Sustainable Tourism and Culture: A Symbiotic Relationship

Reham Kamel El-Khadrawy[1], Amr Abdalla Attia[2], Marwa Khalifa[2], Rowaida Rashed[4]

[1] PhD Candidate, Department of Urban Planning, Faculty of Engineering, Ain Shams University

[2] Professor, Department of Urban Planning, Faculty of Engineering, Ain Shams University

[4] Associated Professor, Department of Urban Planning, Faculty of Engineering, Ain Shams Universityg

Abstract

Cultural Tourism offers a strong motivation to preserve the elements of cultural heritage in tourist destinations. It helps to preserve cultural elements as important tourist attractions. Cultural tourism's notion is unlimited to visiting monumental attractions only, but it has also become an interactive experience with the social fabric of the community through attending exhibitions, festivals and events, and the purchase of traditional local products. Thus, the human capital factor in tourism is linked to the quality of tourism products. With the growth of international tourism, the importance of sustainable tourism development has emerged to protect natural, cultural, and human resources, in addition to achieving economic development. As non-sustainable tourism development has led to the deterioration of tourism resources. This research paper examines if cultural tourism contributes to decrease tourism seasonality and achieve sustainable tourism development in cultural heritage sites. A case study of Aswan was selected. Aswan has unique and important elements of cultural heritage (Tangible and Intangible), but it still faces many problems like tourism seasonality, besides its tourism is still weak compared with other cities that have the same tourism potential. Based on a literature review and analytical study of global examples that achieved sustainability in cultural heritage sites, a field study of Aswan was conducted to evaluate the current status of cultural tourism, besides illustrating the challenges of achieving sustainability. The major result that has emerged from the study is paying attention to cultural tourism is the possible solution to the challenges that Aswan tourism faces. Finally, the paper concluded that investment in human capital creates opportunities for cultural tourism which in return resolves one of tourism's major challenges: seasonality.

1. Introduction

Tourism is mainly perceived as a major industry that contributes to 10% of the world's GDP, along with a wide range of job opportunities (EENCA, 2017). It also considered among the most important means of cultural exchange, as it provides an experience for tourists to learn about the cultures inherited in local society as well as cultures from contemporary life (UNESCAP, 2008). Hence, tourism has been considered as a tool for attracting visitors to cultural sites and venues, and culture is considered as a source of attractive opportunities for cultural experiences to tourists (EENCA, 2017). Unfortunately, tourism could have damaging multiple effects on cultural heritage sites (UNESCAP, 2008). However, cultural tourism could be viewed as part of the solution to such tourism problems. According to Richards & Raymond (2000), cultural tourism had witnessed significant growth in recent decades, as tourists had

become increasingly interested in learning about the culture, heritage, and history of the destinations they visit. Therefore, cultural tourism creates a growth market, and cultural tourists are seen as desirable tourists in cultural destinations. Consequently, this had led to tremendous growth in the number of cultural places around the world in the last twenty years, which had led to the emergence of competitions between cultural places with each other and with other types of tourist attractions. Due to these competitions, some cities began to search for innovative solutions to develop cultural tourism, increase income and jobs, and at the same time support culture of local communities. This had done by adopting new and innovative strategies that rely on human capital (Richards & Raymond, 2000).

Many researchers including El-Sayed (2006), Lut & Vlad (2010) and Esu (2012), agreed that the main factor of success and achieving competitiveness in the tourism sector is "human capital". Where human capital in tourism is the essence of the tourist offer, due to the nature of tourism services that requires a direct interaction between the tourist and the tourism workers. Therefore, developing human capital leads to improving tourism services, and consequently, the ability to compete with other tourist countries.

Egypt has diversity in the tourism field and possesses many tourism assets. At the same time, cultural tourism in Egypt is a competitive, unique, and non-recurring type of tourism. Due to the existence of the successive civilizations, which resulted in unique social and architectural cultures stemming from the natural environment, in addition to the local community traditions that considered as one of the most important attraction elements (Ibrahim, 2013). Furthermore, Egypt is one of the most populous countries in the Middle East. It also has the advantage of being a young country, due to having a large number of young people under 30 years old, representing around 61% of its total population (MPMAR, 2016).

This research aims to examine if cultural tourism contributes to decreasing tourism seasonality, overcome political issues and terrorist attacks, and achieve longlasting advancement in cultural heritage sites. The Methodology of this study is based on the integration between three main approaches: The first one (descriptive approach): is based on literature review concerning the paper topic, the second one (analytical approach) is based on a comparative analytical study between Three cities from different countries focusing on developing the cultural tourism, and the third one (case study) is based on field study took place from 6th -8th of March, 2019, interviews with hotels owners & workers in Gharb Soheil, shop owners in Aswan market, tour guides & tourism companies, Aswan Municipality employees and a random sample of Aswan residents including youth, women & men.

Nomenclature	
CH	Cultural Heritage
CT	Cultural Tourism
ECoC	European Capital of Culture
GOPP	General Organization for Physical Planning
TD	Tourism Development
ST	Sustainable Tourism
STD	Sustainable Tourism Development
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization

2. Literature Review:

2.1. Cultural Heritage & Cultural Tourism

In the past, Cultural Heritage merely addressed perceptible heritage or monuments. Now the meaning of CH has widened to include all the evidence of people's lives and activities from the past; comprising imperceptible heritage, historic areas, and cultural landscapes. In particular, the manifestations of CH can be grouped into two wide categories: a) <u>Tangible heritage</u>: denoting the physical heritage such as monuments, traditional buildings, archaeological sites, temples, and historic cities. b) <u>Intangible heritage</u>: signifying the abstract societal cultural expressions, such as conventional customs, societal practices, festivals, music, and craftsmanship (UNESCAP, 2008).

