

## Studying the Characteristics of a Sustainable Rural Resort in Middle Delta Region, Egypt

**Magdy Abd El Razik Bab El Khair Hassan**  
Lecturer of Hotel Studies, Giza Higher  
Institute for Specific Studies

**Rasha Reda Mokhtar Kotb**  
Lecturer of Hotel Studies, Giza  
Higher Institute for Specific Studies

### Abstract:

This study was conducted to shade the light on the concept of rural tourism, the meaning of rural resort, identifying the features of the rural resort, investigating the characteristics of the sustainable rural resort in Egypt, investigating the viewpoint of the tourist (academic and field) experts of the requirements of sustainable rural resort to provide a unique accommodation experience in the Egyptian countryside and to keep the local social, ecological, economic environment.

### Keywords:

Rural tourism, sustainable rural resort, accommodation facilities, sustainable development, tourist services.

### 1-Introduction

During the last few decades there were new trends in tourism, such as Ecotourism, agro-tourism, rural tourism, and adventure tourism. These trends are becoming increasingly important sectors of the tourism industry worldwide (Wayan and Gusti, 2012). Sustainable development requires developing the rural areas in a way that keeps the environment and local community. As a result, many developing countries such as Romania, Poland in Europe and Magnolia in Asia besides Cost Arica in south America try to find new economic sectors that could help in improving the economic, cultural and social conditions of the populations of these rural areas (Satana, *et al.*, 2011).

Tourism is seen as an economic sector that can help in enhancing the life conditions in the countryside in the context of sustainable development. In this context, rural tourism has become an alternative that can facilitate the achievement of integrated rural development through providing jobs for rural population and minimizing the negative impact of seasonal character of agricultural sector on their social and economic situation (Ruth and John, 2011). The rural resorts as a part of the integrated sustainable development can contribute in enhancing the rural populations' lives as well as providing unique tourist service for the continuously increasing number of tourists who seek for experiencing the pure rural environment that is characterized with excellence, as well as ecological oases which are the foundations of traditional culture and ethno-cultural heritage (Rike, 2019).

The Egyptian Countryside with its vast green spaces constitutes more than half of Egypt's Area. Egypt is characterized by a variety of rural areas according to the diversity of its geographical locations, the Middle Delta area

contains Menoufia, Gharbia, Kafr Alshiekh and Damietta governorates which have vast rural area (Sayed and Esam, 2018).

This geographical diversity is reflected in the existence of environmental, social, cultural, and physical diversity. This diversity consists of the local economy, crafts, handicrafts, distinctive folklore, and the region-specific food (Rike, 2019). There for, the rural tourism became a priority in the tourism industry in Egypt. This can make a great opportunity for developing sustainable rural resorts in Middle Delta region that contains four governorates; Memoufia, Gharbia, Demitta and Khafr Al Shaikh to originate the local heritage of this region. (Sayed and Esam, 2018).

As well, a well-designed and managed resort can not only make a significant contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development in the rural regions, but also have important linkages to other sectors and can create many jobs and generate trade opportunities to the supply sectors in the countryside (Satana, *et al.*, 2011).

## **2- Objectives of the study**

The study aimed to acknowledging the characteristics of the sustainable rural resort in Middle Delta region, Egypt and to assess the hospitality experts' opinions of the rural sustainable resort design, characteristics and facilities.

## **3-The research problem**

The research problem can be formulated as the following questions:

- 1- What are the suitable location, design and characteristics of a sustainable rural resort in Middle Delta region, Egypt?
- 2- What are the suitable environmental practices that should be applied in a sustainable rural resort in Middle Delta region, Egypt?
- 3- What are the suitable economic practices that should be applied in a sustainable rural resort in Middle Delta region design, Egypt?
- 4- What are the suitable socio-cultural practices that should be applied in a sustainable rural resort in Middle Delta region, Egypt?

## **4-The research hypotheses:**

- 1- A rural resort in Middle Delta region, Egypt should be located in the fields near a water stream.
- 2- The construction materials should be from the local area.
- 3- There should be environmental restrictions for these resorts.
- 4- There should be some social and economic participation to develop the local community in this region.

## **5-Review of literature**

Rural tourism is an important form of tourism sector which can play an undeniable role and creates many benefits to rural areas community. When tourists travel to rural areas, they support the local economy and help in various ways. Rural tourism helps in the development of rural areas and living standards of host communities (Nagaraju and Chandrashekara, 2014). Moreover, rural tourism combines different forms of tourism and therefore represents an opportunity for the involvement of different segments of the local

community to participate in the implementation of tourism development; rural tourism is an important component of integrated and sustainable rural development and revitalization (Natasha and Katerina, 2015).

The rural tourism is a very broad concept that includes not only vacation in the village, but all other activities in rural areas. The tourists turn their attention to certain areas which offer unique and specific experiences and consequently authentic ones (Sayed and Esam, 2018).

