintain our nature as it is.
5. To focus on the importance of Media and youth's role in refreshing sustainable tourism in Qatar.
6. To focus on the importance of hosting the 2022 World Cup in Qatar in introducing tourist sites and increasing the number of tourists.

Research Terms

- Sustainable tourism: is a way of travelling and exploring a destination while respecting its culture, environment and people. (<https://visit.org/blog/en/what-is-sustainable-tourism/>, n.d.)
- Sustainable tourism (according to The World Tourism Organization) : 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.

(<http://sdt.unwto.org/content/about-us-5>)

- Domestic tourism: tourism that is carried out by people travelling within their own countries, usually by road or rail.
- Eco-friendly tourism (eco-tourism): is travelling to natural areas that aren't polluted in order to enjoy the rainforests, wildlife and the culture of the country.
- International tourism: is a tourist activity in which people travel from one country to another in order to have fun and entertainment, see different cultures and ancient civilizations of countries.

Literature Reviews

Sustainable tourism is of great interest in Qatar, so it seeks to achieve sustainability by developing tourism projects and services that will differentiate Qatar's tourism experience in line with its 2030 vision, and put it on the global map as well as support the national economy.

Hence, Qatar Tourism Authority was established in 2007 with the aim of achieving sustainable growth for the tourism sector, and promoting Qatar as a unique international tourism destination for business, education, sports and entertainment, as well as encouraging local investment to set up tourism projects. (<https://www.al-sharq.com/article/17/06/2015/>)

Therefore, the tourism industry has shifted from the goal of entertainment to an integrated industry that contributes in economy growth.

Qatar has many elements that make it as an ideal tourist destination. It has traditional markets like Souq Waqif, magnificent museums, sand dunes that are overlooking clean beaches, exhibitions and conferences.

On the other hand, Qatar is characterized by desert climate because it has vast areas of desert land, sand dunes and soft sand which make Qatar an integrated environment. So tourists 'from cold areas' will enjoy the warm desert climate. (واخرون، 1998)

In addition, the historical and cultural heritage like customs, traditions and local folklore is a means of attracting tourists from abroad to introduce the civilization of Qatar, and its achievements in the past and present especially tourists look for new areas that are different from what they see in their countries. (واخرون، 1998)

Hence, Qatar has given special attention to museums and has established many of them as cultural centers to preserve, display, maintain and explain the heritage in all its different forms. (الخليفي، 2003)

Since sustainable tourism is the best use of natural resources, some traditional houses and historical castles have been made museums as the Qatar National Museum which was an old traditional palace and built during the reign of Sheikh Abdullah Bin Jassim Al – Thani 1901, Al Khor Museum which was the headquarters of the police (الخليفي، المواقع الاثارية التراث المعماري المتاحف في قطر، 2003)

On the other side, the 2022 World Cup, which is hosted by Qatar, will be one of the most important aspects of economic development in the country that will strengthen Qatar as a global tourist destination.

So tourism is a major industry worldwide. It is an important source of foreign currency for governments and it has brought economic benefits to many places by way of increased job opportunities and extra income.

To sum up, Qatar is one of the countries that has many advantages to set up a distinctive tourism where it owns a lot of archaeological sites, hotels, traditional markets and provides safety as well as modern means of transports.

Research Population

The team of the scientific research conducted this study about the Desert and the places of tourism in Qatar and how we can make them as attractive places for local and foreign tourists.

Data Collection Methods and Instruments

1. A questionnaire.
2. An interview
3. Reading books and articles.
4. Visiting Museums.
5. A video.

Research Procedures

A random sample of people (40 persons) was selected and a questionnaire was distributed among them and after analyzing the questionnaire, it was found that a large percentage of them was very satisfied that sustainable tourism depends on the heritage of the country and its beautiful nature, as well as Social Media has a role in stimulating tourism and attracting tourists to Qatar, too.

It was also noticed that a large percentage emphasized that Qatar is living in the era of the tourism industry and there will be a better future for it. They also emphasized that a tourist is a tool to transfer what he/ she has seen in a certain country to his/ her community and relatives.

- The research team also interviewed Dr. Hafez Ali – The Director Of Msheireb Museums– and Ms. Sara Al Mannai – The Director of Education in Msheireb Museums– who confirmed that the desert nature in Qatar is an advantage because this climate isn't available in Europe and Asia, so it is an attraction for tourists to visit Qatar to see its nature and to recognize its cultural heritage through museums such as Msheireb Museums and the Islamic Museums which have their own architectural designs. So this will increase the number of the tourists and they will stay for a long time in Qatar.
- They added that despite of the high temperature in the Qatari Desert, which is a major obstacle for tourism, tourists are attracted to commercial tourism and visiting museums instead of going to the nature.
- According to a question that is asked about the impact of hosting 2022 World Cup on the sustainable tourism in Qatar, they replied that it has a positive impact as visitors, who come to watch the matches, will have a chance to recognize the tourist areas in Qatar. So the commercial activities in hotels and restaurants will revive, jobs will be available and traditional products will be sold, which will have excellent economic returns. They also added that Qatar is working to provide a metro station, hotels and all services to attract a large number of tourists.
- They explained that making sustainable tourism in Qatar will provide the youth sector with many jobs in the fields of cultural guidance and

cultural education, as they are ambassadors in conveying a cultural image of Qatar, and as His Highness Emir Sheikh Hamad said,” The real wealth is the human abilities, not the oil”.

