

Sara Mohamed

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

Sara Mohamed (Researcher)

**Tourism Studies Department, Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management,
Helwan University, Cairo Egypt**

Abstract

This study investigates the recovery of events tourism in Egypt following the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing its critical role in the post-crisis landscape. Through a comprehensive literature review on crisis management and its implications for the Events tourism industry, the research underscores the necessity of enhancing resilience and preparedness for future disruptions. The primary objective is to develop and redesign recovery strategies for Egypt's events sector, leveraging post-crisis opportunities for long-term success.

Employing an inductive approach, the study conducts qualitative analysis via semi-structured interviews with 20 event professionals and experts from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, events companies and the Egyptian Tourism Authority (ETA). The findings reveal the potential for doubling the sector's growth to offset pandemic-related losses and the repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis. The research highlights the imperative for collaborative efforts between the government and stakeholders to support the events industry, thereby fostering sustainable recovery and future resilience. These insights hold significant implications for policy formulation and

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

industry practices, aiming to enhance the resilience and prosperity of Egypt's events tourism industry in the face of future challenges.

Keywords: *Events, Post-Crisis, Recovery, Strategy, SWOT.*

Introduction

Global crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical tensions, and climate change, have posed unprecedented challenges to countries worldwide, irrespective of their economic status or geographic location. The COVID-19 pandemic, declared a global health emergency by the World Health Organization (WHO), has particularly disrupted the tourism industry, affecting tourist demand, industry operations and employment (Churski et al., 2021).

The Events tourism is classified into four categories: the acronym, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Convention/Congress and Exhibition/Event), defined as travel for the purpose of attending conferences, exhibitions and other events, constitutes a significant portion of global tourism, accounting for over 15% of total tourism activity, with more than 135 million trips annually (UNWTO, 2022).

Events Tourism is registered as the fastest growing sector in the tourism industry and plays a crucial role in the development of the tourism industry and economic benefits (Seraphin, 2020). Every year, a large number of attendees participate in events that contribute to the promotion of the destination, cultural awareness, employment opportunities, and economic growth. As per the study by Gursoy & Chi. (2020), the annual participation only in business events alone was around 1.5 billion visitors worldwide while the share of the global event industry in the global GDP was 1.5 trillion USD with direct and indirect spending constituting a staggering figure nearing 2.5

Sara Mohamed

trillion USD. The global event industry also provided direct and indirect employment opportunities to 26 Million people (Jiang, 2019).

Events tourism sector has emerged strongly on the scene of international communities as an innovative method to increase foreign currency in countries that need it, especially with the repercussions of the successive global crises as Covid-19 pandemic, the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, general price inflation and the war of October 7, 2023 regarding the Palestinian-Israeli crisis. The events tourism could be found at the efforts of finding solutions, developing plans and taking the necessary measures and policies to deal with the crises through local and international conferences (EECA, 2024). These global crises have caused destabilization to a varying degree all over the world in several sectors, especially the tourism and travel sector which events tourism belongs in a mutually complementary relationship (Mekawy, et al., 2017).

This study aims to redesign recovery strategies for Egypt's events sector in the post-crisis era, focusing on enhancing resilience and preparedness for future disruptions. By exploring crisis management within the context of events management, this research contributes to the discourse on proactive strategies to support, enhance and diversify services in the events tourism sector, ensuring its sustainability. A key focus is the preparation stage of crisis management, which is identified as the starting point for strategic recovery initiatives proposed herein. Additionally, the study addresses Egypt's challenges in realizing the economic, political and social benefits of events tourism commensurate with its capabilities.

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

1. Literature Review

1.1 The Impacts of Covid-19 Pandemic on the Events Tourism Industry in Egypt

As countries imposed strict travel restrictions to contain the Covid-19 virus, international and domestic tourism came to a standstill. According to the World Tourism Organization, the travel and tourism industry experienced a 42% revenue decline in 2020 (UNWTO, 2021a). International tourist arrivals plummeted to their lowest levels since 1989, with only 421 million visitors in 2021, represented less than 30% of the 2019 figures (UNWTO, 2023).

In Egypt, the tourism sector's contribution to GDP decreased from 2.3% in fiscal year 2019/2020 to 1.6% in 2020/2021 (Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, 2024). Despite the rich historical heritage and substantial infrastructure, Egypt's events tourism has not reached its full potential (Egyptian Center for Strategic Studies ECSS, 2024). Meanwhile, events industry has downturns during the pandemic of Covid-19 and around 7 million employees who are working in hospitality and catering in Egypt was affected by the pandemic crisis (Selim et al., 2020).

Like other countries worldwide, Egypt experienced the repercussions of global travel restrictions and air travel closures during the pandemic. Consequently, the number of tourists visiting Egypt dropped from approximately 13 million in 2019 to about 3.7 million in 2020. Tourism revenues also declined from around 13 billion USD in 2019 to approximately 4.4 billion USD in 2020 (Youssef et al, 2020).

Sara Mohamed

1.2 The Effect of Covid-19 Crisis in Human Resources of the Industry

The COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected the industry of events in two ways; delaying or cancelling the events and the reduction of the number of employees. In 2020 there was a loss of 844 thousand of travel and tourism jobs. The majority of travel businesses have been forced on remotely mood or hibernation. The crisis has put between 100 and 120 million direct tourism jobs at risk, many of them in small and medium-sized enterprises. 90% of the staff at the Events and travel companies was out of work during the crisis, while only 10% were upon request. Since resources had been depleted, companies were forced to lay off their employees, and retain key employees who can work with partners to guarantee customers satisfactions. The companies' revenue was zero, forcing to give 90% of its employee's unpaid leave, keeping only key personnel, depending on 10% of its work force (Dinesh et al., 2022).

According to Egypt Presidency (2023), about 80% of workers in the Events industry were unemployed (63.5% were unemployed in 2020 and 36.5% remained unemployed at the beginning of 2021). Post the crisis, most events industry workers who had lost their jobs had attempted to find new vacancies. Some events professionals and specialists were still having optimistic vision for the events industry during Covid-19 crisis.

According to Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (2024), When Events professionals found new positions in different industries; approximately 60% of them added that they did not consider returning to the tourism industry post crisis. This presents a significant challenge in the future for the tourism industry recovery. A lack of human resources raised, especially high-qualified human resources with special skills that cannot be trained in a short time.

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

However the tourism sector remains one of the largest employers in Egypt with workforce of almost 2.4 million in 2022. Many events professionals after being laid off and losing their main source of income, have found a suitable job that match their former income and the passion for tourism has disappeared, leaving them with no need to return to the industry (Cabinet News, 2024).

1.3 Recovery Strategies of Egypt's Events Industry post the Pandemic Crisis

The UNWTO presented three strategies and tactics to deal with crises the first strategy was: crisis management and mitigation, second strategy: provide stimulus and accelerate recovery, the third strategy was about: Preparing for Tomorrow (UNWTO, 2020a).

Egypt has made significant strides in various tourism activities, positioning events tourism as a key contributor to foreign currency generation. With its distinguished historical and cultural landmarks, coupled with advancements in infrastructure and supportive policies, Egypt has solidified its standing as a premier tourist destination. Notably, Bloomberg recognized Cairo as one of the top tourist destinations in 2020, while Insider ranked Egypt among the 12 most important global tourist destinations. Additionally, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Global Islamic Travel Index 2022 placed Egypt among the top 20 travel destinations.

These acknowledgments underscore Egypt's immense competitive and relative advantages in promoting events tourism. By implementing efficient and effective strategies, the country can harness this potential to further enhance its foreign currency earnings (ECSS, 2024).

The National strategy for tourism in Egypt aims to increase tourism traffic to 30 million tourists until 2028, by working to achieve rates of incoming tourist

Sara Mohamed

traffic to Egyptian destinations of about 25% and 30% annually, within the framework of Egypt's 2030 vision for sustainable development (Egypt Presidency, 2023).

1.4 Egypt's Efforts in Hosting and Organizing Events Post the Pandemic Crisis

Egypt is planning for major business events and expos as part of the sector recovery strategy to promote Egypt as events tourism destination post Covid-19 crisis as following:

2021/2022 Events

Avenue of Sphinxes reopened in Luxor, The Pharaohs' Golden Parade in Cairo, Food Africa in Cairo, The Gate Travel Expo in Cairo, The International Book Fair in Cairo, COMESA Africa conference that held in the New Administrative Capital, Cop27 the UN climate change conference held in Sharm El Sheikh hosted 197 Country, World Youth Forum in Sharm Elsheikh, Food Africa in Cairo, Pharmaconex 2022 in Cairo and the first Edition of Africa Health ExCon 2022 in Cairo that was attended by 75 countries (Africahealthexcon, 2023) (Expotobi, 2023).

2023/2024 Events

Food Africa in Cairo, Cairo Summit for Peace in the New Administrative Capital and Africa Health ExCon conference, QETC International Education Fair (QETC Middle East) in Cairo, Cairo International Tourism Exhibition in Cairo, El Alamein International Boat Show in Alexandria, Egypt Health Tourism International Conference in the New Administrative Capital,

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

Destination Africa event in Cairo and the World Urban Forum that take place in Cairo (entasher.com, 2024).

Moreover, Egypt is home for many national events and festivals that witness gatherings of many nationalities, including:

1. Sun alignment Phenomenon - Abu Simbel Temple and the annual celebration of the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb in Luxor have a cultural character linked to Egyptian antiquities.
2. Cairo International Popular Song Festival, Cairo International Film Festival, El Gouna International Film Festival, Alexandria International Film Festival, International Documentary Film Festival, Luxor African Film Festival, Cairo International Experimental Theater Festival, Cairo Arab Media Festival. These festivals are related to media, cinema and theater tourism and promoting events tourism in Egypt during the festival period.
3. Ismailia Folklore Festival, International Drum Festival, Mango Festival in Ismailia, International Fishing Festival in Port Said, These artistic and entertainment festivals attract a number of Arab and foreign nationalities and promote the tourist destination (Egypt Presidency, 2023).

1.5 The Results of Events Tourism on Egypt as a Tourist Destination

The reflections of these events on Egypt as a tourist destination are multifaceted, encompassing economic, cultural and reputational dimensions. These reflections include:

- 1- Economic Growth and Revenue Generation: High-profile events, such as the reopening of the Avenue of Sphinxes, directly contribute to increased tourist arrivals and higher foreign currency earnings. These

Sara Mohamed

events stimulate local economies by boosting demand for Hospitality, transportation and ancillary services.

- 2- Enhanced Global Visibility: International recognition from reputable organizations elevates Egypt's profile as a competitive and attractive destination. This exposure helps position Egypt as a leading hub for cultural and events tourism on the global stage.
- 3- Cultural Preservation and Promotion: Events showcasing Egypt's heritage, these initiatives not only attract tourists but also reinforce Egypt's identity as a custodian of world heritage.
- 4- Infrastructural Development: To host such events, Egypt has invested in upgrading infrastructure, including transportation networks, venues and hospitality facilities (GAFI, 2024).
- 5- Destination Image and Reputation: The successful execution of events and the resulting international accolades contribute to a positive and dynamic image of Egypt as a safe, modern and culturally rich destination. This helps mitigate the impact of past crises and rebuilds confidence among travelers.
- 6- Encouragement of Repeat and Extended Visits: Events attract tourists for specific occasions but often encourage extended stays or repeat visits to explore other attractions in the country. This broadens the tourism value chain and maximizes the economic benefits of each visitor.
- 7- Stakeholder Collaboration: The successful organization of such events highlights the importance of collaboration between government bodies, private sector stakeholders and international organizations (UNWTO, 2023).

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Data Sources

Primary Data Sources

based on the objectives of the research and the research problem will be collected by using one-to-one, semi-structured interviews, undertaken with several experts and managers of those figures who were responsible for the event-producing organizations and venue managers to consult their reviews and explore their needs and opinions for the success of such recovery strategy, the methods they will rely on and the opportunities and challenges that may face them, through visitations to the official tourism associations in Egypt.

Secondary Data Sources

Desk review has been conducted to collect data from various secondary sources through Google Scholar, Web of Science, Science Direct and Scopus search engines were used to identify and obtain relevant literatures. Reputable journals, books, different articles, periodicals, proceedings, magazines, newsletters, newspapers, websites, working documents, manuals, procedures, reports, statistical data, policies, regulations and standards were taken into account for the review. COVID-19 and Egypt Event Tourism, COVID-19 and Crisis Recovery Management were among the search terms used to search technical reports and academic articles.

Sara Mohamed

2.2 Data Collection Methods and Analysis Procedures

This study depends on inductive approach in which qualitative data is collected through in-depth interview as a data-gathering tool undertaken with range of 20 stakeholders and professionals in Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Events companies and experts in the Egyptian Tourism Authority (ETA) consulting their reviews and tracking their latest updates regarding Events industry in Egypt. Snowball sampling technique has been used in the study as one of the most popular methods of sampling in qualitative research, where the interviews usually start with a small number of initial contacts. The participants are then asked to recommend other contacts who fit the research criteria and who potentially might also be willing participants (Geddes, et al., 2018).

Interviewing took place between January and April 2024, on average 35 minutes, the duration depends on the availability of each interviewee. The interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants keeping their personal information private.

The majority of interviewees were male 77% and there are 23% were female. In addition, their age were from 25-35 by 45.8%, from 35-45 by 35.4% and there are 18.8% aged over 45 years. With reference to education, it was found that almost 71% of participants had university or higher education and the others 29% had postgraduate studies. In terms of work experience, a high proportion of respondents 66.6% had an experience of from 15-25 years, 16.7% from 10-15 years, meanwhile 10.4% from 5-10 years and only 6.3 % had over 25 experience years.

2.3 Interviews Analysis

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

2.3.1 SWOT Analysis Matrix for Events Tourism Industry in Egypt

A SWOT analysis was conducted as a strategic planning tool to identify the necessary strategies through direct interview questions, aimed at improving and analyzing the research results and outcomes. This analysis involved manually sorting the internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the external opportunities and threats, related to events tourism in Egypt. The SWOT analysis can be shown as below:

Analysis of the Internal Environment Elements of Events Tourism market in Egypt	
Weaknesses	Strengths
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oligopoly in the Events tourism market and the parallel market for services supporting Events tourism. 2. Ignoring the importance of local tourism in enhancing Events tourism programs. 3. The absence of unified specialized entities to manage and implement Event tourism programs with periodically updated databases and information systems. 4. Skill Gaps: Shortage of professionals with advanced skills in event management, logistics, and hospitality. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government and societal awareness of the importance of the events sector with the international and global events. 2. National government initiatives to support the sector (UNWTO, 2022a). 3. Digital infrastructure updates and digital transformation procedures (ECSS, 2024). 4. The strength of the security system and protection measures for security and safety. 5. Established Tourism Infrastructure: Cities like Cairo and Sharm El-Sheikh have convention centers, hotels, and venues suitable for large-scale events. New developments and constructions in The

<p>5. Weak specialized qualification training in the sector (Abo Zeid, 2022).</p> <p>6. Outdated Infrastructure in some regions compared to modern event hubs and poor level of basic services in some tourist and archaeological attractions associated with Events tourism.</p> <p>7. Bureaucratic and Regulatory Challenges: Complex procedures and policies can deter event organizers in addition to conflict and outdated laws and legislation.</p> <p>8. Lack of facilitating procedures and long period of time to fulfill work requirements.</p> <p>9. The multiplicity of supervisory bodies (Ghamry, 2024).</p> <p>10. Lack of thoughtful integration between relevant sectors.</p> <p>11. Limited Digital Integration: Lack of widespread use of digital platforms and technologies in event planning and execution, beside weak innovative marketing and promotion.</p> <p>12. Political Instability: Occasional political or security concerns might discourage international participation.</p>	<p>New Administrative Capital and El Alamein city.</p> <p>6. Huge archaeological and cultural projects with high classifications, such as The National Museum of Egyptian civilization and the Grand Egyptian Museum (ECSS, 2024).</p> <p>7. Procedural facilities for travel and tourist visas.</p> <p>8. Availability of the material, digital, legislative and human components of Events tourism in Egypt.</p> <p>9. Rich Cultural and Historical Heritage: Egypt's iconic landmarks (pyramids, temples, Nile) serve as unique settings for events.</p> <p>10. Strategic Location: Proximity to Europe, Africa and the Middle East provides a geographical advantage for attracting international attendees.</p> <p>11. Growing MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions) Sector: Egypt is emerging as a destination for corporate events and exhibitions.</p>
--	--

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

Analysis of the External Environment Elements of Events Tourism Market in Egypt

Threats	Opportunities
<p>1. The impact of the repercussions of international Political, Economic and Social events. Fluctuations in the economy may affect investment in the events sector, perceptions of safety issues can affect event participation and tourism and global crises (Pandemics, Recessions) which can cause widespread cancellations and reduced travel.</p> <p>2. The purchasing power of individuals globally is affected by high levels of inflation and the repercussions of global crises.</p> <p>3. The competitive quality level of basic, auxiliary and complementary services for events tourism in other countries.</p> <p>4. The intensity of holding international and local events online and remotely as an economic alternative and a precautionary measure for holding them face-to-face in time of crises.</p>	<p>1. Sustainability and Eco-Friendly Practices: Aligning with global trends in sustainable events can enhance Egypt's appeal as an environmentally conscious destination.</p> <p>2. Cultural and Heritage Integration: Combining historical settings with modern events can create one of a kind experiences and increase the international confidence as a tourism destination with high level of attractions and museums.</p> <p>3. The external mental image and the distinctive reputation of Egypt as a tourist destination.</p> <p>4. Government Initiatives: Ongoing government support and investment in infrastructure modernization and tourism can attract more international events increasing the inflow of foreign currency from European markets.</p>

Sara Mohamed

<p>5. Shift career for many events organizers from the tourism market globally after Covid-19 crisis (UNWTO, 2022a).</p> <p>6. Increase in airline ticket prices as a result of global fuel prices.</p> <p>7. Marketing programs and promotional strategies provide International competition in Event tourism sector.</p> <p>8. Regional Competition: Countries like the UAE (Dubai, Abu Dhabi) are well-established event hubs, providing stiff competition (From Interviews).</p>	<p>5. The presence of Egyptian bodies, consulates and cultural centers that represent an external force to enhance Egypt's competitive position in the sector.</p> <p>6. Global Event Trends: Adoption of hybrid and virtual events can increase Egypt's accessibility to a global audience. The potential of digital transformation for Events tourism sector provides an opportunity for promotion and marketing through social media.</p> <p>7. Niche Markets: Targeting specialized event sectors like technology, healthcare and education offers significant growth potential.</p> <p>8. Possibilities to benefit from international agreements to establish low-cost Egyptian airlines to replace foreign airlines operating in the markets of countries that have agreements with Egypt.</p>
--	--

2.3.2 Data Results and Discussions

To archive the main objective of the study, interviewees' responses were analyzed into four key themes as follows:

- 1- The Crises and Obstacles facing Events industry in Egypt.
- 2- Awareness of Events Tourism Importance.

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

3- The Effort of Egyptian Governmental bodies.

4- The future vision of Events industry in Egypt.

1. The Crises and Obstacles facing Events industry in Egypt

The interviewees confirmed that the tourism sector has suffered from the impact of many global crises that reduced tourism revenues. The most prominent of which was the losses and negative effects of Covid-19 crisis in the beginning of 2019 affecting the numbers of incoming tourism to Egypt.

At a time when Egypt began to recover from the consequences of the Corona pandemic, the world has been affected by the Russian-Ukrainian crisis economically and therefore this impact was clear on Egypt in the tourism sector as a result of the decline in the numbers of tourists, especially Russians and Ukrainians, who represented 35% of incoming tourism to Egypt, this point was assured in interview with (Expert in Tourism Promotion Authority in Egypt) who mentioned also that the biggest main problem lies in the ability to compete with some Arab and foreign countries, which created the motivation for tourists to prefer visiting them. The most competitive Arab countries in attracting tourists are the United Arab of Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which relied heavily on Events industry.

(Managers in Egyptian Tourism Authority) confirmed that by comparing Egypt's position with the United Arab of Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the Travel and Tourism Development Index, issued by the World Economic Forum in May 2022, we find that Egypt ranked No. 51 globally, while the United Arab Emirates ranked No. 25 and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia ranked No. 33. The department of Economy and Tourism in the Emirate of Dubai relies on announcing the emirate's tourism agenda on the official

Sara Mohamed

website at the beginning of the tourist season, detailing many of the various events and festivals that are organized throughout the year.

From Interviews, it was possible to identify the problem of Events tourism in Egypt and assess the obstacles of achieving the desired economic, political and social benefits in a manner that is equal with the capabilities achieved by the Egyptian state in the basic technical and infrastructure for this sector, by analyzing the reasons indicated in the (Cause - Effect table) of promoting Events tourism in Egypt as follows:

Cause			Effect
<p>Institutional Coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Weak demand for the individual tourism market. ➤ Lack of systemic connectivity and procedural facilities. ➤ The complexity and length of time required to complete transactions. 	<p>Supervision and Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Multiple supervisory and monitoring bodies. ➤ Poor efficiency of implementation procedures. ➤ Conflict of laws and decisions. ➤ Lack of flexibility in implementing laws. 	<p>Marketing and Information Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lack of unified Events databases. ➤ Lack in using digital Events management systems. ➤ Lack of innovative marketing strategies. ➤ Weak local and international cooperation. 	<p>Weak of Events Tourism Market in Egypt</p>

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Unwillingness of banking sector to finance. 			
<p>Parallel Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lack of licensed tourism entities. ➤ Oligopoly. ➤ Expiry of legislation and executive regulations. ➤ Failure to integrate small and medium enterprises. 	<p>The Capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lack of attention to quality performance standards. ➤ Limiting and preventing community participation. ➤ Not investing in available capabilities 	<p>Human Resources and Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Inefficiency of qualification training. ➤ Reduced spending on tourism training. ➤ Low social and cultural levels of tourism workers. ➤ Absence of community awareness campaigns. 	

2. Awareness of Events Tourism Importance

All the interviewees assured that raising awareness of the industry importance and training Events managers and employees on crisis management practices will qualify them as a skilled workforce to restore and develop Events tourism following the crises and emphasize the need for collaboration between the government and stakeholders to support the Events industry.

Sara Mohamed

(Tourist Specialist in Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities) mentioned that Events tourism will lead to an increase in the growth rate of tourists and a higher percentage of their spending on various activities in foreign currency, thus increasing tourism revenues and increasing national income. In addition, these events may attract not only tourists but also investments and partnerships.

Therefore, the interviewees emphasized the significance of the events industry in bringing together diverse nationalities with shared interests, participating in festivals organized over extended periods, such as two months. These events play a crucial role in revitalizing tourism activity, increasing hotel occupancy rates and boosting tourism revenues. One expert highlighted the success of the New Alamein Festival, launched in 2023, which significantly enhanced the regional and Gulf interest in El Alamein as a tourist destination. The expert further noted that Kuwaiti tourists represent the largest group of visitors to El Alamein, followed by tourists from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and other Arab countries.

3. The Effort of Egyptian Governmental bodies

An expert in general management of tourism events in the Egyptian Tourism Authority stated that the government organizing and holding events in Arab or Foreign countries with an Egyptian character, not only hosting Events inside Egypt as the Canadian Authority for Egyptian Heritage recently did in August 2023. The Egyptian Festival was organized in Mississauga, Canada, where the festival received thousands who experienced Egyptian food and listened to Egyptian music and songs. The Event was a marketing tool which tourists could be reached inside their country to promote the Egyptian tourism product. Interviews with experts from the Ministry of Tourism highlighted the

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

government's achievements in advancing electronic support and promoting digital transformation within the tourism sector as follows:

- Developing the official tourism website and the website of the Egyptian General Authority for Exhibitions and Conferences: (<http://eeca.gov.eg/arabic/eeca.html>).
- Establishing a unified database system for workers in the tourism sector.
- Automation of hotel sector services.
- Automating the process of purchasing tickets for archaeological sites and museums electronically in 30 locations.

4. The Future Vision of Events industry in Egypt

The interviews conducted enabled the researcher to analyze and gain insights into respondents' perspectives on the future vision of Egypt's events industry. Most governmental officials interviewed agreed that it is planned for Egypt to become a premier global hub for a wide variety of events by leveraging its rich cultural heritage, strategic initiatives, and technological advancements. This vision emphasizes sustainable growth, innovation, inclusivity, and resilience, ensuring Egypt's continued competitiveness and appeal in the evolving global events landscape through policies proposed shaping the future of Events industry in Egypt, based on a set of leading global experiences as an action program and developing strategies as follows:

- 1- Linking local tourism and event tourism in Egypt using the technological innovation by offering technology-driven tourism

Sara Mohamed

experiences tailored to participants in international conferences and events.

- 2- Unified electronic ticket project for event tourism in Egypt to create a central electronic system that allows Event participants to obtain unified electronic tickets approved by the organizers, in a way that improves the tourism experience and makes it easier for participants to plan and organize their attendance at events.
- 3- A unified website project for events tourism in Egypt that aim to design and develop a comprehensive central governmental electronic platform to provide and display detailed information and data related to Events held in Egypt, including: dates, locations, agendas, speakers, places and facilities available for organizing events, and detailed integrated databases about tourism landmarks, accommodation, transportation, hotel services, logistics and travel.
- 4- Using innovative marketing mechanisms and methods to promote event tourism in Egypt involves optimizing key elements such as tourism products, pricing and costs, transportation and distribution channels, and advertising through various media platforms. These efforts can be executed both face-to-face and remotely, targeting both local and international audiences, to effectively stimulate event tourism in the country.

2.4 The New Administrative Capital in the Future Vision of Events Industry in Egypt

Building the new administrative capital as an events city consider one of the Egypt's development Efforts and achievements, the New Administrative Capital was designed to include and accommodate majority of planned

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

exhibitions and Events. The New Administrative Capital is situated between Cairo/Suez and Cairo/Al Ain Sokhna roads near Badr city, Future city and Madinaty city. It is the biggest new city that introduces a modern and smart concept of residence. The main objectives of its construction are to keep up with the population growth, to provide a better quality of life, and to achieve sustainable development (Property Finder, 2022).

An expert interviewee stated that the new capital includes all services that integrate smart technologies and provide all possible ways of comfort including:

- a. All governmental and residential Institutions
- b. An integrated transportation network with a smart traffic system.
- c. A unified digital infrastructure and smart network facilities.
- d. Technology and Innovation Park, Disney land, Floating forest with an artificial river and artificial lakes.
- e. Sports city, Medical city, Expo city, Culture and Arts city, and digital conference halls.
- f. Essential facilities such as an international airport, hospitals, health clubs, social clubs, worship houses, hotels, banks, world-class hotels, showrooms, a conference center and reception halls for up to approximately 5,000 guests (Property Finder, 2022; El-mouelhi, 2019).

Recommendations

Recommendations Directed to the Egyptian Government

1. Creating a safe tourism environment as Covid-19 crisis had affected many of tourist's psychology. Subsequently, a safe tourism environment trend should be adopted to attract tourists post crisis, ensuring the prevention of the disease and having full knowledge about disease prevention according to World Health Organization and the Egyptian Ministry of Health.
2. Hosting and managing more international events and conferences, thus diversification tourism product and improving quality will develop the events industry in Egypt.
3. Adopting digital transformation and data analytics in events to recover Egypt's events industry post crises, it is necessary to strengthen the digitalization of tourism data, applying digital technology on tourism marketing activities, promote for the destination innovatively, establish a tourism information system and develop experience-based applications on Internet platforms for virtual event and connect data with related industries.
4. The New Administrative Capital and The New Alamein City have the potential to be pioneer destinations for Events tourism. Therefore, the government has a vital role in planning regulations, setting policies, enhancing the infrastructure efficiency, encouraging investments in Events industry, extending international relations cooperating with the strategic partners, participating in international conferences and improving marketing strategies in order to promote Egypt image and promote investment opportunities available in various sectors.

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

Recommendations Directed to Events and Tourism Companies in Egypt

1. Establishing a crisis management team consist of individuals from different departments and levels of the Tourism organization, including senior executives, communications experts, legal counsel and Events businesses experts. Assign clear roles and responsibilities to team members to ensure a coordinated and efficient response.
2. For recovering gradually, companies need to arrange and resume domestic and local events. A strategic vision and planned steps will help to skip any negative impacts of crises.
3. Collaborate with international organizations, event organizers and corporate entities to attract global events.

References

Abo Zeid, M., (2022), Tourism. A Strategic Industry in the growth of the Egyptian Economy, available at: <https://www.idsc.gov.eg/Article/details/7085> accessed on 22nd MAR, 2024.

Africa Health Excon (2023), Available at: [AfricaExcon Home \(africahealthexcon.com\)](http://africahealthexcon.com), Accessed on 30thMAR, 2023.

Ahmed, Q. A., & Memish, Z. A. (2020), The cancellation of mass gatherings (MGs) Decision making in the time of COVID-19, *Travel Medicine and Infectious Disease*, available at: <https://www.Sciencedirect.com>, accessed on 01stNOV, 2020.

Bundy, J., Pfarrer, M.D., Short, C.E., & Coombs, W.T. (2017), Crises and Crisis Management: Integration, *Interpretation, and Research Development*, J. Manag. Publisher, available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0149206316680030>, accessed on 30thMAR, 2023.

Bladen, C., Kennel, J., Abson, E., & Wilde, N. (2018), Events Management an Introduction, (2nd Ed.). London: Routledge, pp. 360-370.

Cabinet News (2024), Sharm El-Sheikh for Winning the AFASU Golden Awards, available at: <https://www.cabinet.gov.eg/News/Details/75260> accessed on 01stNOV, 2023.

Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics CAPMAS. (2023), the number of tourists coming to Egypt, available at:

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

https://www.capmas.gov.eg/Pages/IndicatorsPage.aspx?Ind_id=2550,

accessed on 30thMAR, 2024.

Churski, P., Krocak, H., Luczak, M., Shelest-Szumilas, O. & Wozniak, M. (2021), Adaptation strategies of migrant workers from Ukraine during the COVID-19 pandemic, Sustainability, available at: [\(PDF\) Adaptation Strategies of Migrant Workers from Ukraine during the COVID-19 Pandemic \(researchgate.net\)](#), Accessed on 05thAPR, 2023.

Coombs, W.T. (2019), Ongoing Crisis Communication, 5th ed., California Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA.

Dinesh, T., Aniket K. & Roshan D. (2022), Events industry Market, available at: <https://www.alliedmarketresearch.com/events-industry-market>, accessed on 30thMAR, 2023.

Dowson, R., & Bassett, D. (2018), Event Planning and Management, (2nd Ed.). (p 140), London: Kogan Page.

Egypt Presidency (2023), Events and Conferences, available at: <https://www.presidency.eg/>, accessed on 30thSEP, 2023.

Egyptian Center for Strategic Studies ECSS. (2024), The Infrastructure Projects in Egypt, available at: <https://ecss.com.eg/> accessed on 05thAPR, 2024.

Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, (2024), Tourism initiatives and events in Egypt, available at: www.tourism.eg, accessed on 18th AUG, 2024.

Egyptian General Authority for Exhibitions and Conferences, EECA (2024) the Authority's activities and events, available at: www.egyptexhibition.gov.eg , accessed on : 20th JUL,2024.

Sara Mohamed

El-mouelhi, H. (2019), New Administrative Capital in Cairo: Power, Urban Development vs. Social Injustice – an Egyptian Model of Neoliberalism, Neoliberal Urbanisierung, available at: <https://doi.org/10.14361/9783839437803-007>, accessed on 05thAPR, 2023.

Entasher (2024), Schedule of the top events and exhibitions in Egypt, available at <https://entasher.com/eg/events>, accessed on 05thAPR, 2024.

Expotobi (2023) Events in Egypt, available at, <https://expotobi.com/country/egypt> , accessed on 30thSEP, 2023.

Fullard, M. (2020). 525,000 jobs are at risk as business events industry campaigns for roadmap to recovery, Exhibition News. <https://exhibitionnews.uk/525000-> accessed on 05thAPR, 2024.

Galal, S. (2022), Number of tourist arrivals Egypt 2019-2020, by region of origin, Published 13DEC2022, Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/999378/egypt-tourist-arrivals-by-region-of-origin/> , accessed on 01stFeb, 2024

General Authority for Investment & free zones GAFI. (2024), Modern and Advanced Infrastructures in Egypt, available at: <https://www.gafi.gov.eg/English/whyegypt/Pages/Egypt-Ranking.aspx>, accessed on 22ndAPR, 2024.

Getz, D, & Page, S. (2020), Event Studies: Theory research and policy for planned events, (4th Ed.). Oxford: Routledge.

Geddes, A., Scott, S. & Parker, C. (2018), When the snowball fails to roll and the use of ‘horizontal’ networking in qualitative social research, *International*

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

Journal of Research Methodology, available at:
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13645579.2017.1406219>,
accessed on 22nd APR, 2022.

Ghamry, A. (2024) [In Arabic], Egyptian tourism is recovering from a decade of crises, Egyptian Center for Strategic Studies ECSS, available at:
<https://ecss.com.eg/44876/>, accessed on 01stFeb, 2024

Gursoy, D., & Chi, C. G. (2020), Effects of COVID-19 pandemic on hospitality industry: Review of the current situations and a research agenda, available at:
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19368623.2020.1788231>,
accessed on 22nd APR, 2022.

Jiang, Y.; Ritchie, B.W., & Verreynne, M. (2019), Building tourism organizational resilience to crises and disasters: A dynamic capabilities view, *International Journal of Tourism*, Available at:
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jtr.2312> , accessed on: 22ndAPR, 2024.

Maga, C. (2020), Festival suspends 2020 season indefinitely due to COVID-19, available at:
<https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/stage/2020/04/27/stratford-festival-suspends-2020-season-indefinitely-due-tocovid-19.html>; accessed on 01st NOV, 2022.

Marques, J. & Pinho, M. (2021), Collaborative research to enhance a business tourism destination: A case study from Porto, available at: *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events* | Taylor & Francis, [tandfonline.com](https://www.tandfonline.com), accessed on: 30thOCT, 2022.

Sara Mohamed

Mekawy, A. Elshahat, N., & Abdelwaab, M., (2017) [In Arabic], Development of Conference Tourism in Egypt Guided by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Experience, available at: https://jihtha.journals.ekb.eg/article_28017.html accessed on 01st NOV, 2022.

McCloskey, B., Zumla, A., Ippolito, G., Blumberg, L., Arbon, P., Cicero, A., Endericks, T., Lim, P., & Borodina, M. (2020), Mass gathering events and reducing further global spread of COVID-19: a political and public health dilemma, *The Lancet*, pp.1096-1099.

McCombes, S. (2019), Descriptive Research: Definition, Types, Methods and Examples, available at: <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/descriptive-research> Accessed on 01st NOV, 2022.

Property Finder. (2022), Top New Cities in Egypt, available at: <https://www.propertyfinder.eg/blog/en/new-cities-in-egypt/> accessed on 28th May, 2024.

Rogerson, C. M., & Rogerson, J. M. (2021), COVID-19 and changing tourism demand: Research review and policy implications for South Africa, *African Journal on Hospitality*, available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349967919_COVID-19_and_Changing_Tourism_Demand_Research_Review_and_Policy_Implications_for_South_Africa, accessed on 25th JUN, 2023.

Salem, I. E., Elkhwesky, Z., & Ramkissoon, H. (2021), A content analysis for government and hotel response to COVID-19 pandemic in Egypt, *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, available at

Towards an Effective Recovery for Events Tourism in Egypt post COVID-19 Crisis

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epub/10.1177/14673584211002614>,

accessed on 28thJUL, 2024.

Saad S., Yahia A.& Choura F. (2023), Towards a Better Comprehension of Tourism Crisis in the Era of Covid-19, available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/360241866>, accessed on 28thJUN, 2024.

Seraphin, H. (2021), COVID-19: An opportunity to review existing grounded theories in event studies, *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, available at: [tandfonline.com](https://www.tandfonline.com), accessed on 28thJUN, 2024.

Selim, M., Aidrous, I., & Semenova, E. (2020), International tourism: Prospects for development in the post coronavirus world (Egyptian example), *International Journal of Management* available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343555185>, accessed on 28thJUL, 2024.

UNWTO (2020a), Tourism and COVID-19: guiding tourism's recovery, available at: <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-covid-19>, accessed 23rd JAN, 2024.

UNWTO (2020b), World Tourism Barometer, available at: <https://www.unwto.org/international-tourism-growth-continues-to-outpace-the-economy> accessed on 03rd NOV, 2022.

UNWTO (2021a), News Release 28/1/2021, 2020: Worst Year in Tourism History with 1 Billion Fewer International Arrivals, available at: <https://www.unwto.org/news/2020-worst-year-in-tourismhistory-with-1-billion-fewer-international-arrivals> accessed on 23rd JAN, 2024.

Sara Mohamed

UNWTO (2021b), News Release 2/6/2021 Tourist numbers down 83% but confidence slowly rising, available at: <https://www.unwto.org/news/tourist-numbers-down-83-but-confidence-slowly-rising> accessed on 06th NOV, 2022.

UNWTO (2022), Rethinking tourism from Crisis to Transformation, available at: <https://www.unwto.org/>, accessed on 23rd JAN, 2024.

UNWTO (2023), Tourism and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, available at: <https://unwto.org/reports/from-crisis-to-transformation/agenda-2030.html>, accessed 23rd JAN, 2024.

Williams, A. M., & Baláž, V. (2015), Tourism risk and uncertainty theoretical reflections, Journal of Travel Research, available at: [Tourism Risk and Uncertainty \(sagepub.com\)](https://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav?lang=en&path=/journals/jtr/2015/01/01/0047312114268811a.pdf), accessed on 23rd JAN, 2024.

Youssef, A. B., Zeqiri, A., & Dedaj, B. (2020), Short and Long Run Effects of COVID-19 on the Hospitality Industry and the Potential Effects on Jet Fuel Markets, Available at: [researchgate.net](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354111111), accessed on 03rd AUG, 2023.

Zenker, S. & Kock, F. (2020), the coronavirus pandemic - A critical discussion of a tourism research agenda, Tourism. Management, available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0261517720300881?via%3DIihub>, accessed on 23rd JAN, 2024.