### **5.1 The concept of rural tourism and rural resort**

There is widespread concern about the environment, countryside, organic foods, and sustainable development; these are the factors that led to the expansion of these niche market types of tourism. According to Barbu (2013, p.128) it could be said that rural tourism is "the kind of tourist services in rural areas, services involving investors, tour operators, local and central governments". These services include accommodation, meals (with a focus on traditional local cuisine) and all leisure activities according to the desires of tourists.

A comprehensive definition that uses these characteristics is given by Nagaraju and Chandrashekara (2014, p. 43) who stated that rural tourism represents "any form of tourism that showcases the rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations. In other words, rural tourism can be broadly defined as tourism which takes place in the rural area or inside the countryside".

Another definition of rural tourism is: "A multi-faced activity that takes place in an environment outside heavily urbanized areas"(Norida and Abdulshukor, 2014, P. 134). The rural tourism product could be segmented to include such product components as rural attractions, rural adventure tours, nature based tours, ecotourism tours, rural resorts and country-style accommodation, and farm holidays, together with festivals, events and agricultural education. (Natasha and Katerina, 2015).

As for the rural resort, it is the lodging enterprise that is located in the countryside and consists of the traditional village or rural architecture, together with entire rural landscape where traditional culture, specific knowledge and skills, habitation, clothing, nutrition, folk dances, songs and legends are developed, created and vivid( Nordia and AbdulShukor, 2014). The unity of all these elements represents the distinctive and valuable part of the tourist value that should be integrated into rural resorts (Angelo, 2020).

Angelo (2020) mentioned that, rural resort has to possess the following characteristics:

- Located in rural areas.

- Functionally rural-built upon the rural world's special features of small and medium size enterprise, open space, contact with nature and the natural world, heritage, traditional societies and ,traditional practices.
- Rural in scale-both in terms of buildings and settlements furnishing.
- Traditional in character, built in a local design, and connected with local heritage. It could be in a small or medium or even large, horizontally extended.
- It should represent the complex pattern of rural environment, heritage, history and location.

### **5.1.1 The significance of rural resorts in developing rural areas**

Rural tourism is an important form of tourism sector which plays an important role and creates many benefits to rural areas community. When tourists travel to rural areas and stay in a rural lodging enterprise (resort or a family lodge), they support the local economy through using the local transportation means, buying local crafts, and attending local festivals. A rural resort helps in the development of rural areas and living standards of host communities (Asber, 2014).

As well, one of the important advantages of a rural resort is that it meets the needs of urban people for staying in a free space accommodation that gives them new experiences of nature and rural life and thus it provides new exciting experience in contrast with urban accommodation (Gibi and Nancy, 2014).

A rural resort is admitted to be an important factor of the sustainable development that helps in preserving the folklore of rural areas through best design, coherent and balanced practices; it creates and ensures the identity of each geographical area of the country (Herzallah, *et al.*, 2018).

According to Dimitrios and Barbora (2018) the importance and benefits of rural resorts are as follows:

- Provide a source of new, alternative or supplementary income and employment in rural areas.
- Rural resorts support infrastructure development in rural areas.
- Reduce gender and other social power, reinvigorate local culture.
- Contribute to conservation and protection of nature.
- Increase the living standards of the local community through direct and indirect economic practices.
- Assist refurbishment and re-use of abandoned properties.

As in many other countries, rural tourism- including lodging enterprises in Egypt- should be receiving increased recognition, as a rural economic development tool (Sayed and Esam, 2018).

### **5.2 The concept of sustainable resort**

Different studies have addressed the positive relationship between environmental sustainability and the tourist experience. Sustainable tourism

could be defined as “tourism which leads to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be filled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems” (Ruth and John, 2011). Sustainability is about fulfilling the guests’ current dreams and desires without sacrificing future generations’ dreams and desires, the objective is to achieve development without making the environment sacrifice (Zahed and Joan, 2012).

A sustainable resort is a resort that puts sustainable development into practice in its development, management, and integration with the wider economy, society, and the environment (Iulia, *et al.*, 2016). It includes the participation of local communities in its activities and ensures that they have an equitable share in its benefits in order to protect the quality human and natural environments and resources - on which tourism depends- and operating within natural capacities for the regeneration and future productivity of natural resources (Maria, 2017).

A sustainable resort should take full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the environment and the host community; it should depend on practices that reduce the negative impact on the environment (Natasha and Katerina, 2015).

### **5.2.1 Pillars of developing a sustainable rural resort**

There are three main pillars of sustainable development (triple bottom line) consisting of social equity, economic, and environmental factors. The phrase "people, planet, and profit" used to describe the triple bottom line and the goal of sustainability, these three pillars (lines) are to be considered for sustainable development (Bernard, 2005). These three pillars will be explained below:

#### **5.2.1.1 Environmental Sustainability:**

Sustainability of a rural tourist destination requires presence of different types of services to guests accompanied with systematic approach to preserving the environment (Gibi and Nancy, 2014). The aim is to preserve the environment and restrain environmental conditions as well as supervising and cautiously utilizing energy, water and resources at the same time decreasing wastes and contaminated materials before disposal, so that the environment is safe, and it is done in a lawful way (Iulia, *et al.*, 2016). People want to feel like they are having a positive impact on the world as most of travellers saying that they value and seek a sustainable, eco-friendly option (Rike, *et al.*, 2019).

#### **5.2.1.2 Economic Sustainability:**

The economic and social aspects cannot be separated, and it is hard to reject the vital relationships that guide economic institutions. Sustainable rural tourism is concerned with working towards a balanced and diversified rural economy, social justice and economic viability as well as the physical

environment (Nagaraju and Chandrashekara, 2014). Human communities across the globe can maintain their independence and have access to the resources that they require to meet their needs (Raegan, 2014). As a result, the economic systems and activities are to be available to everyone, such as sources of livelihood. Sustainable tourism aims to minimize environmental and cultural damage, optimize visitor satisfaction, and maximize long-term economic growth for the region (Sayed and Esam, 2018).

### **5.2.1.3 Socio-cultural Sustainability:**

The social aspect of (Triple Bottom Line) refers to standard of living, education, community and equal opportunity for all in society (Zahed and Joan, 2012). Furthermore, sustainable business helps towards the development of community and the region. This also takes account of monitoring the labor, comply human rights, enhancing working conditions and making relationships with and among labor, as well as considering any indications of social responsibility which is achieved in the civil society movement (Wayan and Gusti, 2012).

Sustainable tourism focuses on conservation of environmental and cultural resources and emphasizes the participation of local people and the responsibility of visitors; as a result, the tourists should respect the culture of local people. Also, visitors should learn about and observe local etiquette (Barbu, 2013). Residents, also, should learn how to deal with visitor expectations that may differ from their own, and also respect the environment such as minimizing pollution, waste, energy consumption, water usage, agriculture chemicals, and excessive night-time lighting (Angelo, 2020).

Respecting local culture and tradition is also a need when visiting farms (Santana, *et al.*, 2011). Moreover, local communities and their unique culture, interesting customs, handcrafts local festivities, traditional architecture and building materials, traditional agricultural practices, historical destination, as well as natural springs with opportunities for swimming, salt lakes, rock formations, dunes, opportunities for sand baths, etc. should be respected (Karin, and Gheorghe, 2016).

## **5.3 Requirements of sustainable rural resort development**

The resort should be led by basic principles of sustainable development, respecting the requirements of clientele for maximum quality of the resources and services offered, as well, emphasizing the participation of local people and the responsibility of visitors (Bernard, 2005).

### **5.3.1 Environmental Practices in sustainable rural resort**

There are many initiatives towards additional environmentally friendly operations management that should be adopted by accommodation businesses (Iulia, *et al.*, 2016). The environmentally sustainable practices are divided into three types as follow:

#### **5.3.1.1 Energy Conservation practices**

The hotel sector is considered one of the major emitters of carbon dioxide because of its intensive use of fossil fuels which generate greenhouse gases that

impact negatively on both the environment and climate (Ruth and John, 2011). Consequently, different practices have been adopted by hotel operations to mitigate climate change. Moreover, hotels' operations were proactive in implementing green hotel practices regarding energy conservation and switching to the use of renewable energy as an energy source (Santana, *et al.*, 2011).

According to Norida and Abdushukor (2014) the practices of energy conservation differ from one hotel to another, but there are some common practices as follow:

- Using renewable energy as an energy source (solar power and wind power should be used).
- Implementing advanced technologies to track energy consumption such as low-wattage lighting fixtures and light-emitting diode bulbs, dimming and occupancy sensor systems in guest rooms that save about 2.36 US dollars daily, smart vent hoods in the kitchen.
- Installing energy-efficient appliances and equipment, controlling guestroom energy consumption by using digital thermostats and using of energy star-qualified products.
- fixing motion sensors that automatically turn lights off in low-traffic areas.
- Installation of reflective glass or triple-glazed windows, using energy-efficient light bulbs (LED) and depending on daylight rather than artificial light in rooms, restaurants and conference rooms during daytime.
- Using energy-saving air conditioners, kitchen instruments and using bio-gas for kitchen instruments.
- Depending on local daily supplies to reduce the transportation and storage cost.

These practices could save about 40% of the hotel energy consumption (Norida and Abdushukor, 2014).

### **5.3.1.2 Water Conservation practices**

Hotels are a very high water consumption sector, hotel departments that use water are (guest rooms 33%, kitchen 18%, irrigating landscape 15%, laundry 15%, public bathes 10%, swimming pool 4%, air -conditioning 4%, other use 1%) (Santana, *et al.*, 2011). A rural resort increases water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensures sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to control water scarcity (Natasha and Katerina, 2015).

According to Maria (2017), the rural resort could reduce the water consumption by (about 40%) through applying the water conservation practices adopted by the hotel sector such as:

- Installing water-efficient devices and appliances such as: installing infrared-activated faucets.
- Implementing towel & bed linen reuse programs (changing towels and bed linens when the guest asks), fixing leaks regularly.
- Watering grass and plants early in the morning or late at night.
- Using low-flow toilet and showerheads.

- Recycling the gray water for irrigation and using drip irrigation system.
- Monitoring the water consumption in each department to track usage
- Collecting and using rainwater to irrigating the plants when possible
- Using of water resources such as drilling wells for underground water.
- Contributing to achieving universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.
- Putting Water Conservation signs in guest rooms, kitchen, laundry and public bathrooms to encourage both guests and staff to save water.
- Fixing water filters in the swimming pools to avoid changing the pool water and reusing the pool water in irrigating the landscape.

### **5.3.1.3 Waste Management practices**

The hotel industry is regarded as a major contributor to both greenhouse gas emissions by generating a huge amount of wet waste (such as garden waste, food waste and cooking oil waste) and dry waste (such as cardboard, plastics, cans, metal, linen, paper and other garbage) that is transferred into rubbish and garbage (Zahed and Joan, 2012). As a result, the hotels should contribute to achieving access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene and waste management that could cut down the hard waste by about 70 % (Maria, 2017).

Hotel operators began adopting various practices that aim at reducing hotel wastes as follows (Natasha and Katerina, 2015):

- Separating wastes by using labeled and colored bins for collecting recyclables (glass, metal, cardboard, paper, wood, plastics).
- Purchasing products containing recycled content, collecting organic kitchen wastes separately for soil composting.
- Purchasing food items and cleaning chemicals in bulk to avoid excess packaging.
- Adopting donation of (food leftovers, old furniture and linens) to charity and using the remaining guest soaps as laundry detergent.
- Reducing food waste and losses along production and supply chains.
- Promoting public procurement practices that are sustainable (purchasing green products and locally produced food items).
- Contributing to reducing waste generation through the (3 Rs) (reducing, reusing and recycling).
- Informing the guest about good environmental practices through noticeboards and pamphlets.
- Reducing pollution through (organic linens, non-toxic cleaning supplies, non-disposable table sets).
- Reducing the proportion of untreated wastewater.
- Increasing recycling and safe reuse of wastewater.
- Returning the packaging filling substances to suppliers to refill them instead of getting rid of them.
- Establishing processes to compost waste, which can in turn support sustainable gardening practices.
- On-site transportation with green vehicles.



- Stock the room with reusable coffee mugs and glasses rather than plasticware, paper, or styrofoam.

### 5.3.2 Economic Practices in the rural resort

Hospitality businesses contemplate their economic impact on the community, corresponding to job creation, native wages, and their contribution to native economic process (Asber, 2014). At an equivalent time, businesses ought to maintain company gain and internal money stability (Iulia *et al.*, 2016). A sustainable resort has to promote using local environmental elements and materials to guide the design towards activating the sustainability requirements. It is important for resorts to continue to generate profits by setting strategies to maintain their financial performance and in the same time create economic benefits to the local community through some economic practices such as (Marino, 2017):

- Depending on local food and beverage supplies encourage local businesses.
- Adopting a local employment policy.
- Using locally made furniture, utensils, etc.
- Resorts allow participation in decision-making between shareholders and management, achieving good customer relations.
- Maintain and enhancing shareholder' revenues and profits.
- Meeting the requirements of the law and governmental policy provides job opportunities and serves as good corporate citizens.
- Participating in Innovation and development Investment on developing innovative methods and technology.
- Developing products and services to meet guest needs at acceptable prices and communicating them in a convincing way.
- Exploring new economic models that support sustainable food and agriculture while raising public awareness of the value of organic and biodynamic farming.
- Making the gift shop green through stocking-up with sustainable items and green products.

### 5.3.3 Socio-cultural Practices in the rural resort

Sustainable tourism is tourism that puts sustainable development into practice in its development, management, and integration with the wider economy, society, and the environment. It includes the participation of local communities in tourism and ensuring that they have an equitable share in its benefits (Gibi and Nancy, 2014).

The socio-cultural aspect of sustainable tourism is that the tourist becomes more engaged in the community and its culture. This can be from learning a religious tradition or supporting local handicrafts. Guests can also participate in nature protection activities through planting trees or helping a local initiative to protect the local culture (Natasha and Katerina, 2015).

According to Herzallah *et al.* (2018), the socio-culture practices in rural resorts may include:

- Supporting charities and encouraging employees to volunteer.
- Initiating projects for the local community is important to enhance a resort's image and maintain good communication.
- Participation in charities and making donations.
- Obey the requirements of laws and policy and actively support the public welfare activities that the government initiated.
- Focusing on conservation of environmental and cultural resources.
- Contributing to ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services.
- Building strong relationships with local government.
- Achieving access to safe and affordable drinking water “sufficient drinking water” which is free from pathogens and toxic chemicals with a reasonable price for guests, staff, and inhabitants.
- Minimizing the use of hazardous chemicals.
- Reducing pollution and eliminating dumping
- Promoting efficient management systems, legal compliance, employee training, customer satisfaction, accuracy of promotional materials.
- Building infrastructure and developing communication, health and safety.
- Keeping code of behavior, historical artifacts, protecting of sites and incorporation of culture.
- Equitable hiring and employee protection.
- Providing safe and healthy working environment and staff facilities (appropriate training for the job, legal working hours, staff areas, no delay in payment salary and allowances, drinking water and food, social security funds paid in accordance with state regulations, special allowances to workers under special work conditions, no interfere in employee beliefs, customs, and legal rights, Prohibiting harassment of the workers and Employees’ representation in corporate decision-making).
- Sourcing from nearby growers and food providers to support area farmers while also reducing the carbon emissions caused when trucking-in food from a distance.
- Housekeeping uses non-toxic cleaning agents and laundry detergent, 100% organic cotton sheets, towels and mattresses.

### **5.5. Sustainable rural resort design**

Luxury resorts are generally more spacious and include plush or exotic materials, sophisticated lighting that feels warm and inviting, and bathrooms with large bathtubs and multiple showerheads (Bernard, 2005). These luxury attributes are seldom compatible with sustainable resort practices, which tend towards smaller spaces, materials and products that are non-exotic, recycled, natural, or rapidly renewable, with increased use of fluorescent lighting to reduce energy use and an emphasis on the conservation of water (Nistoreanu, 2006).

Employing the characteristics of sustainable environmental architecture in the design treatments of the internal space of tourist resorts is one of the recent concerns in order to provide comfort for users, and energy savings (Norida and

Abdul Shukor, 2014). One of green building practices that can be implemented in hotels and resorts, the (LEED) (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) green building rating system that has been developed to provide green building practices for different types of building uses and different phases of a building's life cycle (Dimitrios, and Barbora, 2018).

The rural resort design team should choose a range of green strategies related to materials and resources, including materials reuse, use of recycled content, regional materials, and green furniture or products. They also are to use low volatile organic compound emitting materials to reduce the quantity of indoor air contaminants in the building and additional outdoor air ventilation to improve indoor air quality and promote comfort (Karin and Gheorghe, 2013)

A sustainable resort must strike a delicate balance between providing a superior guest experience and green building practices. Green building decisions in the resort must also improve guest satisfaction while at the same time supporting the growth of sustainability in the building (Nistoreanu, 2006).

Major sustainable resort building practices according to Dimitrios, and Barbora (2018) are:

- Sustainable site planning and landscaping
- Solar orientation of building and day-lighting
- Onsite renewable energy sources (photovoltaic)
- Water saving fixtures and technologies, rainwater harvesting.
- Green supplies & materials and waste management
- Regional materials, locally sourced, recycled content materials.

Asber (2014) mentioned that the rural lodging properties take various designs according to the size, shape, instruction materials, etc., the following are some examples of rural accommodation; home stay, campground or tent, community lodge, family-run guesthouse, local family or homestay rural bed & breakfast or small hotel, family-run hostels and full service resorts. Whereas Maria (2017) added that the common activities in rural resort include: animal observation, boat trips, using cycling or walking trail, horse riding, fishing, hunting, wildlife study, Entertainment (harvest festivals or barn dances), tours (village, coffee, tea), workshops (cooking, planting or handicrafts).

## **6 -Research Methodology and methods:**

### **6.1 The Sample of the Study**

A non-random sampling was applied for this study. The population of the study is (dean or former dean or voice dean or hotel management department head of faculties and institutes of tourism and hotels, in addition to the ministry of tourism and monuments experts). According to the ministry of higher education there are nine faculties of tourism and hotels (seven governmental & two private) and seventeen tourism and hotel institutes in Egypt. The

interviewees were selected by the researcher to cover the most regions of Egypt. Therefore, the researcher conducted some interviews with:

<b>N</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>position</b>	<b>Notice</b>
1	Giza higher institute of specific studies	Dean	Face to face
2	Giza higher institute of specific studies	H.M.dep. Head	Telephone
3	Cairo higher institute of tourism and hotels	Dean	Telephone
4	Alson higher institute of tourism and hotels, Cairo	Former dean	Telephone
5	Egoth higher institute of tourism and hotels, Alexandria	Dean	Telephone
6	Alseuof higher institute of tourism and hotels, Alexandria	Vice dean	Telephone
7	The higher institute of tourism and hotel management in Demitta	Vice dean	Telephone
8	The higher institute of tourism and hotel management in Abou Quir, Alexandria	Dean	Telephone
9	Faculty of tourism and hotels, Sadat City University	Vice dean	Telephone
10	Faculty of tourism and hotels, Helwan University	Dean	Telephone
11	Faculty of tourism and hotels, Helwan University	Former dean	Telephone
12	Faculty of tourism and hotels, Menia University	Dean	Telephone
13	Faculty of tourism and hotels, Luxor University	H.M. dep. Head	Telephone
14	Faculty of tourism and hotels, Suez Canal University	Former dean	Telephone
15	The ministry of tourism and monuments	Travel agents sector director	Telephone
16	The ministry of tourism and monuments	Hotels sector director	Telephone
17	The ministry of tourism and monuments	Ministry consultant for sustainable tourism	Telephone
18	The ministry of tourism and monuments	Ministry consultant for training	Telephone
19	The ministry of tourism and monuments	Ministry consultant for hotel affairs	Telephone

Table (1) the sample of the study.

## 5.2 Method

An interview protocol was created to gather information about the respondents' perceptions. The questions were asked in Arabic to give the respondent an opportunity to express his or her viewpoints without any language restrictions. Then, the information gathered was analyzed using content analysis method. (The questions of the interview are in the research appendix).

## 6- Results and Discussions

The data were collected from some hotel management experts in Egypt, using interviews that were held by the researcher. All the interviews were semi-structured with open ended questions, the questions of the interview concentrated on sustainable rural resort design and characteristics, as follows:

### ***A- Rural resort location, design, constructing materials and lay-out:***

The respondent mentioned that a rural resort should be located in the farms beside a stream of water (The Nile) and should take the design of the rural houses of one or two floors, with the classic pigeon house over it. It should be built using the local materials of the area such as silt, Kreshif (silt mixed with sand and salt), local wood, frond and other local materials, that is in accordance with (Karin and Gheorghe, 2013). Restaurants could be designed like the countryside habits such as eating while sitting on the earth, eating in groups from one big tray, using local table set and local menu items. The buildings should be surrounded with green land scape with fruitful trees (olive, palm, fruits, etc.). The furniture used should be locally made with local materials (wood, frond, wool, local fabric, etc.). Each accommodation unit (guest house) may contain a small stockyard containing some (hens, ducks, rabbits, pigeons, geese, etc.), the guest could feed them and take care of them during his or her stay at the resort. The resort also could contain a small zoo of local animals such as (sheep, goats, cows, donkeys, horses, etc).

### ***B-Energy Conservation practices:***

The respondents mentioned that a sustainable rural resort should depend on solar energy, solar heaters, as the sun light is available in the countryside all the year round, depend on day light when possible, use low-wattage lighting fixtures and light-emitting diode bulbs, fix occupancy sensors in guest rooms, that is agree with (Santana, *et al.*, 2011). Moreover, the use of silt or Kershif in instructing the resort, making the windows towards the north and locating the resort near a water stream could help in lowering the temperature during hot weather instead of using the air conditioner. Using the food waste to make compost or to generate bio-gas could help in reducing the energy used. In addition, using the local traditional ovens that work with the used wood to cook food could help in reducing energy consumption.

### ***C- Water conservation practices:***

The respondents agreed with Maria (2017) and mentioned that a sustainable rural resort should use low flow water fixtures in the all resort, install infrared-activated faucets, reuse gray water, drill a well and fix filters to get drinking

water, fix a dripping irrigating system to water land scape, reduce towels size and implement towel & bed linen reuse programs and fix filters in the swimming pool to filter the pool water instead of changing it.

#### **D- Waste management practices:**

The answers of respondents came in accordance with Natasha and Katerina (2015) that a sustainable rural resort should separate waste by using clearly labeled containers and colored bins for collecting recyclables, purchase local fresh supplies. Also, composting organic wastes, adopting the (3 Rs) (reducing, reusing, recycling) policy and training staff to apply it, using organic products as possible, purchasing in bulk, reusing of wastewater, furnishing guest rooms with natural fiber sheets and furniture made of sustainable materials, using multiuse table set instead of plastic ware, paper, or styrofoam, donate used furniture and food left over, and refilling the containers of room supplies could help in reducing wastes.

#### **E- Economic Practices:**

The answer of respondents verified that mentioned by Maria (2017) as a sustainable rural resort should apply a suitable economic strategy to ensure generating values for all shareholders (guests, investors, employees, local community, and the country). This strategy should include:

1-Ensuring guest satisfaction through quality and innovative services for suitable prices, ensuring guest safety and hygiene, adopting suitable differentiation marketing strategy that keep the competitive advantage of the resort.

2- Depending a cost reduction strategy such as using the local products for food and beverages ( local menu items), local room supplies(towels, covers, refilling room supplies instead of changing them, etc.) and local food and beverage utensils(pottery utensils, multiuse utensils , non-disposable dishes).

3- Optimizing local economic benefits through training and hiring local employees, using local materials to construct the resort and using local hand crafts to furnish the resort, reusing and recycling whenever possible, using organic products, filtered water dispensers and refillable bottles and water pitchers for guests and staff.