- They explained that Msheireb project is an integrated model which can be emulated in establishing new projects in other cities in Qatar such as Al Wakra or Al Khor, and benefit from the positive aspects of this project like taking advantages of the sun’s rays in the design of the city itself. As well as the architectural design of the buildings, which shows us a picture of the heritage and identity of Qatar.
- They added that Msheireb project has developed many solutions such as water circulation, air conditioning and engineering design of the buildings that reduces the high temperature.
- They explained that Qatar has entered into a tourism field, where the National Tourism Council was established under the chairmanship of

The Prime Minister. There is also the Museum Authority that works in establishing museums and cultural facilities, as well as the Ministry of

Culture which organizes cultural events between Qatar and other countries to exchange cultures among people. Katara is also a cultural platform where many events are held throughout the year such as exhibitions, plays and concerts.

- On the other hand, they stressed that the Social Media Sites have a main role in introducing the tourist sites, as well as the visitors themselves contribute to transfer what they have seen in a certain country to other tourists. So we see many tourists visit Msheireb Museums after reading about them in social networking platforms.

- They added that the most important thing in the tourist place is to be integrated and contains services that suit all members of family as in Msheireb City where it will contain shops, restaurants, cinemas, walkways and a city of entertainment games.
- At the end of the interview, they suggested, to develop the tourism in Qatar, to have a diversity in the popular museums and a variety of presentation, as well as to pay attention to visitors that are coming from abroad and present tourist products in a simple language in order to understand the history of Qatar.
- The Research Team concluded at the end of the interview that Qatar is interested in sustainable tourism and Msheireb project is a model of sustainability. It also has many cultural places that attract many tourists to visit Qatar taking into account tourists' opinions in tourist products in order to improve them if there are any defects.
- The research team has read some books and articles related to the tourism and sustainable tourism.
- The research team browsed the internet to find out more information about the tourism and sustainable tourism.
- The research team visited Msheireb Museums, toured the museums, listened to a simplified explanation about the origin of petroleum in Qatar, and also saw the antiques in the old traditional houses which are turned into museums. They also listened to an explanation about the Msheireb City project.

- A descriptive video has been made to show how to benefit from the desert lands in making a large tourism project as well as adding some ideas to the 'Aspire Park'.

Results

After searching about sustainable tourism especially in desert lands, we concluded that:

- Desert nature is an advantage and it can be utilized in making large tourism projects.
- Qatar has many components to make advanced tourism in all fields.
- Sustainable tourism has a great impact on raising economic growth.
- Social Media Sites play an important role in introducing tourist areas.
- The youth sector has an effective role in highlighting Qatar.
- The World Cup 2022 is a golden opportunity to introduce Qatar and make it a tourist destination.

Recommendations

- Building a beautiful and productive desert which will have an impact on the economic and recreational growth in Qatar.
- Establishing a permanent desert camp throughout the year, which includes tents that are transparent from one side to view and enjoy the external nature, as well as providing them with air conditioning to cool the summer and warm them in the winter. In addition, providing this camp with net, restaurants and doing some activities there such as

- sleeping under the stars, camel riding, Jeep tours, sand skiing races and hiking. (Tents will be as hotels).
- Building large games city and restrooms with closed ceilings in the desert.
 - Setting up traditional Qatari style restaurants as old Qatari houses which offer Qatari cuisine like Harees.
 - Setting up Qatari crafts shops in desert areas in order to be as an attractive shops for tourists that come from abroad.
 - Making Desert Gardens that include plants which live in the desert such as cactuses and 'Daghamos'.
 - Setting up nature reserves that include desert animals especially camels which foreign tourists like them to see and ride.
 - Setting up an Amiri car show that includes the old cars that were/ are used by the sheikhs in the past and up to the present.
 - Benefiting from the solar energy in lighting desert areas.
 - Making artificial lakes and mountains in deserts to cool the weather and give the desert an amazing view.
 - Using balloons to do tours and to see the desert from up. This will be a nice experience for adventure lovers.
 - Setting up new airports in Al Khor, Al Wukair and Al Shamal.
 - Encouraging studies and researches that are related to desert tourism.
 - Setting up cable cars in Aspire Park.
 - Taking advantages of the air conditioning water in developing a green environment on the sidewalks.
 - Taking advantage of Qatar 2022 World Cup by setting up tourist museums that will be close to the stadiums and attract tourists to visit them.

