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The Role of Women's Empowerment in Promoting Sustainable Tourism Development in Egypt

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ABSTRACT
Women's empowerment plays a vital role in enhancing sustainable tourism development by fostering economic growth, social equity, and environmental stewardship, particularly in emerging economies like Egypt. This study aims to identify the crucial role of women's empowerment in promoting sustainable tourism development within the tourism sector in Egypt. To achieve the research objectives, the descriptive analytical approach was used. A questionnaire was designed to collect primary data and distribute it to women working in various fields in the tourism sector. A number of 455 questionnaires were analyzed using the SPSS v.20.
Results confirm a strong positive correlation between women empowerment and achieving key sustainability goals in tourism, specifically economic viability, social equity, and environmental protection. The findings highlight that increased participation and leadership of women in tourism enhance community involvement, cultural preservation, and resource sustainability. The study concludes with practical recommendations to promote gender equality, strengthen women's leadership, and implement supportive policies, thereby reinforcing women's effective roles in the sustained growth of Egypt's tourism industry. This research underscores the necessity of integrating gender empowerment initiatives to drive inclusive and resilient sustainable tourism development.
KEYWORDS
Women's empowerment, Sustainable tourism development, Promoting, Egyptian Tourism Sector.

دور تمكين المرأة في تعزيز التنمية السياحية المستدامة في مصر

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الملخص

يلعب تمكين المرأة دورًا حيويًا في تعزيز التنمية السياحية المستدامة من خلال تعزيز النمو الاقتصادي والعدالة الاجتماعية والمحافظة على البيئة ، لا سيما في الاقتصادات الناشئة مثل مصر. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على الدور الحاسم لتمكين المرأة في تعزيز التنمية السياحية المستدامة داخل قطاع السياحة في مصر. ولتحقيق أهداف البحث، تم استخدام المنهج التحليلي الوصفي. تم تصميم استمارة استبيان لجمع البيانات الأولية وتوزيعها على النساء العاملات في مختلف المجالات في قطاع السياحة. تم تحليل 455استبيانًا بأستخدام برنامج SPSS V.20.

حيث اكدت النتائج وجود علاقة إيجابية قوية بين تمكين المرأة وتحقيق أهداف الاستدامة الرئيسية في السياحة، وتحديدًا الجدوى الاقتصادية والعدالة الاجتماعية وحماية البيئة. وتسلط النتائج الضوء على أن زيادة مشاركة المرأة وقيادتها في السياحة تعزز المشاركة المجتمعية والحفاظ على التراث الثقافي واستدامة الموارد. وتختتم الدراسة بتوصيات عملية لتعزيز المساواة بين الجنسين، وتعزيز قيادة المرأة، وتنفيذ سياسات داعمة، وبالتالي تعزيز الأدوار الفعالة للمرأة في النمو المستدام لصناعة السياحة في مصر. يؤكد هذا البحث على ضرورة دمج مبادرات تمكين المرأة لدفع عجلة التنمية السياحية المستدامة الشاملة والمرنة.

الكلمات الدالة

تمكين المرأة ، التنمية السياحية المستدامة ، تعزيز ، قطاع السياحة المصرى.

1. Introduction

Empowerment of women has become a crucial factor in promoting inclusive growth and sustainable development worldwide. In the context of Egypt, women empowerment politically, economically, and socially represents a vital driver for broader societal progress. Political empowerment enables women to participate actively in decision-making processes and governance, economic empowerment enhances their access to resources and opportunities, and social empowerment fosters gender equality and improves overall quality of life (Hansen, 2015; National Council for Women, 2021). These dimensions of empowerment not only contribute to individual well-being but also serve as foundations for larger developmental goals. Together, these dimensions create a comprehensive framework that supports women's active involvement in shaping Egypt's future (Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, 2022).

Simultaneously, sustainable tourism development has emerged as a key strategy for achieving long-term economic growth while preserving cultural heritage and natural resources. Sustainable tourism integrates economic, social, and environmental sustainability to ensure that tourism activities meet the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to benefit from the same resources (Hamed, 2022). Economic sustainability focuses on creating stable and resilient tourism markets, social sustainability emphasizes community involvement and cultural respect, and environmental sustainability seeks to protect ecosystems and reduce negative impacts (Abdellatif, 2021).

Parallel to these efforts, sustainable tourism development has become a critical sector for Egypt's economic diversification and social progress. Sustainable tourism emphasizes the integration of three core elements: economic sustainability, which ensures long-term financial viability and local economic benefits; social sustainability, which promotes inclusive community engagement and cultural preservation; and environmental sustainability, which aims to protect natural resources and minimize ecological impact (Ministry of International Cooperation, 2016). The alignment of women's empowerment with sustainable tourism development presents a promising pathway for fostering inclusive growth and resilience. Within this framework, women play a pivotal role in supporting sustainable tourism by engaging at all stages—from planning to management and delivering innovative services that respect environmental and social values (Hamed, 2022; Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, 2022).

The women empowerment is widely recognized as a fundamental pillar for achieving sustainable development and social justice. In Egypt, the political, economic, and social empowerment of women has gained significant attention, particularly through initiatives such as the National Strategy for Women Empowerment 2030 (National Council for Women, 2017). This strategy aims to enhance women's roles and opportunities across various sectors, promoting gender equality and enabling women to contribute more effectively to Egypt's development agenda (State Information Service, 2024).

This research explores the interrelationship between the empowerment of Egyptian women—politically, economically, and socially—and the advancement of sustainable

tourism development, analyzing the roles women play in enhancing this vital sector to contribute to comprehensive and sustainable development that benefits Egyptian society and the economy. Understanding how empowered women can contribute to sustainable tourism may provide valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders committed to achieving sustainable development goals in Egypt.

2. Literature Review
2.1: Women's Empowerment
2.1.1: The Concept of Women's Empowerment

Women's empowerment is a multidimensional process through which women gain power and control over their own lives, acquire the ability to make strategic choices, and influence social change to achieve gender equality and improve their status politically, economically, and socially. It involves increasing self-worth, raising awareness, expanding choices, gaining access to resources, and building capacity to act and negotiate in different societal contexts. Women's empowerment also includes the removal of barriers that limit their participation in decision-making at household, community, and national levels (Samari, 2019; Mandal, 2013).

It is a dynamic process that moves women from states of disempowerment (lack of choices and control) to empowerment (ability to make and act upon choices) (Kabeer, 1999). It entails agency, self-confidence, and the ability to act independently or collectively to challenge and change inequitable power relations and gender norms (Arnoff, 2011).

Women's empowerment encompasses economic, political, and social dimensions: economic empowerment means having control over financial resources and economic opportunity; political empowerment involves participation and influence in political processes; social empowerment relates to participation in social and cultural life without discrimination (Papart, Rai & Staudt, 2002).

The concept is often measured through indicators like decision-making power in the household, access to education and employment, participation in governance, and freedom from violence and discrimination (Stromquist, 2015). Empowerment is seen as both an individual and collective process (Patricia, Darlington & Mulvaney, 2003). The United Nations Development Fund for Women has defined empowerment as follows: "It is the process of empowering women and increasing their awareness by providing cultural, educational and material means so that individuals can participate in decision-making and control the resources that concern them" (United Nations, 2023)The United Nations and international organizations affirm that empowering women is essential for sustainable development, enabling women to set their own agendas, enhance their skills, solve problems, and contribute fully to societal progress (Al-koh, 2016).

2.1.2: Dimensions of Women's Empowerment

Women's empowerment is a multidimensional concept that includes psychological, economic, social, and political aspects. Key dimensions encompass self-esteem, access to resources, decision-making power, leadership roles, and protection mechanisms. Self-esteem involves women's confidence and sense of agency, while access to resources covers economic assets, education, and healthcare. Decision-making power highlights women's participation and influence in family, community,

and governance. Leadership refers to women's ability to occupy influential positions and shape policies and actions. Protection ensures women's rights, safety, and freedom from discrimination and violence (Salman & Bassim, 2019).

1. **Economic Empowerment:** This dimension refers to women's access to and control over financial resources, employment opportunities, income generation, and economic decision-making. It enables women to achieve financial independence and stability, encompasses several key elements (Chattopadhyay, 2005; Mandal, 2013) :

Knowledge and Skills: Women acquire education, vocational training, and life skills that enable them to compete successfully in the labor market and entrepreneurial activities. These skills form the foundation for sustainable economic advancement (National Council for Women, 2017; National Council for Women, 2021).

Access to Markets: Economic empowerment requires women to have fair and equal access to markets where they can sell their products or services, participate in value chains, and benefit from economic opportunities without discrimination or exclusion (Hamed, 2022; State Information Service, 2024).

Access to Financial Resources: This includes women's ability to obtain credit, loans, savings, and other financial services that can help them start or expand businesses, invest in productive assets, and achieve financial independence (Kabeer, 2018; Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, 2022).

Access to Networks: Economic empowerment is enhanced by women's inclusion in professional networks, mentorship programs, business associations, and social capital that provide support, information, and opportunities for collaboration and growth (Abigail & Emma, 2016; National Council for Women, 2021).

Together, these elements enable women not only to succeed economically but to have control and agency over economic decisions and resources, fostering sustainable economic growth and gender equality.

2. **Social Empowerment:** This dimension addresses women's ability to influence social norms and cultural practices, participate fully in community and family life, and gain respect and equality within society. It includes improvements in education, health, freedom from violence, and social inclusion, includes several key elements (Leah, 2002; Al Sayed & Abd Elaziz, 2022):

Participation in Decision-Making: Women's active involvement in decisions within their families, communities, workplaces, and public spheres. This includes decision-making related to social, cultural, and economic matters that affect their lives and the community (Assaad, Nazier & Ramadan, 2015).

Access to Resources: Women's ability to access social, educational, healthcare, and community resources that enable them to improve their well-being and social standing. This access helps break down barriers created by discriminatory social norms and practices (El-kady, 2022).

Leadership and Influence: Women's opportunities to take on leadership roles in social, cultural, and community organizations. Social empowerment enables women to influence societal norms, advocate for their rights, and drive social change (Tousson, 2020).

These elements collectively enable women to exert control over their social environment and contribute meaningfully to societal development, challenging traditional norms and achieving greater equality.

3. **Political Empowerment:** Political empowerment of women is defined as a process that increases women's capacity, leading to greater choice, agency, and participation in societal decision-making. It entails expanding women's ability to influence formal and informal political institutions, policies, and practices that shape their lives and communities. Political empowerment of women includes several interconnected dimensions that together reflect their ability to influence political processes and decisions (Ghosh, 2000) :

Political Participation: This refers to women's active involvement in political life, including voting, running for and holding elected office, engaging in political parties, and participating in civil society organizations. It measures the extent to which women are present and represented in decision-making positions, such as legislators or leaders in political institutions (The Egyptian Center for Women's Rights, 2024).

Decision-Making: This dimension highlights women's capacity to make meaningful choices and have a voice in political and societal decisions at local, national, and international levels. It includes their influence within political parties, government institutions, and policy formulation processes.

Political Awareness: Political empowerment involves increasing women's knowledge and understanding of their political rights, laws, and governance mechanisms. Awareness enables women to exercise their rights effectively, advocate for their interests, and actively participate in political debates (Christopherson et al., 2022).

Legal Empowerment: This aspect ensures women have equal legal rights and protections, enabling them to participate politically without discrimination or restrictions. Legal empowerment includes access to justice, protection from gender-based violence, and laws ensuring gender equality in political representation (Mashaly, 2024).

Together, these dimensions emphasize women's enhanced capacity and agency to participate fully and effectively in political processes, shape policies, and influence governance, leading to greater gender equality and democratic inclusiveness.

2.2: Sustainable Tourism Development (STD)

2.2.1: The Concept of Sustainable Tourism Development (STD)

Sustainable tourism development is defined as tourism that fully considers its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities. It aims to establish a balanced approach among environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism to ensure long-term sustainability. The goal is to meet the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future, minimizing negative impacts such as environmental damage and overcrowding, and maximizing positive outcomes like job creation, cultural preservation, and wildlife conservation (Nara & Irawan, 2022; Global sustainable tourism council "GSTC").

 A recent addition to the concept of tourism development is sustainable tourism, which aims to lessen the negative effects of travel and increase its benefits for the

sector in order to preserve economic growth in the nation, improve locals' quality of life, and outperform other forms of development while preserving natural resources, which are essential to the well-being of host communities (Muhanna, 2006; Gebhard, Meyer & Roth, 2009).

This definition is endorsed by international bodies such as the United Nations Environment Program and the World Tourism Organization, which emphasize that sustainable tourism involves careful planning and management to preserve natural resources, respect local cultures, and provide equitable economic benefits to local communities (United Nations, 2018).

2.2.2 Dimensions of Sustainable Tourism Development
According to Cernat and Gourdon (2007) sustainable tourism has three dimensions; Economic, Social, and Environmental

- **Economic Sustainability**

Ensures that tourism generates long-term economic benefits for all stakeholders without causing economic leakage. This includes supporting local businesses, providing quality jobs, and investing in infrastructure that benefits both tourists and residents (APEC, 2013; Hiere, 2018).

- **Social Sustainability**

Focuses on maintaining and enhancing the social fabric of host communities. It promotes respect for local culture, ensures social equity, improves the quality of life for residents, and encourages the participation of local populations in tourism planning and decision-making (Aref, Hussein & Awees, 2015).

- **Environmental Sustainability**

Involves preserving natural resources and ecosystems, minimizing waste and pollution, and reducing the carbon footprint of tourism activities. It encourages the use of renewable resources and habitat conservation to maintain the integrity and attractiveness of tourist destinations (Baloch et al., 2023).

Sustainable tourism development is essential for balancing tourism growth with the preservation of environmental, social, and economic resources, ensuring that tourism remains a positive force for destinations and communities now and into the future (Hiere, 2018).

2.3 Frameworks for Sustainable Tourism in Egypt
Sustainable tourism development frameworks and principles, in Egypt are shaped by national strategies, regulatory reforms, and targeted projects aimed at balancing tourism growth with biodiversity conservation and community benefits.

2.3.1 Egypt's Approach to Sustainable Tourism Involves Multiple Frameworks and Projects
- The "Mainstream Biodiversity into Tourism Development" project integrates biodiversity conservation into tourism planning in ecologically sensitive areas, focusing on creating protected zones, monitoring tourism impacts, and promoting responsible tourism grading and community-based management systems (Nugraheni et al., 2020; Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt's Vision 2030) .
- The National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism 2030 aims to increase tourist traffic sustainably by reforming legislation, improving institutional

frameworks, and adopting smart tourism practices aligned with Egypt's Vision 2030 development goals (National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism 2030, 2023).

- Smart and sustainable tourism initiatives include digital transformation and smart transportation technologies to enhance visitor experiences while reducing environmental impacts in destinations like Sharm El-Sheikh (Magdy et al., 2022).

2.3.2 Principles of Sustainable Tourism in Egypt

Key principles guiding sustainable tourism development include (UNWTO, 2013):

- **Environmental Conservation:** Protecting and preserving Egypt's natural environments, marine ecosystems (especially the Red Sea), and biodiversity is paramount. Efforts include promoting eco-friendly practices in hotels, diving centers, and tourist activities to minimize damage and maintain healthy ecosystem (Tardivo, Scilla & Viassone, 2014).
- **Community Participation and Socio-Economic Benefits:** Sustainable tourism prioritizes involving local communities to ensure their economic and social well-being. This includes job creation, training, fair wages, and supporting small businesses, with emphasis on community-based conservation and tourism activities (United States Agency for International Development, 2008; ALhasni, 2021).
- **Cultural Heritage Preservation:** Safeguarding Egypt's archaeological and cultural sites is a critical principle. Legislation reforms and protective measures help prevent theft, damage, and smuggling of antiquities, ensuring cultural assets are preserved for future generations (Michail, 2022).
- **Legislative and Institutional Support:** Egypt emphasizes institutional reform to support sustainable tourism through updated laws and policies, such as the Antiquities Protection Law and new regulatory frameworks that support environmentally friendly practices and streamline tourism investments. (Michail, 2022).
- **Technology and Innovation:** The adoption of smart tourism practices using digital tools and sustainable technologies enhances tourism management, resource efficiency, and visitor experience while minimizing environmental impact. This includes smart transportation and waste management systems (Magdy et al., 2022).
- **Education and Awareness:** Promoting awareness among tourism stakeholders and visitors about sustainable practices helps foster responsible tourism behavior, contributing towards long-term sustainability goals (Abd EL-Hameed et al., 2024).

These frameworks and principles form a holistic approach to sustainable tourism development in Egypt, aiming to support economic growth while preserving environmental and cultural resources for future generations.

Based on the above of literature review, The positive impact of women's empowerment on sustainable development is well established through various linkages between the two variables. This relationship can be built by understanding women's empowerment as a multidimensional process involving economic, political

and social dimensions. Women's empowerment enables them to access education, employment, health, legal rights, and decision-making roles, which collectively allow them to contribute actively to sustainable economic growth, social progress, and environmental sustainability .Can be constructed by considering empowerment as an independent variable that affects the various pillars of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental).Can be constructed the hypothesis:

Research Hypothesis: Women's Empowerment has a positive impact on Sustainable Development.

3. Methodology

Because it focuses on a scientific research topic that centers on a social or human phenomenon or issue, this study is classified as a descriptive analytical research study. As a result, quantitative research was used in this study. To meet research objectives a survey questionnaire was developed and distributed to specifically targets women working in the Egyptian tourism sector. The anonymous form of the questionnaire enabled respondents to freely express their inner views, attitudes, and perceptions towards the process of empowering Egyptian women in the tourism sector, because the research aims to uncover deeply held personal opinions, some of which may be sensitive in nature. Items or questions that demand the respondent to respond to a series of questions or phrases are generated when designing a questionnaire. The responses of the participants are then translated into numerical form and statistically examined (Mohamed, 2015).

3.1 Questionnaire Design

Using a five-point Likert scale, would indicate (1) "strongly disagree," (2) "disagree," (3) "neutral," (4) "agree," and (5) "strongly agree." and the questionnaire was divided in to 3 sections which are Demographic Information, Women's Empowerment, Sustainable Development.

3.2 Sample Size and Data Collection

The research object of this study in the quantitative method was the questionnaire is specifically targeted at women working in the Egyptian tourism sector. A method mode is the survey, by data collecting tool is the questionnaire (online and field surveys) .Due to the size of the sample and its geographic distribution, the questionnaire was distributed using a simple random sample technique. The questionnaire was distributed in a number of Egyptian governorates؛ Alexandria, ELsadat City, Kafr El Sheikh, Tanta, Cairo and Luxor, which represent the main Urban and rural cities where women work in Egypt from July 2024 to December 2024. A total of 494 responses were collected. After eliminating samples with missing values, 455 responses were finally selected. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques including means, standard deviations and frequencies were also calculated for the study variables- women's empowerment, sustainable development (Economic, Social, and Environmental) - to summarize the distribution and central tendencies of the data.

Table (1) Questionnaire Distribution

Total Paper& Electronic forms	Valid Paper& Electronic forms	In valid Paper& Electronic forms	Total valid forms
494	455	39	455

3.3 Field Study Results
A- Descriptive Analysis
Demographic Information

Table (2) presents a demographic information provides important context for understanding the characteristics of the respondents in this study. The data is broken down into several key categories: age, education, and years of work experience in the tourism sector, marital status, and workplace type. These categories help to provide a comprehensive picture of the respondents' background (Women working in all fields in the Egyptian tourism sector) and may offer insights into how these factors could influence their perceptions of the study variables (women's empowerment and sustainable development).

Table (2) Demographic Information

Demographic and Travel Information		Freq.	%
Age	less than 25 years	50	11.0
	25- less than 35 years	129	28.4
	35- less than45 years	139	30.5
	45-less than 55 years	87	19.1
	More than 55 years	50	11.0
Education	High school or less	31	6.8
	Diploma	17	3.7
	Bachelor's degree	340	74.7
	Master's degree	33	7.3
	Doctoral degree	21	4.6
	Other	13	3
Years of Work experience in Tourism Sector	Less than 1 year	14	3.1
	1-3 years	43	9.5
	4-7 years	66	14.5
	8-10 years	78	17.1
	more than10 years	254	55.8
Marital Status	Single	125	27.5
	Married	277	60.9
	Divorced	32	7.0
	Widow	21	4.6
Work place	Hotel	98	21.5
	Airline Company	73	16.0
	Government Tourism Institutions	66	14.5
	Travel Agency	66	14.5
	Tour Operator	54	11.9
	Civil society organization	49	10.8
	Other	49	10.7
Total		**455**	**100%**

- **Age Distribution**

The respondents are primarily distributed across the middle-age categories, with the largest group being those aged **35-45 years** (30.5%), followed closely by the **25-35 years** age group at 28.4%. This indicates that a significant portion of the sample is in their prime working years, which is typical for the tourism industry. The **less than 25**

years and **more than 55 years** categories each account for 11%, reflecting a more balanced representation across different age groups. This distribution suggests that the study captures a broad spectrum of age groups, each potentially offering different perspectives based on their level of experience and career stage.

- **Education Level**

A considerable portion of the sample holds a **Bachelor's degree** (74.7%), demonstrating a highly educated workforce in the tourism sector. This is followed by smaller groups with **Master's degrees** (7.3%) and **Doctoral degrees** (4.6%). These figures suggest that the respondents are not only well-educated but may also have specialized knowledge that could influence their responses to the study's variables. On the other hand, only a small percentage of respondents have **High school or less** (6.8%) or a **Diploma** (3.7%), which could indicate that the study predominantly captures the views of individuals with higher educational qualifications, likely associated with more experienced or managerial roles in the tourism sector.

- **Years of Work Experience in the Tourism Sector**

The majority of respondents have significant experience in the tourism sector, with **55.8%** having more than **10 years** of experience. This is followed by those with **8-10 years** of experience (17.1%) and **4-7 years** (14.5%). The high percentage of respondents with over 10 years of experience suggests that the study predominantly captures the views of seasoned professionals who have a deep understanding of the industry. This extensive experience could provide valuable insights into long-term trends and challenges in the tourism sector. Fewer respondents (3.1%) have less than 1 year of experience, which may offer a different perspective, especially when compared to those with more extensive experience.

- **Marital Status**

The marital status of the respondents shows that a large portion is **Married** (60.9%), followed by **Single** (27.5%). The percentage of **Divorced** (7%) and **Widowed** (4.6%) respondents is smaller, yet these groups still offer an important perspective. The high percentage of married individuals could suggest that family and work-life balance may be influential factors in their work-related decisions or perceptions, particularly in an industry like tourism that often requires flexibility and long working hours.

- **Workplace Type**

In terms of workplace type, the largest group of respondents works in **Hotels** (21.5%), followed by those employed by **Airline Companies** (16%) and **Government Tourism Institutions** (14.5%). **Travel Agencies** and **Tour Operators** each represent 14.5% of the sample. Smaller portions of the sample work in **Civil Society Organizations** (10.8%) and other sectors (10.7%). This distribution shows that the study includes a diverse range of respondents from different segments of the tourism industry, including both private and public sectors. The representation from key sectors such as hospitality, airlines, and travel agencies helps ensure that the study captures a broad range of industry perspectives.

B- Descriptive Statistics

This section provides a detailed presentation of the descriptive statistics of various dimensions relevant to women's empowerment and sustainable development in the

tourism sector. The descriptive statistics include the mean, standard deviation (SD), and rank for each of the items measured in the research.

1) Women's Empowerment

This section provides descriptive statistics on women's empowerment in the tourism sector, covering three key dimensions: Economic Empowerment, Social Empowerment, and Political Empowerment. Economic Empowerment looks at women's access to skills, financial resources, and networks. Social Empowerment focuses on their participation in decision-making and leadership opportunities, while Political Empowerment examines their involvement in political activities and influence in tourism-related decisions. The following tables present the mean scores, standard deviations, and ranks for each of these areas.

❖ Economic Empowerment

This section explores the **economic empowerment** of women in the tourism sector, focusing on their **knowledge and skills**, **access to markets**, **access to financial resources**, and **networks**. Economic empowerment is a key factor that influences women's ability to contribute effectively to the tourism sector, enhancing their participation and ensuring equitable opportunities their capabilities in these areas.

Table (3) Descriptive Statistics for Economic Empowerment

		Mean	SD	Rank
	1. Economic Empowerment	**3.64**	**0.545**	
	a. Knowledge and skills	4.57	.447	**1**
1	I possess the knowledge and skills necessary to work in the tourism sector.	4.60	.602	
2	I have the ability to quickly acquire new skills in the tourism sector.	4.63	.496	
3	My skills and knowledge have given me positive attitudes towards developing and growing my work in the tourism sector.	4.47	.550	
	b. Access to Markets	3.04	.598	**4**
4	I have a wide network of connections in the tourism sector.	4.43	.723	
5	I face difficulties in reaching customers in the tourism sector.	2.13	.827	
6	Communicating and dealing with tourism service providers are a challenge for me.	2.57	1.11	
	c. Access to Financial Resource	**3.41**	**0.733**	**3**
7	I have access to a variety of financial resources.	3.26	1.169	
8	I face difficulties in obtaining the necessary funding to start or run a business in the tourism sector.	3.07	1.33	
9	There are opportunities to form partnerships to overcome the challenges of financing my tourism project.	3.91	1.00	
	d. Networks	**3.55**	**.442**	**2**
10	I have strong relationships with other members in the tourism sector.	4.58	.665	
11	I feel isolated from networks in the tourism sector.	1.84	.569	
12	There is strong informal organizing in the tourism business environment that facilitate entry and exit into the tourism investment environment.	4.22	.924	

The descriptive statistics provided in Table (3), summarized below, reveal important insights into how women perceive their economic empowerment in tourism. The analysis covers four key components: **knowledge and skills**, **access to markets**, **access to financial resources**, and **networks**.

1. **Knowledge and Skills** (Mean = 4.57, SD = 0.447, Rank = 1): This component ranks the highest among all dimensions, indicating that women feel highly competent in their knowledge and skills within the tourism sector. The item "I have the ability to quickly acquire new skills in the tourism sector" scores the highest (Mean = 4.63, SD = 0.496), suggesting that women are confident in their adaptability and capacity to develop their expertise. This positive self-perception of skills and knowledge contributes to their readiness to participate and grow within the sector.

2. **Access to Markets** (Mean = 3.04, SD = 0.598, Rank = 4): In contrast, access to markets ranks the lowest among the four dimensions. Despite having a strong network of connections (Mean = 4.43, SD = 0.723), many women face significant challenges in reaching customers (Mean = 2.13, SD = 0.827) and in dealing with tourism service providers (Mean = 2.57, SD = 1.11). These difficulties suggest that while women may have the skills, their ability to effectively engage with the market is limited by barriers to customer access and service provider relationships.

3. **Access to Financial Resources** (Mean = 3.41, SD = 0.733, Rank = 3): Access to financial resources is a critical factor in economic empowerment. Women express some difficulties in obtaining funding (Mean = 3.07, SD = 1.33), yet they acknowledge opportunities to form partnerships to overcome these challenges (Mean = 3.91, SD = 1.00). This highlights a mixed perception of financial empowerment, where women recognize existing financial opportunities but still face hurdles in acquiring sufficient resources to launch or sustain tourism ventures.

4. **Networks** (Mean = 3.55, SD = 0.442, Rank = 2): Networking is a crucial aspect of economic empowerment, with women generally perceiving themselves as well-integrated into the tourism sector's social structure. The item "I have strong relationships with other members in the tourism sector" scores highly (Mean = 4.58, SD = 0.665), indicating strong social capital. However, some women feel isolated from networks (Mean = 1.84, SD = 0.569), pointing to potential gaps in inclusivity, especially for newcomers or those without established connections. The presence of informal organizing within the tourism business environment (Mean = 4.22, SD = 0.924) suggests that while there are networks that facilitate entry, not all women benefit equally from these structures.

❖ **Social Empowerment**

This section explores the **social empowerment** of women in the tourism sector, focusing on their **participation in decision-making**, **access to resources**, and **leadership opportunities**. Social empowerment is critical for ensuring that women can contribute meaningfully to the sector and access opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Table (4) Descriptive Statistics for Social Empowerment

		Mean	SD	Rank
	2. Social Empowerment	**3.87**	**.406**	
	a. Decision-Making Participation	**4.11**	**.893**	**1**
1	Regularly participate in meetings and discussions related to the tourism sector.	4.23	.988	
2	I have an influence on decisions related to my work in the tourism sector.	4.24	1.06	
3	I feel adequately represented in bodies and institutions related to the tourism sector.	3.85	1.18	
	b. Access to Resources	**3.77**	**.451**	**2**
4	It is easy for me to access educational and training opportunities in the tourism sector.	4.70	.535	
5	I have access to a diverse range of stakeholders in the tourism sector.	4.62	.623	
6	I face difficulties in obtaining the necessary support to develop my skills in the tourism sector.	1.97	.697	
	c. Leadership	**3.73**	**.505**	**3**
7	I see many women in leadership positions in the tourism sector.	4.66	.538	
8	I feel that I can attain leadership positions in the tourism sector.	4.45	.786	
9	Women face difficulties in attaining leadership positions in the tourism sector.	2.09	.811	

Table (4) presents the descriptive statistics for the items related to social empowerment, summarized across three key components: **decision-making participation**, **access to resources**, and **leadership**.

1. **Decision-Making Participation** (Mean = 4.11, SD = 0.893, Rank = 1): This dimension ranks the highest in social empowerment, indicating that women feel reasonably involved in decision-making processes within the tourism sector. Women perceive themselves as having a substantial influence on decisions related to their work (Mean = 4.24, SD = 1.06), and they regularly participate in meetings and discussions (Mean = 4.23, SD = 0.988). However, representation in official bodies and institutions related to tourism scored slightly lower (Mean = 3.85, SD = 1.18), suggesting there is still room for improving women's visibility and representation in formal tourism governance structures.

2. **Access to Resources** (Mean = 3.77, SD = 0.451, Rank = 2): Women report relatively good access to resources in the tourism sector. Specifically, they find it easy to access educational and training opportunities (Mean = 4.70, SD = 0.535) and have a diverse range of stakeholders available for support (Mean = 4.62, SD = 0.623). However, there are some challenges, as a small portion of women express difficulties in obtaining the necessary support to develop their skills (Mean = 1.97, SD = 0.697). This disparity indicates that while resources are available, not all women have equal access to them, potentially due to systemic barriers or lack of targeted support.

3. **Leadership** (Mean = 3.73, SD = 0.505, Rank = 3): Leadership opportunities for women in the tourism sector rank the lowest among the three dimensions. While women observe many female leaders in the sector (Mean = 4.66, SD = 0.538) and feel that they can attain leadership positions (Mean = 4.45, SD = 0.786), they also acknowledge that women face significant challenges in reaching these roles (Mean = 2.09, SD = 0.811). This suggests a perception of both opportunity and constraint, where women recognize the potential for leadership but also face barriers that need to be addressed to improve equitable access to leadership roles.

❖ **Political Empowerment**

Political empowerment is examined through political participation, decision-making, political awareness, and legal rights. The statistics presented in the table below shed light on the level of political engagement and confidence among women in the tourism sector.

Table (5) Descriptive Statistics for Political Empowerment

		Mean	SD	Rank
	3. Political Empowerment	**3.85**	**.569**	
	a. Political Participation	**4.02**	**.783**	**2**
1	I regularly participate in elections in the tourism sector.	3.96	1.09	
2	I consider running for political office in the future.	3.65	1.172	
3	I believe that Egyptian women are adequately represented in the electoral process in the tourism sector.	4.48	.756	
4	I participate in local or community political activities that impact the tourism industry.	3.95	1.082	
5	I feel confident in voicing my opinions on political matters related to tourism.	4.05	.963	
	b. Decision-Making	**3.35**	**.983**	**4**
6	I regularly participate in political events and meetings.	3.49	1.12	
7	I have an influence on political decisions that affect my life.	3.34	1.12	
8	I feel that my voice is heard in the political process.	3.36	1.09	
9	I have the ability to influence political decisions that affect the tourism sector in my community.	3.22	1.05	
	c. Political Awareness	**4.48**	**.582**	**1**
10	I regularly follow political news.	4.44	.845	
11	I engage in political discussions with family and friends.	4.37	.839	
12	I believe that Egyptian women have a high level of political awareness.	4.64	.586	
	d. Legal Empowerment	**3.55**	**.569**	**3**
13	I enjoy the same legal rights as men in political participation.	4.40	.822	
14	I do not face any discrimination due to being a woman in the political sphere.	4.06	.963	
15	I feel restricted by laws and regulations in the political field.	2.18	.899	

Table (5) provides descriptive statistics for each component related to political empowerment, covering **political participation**, **decision-making**, **political awareness**, and **legal empowerment**.

1. **Political Participation (Mean = 4.02, SD = 0.783, Rank: 2)**: Women in the tourism sector report a relatively high level of political participation. This suggests that they are actively engaged in political processes, including elections (Mean = 3.96, SD = 1.09), with many considering the possibility of running for political office in the future (Mean = 3.65, SD = 1.172). Notably, women strongly believe that Egyptian women are adequately represented in the electoral process within the tourism sector (Mean = 4.48, SD = 0.756), and they feel confident expressing their political opinions (Mean = 4.05, SD = 0.963). These findings highlight the growing political agency and engagement among women in the sector.

2. **Decision-Making (Mean = 3.35, SD = 0.983, Rank: 4):** This dimension ranks lower, indicating that although women are politically active, they feel less influential in decision-making processes. Women report moderate participation in political events and meetings (Mean = 3.49, SD = 1.12) but perceive their ability to influence political decisions as somewhat limited (Mean = 3.34, SD = 1.12). They also express concerns about whether their voices are being heard in the political process (Mean = 3.36, SD = 1.09). The relatively lower scores in decision-making suggest that there is a gap between political participation and the actual impact women feel they have on decisions, especially in relation to the tourism sector.

3. **Political Awareness (Mean = 4.48, SD = 0.582, Rank: 1)**: Women show a high level of political awareness, which is the highest-rated dimension of political empowerment. They report that they regularly follow political news (Mean = 4.44, SD = 0.845) and engage in political discussions with family and friends (Mean = 4.37, SD = 0.839). Furthermore, they believe that Egyptian women in general possess a high level of political awareness (Mean = 4.64, SD = 0.586). This high political consciousness among women reflects their understanding of the political landscape and their willingness to engage in informed discussions.

4. **Legal Empowerment (Mean = 3.55, SD = 0.569, Rank: 3)**: Legal empowerment is another critical aspect, with women generally expressing confidence in their legal rights. Most women believe they enjoy the same legal rights as men in political participation (Mean = 4.40, SD = 0.822), and a significant number report that they do not face discrimination due to their gender in the political sphere (Mean = 4.06, SD = 0.963). However, some women feel restricted by laws and regulations in the political field (Mean = 2.18, SD = 0.899), suggesting that legal barriers still exist for women in certain political activities.

2) Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is divided into three sub dimensions: economic sustainability, social sustainability, and environmental sustainability. Each dimension reflects the extent to which women in the tourism sector engage in activities that

promote sustainability. The **Sustainable Development** dimension has a mean score of **4.50**, with a standard deviation of **0.391**, indicating a strong commitment to sustainability within the tourism sector. This high mean reflects that participants believe their work significantly contributes to sustainable practices in tourism. The low standard deviation suggests there is agreement among the responses.

Table (6) Descriptive Statistics for Sustainable Development

		Mean	SD	Rank
Sustainable Development		4.50	.391	
a. Economic Sustainability		4.46	.514	3
1	My work in tourism contributes to the economic stability of my community.	4.35	.844	
2	I am involved in initiatives within tourism that promote sustainable economic growth.	4.40	.836	
3	My organization supports practices that lead to long-term economic benefits in tourism.	4.61	.595	
4	I believe my role helps in reducing economic disparities through tourism.	4.34	.833	
5	My organization invests in sustainable tourism business practices.	4.61	.550	
b. Social Sustainability		4.50	.436	**2**
1	My work environment in tourism promotes social inclusion and equality.	4.58	.540	
2	I participate in programs that support community welfare through tourism.	4.42	.776	
3	My organization values diversity and cultural heritage in the tourism sector.	4.57	.553	
4	I feel my job in tourism contributes to the well-being of society.	4.36	.775	
5	My organization engages in fair labor practices within the tourism industry.	4.55	.548	
c. Environmental Sustainability		4.53	.438	**1**
1	I am aware of environmental issues related to my work in tourism.	4.64	.555	
2	I participate in initiatives that aim to reduce environmental impact within the tourism sector.	4.45	.734	
3	My organization implements eco-friendly practices in tourism operations.	4.54	.568	
4	I believe my work supports environmental conservation through sustainable tourism.	4.49	.649	
5	My organization encourages sustainable resource use in the tourism sector.	4.52	.554	

Table (6) provides descriptive statistics for each sub dimension: economic sustainability, social sustainability, and environmental sustainability.

1. Regarding **Economic Sustainability**, the mean was 4.46, with a standard deviation of 0.514. This dimension highlights the extent to which women contribute to sustainable economic growth in the tourism sector. Women believe their work significantly contributes to **the economic stability of their**

local community, with a mean of 4.35, demonstrating the importance of tourism in strengthening local economies. Many women are involved in **initiatives that promote sustainable economic growth**, with a mean of 4.40, indicating their active role in supporting long-term economic development. Additionally, women affirm that **their organizations support practices that lead to long-term economic benefits**, with a mean of 4.61, showcasing an institutional focus on sustainability. They also believe their roles help in **reducing economic disparities through tourism**, with a mean of 4.34, emphasizing the role of tourism in fostering economic equality. Finally, **investment in sustainable tourism business practices** is strongly supported, with a mean of 4.61, indicating a commitment by organizations to ensuring economic sustainability.

2. For **Social Sustainability**, the mean was 4.50, with a standard deviation of 0.436. This dimension reflects the role of women in promoting **social inclusion and equality** in tourism work environments, with a mean of 4.58, highlighting the strong commitment to fostering diversity and inclusivity at work. Many women also participate in **programs that support community welfare through tourism**, with a mean of 4.42, emphasizing the role of tourism in enhancing the quality of life for local communities. The results also show that **organizations value diversity and cultural heritage** in the tourism sector, with a mean of 4.57, indicating a focus on preserving traditions and promoting inclusivity. Additionally, women feel that their **jobs contribute to the well-being of society**, with a mean of 4.36, reflecting the positive social impact of their work in tourism. Lastly, women report that **organizations engage in fair labor practices** within the tourism industry, with a mean of 4.55, reinforcing the ethical commitment of the sector to fair treatment of workers.

3. In terms of **Environmental Sustainability**, the mean was 4.53, with a standard deviation of 0.438. This dimension shows that women are highly aware of **environmental issues related to their work** in the tourism sector, with a mean of 4.64, reflecting strong environmental awareness among women. Many also participate in **initiatives aimed at reducing environmental impact** within tourism, with a mean of 4.45, demonstrating their active involvement in sustainability efforts. Furthermore, women affirm that **their organizations implement eco-friendly practices** in tourism operations, with a mean of 4.54, underscoring the sector's commitment to reducing its environmental footprint. They also believe that their **work supports environmental conservation through sustainable tourism**, with a mean of 4.49, highlighting their role in protecting natural resources. Finally, organizations are seen as **encouraging sustainable resource use**, with a mean of 4.52, reflecting the sector's responsibility toward environmental stewardship.

The findings on sustainable development indicate that women in the tourism sector are strongly committed to promoting sustainability across the economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Economic sustainability scores highly, with women actively involved in initiatives that support long-term growth and reduce economic inequalities. Social sustainability reflects a strong commitment to inclusion and

equality, while environmental sustainability highlights a high level of awareness and participation in environmental efforts. These results demonstrate the crucial role women play in advancing sustainable development, though there are opportunities for further improvement, such as enhancing decision-making power and addressing legal challenges that hinder full empowerment in this sector. These results come to support the findings of (Abdel-Razzaq & Al-Kariti, 2021) in women's empowerment and interest in it by most countries of the world due to its effective role in economic, social and political life. This concept is intended to show the extent of women's contribution and active participation in all aspects of life, as tangible economic development or growth cannot be achieved without the involvement or contribution of women. It is recognition of women as an active element in creating development and sustainable development alike. Economic empowerment may represent the extent of women's participation in economic decision-making and economic activity, or social empowerment with their right to obtain decent education and health, as women's empowerment carries several goals, including improving the status of women and active participation in making economic, social or political decisions and raising their status in national and international forums. However, the call to liberate Egyptian women still suffers from many problems, in addition to the existence of many obstacles that prevent their participation in economic development and their ownership of companies, businesses and productive projects. The environmental, educational and cultural factor has a great impact on making a decision on Egyptian women, and the difference is clear in terms of women's optional empowerment. The higher the educational level, the higher the indicator of optional empowerment for them, and there is a lack of awareness and weakness of Egyptian women in the level of conviction and knowledge among women. She has her own rights and freedom to make decisions since childhood.

C- Structural Model

Structural Equation Model (SEM)

Table (7) presents the path coefficients and corresponding p-values for the relationships between women's empowerment, and the three dimensions of sustainability (economic, environmental, and social) the results indicate the following:

Table (7) Path Coefficients

	Path coefficients	P value
WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT -> ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY	0.585	0.000
WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT -> ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	0.436	0.000
WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT -> SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	0.486	0.000

1. **Women's Empowerment → Economic Sustainability (0.585, P = 0.000):** The path coefficient of 0.585 indicates a strong positive relationship between Women's Empowerment and Economic Sustainability. This suggests that initiatives aimed at empowering women have a significant impact on

promoting economic sustainability. The p-value of 0.000 confirms the statistical significance of this relationship, demonstrating that empowering women plays a crucial role in enhancing economic outcomes within the model.

2. **Women's Empowerment → Environmental Sustainability (0.436, P =0.000):**
   The path coefficient of 0.436 reflects a moderate positive relationship between Women's Empowerment and Environmental Sustainability. This suggests that empowering women positively contributes to environmental sustainability, though the effect is somewhat lower than its impact on economic sustainability. The p-value of 0.000 indicates that this relationship is statistically significant, highlighting the importance of women's empowerment in fostering environmentally sustainable practices.

3. **Women's Empowerment → Social Sustainability (0.486, P = 0.000):**
   With a path coefficient of 0.486, the relationship between Women's Empowerment and Social Sustainability is also moderate but notably strong. This implies that empowering women leads to better social sustainability outcomes, including improvements in social equity and community development. The p-value of 0.000 confirms the statistical significance of this relationship, underscoring the role of women's empowerment in advancing social sustainability goals.

And these findings come to agree also the results of (Nara & Irawan, 2020), to explore how tourism impacts women empowerment management and women's participation in sustainable tourism development and that tourism actually brings many social and economic benefits to the local community, especially women members of the community by empowering them economically, socially, psychologically and politically. As women are the main contributors to the development of sustainable tourism in their community by participating in all activities related to economic sustainability, social and cultural sustainability and environmental sustainability, by managing the benefits of tourism and distributing them fairly to all people in the community but minimizing the negative impacts on the natural resources of the community in addition to preserving the local culture.

D- Testing the Research Hypotheses
The hypothesis testing results provides robust support for the proposed relationships between women's empowerment and sustainable development across economic, social, and environmental dimensions. All hypotheses were supported based on the significant path coefficient.

H: Women's Empowerment positively impacts Sustainable Development
- The impact on **Economic Sustainability** is strong (path coefficient = 0.585), indicating that empowering women contributes substantially to economic stability and growth.
- A significant positive impact on **Social Sustainability** is evident (path coefficient = 0.486), showing that women's empowerment enhances social inclusion and cohesion within the tourism sector.

- The influence on **Environmental Sustainability** is also positive (path coefficient = 0.436), reinforcing the role of empowered women in promoting environmentally sustainable practices.

Accordingly, based on what was previously discussed and analyzed it could be said that the current research's findings proved the validity of the research hypothesis, which stated the following:

"Women's Empowerment has a positive impact on Sustainable Development"

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The current study reviews role of women's empowerment in Promoting sustainable development in Egyptian tourism sector, The theoretical framework of the study included women empowerment in terms of its concept, dealing with Dimensions of women's empowerment (Economic, Social and Political), in addition to sustainable tourism development, its concept, the three main dimensions (Economic, Social and Environmental), and Sustainable tourism development frameworks and principles.

The study also included the practical framework, which included the methodology adopted to analyze the phenomenon under discussion and the statistical techniques utilized to get the information needed for this research. Study results the clarified and proved the validity of the previously established hypotheses, which confirmed the existence of a close relationship between Women's Empowerment and Sustainable Development, Results showed that empowering women positively impacts the sustainability of the Egyptian tourism sector by ensuring economic viability, social equity, and environmental protection, thereby fostering inclusive growth and resilient communities.

Based on these findings, the study proposes recommendations to promote women's empowerment and their effective roles in the development and sustainability of tourism in Egypt; Strengthening policies and programs that promote women's political, economic, and social empowerment within the tourism sector is crucial to enhancing their active participation and leadership. Facilitating access to education, vocational training, and skills development specifically related to tourism, hospitality, and entrepreneurship improves women's competitiveness in the labor market. Equally important is improving women's access to financial resources such as microfinance, loans, and investment opportunities, which supports the growth of women-led tourism enterprises and businesses.

Promoting awareness campaigns to challenge and change social and cultural perceptions that restrict women's roles in tourism is essential to emphasize the value and capabilities of women as key contributors to sustainable tourism. Encouraging inclusive decision-making by involving women at all levels of planning, development, and management in tourism policies and projects ensures their voices are heard. Developing safe, flexible, and gender-sensitive work environments attracts and retains more women employees and entrepreneurs in the tourism sector.

Supporting community-based and eco-tourism initiatives offers economic empowerment to women while preserving local cultural and environmental sustainability. It is also important to monitor and evaluate the impact of women's empowerment initiatives on sustainable tourism development through measurable indicators aligned with Egypt's National Strategy for Women 2030 and the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Fostering partnerships among government, private sector, NGOs, and international organizations creates comprehensive support networks for women in tourism. Finally, strengthening legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms is necessary to eliminate gender discrimination and protect women's rights within the tourism industry.

This research underscores that woman empowerment is essential for achieving balanced and long-term sustainable tourism growth in Egypt, aligning with national developmental goals and international sustainable development principles.

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