#### **F- Socio-cultural Practices**

The respondents assured that a sustainable rural resort should adopt a socio-cultural strategy that ensures the welfare of the local community. That is in accordance with Herzallah *et al.* (2018). Also, it should keep the local culture of the Egyptian countryside through:

1-Participating the local community in the decision making process in the resort (Gibi and Nancy, 2014), initiating projects to enhance people life such as: infrastructure projects (roads, drilling a well for drinking water, lighting

streets, etc.), training programs in different fields(cultural, health and sanitation, crafts, illiteracy elimination, reducing pollution etc.), public welfare activities that government initiated, cleanliness and protecting environment, keeping the folklore and traditional crafts(pottery, spinning, frond, Arabesque, traditional organic agriculture, etc.).

2-Supporting charities and encouraging donations through donating (food left-over, old bed covers and old furniture). Adopting a local employment policy (training and hiring local employees, hiring some handicapped in suitable backhouse jobs, depending on the local people in case of out sourcing and encouraging small projects of local crafts.

3-Respecting the local religions, habits and traditions through (informing guests with the local religions and traditions especially concerning drinking alcohol, nakedness and dress code, participating in local occasions and festivals such as Islamic and Christian fests, weddings, etc.).

4-Providing suitable work environment and creating staff loyalty program through (staff participation in corporate decision, suitable salaries, training, promotion, health and safety, legal working hours, no interfere in staff legal rights, no hazardous chemicals).

## **7- Recommendations**

- 1- There should be more interest in tourist investment in the rural areas to enhance the economic and social level of the rural inhabitants.
- 2- Due consideration and incentives should be given by the government (such as reducing government taxes) to support hotel operators to invest in rural resorts and to be more committed to sustaining natural resources.
- 3- A suitable national marketing strategy should be formulated to market the rural tourism in Egypt.

## **8-Directions for Further studies**

There is a need to make further studies as follows:

- 1- There is a need to formulate a suitable plan to develop the tourist activities in the Egyptian countryside.
- 2- Further studies are needed to market the Egyptian countryside internationally.

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## دراسة خصائص منتج ريفي مستدام في إقليم وسط الدلتا بمصر

### المقدمة

خلال العقود القليلة الماضية ظهر هناك اتجاه نحو السياحة البيئية والسياحة الريفية وسياحة المغامرات، مما جعل هناك طلب متزايد لقضاء اوقات في مناطق مفتوحة ذات هواء منعش ومساحات خضراء وبيئة خالية من التلوث. كل هذا ادي الي الحاجة الي اقامة منتجعات مستدامة تتوافر بها الخدمة المميزة وفي الوقت ذاته تتبني اجراءات بيئية واقتصادية واجتماعية رشيدة للحفاظ على المجتمع الريفي المحيط بها.

### اهداف البحث:

- ١- دراسة التصميم ومواد البناء المناسبة لإنشاء منتج ريفي مستدام في مصر.
- ٢- دراسة الممارسات البيئية الواجب اتخاذها في المنتج الريفي المستدام في مصر.
- ٣- دراسة الممارسات الاقتصادية الواجب اتخاذها في المنتج الريفي المستدام في مصر.
- ٤- دراسة الممارسات الاجتماعية والثقافية الواجب اتخاذها في المنتج الريفي المستدام في مصر.

### عينة الدراسة:

تم اختيار العينة بما يحقق اهداف البحث حيث تم اجراء مقابلات شخصية مع عدد من الخبراء في المجال السياحي (عمداء ووكلاء ورؤساء قسم ادارة الفنادق ببعض كليات ومعاهد السياحة والفنادق في مصر).

### تحليل البيانات:

تم استخدام اسلوب تحليل المحتوي (Content Analysis) لتحليل البيانات التي تم الحصول عليها من المقابلات الشخصية.

### الخاتمة:

اوضحت النتائج انه يجب اختيار تصميم المنتج الريفي كالمباني الريفية القديمة المبنية من مواد محلية مثل(الطوب اللبن والطين و الاخشاب و الجريد ) او مادة (الكرشيف) التي تستخدم لبناء البيوت في واحة سيوه. كما اوضحت النتائج انه يجب اتباع بعض الاجراءات البيئية والاجتماعية والاقتصادية الرشيدة التي تحافظ علي البيئة و علي الطابع الريفي التقليدي للريف المصري.

## Appendix

السادة الافاضل:

إن هذه الاسئلة من متطلبات بحث بعنوان " دراسة خصائص المنتج الريفي المستدام في إقليم وسط الدلتا بمصر" الذي يهدف الي التعرف علي اراء الخبراء السياحيين و الفندقيين فيما يخص خصائص المنتج الريفي المستدام في مصر. ان اراء سيادتكم سوف تكون محل تقدير واهتمام وسوف تستخدم فقط للأغراض البحثية. شكرا مقدما على تعاونكم

الباحث: د. مجدي عبد الرازق

لقد اصبحت التنمية المستدامة اتجاه عالمي في جميع المجالات وخاصة مجال السياحة والضيافة. وتتجه جميع المؤسسات العالمية الي دعم التنمية المستدامة وحث الشركات على تطبيق مبادئها وممارستها المختلفة. هذا وتأخذ الممارسات الخاصة بالتنمية المستدامة في المجال السياحي والفندقي عدة محاور يجب تطبيقها في المنتج السياحي المستدام كما يلي:

١- الموقع والتصميم Design والمواد المستخدمة في الانشاء: تأخذ المنتجعات الريفية العديد من الاشكال التصميمية منها (مباني على شكل اكشاك خشبية – خيام و معسكرات – مباني و انشاءات معدنية – مباني ريفية من الطوب اللبن – مباني خرسانية حديثة.....الخ). ما هو رأيكم في الموقع الانسب والتصميم والشكل المقترح والمواد المستخدمة في انشاء المنتج الريفي المستدام بما يتفق مع طبيعة وامكانيات الريف المصري؟

٢- تأخذ التنمية المستدامة عدة محاور رئيسية في المجال السياحي والفندقي من هذه المحاور المحور البيئي Environmental الذي يركز على ثلاثة جوانب هامة هي:  
أ: ترشيد استخدام الطاقة Energy conservation practices والاعتماد على الطاقة النظيفة. من وجهة نظركم ما هي الاجراءات الواجب تطبيقها في المنتج الريفي لاستيفاء هذه المحور بالريف المصري؟

ب: ترشيد استخدام المياه Water conservation practices واعادة استخدام المياه الرمادية gray water في اغراض الري. في رأيكم ما هي الاجراءات التي يتم تطبيقها في المنتج الريفي لاستيفاء ذلك المحور بما يتناسب مع الريف المصري؟

ج: ادارة المخلفات Waste management واعادة استخدام المواد وتقليل المواد المهترئة. من وجهة نظركم ما هي الاجراءات التي يجب تطبيقها في المنتج الريفي لإدارة المخلفات وتقليل المواد المهترئة؟

٣- المحور الرئيسي الثاني من محاور التنمية المستدامة هو محور التنمية الاقتصاديةEconomic development للمجتمع المحلي من خلال:

أ: توفير فرص لتنمية المجتمع المحلي اقتصاديا. في رأيكم ما هي الاجراءات والممارسات التي تساعد في تنمية المجتمعات الريفية في مصر اقتصاديا؟

ب: العمل على ان يستمر المنتج الريفي يحقق ربح على المدى الطويل لضمان الاستمرار في النشاط وعدم التوقف لأسباب اقتصادية. في رأيكم ما هي الاجراءات الاقتصادية التي يجب اتباعها في المنتج الريفي لكي يستمر في تحقيق عائد اقتصادي؟

ج: المساهمة في تحقيق تنمية اقتصادية على المستوى القومي. في رأيكم ما هي الاجراءات التي يجب ان يقوم بها المنتج الريفي لكي يساعد في تحقيق التنمية على المستوى القومي المصري؟

د: تقديم خدمات وتسهيلات للسياح تتفق مع الطبيعة الريفية للمنطقة وامكاناتها المتوفرة بما يخدم الانشطة الاقتصادية للسكان المحليين. في رأيكم ما هي الخدمات والتسهيلات التي يجب ان يقدمها المنتج الريفي لعملائه والتي تتفق مع طبيعة وامكانيات الريف المصري؟

٤- المحور الرئيسي الثالث من محاور التنمية المستدامة محور التنمية الاجتماعية والثقافية Sociocultural development وذلك من خلال:

أ: المساعدة على التنمية الاجتماعية للمجتمع المحلي وتشجيع المساعدات و التبرعان والتعاون المؤسسات الخيرية و الحفاظ علي علاقات ممتازة مع السكان المحليين و احترام العادات و التقاليد و الديانات الخاصة بهم: في رأيكم ما هي الاجراءات التي يجب علي المنتج الريفي تنفيذها لضمان التنمية المجتمعية للريف المصري؟

ب: العمل على محاربة الفقر و الجهل و المرض و توفير فرص للتدريب و التعلم و العمل للسكان المحليين و نشر العدالة الاجتماعية و السلام المجتمعي. في رأيكم ما هي الخطوات التي يجب ان يتخذها المنتج الريفي لتنفيذ ذلك في الريف المصري؟

ج: حماية التراث والعادات والتقاليد و انماط المعيشة و الثقافة الخاصة بالسكان المحليين. ماهي الاجراءات التي يجب على المنتج الريفي تنفيذها لضمان الحفاظ على انماط المعيشة الريفية التقليدية للريف المصري؟

د: تطبيق انماط ادارية فعالة تساعد علي تحسن بيئة العمل و توفير فرص للتعلم و التدريب و الترقى لجميع العاملين و توفير مرتبات عادلة و تامين صحي و اجتماعي علي العاملين. كذلك عدم استخدام اي مواد تنظيف او مبيدات تؤثر على الصحة العامة واستخدام المنتجات المحلية بقدر الامكان في تأثيث وتشغيل المنتج. من وجهة نظركم ما هي الانماط الادارية التي يجب تطبيقها في المنتج الريفي لضمان تنفيذ ذلك؟

شكرا لكم