The cultural heritage sites are major tourist attractions, therefore, cultural heritage is the key asset for cultural tourism endurance (UNESCAP, 2008). The European Association for Tourism and Leisure Education "ATLAS' defines CT as: "All movements of persons to specific cultural attractions, such as heritage sites, artistic and cultural manifestations, arts and drama outside their normal place of residence" (EENCA, 2017). And UNWTO defines cultural tourism as "A form of tourism motivated by representations of peoples and their cultures" (UNESCAP, 2008). Hence, CT's concept emphasizes culture and its environment, locals' standards and traditions, arts and entertainment resources including cultural pr8oceedings, museums, and legacy areas and socializing with the local residents (CHERPLAN, 2013). Therefore, heritage and arts are considered to be "primary elements" of cultural tourism. Whenever tourism and heritage harmonize, tourism returns would be used to ensure the endurance of heritage environments. Hence, CT can boost the community and help maintain cultural and social benefits (EENCA, 2017).

2.2. Cultural Tourism Impacts on Heritage Sites:

Tourism influences heritage sites in both positive and negative ways. CT conserves cultural heritage through revenues' augmentation and local crafts' revitalization. It can also boost employment and generate additional income for local businesses (UNESCAP, 2008). CT also could be considered as a part of solving tourism concentration problems, through redirection of cultural tourists to visit less popular destinations or go at less popular times of the year (Richards, 2005). On the other hand, CT has negative impacts; some impacts might be fast and direct, such as draining cultural heritage resources and infrastructure, this could take place through congestion, crowding, and high demands. Other impacts are indirect and slow; such as socio-cultural values altering, high housing prices and the natural environment depletion (UNESCAP, 2008). Tourism aids host communities by providing motivation for local residents to care for their legacy and cultural practices (UNESCAP, 2008).

2.3. Sustainable Tourism Development:

Due to the constant growth of worldwide tourism, Sustainable TD has emerged to protect natural, cultural, human resources, and achieves economic development. As unmanaged tourism expansion has led to the deterioration of tourism resources. According to UNTWO, sustainable TD manages resources achieving economic, social, and aesthetic needs (UNESCAP, 2008). UNWTO further defined ST as "Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, and biological diversity and life support systems" (UNESCAP, 2008). It is essential that relevant stakeholders including the local community, conservationists, tourism operators, property owners, planners, site managers, and policymakers are involved as this is required for the sustainable tourism industry and maintain heritage resources for future generations (UNESCAP, 2008).

Previous international initiatives and conventions emphasized the significance of culture in sustainable development. UNWTO in 2001 adopted the "Global Code of Ethics for Tourism" (CHERPLAN, 2013), that embodies the milestone of (ST). The key themes of cultural and eco-tourism according to UNWTO are (CHERPLAN, 2013): first, the contribution of tourism to create mutual esteem between people and their societies; second, tourism acts as an important factor of sustainable development, third, as tourism exploit cultural heritage, it also contributes to its enrichment. Fourth, an equitable share of socio-economic benefits that tourism activities generate should be targeted to local residents.

UNESCO's latest initiative on "Culture: A Bridge to Development" aimed to improve cultural heritage in all its forms as a prevailing tool for a sustainable multilayer development approach (UNESCO, 2011). According to UNESCO (2015), culture represents a key aspect that fosters sustainable urban development, this takes place through urban identity and environmental protection, encouraging relevant activities to attract visitors, and creating a flexible economy.

According to UNESCO (2012), the outcome document of UN's Rio+20 Conference highlighted the importance of cultural diversity; "We acknowledge the natural and cultural diversity of the world and recognize that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development" (article 41). The document accentuated the importance of the occurrence of a robust relationship between people, their environments and their cultural heritage (30); it also

strengthened the importance of financing cultural tourism-related projects (130 and 131); "the need for conservation of the natural and cultural heritage of human settlements, the revitalization of historic districts, and the rehabilitation of city centers" (134); it also affirmed the vital affiliation between culture and biodiversity (197) (UNESCO, 2012).

2.4. Human capital importance to Sustainable Tourism:

According to Abu-Aljdael (2012), achieving a competitive advantage in tourist destinations is not depends on traditional resources such as natural, technical or other resources, as these resources become easy to imitate, but it depends on the scarce resources that are difficult to imitate like culture & human capital. And according to El-Sayed (2006), the investment in human capital through training and education reflected in the improvement of tourism services and the ability to compete with other tourist destinations. As the tourism industry requires direct interaction between the tourist and the local community. Moreover, the UN's Rio+20 Conference emphasizes the role of the local community in sustainable development (UNESCO, 2012). Article (6) recognizing that "*people are at the center of sustainable development*". Article (30) distinguishing the complex bond between people, their ecosystems and their cultural heritage. Article (41) focus on human development and the role of cultures and civilizations in the contribution to sustainable development (UNESCO, 2012).

After the literature review, the importance of culture could be emphasized, as it's considered as a basis of sustainable tourism. It helps to conserve the cultural heritage, ensure economic returns to local communities, and provide motivation to maintain the heritage and cultural practices. Also, it involves a large number of people including the local population, stakeholders, and tourists. We also illustrated the importance of human capital in sustainable tourism development, as an investment in human capital through training and education reflected in the improvement of tourism services and the ability to compete with other tourist destinations.

3. Sustainable Tourism Development in Egypt:

Ministry of Planning Monitoring and Administrative Reform in Egypt issued report entitled "Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt's Vision 2030" (MPMAR, 2016). The development strategy is based on the three main dimensions of sustainability (Economic, Social, and Environment), and includes 10 main pillars. However, this study will be limited to the pillars concerning tourism, culture and human capital. The following part illustrating the challenges faces sustainable tourism development in Egypt followed by the proposed strategic policies & programs to achieve tourism sustainability:

3.1. Challenges facing Sustainable Tourism Development in Egypt (MPMAR, 2016):

- The instability of political issues that have led to security problems over the last decade.
- Insufficient tourism infrastructure, in addition to the absence of linkages between tourism recent trends and existing services
- Absence of diverse tourism amenities, insufficient advertisement as they are only directed towards private resorts, in addition to the negligence of cultural tourism, health tourism, religious tourism, eco-tourism, desert safaris, oases tourism, and conferences and exhibitions tourism
- The rigidity of organizational institutions due to the various number of stakeholders including ministries, and different administrative bodies, and their conflict of interests.
- Absence of coordination between different institutions.
- Absence of public awareness of the significance of cultural heritage and their role in preserving heritage sites
- Insufficient financial resources that are targeted to keep and protect heritage sites, in addition to lack of financing cultural and artistic works.
- Lack of Protection of Egypt's intangible heritage.

3.2. Egypt Strategic Policies & Programs to Achieve Sustainable Tourism Development:

a)   Human Capital (MPMAR, 2016):
- Allowing different incentives either through financing development projects or tax minimizing.

- Develop human skills through subsidizing labors training in the tourism sector and relevant activities.

- Encouraging technical education exclusively tourism and hotel education.

- Establish training centers in the tourism sector according to international standards.

b) Tourism & Culture:

According to MPMAR (2016), the **first objective** of the strategy is to encourage culturally relevant businesses including entertainment and traditional crafts. The **second objective** is to ensure the efficiency of tourism bodies along with minimizing the terrestrial gap of amenities provided due to location. The **third objective** is to preserve Egypt's heritage through protecting, maintenance, and increasing awareness as well as attracting national and international visitors and supporting local cultural activities. Polices & programs will be as follows**:**

- Adopting innovative programs to increase societal's historic and cultural awareness.

- Establishing a database including cultural products and activities in Egypt.

- Increasing the efficiency of cultural tourism infrastructure and expand its scope.

- Protecting and developing local crafts through financing them and endorsing exhibitions and agendas.

- Establishing stimulating environments to encourage local industries.

- Updatig techniques of protection and reconstruction of heritage.

- Formation of efficient policies and plans to protect heritage (MPMAR, 2016).

As a result, the above section explains that developing cultural industries and developing human skills through training & education, are key factors in Egypt's strategic policies & programs that were set to overcome challenges faces tourism sustainability.

4. Global Experiences:

The following part is a presentation of global cities aimed at achieving sustainable tourism development through the development of Cultural Tourism. Three cities were selected, two of them were chosen from UNESCO World Heritage List, and the third one won the title of the European Capital of Culture in 2012.

4.1. Maribor, Slovenia (European Capital of Culture 2012):

Maribor city is the second-largest city in Slovenia, with a total number of residents of 95'881 persons in 2016[1]. The old city center which built in the 13th century has a rich historical heritage which is evident in numerous churches, monuments, museums, and other sites. The city faced many political alterations and after World War I, it came under the rule of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In 1991 and after the breakup of Yugoslavia, it became part of Slovenia (Maribor, 2015). The breakup subsequent collapse of heavy industry that was at the time the flagship of the national economy, resulted in heavy economic, social, and infrastructural damage for the city of Maribor. By the 20th century, the city was developed as an educational and cultural center and became one of the major education centers of Slovenia (Maribor, 2016).

Maribor titled as the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) in 2012 (Maribor, 2015). The preparation period was 6 years before the title-year. In 2010 the City Council of the Municipality of Maribor established the public institute "Maribor 2012" to be responsible for the inclusive process of planning and executing the "Maribor 2012 – European Capital of Culture" project (Maribor, 2015). The ECoC criteria require the nominated city to host hundreds of top-level cultural events spread out throughout the year, and to develop physical infrastructure (cultural venues, accommodation capacities, and transport connections), also to develop "human infrastructure" which is needed to host the ECOC. The criteria also require significant engagement with the citizens of a city: involve schools, universities, youth clubs, civil society organizations, and the engaging of the private sector in the cultural and creative industries (EUROPEAN-COMMISSION, 2012).

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[1] http://population.city/slovenia/maribor/

According to Maribor (2015), multiple stakeholders carried out 308 programs and projects in Maribor in the title year, including the local community, the Slovenian, and international partners. In addition to nearly 5,300 events took place in 2012 and included more than 30 different countries. "Maribor 2012" mission and vision were based on cultural promotion as this approach represents essential factors focusing on the importance of having a strong bond gathering individuals, cities, regions, and countries. It also targeted the founding of strengthening social relations through various cultural ventures. The plan also integrated different segments of the local community in the cultural projects after providing the required training and attending cultural awareness programs (Maribor, 2015).
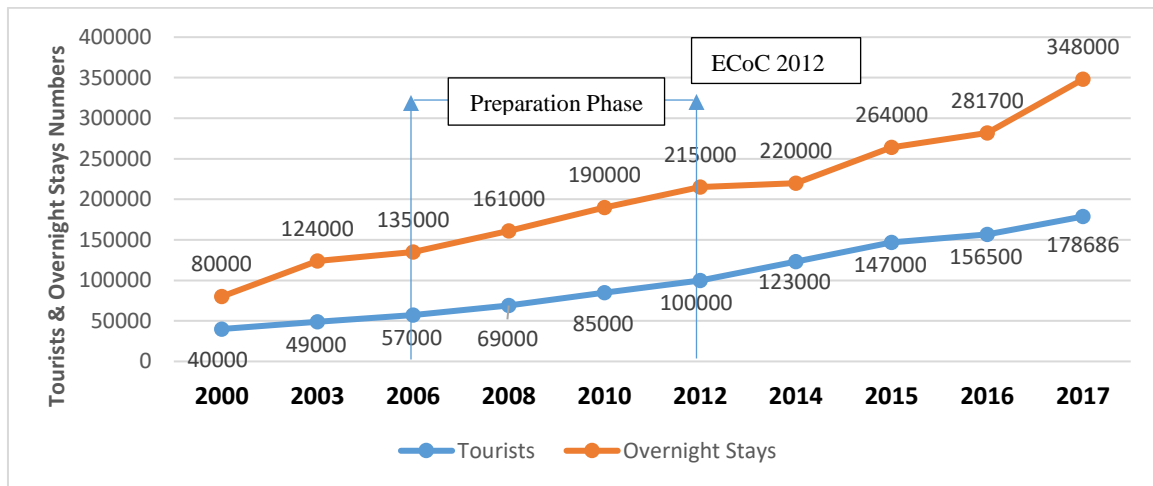
The following Figure 1, the benefits of ECoC in Maribor

Figure 1 Illustrating the tourists & overnights numbers from 2000 to 2017 in Maribor [2] (Adapted by the researcher)

From the above, we can notice that ECoC brought new opportunities to Maribor, it revitalized the city center through various cultural festivals & events spread out throughout the whole year and proven that cooperation is a key step to achieve sustainability, as local community involvement played an important role in the ECoC project's success, after providing them with the required training. It also was able to attract more visitors, which consequently lead to recognize Maribor as "*one of the top ten tourist destinations in Europe*" (Maribor, 2015).
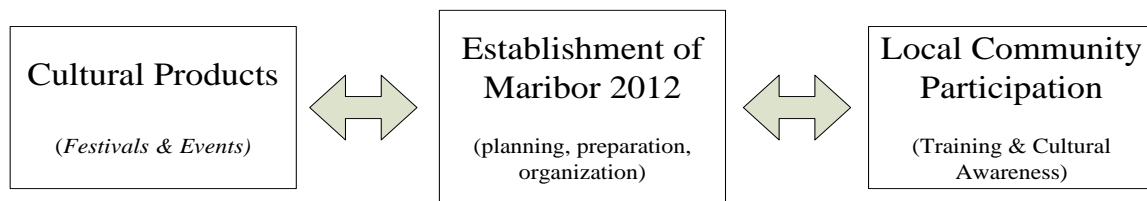

Figure 2 Maribor key steps to achieve tourism sustainability (Adapted by the researcher)

4.2. Morelia, Mexico (World Heritage List):

Morelia is the capital of the Michoacán state and is sited within the middle of the Mexican Republic (Alfaro, et al., 2012); with a population of 899'000 persons in 2016[3]. It has one of the most important Universities in Mexico (Alfaro, et al., 2012). Morelia was built in the 16th century and contains 249 monuments that reflect the town's architectural history. UNESCO declared Morelia Historic Centre as a World Cultural Heritage in 1991. Morelia Historic Centre is the main attraction, and it is protected by robust regulations and legislations (UNESCO, 1991). In addition, Morelia joined UNESCO Creative City Network in 2017 as a Creative City of Music (UNESCO, 2017), it built a distinguished dynamic musical character through its large musical program. Since 1989, the Morelia Music Festival Miguel Bernal Jiménez takes place as an international event that is festive with famous artists along with its many musical educational activities (UNESCO, 2017).

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[2] From 2000 to 2011 statistics are from (Horvat, 2012), and from 2012 to 2017 statistics are data collected & adapted by the researcher from Slovenia official website https://slovenia.info
[3] https://populationstat.com/mexico/morelia

Morelia being rich with exquisite architectural, cultural, and historic sites along with its beautiful natural destinations has led to its being among the most visited tourist destinations in Mexico. It also has a wide variety of entertainment facilities such as; theaters, museums, cinemas, and bars. It also has an international airport, and a bus terminal with nine lines that offer transfers to the entire state, as well as major cities across Mexico (Alfaro, et al., 2012). In 2005 Morelia City established the "Council of Cultural Sites of the Historic Centre of Morelia", to be responsible for the Development Program of the Historic Centre Urban. Morelia's plan targeted its transformation into a world-class sustainable city that would take place through economic progress, residents' quality of life improvement, adequate use of public services and spaces, and environmental management. In addition, tourism was introduced as an important factor for economic revenues by Mexico's development policies (UNESCO, 1991).

Morelia includes the "Conservatorio Musical", a 277 years old music school that encompasses various numbers of artists in different specializations (Alfaro, et al., 2012). Morelia also has fifteen universities, six of them offering tourism as an undergraduate program, and two as an area of expertise. Four universities offer seminars and courses related to tourism, and one of them has established a research center for tourism (CIETEC), which has conducted an annual survey from 2010 to 2014 to study the profile of tourists visiting the state in an effort to provide information for decision-makers. And the result was that city is primarily a domestic destination since 85 % of tourists are domestic tourist stays an average of 3.5 days, and international tourists (15%) stay an average of 10 days, visiting museums or attending cultural festivals & events (Medina, 2014).

With the changes of the administrations of the state government and the municipality of Morelia in the second half of 2015, new vision-related to tourism management of the city was set. The main idea was "to make the Historic Center a vibrant heart of the culture and citizenry that attracts more visitors". This vision promoted various actions and projects in the last two years; such as the rescue of the public spaces of the city for the benefit of its inhabitants, celebrating the 25 years of the recognition of Historic Center of Morelia as a World Heritage, and position Morelia within the Wedding and Romance tourism segment. The following figure 3 illustrating the tourist numbers from 2000 to 2017 (Pardo, 2017):
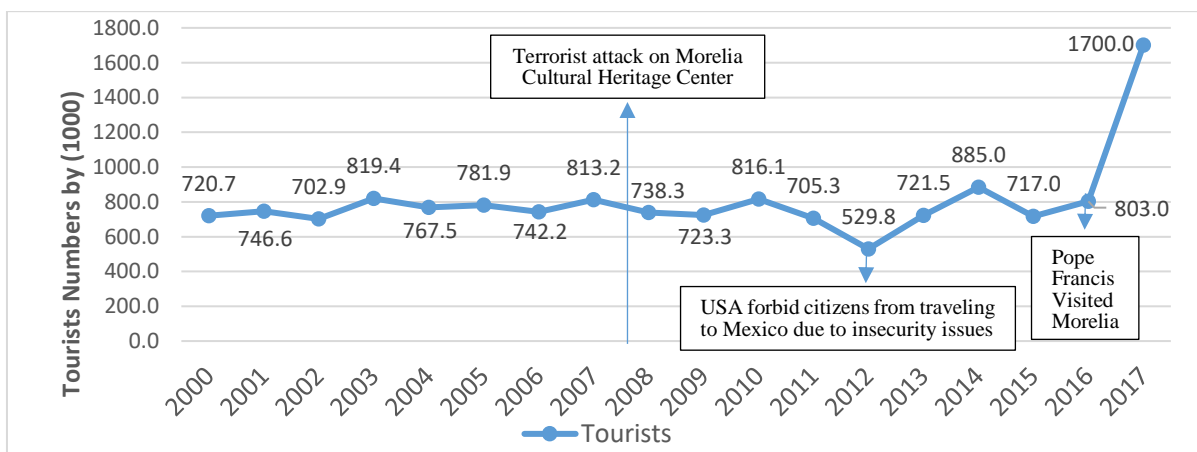

Figure 3 Illustrating the tourists' numbers from 2000 to 2017 in Morelia (Pardo, 2017) (Adapted by the researcher)

From the above, we can notice that Morelia faced tourism sustainability challenges, which represent in seasonality, terrorist attacks in 2008 and insecurity, violence, and instability issues in 2012 through the mixture of two characteristics. a) The development of Human Capital, as human capital in Morelia considering as a strengths point, due to its adherence to the customs, traditions, and expressions of regional culture, as well as its training education through specialized tourism programs. b) Morelia's political intention to strengthen the tourism sector through CT development. In addition to the beauty of the city's architecture, natural and cultural attractions as well as the festivities related to the intangible heritage which provided an important foundation to develop the tourism sector.
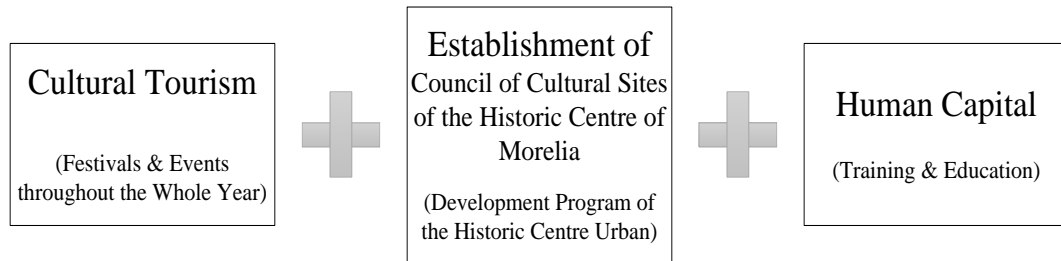
Cultural Tourism (Festivals & Events throughout the Whole Year)	➕	Establishment of Council of Cultural Sites of the Historic Centre of Morelia (Development Program of the Historic Centre Urban)	➕	Human Capital (Training & Education)

Figure 4 Morelia key steps to achieve tourism sustainability (Adapted by the researcher)

4.3. Fez, Morocco (World Heritage List):

Located in the north of Morocco, Fez is the capital of the Fas-Meknes province and the second-largest city in Morocco, its population in 2014 was around 1,146,500 inhabitants (Morocco, 2018). Dating back to the 9th century with the oldest university in the world (UNESCO, 1981). After the transferring of the political capital from Fez to Rabat back in 1912, its position as the cultural and spiritual center of Morocco was attained. Fez city is considered to be among the most well conserved historic municipality in the Arab region. Fez is well known for its superb architectural, rich artifacts sites, urban heritage along with its elegant lifestyle, tenable skills, and iconic culture. In 1981 Fez city was listed as a world heritage city by UNESCO (UNESCO, 1981).

Fez conservation strategy encompasses all intangible and tangible heritage. The renewal project was based on the rehabilitation and revitalization approaches and the restoration of heritage sites with the partnership of multiple investors. The plan also targeted infrastructure upgrading. Accordingly, Fez's image changed from a stagnant, depleted city into a livable and evolving city. During the period of 1981 to 2005; different investments and conservation projects took place; an overall budget was conceded including a 52.9% for infrastructure, 22.1% for rehabilitation projects, 11% for the restoration of monuments, 6.6% for environmental protection, 4.9% for cultural and tourism development and finally 1.3% and 1.2% respectively targeted for training and institutional support (Radoine, 2008).

Recently, Morocco framed its development strategies to encompass CT as its main target through the development of historic quarters, resulting in a distinctive city for tourism attraction. The development notion sought to attract tourism-related to historic sites and various cultural events (Alami, et al., 2017). To achieve the conservation strategy, the Morocco government created a new institutional framework in 1989 (ADER-Fès) to be responsible for the development of Fez. "ADER-Fès" set a vision of Fez's heritage revitalization through the enhancement of inhabitants' quality of life (Radoine, 2008). Fez's CT has evolved in the recent years, it had transformed to an economic touristic hub attracting multinational immigrants to settle, work and mainly found guesthouses; that had multiplied through the past 20 years from one guesthouse back in 1997 up to 112 guesthouses in 2016 (Alami, et al., 2017).

In 2013, the government has implemented a project named "Ziyarates Fez". The project was based on the adaptive reuse of locals' homes into guesthouses where families offer the visitors one or more rooms, this would facilitate interactions between different cultures and experience the local life. Allowing the pilot project, the "Ziyarates Fez" project for the first time to be legal was according to an agreement between different governmental institutions and NGOs (Alami, et al., 2017). The project aimed to involve tourism in human development through the following undertaken actions: restoration & upgrading of residential houses, services quality control, local's training on tourism importance, and grant funds for guesthouses' furnishing. Above all, training was provided to all families in the project about "tourism professions" including; welcoming guests, cooking, bedding and house-holding, ensuring the security of tourists, and accompaniment (Alami, et al., 2017). The Moroccan government initiated robust policies in order to avoid mass tourism in Fez, to reduce the socio-cultural impact on the local population (Alami, et al., 2017).

Fez also adopted a project named: "Fez, Capital of Traditional Arts and Showcase of the Craftsmanship of Morocco" targeting the exploiting of Fez's extraordinary cultural products and branding the local crafts and their high-end images including: 'zellige', ceramics, brassware and textiles, and traditional clothing (Alami, et al., 2017). The following figure 5 illustrating the tourist numbers in Fez from 2009 to 2017:
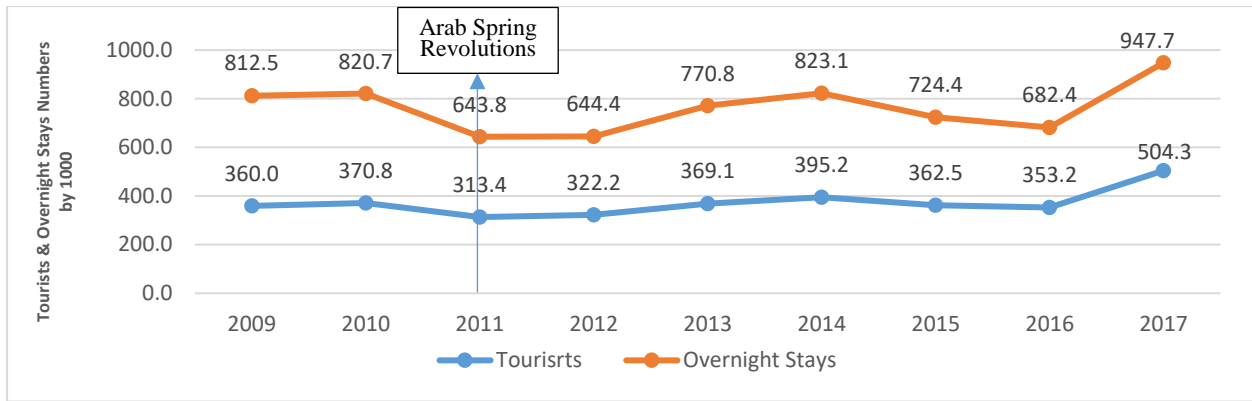
Figure 5 Illustrating the tourists & overnights numbers from 2009 to 2017 in Fez (Morocco, 2019) (Adapted by the researcher)

The cultural tourism project in Fez had developed opportunities for local authorities, and improved the living conditions of the population. Through the restoration and rehabilitation processes and the upgrading of Fez infrastructure, developing human capital through training, and developing the national handicrafts. Fez achieved sustainable tourism development by achieving economic revenues to the local community through their direct involvement in cultural tourism projects and heritage conservation `projects`.
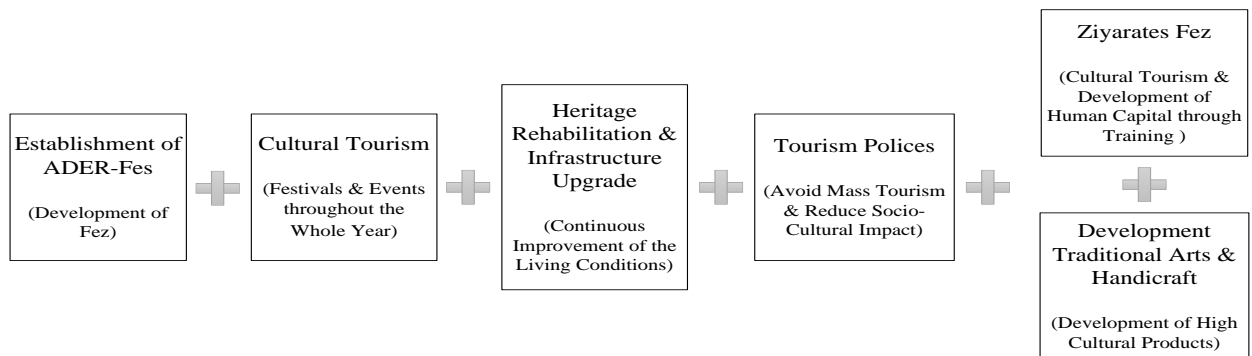

Figure 6 Fez key steps to achieve tourism sustainability (Adapted by the researcher)

5. Case Study: Aswan, Egypt:

Aswan is the capital of Aswan Governorate, located in the south of Egypt with a population of 421'070 persons (GOPP, 2017). Aswan was known as "Sono" through the ancient Egyptian times; the word means the market as it was a famous commercial center serving merchants coming and going to Nubia (SIS, 2017). In the Ptolemaic era, Aswan was named "Syene", and then its name turned into "Lipa Swan" by the Nubians (SIS, 2017). Later, it was entitled "The Land of Gold", for its great treasures or the Nubian kings' cemeteries (SIS, 2017). Aswan encompass16 archaeological sites and UNESCO declared the Nubian Monuments from Abu Simbel to Philae as a World Cultural Heritage in 1979 (UNESCO, 1979). In addition, Aswan joined the UNESCO Creative City Network as a creative city in Crafts and Folk Art in 2005 (UNESCO, 2005). Aswan is famous for its traditional crafts including beaded jewelry, fabric manufacture, palm related crafts, and clay and needle-work products (UNESCO, 2005).

5.1. The Current Situation of Aswan Tourism:

Aswan considers as one of the most important tourist destinations in Egypt, where Aswan has all elements of attractions, such as monuments, temples, nature reserves, and islands scattered in the Nile, in addition to Aswan High Dam and Nasser Lake. Aswan is also famous for its therapeutic areas by burial in the sand. In addition, Aswan includes many full-service hotels and floating hotels between Aswan & Luxor and eco-tourism motels in Gharb Sohail and Abu Simbel (Aswan, 2016). It also offers a rich cultural experience through staying in Nubian guesthouses in Gharb Soheil the Nubian Village (Shampoo, et al., 2019). Aswan also has multiple patterns of tourism in addition to cultural tourism, such as scientific tourism, fishing tourism, deserts adventure tourism, medical tourism, and many other tourism types. Aswan also has an international airport and a railway station (Aswan, 2016).

Unfortunately, although Aswan has all the above-mentioned tourism possibilities, which can qualify it to be one of the most important tourist destinations in the world, it was affected by the tourism seasonality, terrorist attacks, and political issues, which led to a significant drop-off in tourists' numbers in Aswan, especially after the 2011 revolution. The following figure 7 illustrating the situation of the tourism sector in Aswan from 2008 to 2017:
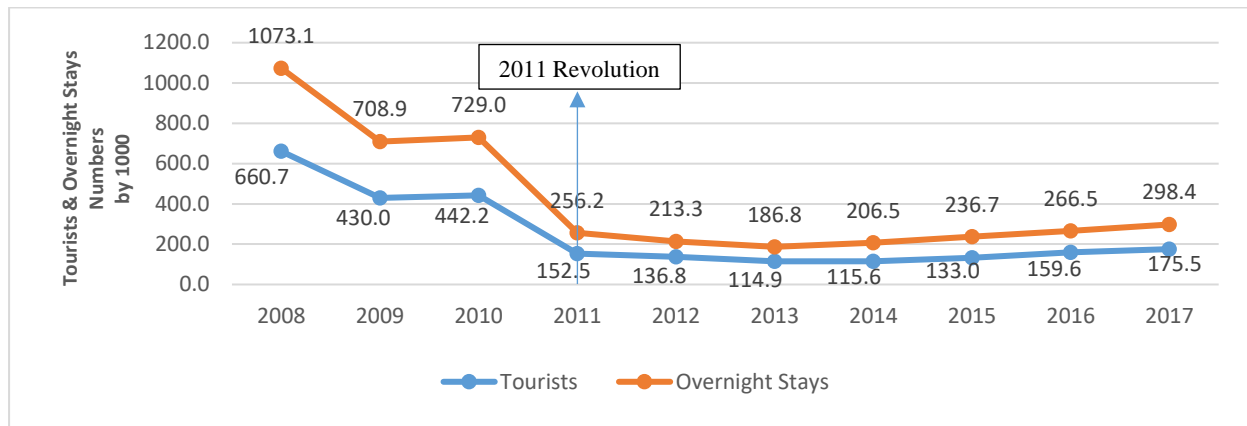

Figure 7 Illustrating the tourists & overnights numbers from 2008 to 2017 in Aswan [4] (Adapted by the researcher)

From the above figure, we can see that the average overnight stays in Aswan are ranging from (1.6 to 1.7 nights/tourist) before and after the revolution. In addition, and according to Aswan statistics (Aswan, 2016), the global tourism ratio decreased from 92% in years (2008 and 2010) to be 28% in 2014.

Aswan Workforce: The workforce in tourism sector represents only 2% from the total workforce in Aswan, and the main workforce is in industries sector with 25%, followed by agriculture sector with 6% (GOPP, 2017), most of the tourism workforce changed from the tourism sector to another sector after the 2011 revolution, most of the tourism bazaars in Aswan Market changes the selling products from tourism souvenirs to household and clothes (Site Visit).

Aswan Cultural facilities: Aswan has only one cinema, one theatre, one culture palace, one sound & light show, three museums (CAPMAS, 2018). In addition, there are only five annual international festivals held in Aswan during the period from November to March each year.

Aswan Infrastructure: The current infrastructure in Aswan hadn't been renovated for 70 years (Soliman, 2018).

5.2. Strategic Plan for Aswan Development (GOPP, 2017):

In 2017 the President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi announced that Aswan would be the "Capital of African Culture and Economy". This vision was part of the recommendations concerning the Second Youth Conference held in January.

In May 2017, the General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP), set future vision & development projects for Aswan Governorate according to Egypt's Vision 2030 and National Strategic Plan for Egypt 2052. The vision included projects in the following categories: road development & beautification, construction of new hotels & eco-tourism hotels, construction of handicrafts villages in Abu Simbel, Edfu, and Com Ombo, in addition to the development of river marina berths.

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[4] From 2008 to 2014 statistics are from (Aswan, 2016), and from 2015 to 2017 statistics are data collected & adapted by the researcher from website https://www.egypttoday.com
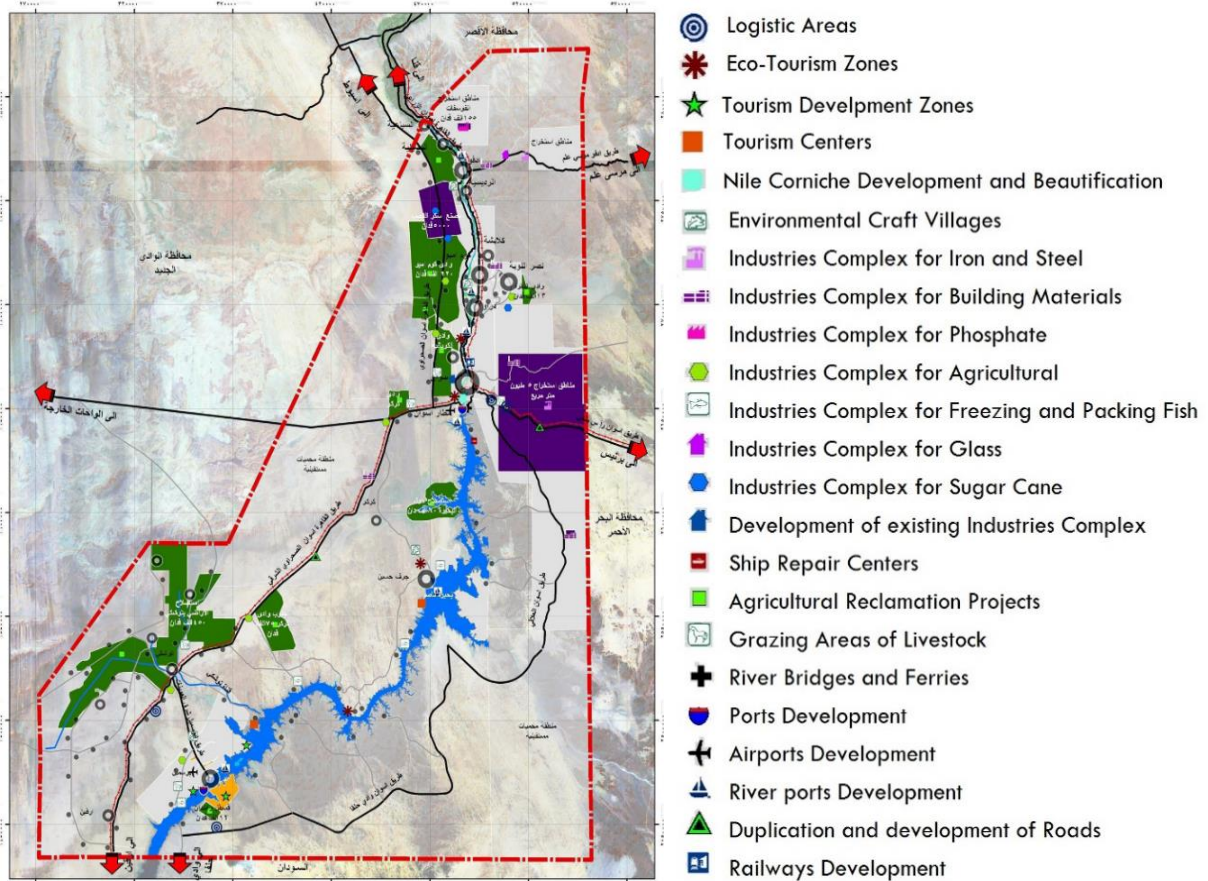
Figure 8 Illustrating the development projects in Aswan Governorate (GOPP, 2017) (adapted by the researcher)

All the proposed projects concentrated on traditional tourism, industrial, and agriculture sectors and didn't include any project concerning cultural tourism or human capital in Aswan. In contrast, Egypt's Vision 2030 set objectives to achieve sustainable development in the tourism sector included: Develop human skills for tourism workers and establish training centers in the tourism sector. Develop cultural industries including cinemas, theaters, music, and traditional crafts, protect & develop heritage crafts through financing & marketing (MPMAR, 2016).

5.3. Recommendations:

From the literature review, and global experiences cities, there are key steps to achieve STD in Aswan, and overcome tourism seasonality; this would take place through terrorism eradication, and political life stability, along with achieving the vision that was set for Aswan to be a "Capital of African Culture and Economy". The following are the summarized key steps:

1. Developing Aswan cultural tourism, through the strategies and programs aimed at engagement of the local community, enhancing their quality of life through economic growth, urban regeneration, and participating in cultural events.

2. Establish an institution to be responsible for the development of cultural tourism in Aswan, and to manage and coordinate the cooperation between different bodies and stakeholders, government sector, private sector, and the local community.

3. Develop Cultural Structure; such as cinemas, theaters, libraries, and festivals & events throughout the whole year (not only in the winter months).

4. Develop Human Capital in Aswan through education and training. And the establishment of training centers specialized in developing human skills for workers in the tourism sector and related services.

5. Set policies and regulations to maintain Aswan's heritage and cultural tourism through security and safety regulations, periodic maintenance and increasing public residents'awareness, and city branding to attract both local and international guests.

6. Imitate Ziyarates Fez project, and apply it in Gharb Soheil to be registered in a legal framework through the government, and provide the required training to the local community, to be a world-class cultural tourism village.

7. `Develop Handicraft products through financing and marketing.`

6. Conclusion:

From the literature review, the global experiments, and the work field conducted in Aswan, the following results were achieved:

− Culture Tourism could be considered as a basis of sustainable tourism. It helps to conserve CT, attain profits to the hosting societies, and increase incentives to preserve legacy and artistic practices. It also could be considered as a part of solving tourism concentration problems, through redirection of cultural tourists to visit less popular destinations or go at less popular times of the year.

− Heritage and arts are considered to be "primary elements" of cultural tourism.

− Human Capital's role is important in achieving sustainable tourism development, as an investment in human capital through training and education reflected in the improvement of tourism services and the ability to compete with other tourist destinations.

− All the global cities examples shared certain key steps to achieve sustainable tourism development, such as; developing cultural tourism through the festivals and events spread throughout the whole year, renovation and rehabilitation of urban fabric, establish an institution to be responsible for the development of cultural tourism, develop Human Capital through education and training, in addition to engaging the local community in cultural programs and improving the quality of life of the inhabitants.

− Aswan considers as one of the most important tourist destinations in Egypt, where it has all elements of attractions, whether natural or cultural, in addition to the huge investments represents in full-service hotels. Unfortunately, Aswan was affected by the tourism seasonality, terrorist attacks, and political issues especially the 2011 revolution. Therefore, the General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP) set future vision & development projects for Aswan. However, all the proposed projects concentrated on traditional tourism, industrial, and agriculture sectors, and didn't include any project concerning cultural tourism or human capital in Aswan.

− To achieve sustainable tourism development in Aswan, there are key steps need to be achieved, such as; establish an institution responsible for cultural tourism in Aswan, develop cultural structure (cinemas, theaters, libraries, and festivals & events …etc), develop human capital through education and training, set policies and regulations to maintain Aswan's heritage and cultural tourism, in addition to develop handicraft products through financing and marketing. Which consistent with Egypt's Vision 2030.

− Paying attention to cultural tourism is a possible solution to the challenges that Aswan tourism faces (tourism seasonality and terrorism).

− Investment in human capital creates opportunities for developing cultural tourism, this is the right way to benefit from all the existing natural and cultural assets in Aswan (tangible & intangible) and resolves one of tourism's major challenges: **seasonality.**

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