- Making a Tour Guide that includes all tourist areas in Qatar.
- Using the Social Media in introducing the tourist areas and hotels in Qatar as well as giving information about them.
- Making special applications on mobile phones to introduce tourism in Qatar in all languages.
- Introducing ‘Tourism Specialization’ in the universities which means teaching courses about tourism to graduate students who are able to convey a cultural image of Qatar to foreign tourists, as well as teaching ‘Languages’ in order to communicate with them in their mother tongue.
- Setting up a Hotel Training Institute to train young people to work in hotels professionally.
- Making tourists offers for Qatar which are announced in newspapers and Social Media and reduce the prices of the tickets to encourage tourists to enjoy these offers.
- Encouraging Water Tourism by creating special places for diving in order to identify coral and fish wealth in Qatar.

Closing

Sustainable tourism plays a vital role in economic growth as it is an extra income source to the country, especially when Qatar hosts the 2022 World Cup and many visitors will come to watch the matches. So it is a good chance to introduce Qatar as a tourism country which has a vast desert land. This present research provides the persons in charge with some ideas of changing the desert into attractive tourism place as well as gives some suggestions to develop the tourism sector in Qatar.

References

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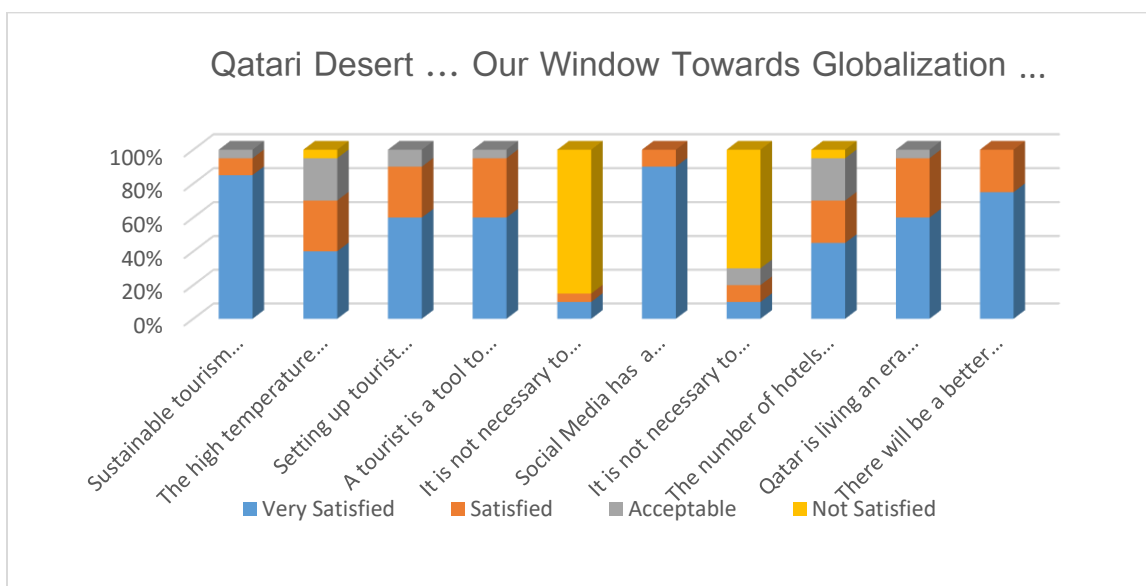
Appendix

Questionnaire

	Statements	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Acceptable	Not satisfied
1.	Sustainable tourism depends on the heritage of the country and its beautiful nature.				
2.	The high temperature in Qatar is an obstacle to make a sustainable tourism in summer.				
3.	Setting up tourist resorts is a main factor in attracting tourists.				
4.	A tourist is a tool to transfer what he has seen in a certain country to his community and relatives.				
5.	It is not necessary to cooperate among different sectors to promote sustainable tourism.				
6.	Social Media has a role in stimulating tourism and attracting tourists to Qatar.				

7.	It is not necessary to provide visitors with a tourist guide to introduce the wonderful places in Qatar.				
8.	The number of hotels in Qatar is sufficient to accommodate many tourists.				
9.	Qatar is living an era of tourism industry.				
10.	There will be a better future for tourism in Qatar.				

How to invest the Qatari Desert in making sustainable tourism projects and increasing the number of local and foreign tourists?



Pictures



The Research Team is searching information



The Research team during the interview

With the Director of Msheireb Museums

Dr. Hafez Ali



The Research Team with the Director of
Msheireb Museums
Dr. Hafez Ali
In Bin Jelmoed House



People are answering the questionnaire

A descriptive video about Qatari Desert & other places in Qatar:

