

Ecotourism Promotion in Egypt: Assessing the Status Quo

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Abstract Egypt has different ecotourism sites, but, it not being branded as ecotourism destination due to lack of promotional efforts to disseminate the ecotourism attractions and ecotourism in Egypt to international tourists. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to identify the current state of ecotourism promotion in Tunis village. A qualitative research approach was adopted in this research to analyse the promotion of the ecotourism in Tunis village in Fayoum governorate. Population of this research consists of all ecotourism in Tunis village (n=12). Total survey method has been chosen to represent the defined population. In this research qualitative data collection methods was included semi-structured interviews with ecotourism managers (n=12) and sales and marketing managers (n=7). The data have been analyzed by descriptive statistics instruments such as frequency distribution and diagrams. The hypotheses have also been tested one by one by the T-test and SPSS software version 24. The results showed that the ecotourism didn't have marketing or promotional plan, which considered the most problem facing the ecotourism in Tunis village. The finding found that advertisements and personal selling are the most important promotional tools should be used by ecotourism. The results revealed that the importance of ecotourism promotion including; maximizing economic benefits, raising the standard of living of the local community. It also indicated that ecotourism are very important and a great opportunity to promote tourism in their destination. The results of the current research indicated that major challenge facing ecotourism promotion in Tunis village was; poor clarity of the concept of ecotourism for local community, There is no marketing and sales department in many ecotourism, lack of clear plans for the promotion of ecotourism, exclude of ecotourism in the promotion plans, and tourism companies do not include ecotourism in their tourism programs. The current research contributes to theory through added to the growing literature of ecotourism promotion through its review of the pervious academic research, generation of new ideas and interpretation of rich data collected from the different sources.

Keywords: Ecotourism, Ecotourism, Promotion Tools, Promotion Challenges, Tunis Village

INTRODUCTION

It is widely accepted that ecotourism considered the largest industry in the world (WTTC, 1995), and one of the fast growing sectors in the tourism industry (Barmelgy and Samy, 2005). Today, a quickly varying the environment business, different customer needs and demand, and increasing the competition has been the main obstacles for several hospitality businesses (Cho et al., 2006). As well, tourism and hospitality industry play an important role for countries economic which lead to increase number of hospitality and tourism establishments and increase the competition (Didin and Köroğlu, 2008). Customers are seeking for new kind of experience which allows them to gain knowledge (WTO, 2003). For that, Fons et al. (2011) reported that alternative

form of tourism help those customers to enjoy the beauty of nature.

Ecotourism are considering a new trend in the hospitality industry, the reason for that trend may guests are usually live in big cities, which have many problems including; noise, pollution, and traffic, these problems push people to travel to the nature areas. Additionally, ecotourism present their ecologically aware customers a holiday alone with flora and fauna, and thus gain an important competitive advantage. Furthermore, ecotourism implement an ecofriendly approach and noticeably assist for the sustainable tourism efforts (Erdem and Tetik, 2013).

The promotion is the starting point for reaching the local and foreign target market (Yang, 2010). Pereira and Almeida

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(2014) reported that main rationale for promoting ecolodges is based on the majority of tourists is becoming friendly with the environment. Therefore, ecolodges marketing has been identified as one of the issues emerging from ecotourism development (Lai and Shafer, 2005). Despite the diversity of the environment and the tourist attractions, ecolodges in Egypt did not have the optimal marketing and promotion; it also did not receive the attention of the responsible authorities (Ibrahim, 2008).

The revolution of January 2011 leads to the breakdown of international tourist arrivals, the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism has started to looking for new trends of tourism, including ecotourism (Abdel-Maksoud and Hussein, 2016). However, Egypt has different ecotourism sites, El Anssary (2016) mentioned that Egypt not being branded as ecotourism destination due to lack of promotional efforts to disseminate the ecotourism attractions and ecolodges of Egypt to international tourists. The main justification of this research is several issues in ecotourism need to be studied by different types of researches, in particularly ecolodges promotions. However, ecotourism attraction in Egypt is known but ecolodge is yet to be revealed. So, this research seeks fill that gap in researches. Consequently, this research aimed to identify the current state of ecolodges promotion in Egypt. In order to achieve this aim, there are three objectives identified; firstly, to identify the promotion tools used by ecolodges; secondly, to identify opportunities to use ecolodge in tourism promotion; thirdly, to explore the challenges of ecolodges promotion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ecotourism Attraction in Egypt

Ecotourism is characterized by rapid growth among international tourism categories, which plays a major role in attracting the attention of governments and the tourism industry (Mackoy and Osland, 2004). There are many academic article and new journal dedicated to ecotourism. These researches discussing the definition of ecotourism, economic and social impacts (Ceballos-Lascurain, 2008; Buckley, 2009; Ban and Ramsaran, 2017). On the other hand, Gunter (2016) highlighted that ecotourism is considered one a branch of sustainable tourism, it also focuses on the conservation of natural resources because it is nature-based tourism and therefore focuses on natural assets and experiences, while adventure tourism focuses on adventure in natural areas and wild tourism mainly based on interaction with surrounding wildlife (Kiper, 2013).

The concept of ecotourism emerged in the early 1990s, TIES (2017:3) has defined it as “responsible travel to nature areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being

of local people”. As well, Kang et al. (2010: 9) add definition of ecotourism as “environmentally-sustainable tourist activities in relatively undisturbed natural areas to enhance the appreciation of and learning about natural ecosystems while providing benefits to local communities”.

Ecotourism is responsible tourism based on visits to natural areas, land areas and urban environments in a responsible manner (El Anssary, 2016). Therefore, the visitors must preserve the environment and improve the well-being of the local community through beneficial social and economic participation of the local community (Ceballos-lascurain, 2008). Generally, ecotourism aims to preserve the environment and society and achieve sustainable travel (Khalifa, 2011).

According to Barmelgy and Samy (2005) Egypt has a unique cultural heritage and diversity of natural resources, which consider the main elements for ecotourism attractions over the last few years. So, Egypt can be divided into four potential zones for ecosystem including: desert, coastal, riverbank, and wetland (Ramzy, 2013). It also, comprising, the red sea, the Nile River and the vast deserts with their unique oases, marvelous mountains and imaginary valleys (El Anssary, 2016). Consequently, so Egypt can be seen as a destination for natural tourism (Barmelgy and Samy, 2005) ecotourism and ecolodge play an important role sustainable development.

Ec lodges: Concepts and Definitions

Ecolodge is characterized by the application of the environmental principles of the preservation of the environment in all of its elements and principles of interpretation, which include education and awareness of tourists for the surrounding environment (Erdem and Tetik, 2013). Ecolodges are usually small-scale hotels that offer opportunities for interaction with local environment; they are locally owned businesses (Moscardo et al., 1996: 32). Ecolodge defined as;

“An ecolodge is a 5- to 75- room, low-impact, nature-based, financially sustainable accommodation facility that helps protect sensitive neighbouring areas; involves and benefits local communities; offers tourists an interpretive and interactive participatory experience; provides a spiritual communion with nature and culture; and is planned, designed, constructed and operated in an environmentally and socially sensitive manner” (Mehta, 2007: 418).

On the other hand, ecolodges are classified as eco-tourism residences, but it's different from regular accommodations as they provide opportunities for travelers with responsible and constructive experiences (TIES, 2015). The study of Erdem and Tetik (2013: 87) showed the key principles of ecolodges design as below;

- Preserve the surrounding environment, whether natural or cultural.
- Have little impact on the surrounding natural environment during construction.
- Use alternative and sustainable means to get water and reduce water consumption.
- Provide careful treatment and disposal of solid waste and sanitation.
- Meet their energy needs through passive design and combine them with modern counterparts for greater sustainability.
- Work with the local community.
- Provide interpretative programs to educate both staff and tourists about the environment surrounding natural and cultural environments.
- Contribute to sustainable local development through research programs.

Ecolodges in Egypt

Ecolodge is in the essential of the development strategy for tourism in Egypt, and there are efforts of the officials from the government and private organization to promote that type of tourism (El Anssary, 2016). This strategy offers a significant attention that is given to the defense of the unique heritage of Egypt beside the protection of the resources of ecotourism (Eraqi, 2007). Many areas in Egypt can become very famous in the field of ecotourism such as the Red Sea ecolodges and the Western Oasis of Siwa. Fayoum Oasis is also a promising area that has all potential to be a famous ecotourism area in Egypt, it has a wide range of different types of tourism product, it also have good climate, geology attraction, fascinating landscape (El Anssary, 2016).

The Importance of Ecolodges Promotion

Many scholars (Peršić et al., 2008; Erdem and Tetik, 2013; Gunter, 2016), reported that ecolodges promotion can achieve these different benefits;

- Maximizing the economic benefits and developing the ecotourism areas,
- Raising the standard of living of local communities,
- Spreading knowledge and awareness of the importance of ecolodges,
- Providing job opportunities for the local community,
- Developing and upgrading the infrastructure of the ecolodges areas.

Consequently, the previous literature leads to the first hypothesis which is:

H1: There are significant differences between respondents on the importance of ecolodges promotion in Tunis village.

Opportunities to Use Ecolodges in Tourism Promotion

Ecolodges are an important element of ecotourism. The success of such an ecolodges will help to promote ecotourism, as well as bring different tourists to the area around the world (Millar and Sammons, 2006). Egypt has a unique cultural heritage from the remarkable diversity of natural and human resources (Barmelgy and Samy, 2005). Based on the market objective, ecolodges companies rely on different resources to produce and operate promotion plans (Gunter, 2016). As well, the study of Mic (2017) reported that environmentally friendly companies stand on a strong promotion ground, both business-level and tourism-wise, by using the help of established brands outside the eco-tourism industry.

On the other hand, the sites of ecolodges and its design play an important role in tourism promotion. Therefore, the studies of Barmelgy and Samy (2005), Amara (2013), Ramzy (2013), El Anssary (2016) and Mic (2017) spotlight on the opportunities to use the ecolodges in tourism promotion as below;

- The safe environment that characterizes the ecolodges because they are located in pristine environments that are far from population groups,
- Ecolodges enjoys scenic scenery and charming nature next to their places,
- Ecolodges are adopted individually without changing the nature of the place, which consequently preserves the natural resources and limits the negative effects of the hotel industry on the surrounding environment,
- Ecolodges are characterized by simplicity in design and reliance on environmental resources beginning with the exterior design,
- Ecolodges rationalize energy and water consumption,
- Ecolodges rotate the materials and residues under which the waste and residues are managed and treated,
- Ecolodges are renowned for its diverse landscapes and various shapes,
- Ecolodges are designed to mimic natural forms and according to environmental requirements. It leads to the second hypothesis which is:

H2: There are significant differences between respondents on the opportunities of using ecolodges in tourism promotion.

Promotional Tools Used by Ecolodges

As one component of the marketing mix, the promotion includes all activities targeted at the target consumers,

which facilitate communication with them in order to feel the importance of the commodity to achieve a high level of customer satisfaction of their desires and needs compared to the competing goods (Nour et al., 2014).

According to Ansari, (2011) and Familmaleki et al. (2015) highlighted that promotion is one of the key factors in marketing mix and plays an important role in market success. Promotion is used to confirm that customers are aware of the products offered by the hotel (Mualla, 2006). The promotional mix is a combination of different channels that can be used to deliver a promotional message to customers, including; advertisements, direct marketing, public relation and publicity, personal selling, sponsorship and promotion of sales (Rowely, 1998). Below is a brief description of each:

Advertisements

It refer to any non-personal communication including; television, newspapers, magazine, websites (Kotler and Keller, 2006). This allows customers to access the hotel information such ask services offered, the hotel style, and the offers available (Watson et al., 2007). As well, Nour et al. (2014) and Danilova et al. (2017) reported that the hotel magazine and website delivers the real picture and advertising products and services offered by the hotel. Additionally, advertisements are one of the most important promotional tools that can be used to promote ecolodges due to their high efficiency in attracting guests (Watson et al., 2007; Danilova et al., 2017).

Sales Promotion

Strategy used to increase sales in a short time. It also offers better value of money (Familmaleki et al., 2015). For that, this tool has ability to attract and keep loyal customer (Enz, 2009). Nour et al. (2014) reported that promotion activity can be measured by using; a different type of awards, gifts and subscriptions, economic packages offers, free samples, sales offers events, sales offers duration. As well, sales promotion is an important component of a marketing mix that achieves effective, positive and immediate results, as well as maximizing benefits that sales promotion gives to the eco-tourist (Enz, 2009; Familmaleki et al., 2015).

Publicity and Public Relation

Is defined as any free distribution or publication of any information either positive or negative about the hotel, also, show the ecolodge products, service and activities by using media (Nour et al., 2014). Interested to build a good relation between the hotel and its customer, this will achieve their satisfaction (Ghafran, 2014). This tool can be measured by carried out some activities including; support social business

and charity, clubs sports, support loyalty of customers, accept audience complaints, address problems and issues, interest in the field of environment and health (Nour et al., 2014).

Personal Selling

The process is known as verbal communication and face to face interaction with one or more potential customers to present the product or service, it also to answer questions and to answer to requests of customers (McCarthy & Berriault, 2004). Ghafran (2014) mentioned that the promotional activity can be measured by: the level of training and skills of the sales staff, the style and appearance, the availability of information, their ability to solve problems, and the presentation style. As well as, the hotels should make a distinctive marketing effort towards achieving their goal through increasing the volume of sales, meeting market needs and finally achieving the required level of profits. Therefore, personal selling is considered one of the main pillars of the marketing mix elements that will effectively contribute to achieve such goal (Nour et al., 2014).

E-Marketing

Ban and Ramsaran (2017) reported that e-marketing plays an important role in hotel industry. E-marketing in ecolodge aims to; firstly, consumer identification of the ecolodge and its products the internet can provide sufficient information about the hotel's environment and the nature of the products or services it offers to guests more easily and faster than the traditional style (Ansari, 2011; Danilova et al., 2017). Secondly, increased sales through the internet can provide important information about the hotel's environment so that it can be used to attract customers, and hence the possibility of booking through the hotel's eco-site (Mic and Eagles, 2018). Thirdly, cost reduction, the web-sites offer automated ordering, billing, and customer service, as they reduce time and paperwork, and the catalogue that displays the hotel on the internet is the lowest price of the printout (Le Baron, 2017).

As mentioned earlier, it leads to the third hypothesis which is:

H3: There are significant differences between respondents on the promotional tools used by ecolodges.

The Challenges of Ecolodges Promotion

According to Jin-Woo et al. (2013) and Miller (2017) the challenges of ecolodges in Egypt including; Lack of local community knowledge about ecolodges, the high price of accommodation in ecolodges compared with other types of hotels, the responsible authorities don't have plan for

promoting ecolodges, as a result, tourism company don't put ecolodges in their program. On the other hand, economic problems and the currency change are considered one of the main challenges of ecolodges promotion in Egypt, in particularly Fayoum (Elkaftanguia et al., 2015).

Additionally, recent wars and political conflicts in Middle East together with the Egyptian revolution are considered the main challenges of ecolodges. This is supported by Morakabati (2011), who stated that parts of the Middle East can be regarded as being among the least preferred tourism destinations in the world and that travellers' perception of the region as a whole has in recent years generally gone from bad to worse. This leads to the fourth hypothesis which is:

H4: There are significant differences between respondents on the challenges of ecolodge promotion in Tunis village.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research approach was adopted in this research to analyse the promotion of the ecolodges in Tunis village in Fayoum governorate. There were a number of criteria for selecting Tunis village are; firstly, The village of Tunis is a natural oasis in the embrace of the Egyptian countryside and the shores of Lake Qaroun, characterized by its simple ecological vocabulary and its haunted space with sunny tranquility. Secondly, the village of Tunis is one of the most important sites of ecotourism in Egypt. Finally, in Tunis village, there are increasing number of ecolodges that are compatible and integrated with the nature of the region, and are serviced by the local community interested in ecotourism. Population of this research consists of all ecolodges in Tunis village (n=12) (Fayoum Tourism Authority, 2018). Total

survey method has been chosen to represent the defined population. In this research qualitative data collection methods was included semi-structured interviews with ecolodge managers (n=12) and only seven semi-structured interviews were conducted with sales and marketing managers (n=7) because there were five ecolodges didn't have sales and marketing department. The data gathered through semi-structured interviews have been analyzed by descriptive statistics instruments such as frequency distribution and diagrams. The hypotheses have also been tested one by one by the T-test and SPSS software version 24. In this research various procedures were used to measure reliability and validity, this research was perform twelve interviews with ecolodge managers and sales and marketing managers to check the items and variables validity that are reflected the literature review.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Source of Information

Fig. 1 illustrated the views of respondents toward "how the guests know ecolodges places in Tunis village" analyzing data in the Fig. 1 illustrated that (62.2%) of the respondents said that the internet sites are one of the most important sources of information about ecolodges, while (17%) of the respondents affirmed that friends are considered sources of information, and the results also indicated that (15.5%) of respondents confirmed that tourism companies are one of the most important sources of information about ecolodges, while the remaining percentage is (5.3%) it is the lowest percentage of booklets and brochures.

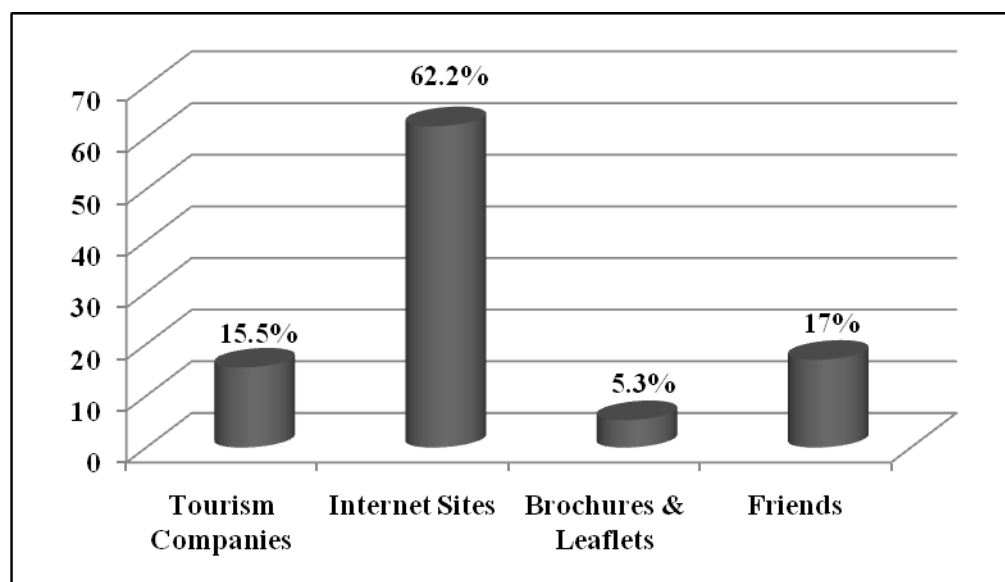


Fig. 1: Sources of Information of Ecolodges

The previous analysis revealed that the internet sites are one of the most important sources of information about ecolodges, and this is what previous literatures had referred to in more than one reference (Danilova et al., 2017; Le Baron, 2017), however the results indicated that most of the ecolodges under this research didn't have internet sites containing information about these featured hotels.

Ecolodges Promotion Plan

Fig. 2 illustrated the respondents' views on "whether there is a suitable promotional plan for ecolodges in Tunis village", and according to data analysis in the Fig. 2 it is shown that (73.7%) of the respondents approved that there is no promotional plan for the ecolodges, whereas (26.3%) of respondents indicated that they have plans to promote ecolodges.

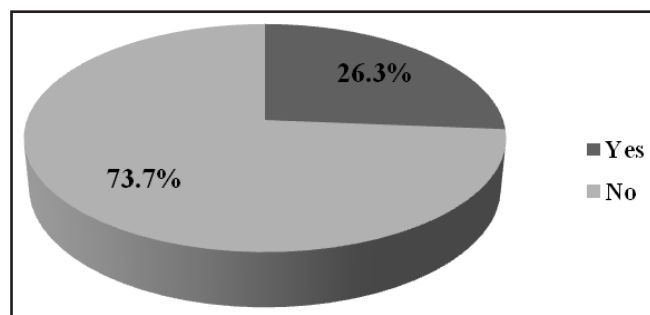


Fig. 2: The Respondents of Ecolodges Promotion Plan

The previous analysis indicated that most of the ecolodges under this research haven't promotional plans and this is agree with previous literatures (Mic, 2017; Barmelgy and Samy, 2005), which mentioned that the lack of promotion plan is one of the most important problems facing Egypt's ecolodges, particularly Tunis village ecolodges.

Promotion Tools

Fig. 3 illustrated the views of respondents to "what promotional tools are used to promote ecolodges" and according to the data analyzed in the Fig. 3 (36.8%) the respondents recognized that advertisements are one of the most important promotional tools used by ecolodges, while (35.8%) of the respondents affirmed that personal selling is one of the promotional tools used by ecolodges, and the results also indicates that (15.8%) of the respondents confirmed the sales promotion was one of the promotional

tools used in ecolodges. The lowest percentages were represented in publicity with (6.3%) and in public relations with (5.3%).

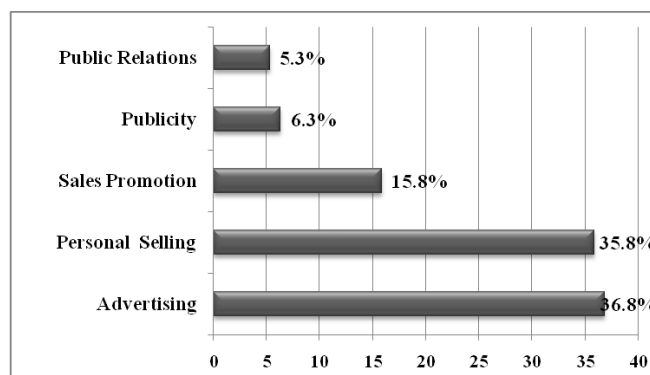


Fig. 3: The Respondents of the Promotion Tools that are Used to Promote Ecolodges

The above mentioned analysis shows that advertisements and personal selling are the most important promotional tools used by ecolodges and this agree with the study of (Nour et al., 2014; Danilova et al., 2017) who stated that advertisements play a significant role in attracting a large segment of the target guests, but it isn't the only promotional tool used as there are also other promotional tools such as public relations and sales promotion.

Importance of Promoting Ecolodges

The results in Table 1 shows that the total mean of the respondents' agreement relating the importance of the ecolodges promotion ranging between (4.57 to 4.75) and comparing that mean with the five-point of Likert scale strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), strongly agree (5), the results indicates that the value the total mean is (4.66) which is limited between [agree (4) and strongly agree (5)], but it is closer to the value (strongly agree), and this shows the respondents' agreement on the importance of the ecolodges promotion process. This is agree with previous literatures which indicated that the prober promotion of ecolodges plays a major role in maximizing economic benefits, raising the standard of living of the local community, raising awareness of ecolodges benefits, providing employment opportunities, as well as infrastructure development (Peršić et al., 2008; Erdem and Tetik, 2013; Gunter, 2016).

Table 1: Results One-Sample T-test Between the Respondents for the Importance of Ecolodges Promotion

S. No.	The Importance of Promoting Ecolodges	One-Sample T-Test					
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
1.	Maximizing the economic benefits of the local tourism industry and improving the economic development of ecotourism areas.	40.736	18	0.000	4.65	4.3927	4.8704
2.	Raising the standard of living of local communities adjacent to ecolodge sites.	45.638	18	0.000	4.73	4.5188	4.9549
3.	Spreading knowledge and awareness of the importance of ecolodge.	42.754	18	0.000	4.68	4.4540	4.9144
4.	Maintaining ecotourism areas which are naturally reflected on ecolodge.	44.736	18	0.000	4.63	4.3927	4.8704
5.	Providing job opportunities for the local community next to the ecolodge.	43.754	18	0.000	4.67	4.4540	4.9144
6.	Developing and upgrading the infrastructure and the ecolodge areas.	36.742	18	0.000	4.75	4.4660	5.0077
7.	Encourage the use of locally sourced renewable building materials and avoid the use of environmentally harmful ores with high output residues.	32.883	18	0.000	4.57	4.2864	4.8715

* Total of Mean for all Variables 4.66.

According to (T-test) analysis for respondents view towards the factor “the importance of ecolodges promotion”, evidenced that the value of the calculated (T-test) ranges from (32.883 to 45.638), with degrees of freedom (df=18), and the level of significance (0.000) which is less than 0.05, this mean that there is a significant difference between the views of the respondents towards the importance of the promotion of ecolodges, this research refused the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative one since the level of significance is below 0.05, which declared that there are no significant differences in the respondents’ answer to the importance of ecolodge promoting.

Opportunities to Use Ecolodges in Tourism Promotion

According to Table 2 the total mean of the respondents’ agreement about the “opportunities for ecolodge usage

in tourism promotion”, ranges between (4.42 to 4.78) and comparing that mean with the five-point of Likert scale strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), strongly agree (5), the results indicates that the value the total mean is (4.60) which is limited between [agree (4) and strongly agree (5)], but it is closer to the value (strongly agree), and this reflects the respondents’ agreement on the point that ecolodges can be used as a tourism promotion tool to Fayoum governorate as an environmental tourist destination in particular and also for Egypt in general. This agreed with the previous literatures which indicated that ecolodges are very important and a great opportunity to promote tourism in their destination, because ecolodges have special features and character that distinguish them from the safe environment of ecolodges, enjoying scenic and charming nature, conserving natural resources, rationalizing energy and water consumption and waste recycling (Barmelgy and Samy, 2005; Amara, 2013; El Anssary, 2016; Mic, 2017).

Table 2: Results One-Sample T-test Between the Respondents for the Opportunities to Use Ecolodges in Tourism Promotion

S. No.	Opportunities to Use Ecolodges in Tourism Promotion	One-Sample T-Test					
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
1.	The safe environment that characterizes the ecolodge because they are located in pristine environments that are far from population groups.	33.802	18	0.000	4.64	4.3437	4.9195

S. No.	Opportunities to Use Ecolodges in Tourism Promotion	One-Sample T-Test					
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
2.	Ecolodge enjoys scenic scenery and charming nature next to their places of concentration.	49.843	18	0.000	4.78	4.5876	4.9914
3.	Ecolodges are adopted individually without changing the nature of the place, which consequently preserves the natural resources and limits the negative effects of the hotel industry on the surrounding Environment.	40.736	18	0.000	4.63	4.3927	4.8704
4.	Increasing demand for eco hotels by tourists around the world, especially in light of growing environmental awareness.	42.754	18	0.000	4.70	4.4540	4.9144
5.	Ecolodges are characterized by simplicity in design and reliance on environmental resources beginning with the exterior design.	49.843	18	0.000	4.78	4.5876	4.9914
6.	Ecolodges rationalize energy and water consumption, and all that is polluting the environment.	39.347	18	0.000	4.57	4.3345	4.8234
7.	Ecolodges rotate the materials and residues under which the waste and residues are managed and treated.	32.883	18	0.000	4.57	4.2864	4.8715
8.	Ecolodges are renowned for its diverse landscapes and various shapes.	25.075	18	0.000	4.42	4.0506	4.7915
9.	The atmosphere of solitude in ecolodge is impressing many tourists of different nationalities.	23.182	18	0.000	4.48	4.0682	4.8791
10.	Ecolodges are designed to mimic natural forms, and according to environmental requirements	25.249	18	0.000	4.47	4.1014	4.8459

* Total of Mean for all Variables 4.60.

According to (T-test) analysis for respondents view towards the factor “opportunities to use ecolodges in tourism promotion”, evidenced that the value of the calculated (T-test) ranges from (23.182 to 49.843), with degrees of freedom (df=18), and the level of significance (0.000) which is less than 0.05, this mean that there is a significant difference between the views of the respondents towards About opportunities to use ecolodges in tourism promotion, the research refused the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative one since the level of significance is below 0.05.

Promotional Tools Used by Ecolodges

Table 3 shows the total mean of the respondents' agreement relating the promotional tools used by ecolodges which ranging between (1.78 to 3.42) and by comparing this mean with the five-point of Likert scale: (1) never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often, (5) always, the results indicated that the value of the total mean is (2.78) but it is closer to the two values [rarely (2) sometimes (3)], which are more closer of value (sometimes), and this reflects that respondents sometimes use some tools promotional for ecolodges. The following results show the elements of the promotion mix and to what extent ecolodges used it in its promotion activities and these factors as follows:

Advertisements

It is also clear from Table 3 that the total mean ranges from (1.78 to 3.21) and by comparing this mean with the five-point of Likert scale the results stated that the value of the total mean is (2.66) which is limited to the two values [rarely (2) sometimes (3)], which are more closer of value (sometimes), and this reflects that respondents sometimes use advertisements to promote ecolodges, although the results in Fig. 3 indicated that advertisements are one of the most important promotional tools used by ecolodges, but the percentage of using this tool not enough and this isn't agree with previous literatures that confirm that advertisements are one of the most important promotional tools that can be used to promote ecolodges due to their high efficiency in attracting guests (Watson et al., 2007; Danilova et al., 2017).

Sales Promotion

Table 3 showed that the total mean value ranges from (2.05 to 2.84) and by comparing this mean with the five-point of Likert scale the results revealed that the value of the total mean is (2.49) which is limited to the two values [rarely (2) and sometimes (3)], which are more closer of the

value (rarely), and this reflects that respondents rarely use sales promotion to promote ecolodges. The results are not in line with the study's recognition that sales promotion is an important component of a marketing mix that achieves effective, positive and immediate results, as well as maximizing benefits that sales promotion gives to the ecotourist (Enz, 2009; Familmaleki et al., 2015).

Publicity and Public Relations

It is also clear from Table 3 that the total mean value of respondents' views relating the use of publicity and public relations in the promotion of ecolodges ranges from (2.42 to 2.94) and by comparing this mean with the five-point of Likert scale the results indicated that the value of the total mean is (2.50) which is limited to the two values [rarely (2) sometimes (3)], but is more closer of value (rarely), and this refers to ecolodges rarely use publicity and public relations. In the publicity process for itself, and this is not in line with what the previous studies suggest that refers to the success of ecolodges at present depends on their ability to adapt themselves to the surrounding circumstances, whether political, social, economic or technical as these conditions impose different pressures on ecolodges, hence the public relations work as a tool to interpret hotels to their surroundings, in order to establish balanced and continuous relations (Ghafran, 2014; Nour et al., 2014).

Personal Selling

Table 3 showed that the total mean of respondents' views relating the use of personal selling in the promotion of ecolodges ranges from (2.94 to 3.10) and by comparing

this mean with the five-point of Likert scale the results also indicated that the value of the total mean is (3.04) which is more closer to the value (sometimes), and this reflects that respondents sometimes use personal selling in the promotion of ecolodges. Although the results in Fig. 3 indicated that personal selling is one of the most important promotional tools used by ecolodges, these results are not consistent with previous literature which affirmed that the hotels should make a distinctive marketing effort towards achieving their goal through increasing the volume of sales, meeting market needs and finally achieving the required level of profits. Therefore, personal selling is considered one of the main pillars of the marketing mix elements that will effectively contribute to achieve such goal (Nour et al., 2014).

E-Marketing

Table 3 showed the views of respondents related to the usage of e-marketing in the promotion of ecolodges, where it is clear from the data analysis in the table that the value of total mean ranges from (3.10 to 3.42) and by comparing this value with the five-point of Likert scale the results indicated that the total mean value is (3.29) which is limited to the two values [(3) sometimes, (4) often], but is more closer to the value (sometimes), which indicated that respondents sometimes use e-marketing in the promotion of ecolodges although previous literature confirmed the important of e-marketing as a great tools of marketing techniques used by hotels due to their high efficiency in reducing time, costs and effort (Ansari, 2011; Danilova et al., 2017; Mic and Eagles, 2018).

Table 3: Results One-Sample T-test Between the Respondents for the Promotional Tools Used by Ecolodges

S.No.	Promotional Tools Used by Ecolodges	One-Sample T-Test					
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Upper	Lower
1. Advertisements							
1.	Ecolodges are advertised on television because it combines sound, motion and image in satellite channels, some of which can be devoted to tourism and hotels.	8.058	18	0.000	2.15	1.5953	2.7205
2.	Ecolodges are advertised on known radio stations that have the widest audience.	9.123	18	0.000	1.78	1.3774	2.2016
3.	The sales representatives will advertise the ecolodges in newspapers and magazines that are widely spread, as they receive as much attention as possible from readers.	12.780	18	0.000	2.73	2.2869	3.1868

S.No.	Promotional Tools Used by Ecolodges	One-Sample T-Test					
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Upper	Lower
4.	Ecolodges use advertisements through posters and exterior paintings that include both illustrated and painted posters displayed on wall areas.	19.615	18	0.000	3.00	2.6787	3.3213
5.	Ecolodges use advertisements on the photovoltaic panels in cities, or on external roads and in buses, trains and other.	12.908	18	0.000	3.21	2.6880	3.7331
6.	Ecolodges use advertisements through internet and social media sites.	15.465	18	0.000	3.10	2.6834	3.5271
2. Sales Promotion							
1.	Ecolodges distribute small promotional gifts used by the hotel to activate its sales and maintain its customers such as organizing a free visit.	9.594	18	0.000	2.47	1.9320	3.0154
2.	Ecolodges distribute souvenirs offered free of charge to their customers, containing the name of the hotel, telephone numbers, location, as noted in the annual calendars, pens, handbags, medals and others.	9.221	18	0.000	2.05	1.5850	2.5203
3.	Ecolodges advertise competitions and prizes that take multiple forms through fast-spreading means of communication. For the winners, they are awarded cash or in-kind prizes.	12.244	18	0.000	2.26	1.8748	2.6515
4.	Ecolodges offer special discounts to the customer who actually visited the hotel frequently.	13.419	18	0.000	2.57	2.1752	2.9827
5.	Ecolodges will make price discounts from time to time in the form of coupons or a withdrawal deducted from the customer's accommodation price.	12.929	18	0.000	2.84	2.3803	3.3039
6.	Ecolodges provide sums of money in the form of material incentives for brokers in return for their promotion efforts for the hotel services.	15.076	18	0.000	2.63	2.2648	2.9983
7.	Ecolodges offer free services or extra rooms without charges to the broker who buys a certain number of rooms.	12.815	18	0.000	2.63	2.2002	3.0630
3. Publicity and Public Relations							
1.	Ecolodges participate in trade fairs organized by internationally or regionally renowned destinations or by a professional company, organized annually or more, to offer various hotel services, especially the new one.	14.098	18	0.000	2.94	2.5082	3.3866
2.	Ecolodges hold inside or abroad press conferences, which bring together those interested in tourism and hospitality affairs, at the level of official agencies and travel agencies.	14.267	18	0.000	2.68	2.2889	3.0795
3.	Ecolodges prepare greeting cards and messages for various occasions and national and religious holidays, to send them to loyal customers to form a positive image of the hotel.	9.551	18	0.000	2.31	1.8064	2.8252
4.	Ecolodges contact and care on the celebrations of various local and international events, cultural, social or religious, to arouse interest and attract the attention of the present audience to the social status of the hotel and to establish a good impression about it.	10.769	18	0.000	2.63	2.1182	3.1450
5.	The hotel ensures the financing of certain cultural and sporting activities, or donations and donations, accompanied by the name of the sponsor hotel.	10.979	18	0.000	2.42	1.9578	2.8844

S. No.	Promotional Tools Used by Ecolodges	One-Sample T-Test					
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Upper	Lower
4. Personal Selling							
1.	The representatives of sales in ecolodge is based on external visits through personal contact with the planning and organization of conferences and representatives of airlines and with the tourism program planners of travel agencies.	20.679	18	0.000	2.94	2.6479	3.2468
2.	The sales representatives of ecolodge use the tools to show its services in the form of video tapes, sales work, seminars and meetings.	13.615	18	0.000	3.10	2.6261	3.5844
3.	Does the representative in ecolodges make phone calls to its target audiences to promote its services and products.	14.452	18	0.000	3.10	2.6538	3.5567
5. E-Marketing							
1.	The ecolodges have websites that allow them to offer their hotel services, and to highlight their specifications, prices and distribution systems and methods and channels of electronic and traditional payment, as can.	15.372	18	0.000	3.36	2.9081	3.8288
2.	The hotel website contains all the information and data related to tourist areas located in the located in the country or the region where it is where it is situated, in order to promote them and to pay tourists to visit them.	14.350	18	0.000	3.26	2.7854	3.7409
3.	Ecolodges seek to identify the different search engines and indexes on their website by accessing these engines and indexes, and then providing them with a brief description of their location, which facilitates the access process of the customer to the website.	11.907	18	0.000	3.26	2.6874	3.8389
4.	Ecolodges use advertising tapes that include brief information about the hotel and its website, a link to the hotel website, giving more details about its geographical location and services.	17.675	18	0.000	3.36	2.9680	3.7688
5.	Ecolodges use email so that they and the senders can send and the sender to send emails with pictures, drawings and all the details to more than one person at the same.	21.534	18	0.000	3.42	3.0873	3.7548
6.	Ecolodges use individual and group chat rooms to communicate with their current and prospective customers through chat rooms, in order to persuade visitors to purchase hotel services from the hotel's website.	12.909	18	0.000	3.10	2.5999	3.6106

It is illustrated by the analysis of the "T-test" relating the opinions of respondents towards "promotional tools used by ecolodges", that the value of calculated (T-test) ranges from the calculated (8.058-19.615), with degrees of freedom (df =18), and the significance level (0.000) that is less than 0.05, and this mean that there is a significant difference between the views of the respondents towards promotional tools that used by ecolodge, the research refused the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative one.

Challenges of Ecolodges Promotion

The results in Table 4 showed the respondents' views towards the challenges facing the promotion of ecolodge in Tunis village, and by analysis of data in the Table 4 showed that the total mean of the respondents' agreement relating the challenges facing the promotion of ecolodges ranging between (4.15 to 4.89) and comparing that mean with the

five-point of Likert scale strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), strongly agree (5), the results indicated that the value of the total mean is (4.41) which is limited to the values [agree (4) and strongly agree (5)], but is more closer to the value (agree), and this confirm the agreement of respondents toward the existence of more challenges facing ecolodge on promotion process, and this was confirmed by (Jin-Woo et al., 2013; Miller, 2017).

It is illustrated by the analysis of the “T-test” relating the

opinions of respondents to “challenges facing ecolodges promotion,” where the value of calculated (T-test) ranges from (18.915 to 67.667), with degrees of freedom (df=18), and a significance level (0.000) which is less than 0.05, and this mean that there is a significant difference between the views of the respondents towards promotional tools that used by ecolodge, so the research accepted the alternative and refused the null and one since the level of significance is below 0.05.

Table 4: Results One-Sample T-test Between the Respondents for the Challenges of Ecolodges Promotion

S. No.	Challenges of Ecolodges Promotion	One-Sample T-Test					
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
1.	Poor clarity of the concept of ecolodge for local community Members.	18.915	18	0.000	4.15	3.6961	4.6197
2.	Poor community involvement in ecolodge promotion plans.	25.731	18	0.000	4.21	3.8667	4.5543
3.	There is no marketing and sales department in many ecolodge.	32.301	18	0.000	4.31	4.0351	4.5965
4.	High rates of accommodation in ecolodges compared to other hotel accommodation rates.	23.455	18	0.000	4.52	4.1209	4.9318
5.	Lack of clear plans for the promotion of ecolodge in the concerned authorities.	28.034	18	0.000	4.31	3.9924	4.6392
6.	The interest of tourism government agencies to promote traditional hotels and to exclude of ecolodge in the promotion plans.	22.922	18	0.000	4.36	3.9680	4.7688
7.	Tourism companies do not include ecolodges in their tourism programs.	22.922	18	0.000	4.36	3.9680	4.7688
8.	There is a mix of concepts and practices between ecolodge and traditional hotels.	27.839	18	0.000	4.36	4.0388	4.6981
9.	The role of all kinds of Egyptian media in promoting ecolodges is so weak.	67.667	18	0.000	4.89	4.7428	5.0467
10.	Lack of cooperation between the ministry of tourism, tourism companies and ecolodge managers.	42.754	18	0.000	4.68	4.4540	4.9144

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The results revealed that the internet sites are one of the most important sources of information about ecolodges, followed by friends, and then tourism companies. It also, showed that the ecolodges didn't have marketing or promotional plan, which considered the most problem facing the ecolodges in Tunis village. The finding found that advertisements and personal selling are the most important promotional tools should be used by ecolodges. The results of the current research revealed that the importance of ecolodges promotion including; a major role in maximizing economic benefits, raising the standard of living of the local community, raising awareness of ecolodges benefits, providing employment opportunities, as well as infrastructure development.

Additionally, the results indicated that ecolodges are very important and a great opportunity to promote tourism

in their destination, because ecolodges have special features and character that distinguish them from the safe environment of ecolodge, enjoying scenic and charming nature, conserving natural resources, rationalizing energy and water consumption and waste recycling. It also found that the ecolodges sometimes used advertisements, personal selling, and e-marketing as promotion tools for promoting their facilities and rarely use sales promotion or publicity and public relation.

The results of the current research revealed that major challenge facing ecolodges promotion in Tunis village was; poor clarity of the concept of ecolodge for local community. There is no marketing and sales department in many ecolodges, lack of clear plans for the promotion of ecolodges, exclude of ecolodges in the promotion plans, tourism companies do not include ecolodges in their tourism programs, and lack of cooperation between the Ministry of tourism, tourism companies and ecolodge managers.

This research have number of limitations were, firstly, this research focused on twelve ecolodges in Tunis village. Secondly, the research area did not include all ecolodges in Egypt. Thirdly, the literature showed there had been clear lack of prior research studies on ecolodges promotion. Future research should address more ecolodges in Egypt; it also should undertake to test the findings of this research.

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