

REVIVING THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN FESTIVALS AS AN AUTHENTIC TOURISM PRODUCT

BY

Azza Saad¹, Mona Taha Hussein², Emad Eddin Abu ElEnain³ & Ahmed Abdelshafy⁴

¹Professor at Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management/ 6 October University, Egypt

²Professor at Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management/ 6 October University, Egypt

³Professor at Faculty of Arts, Science and Information Technology/ University of Khorfakkan, UAE

⁴Lecturer at Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management/ 6 October University, Egypt

ABSTRACT

[AR]

إحياء المهرجانات المصرية القديمة كمنتج سياحي أصيل

تعد المهرجانات من المكونات الأساسية لصناعة السياحة نظرا لأهميتها في الترويج للمقصد السياحي وتعزيز صورته، وأصبحت الأصلة من العناصر الرئيسية التي تؤثر بشكل مباشر على التصنيف العالمي للمنطقة المزارة. وبالرغم من تزايد أعداد الباحثين والدراسين لمفهوم الأصالة في السياحة إلا أن تجربة المهرجانات القديمة لم يتم التطرق إليها. استنادا على تلك الفجوة البحثية، تهدف الدراسة إلى إلقاء الضوء على الأصالة المتحققة من المهرجانات المصرية القديمة عن طريق دراسة نوعية لتحديد كيفية توظيف تلك الأحداث كوسيلة لترويج السياحة في مصر. وجدير بالذكر أن المهرجانات كانت معروفة في مصر منذ العصور القديمة بل ويمكن القول أن كل معبد كان لديه قائمة من الاحتفالات. ورغم ذلك يلاحظ أن أجندة المناسبات الحالية تكاد تخلو من هذه الأحداث، لذا تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على العوامل التي تعوق تطور سياحة الأحداث الخاصة من خلال اللقاءات مع عدد من المسؤولين في قطاع السياحة. وطبقا لتصريحاتهم، فإنه بالرغم من إقامة كثير من المناسبات إلا أن عدد قليل منها يحقق الهدف المطلوب سواء فيما يتعلق بالتسويق أو التخطيط الاستراتيجي أو التمويل وإنه ربما يرجع ذلك إلى إلا افتقاد الإدارة المهنية، فضلا عن أن التقييم الملائم لمابعد الحدث سواء للعوائد الاقتصادية أو الحضور غالبا لا يتم. كما سعت الدراسة إلى تحديد مفهوم الأصالة لدى السائحين من خلال دراسة مسحية على عينة من زائري مهرجان تعامد الشمس بأبوسمبل. وأشارت النتائج إلى أن العينة عبرت عن التجارب الفريدة من نوعها بطرق عديدة، لكن الغالبية اتفقت على أن هذا المهرجان تحديدا كان فريدا. لذا يجب على منظمي الأحداث في مصر الاستفادة من تراثهم العريق وأحياء المناسبات المصرية القديمة لتطوير وتنوع المنتج السياحي.

[EN] Festivals are one of the essential components of the tourism industry due to their importance in promoting destinations and enhancing the region's image. Authenticity has become one of the main elements that directly affect the classification of the visited country at the global level. Despite the growing number of researchers looking at the concept of authenticity in tourism, the experience of ancient festivals has not yet been investigated. Based on the previously mentioned research gap, the current study aims to shed light on the perceived authenticity of Egyptian ancient festivals via a qualitative study, Ancient festivals could be a conduit to promote tourism in Egypt. Although festivals have been known in Egypt since ancient times, and it can be said that every temple had a list of celebrations, the modern Egyptian calendar is almost devoid of these types of events. This study investigates the factors that hinder the development of special events tourism through interviews with a number of officials in the tourism sector. The study also seeks the perceived authenticity of the Egyptian ancient festivals via a qualitative study about the visitors to the Sun Festival. According to the declarations of tourism officials, despite a large number of festivals very few events were engaged in goal setting, marketing, strategic planning, and structured fund-raising ventures- this may be due to the lack of managerial experience. Moreover, proper evaluations of attendance and economic consequences were frequently unavailable. The results of the study indicated that attendees felt differently about their experiences in many ways, but the majority agreed that the event was authentic. Event Planners in Egypt should take advantage of their ancient historical roots and use them to develop and diversify touristic product offerings.

KEYWORDS: Ancient Festivals, Authenticity, Calendar, Egyptian Destination, Identification, Tourism Product, Tourist Satisfaction.

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourists' desire for an authentic cultural experience has become mainstream and has fueled tourism's growth. The current quest for authenticity has piqued travelers' interest in cultural and heritage attractions¹. Some people go around the world in order to obtain authentic products. In the tourism industry, authenticity is a key feature that visitors look for in the destination. This means that tourists are not only having fun, but they are also looking for authentic local things to do as status symbols². Traditional and popular culture has increasingly become fertile ground for events development. Many travelers seek out traditional activities for «genuine» and unique experiences³. Much of the allure of historical and traditional events is that they are never the same, and that one must be present to fully appreciate experience; hence, missing an event is a missed opportunity⁴. Festivals shape a part of local culture and consolidate the place's identity⁵.

Some scholars have noted that obtaining authentic experiences is a top priority for festivalgoers⁶. Despite the importance of developing a theoretical framework for an authentic experience, perceived advantages and disadvantages, and support for festivals development, researchers have hitherto ignored this perspective. The previous studies focused on elements of authenticity in general for destinations, like souvenirs, cuisine, work, museum, heritage management, and brand⁷. Others investigated authenticity through satisfaction, motivation, and loyalty⁸. Despite the growing number of researchers looking at the concept of authenticity in tourism, the experience of ancient festivals has not yet been investigated. Based on the previously mentioned research gap, the current study aims to investigate the perceived authenticity of the Egyptian ancient festivals via a qualitative study, and how these events could be utilized as a conduit to promote tourism in Egypt. Moreover, the authors hope that the paper may help as a base to plan future unique festivals. Thus the research seeks to address the following questions:

- What is the current situation of the national tourism calendar in Egypt?
- Is the calendar an integral part of the promotional strategy for the tourism sector?
- What are the factors that restrain the development of the tourism calendar?
- What does the tourists' interpretation of the authentic experience mean?
- Is there a relationship between the authentic experience and other variables like festival image and tourist satisfaction?
- Does the experience of festival authenticity affect the identity of the Egyptian destination?

¹ HAYWANTEE et Al. 2010: 571; MIRANDA 2021: 13.

² ROOSTIKA 2020: 437.

³ GREG 2007: 34.

⁴ GETZ 2008: 404.

⁵ BERNADETTE 2005: 27.

⁶ LEE & CHANG 2015: 223-224; GETZ & PAGE 2016: 593; CHAPAGAIN 2017: 160-161; LUNCHAPRASITH & MACLEOD 2018: 101; TUSSYADIAH et Al. 2018: 141-142; XIAO 2019: 85.

⁷ CAI et Al. 2021: 1-3.

⁸ NGUYEN & CHEUNG 2016: 1155-1156; PARK et Al. 2019: 100; DAI et Al. 2021: 1-2.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Authenticity and Tourism

The word authenticity comes from the Greek one «authentikos», which means «truthful»⁹. The term authenticity is now widely used to describe something's sincerity, actuality, or veracity¹⁰. Authenticity has been sought in a variety of industries, including electronics, accessories, cosmetics, decorations, music, costumes, tourism & hospitality, and so on¹¹. Regarding the tourism industry, the concept has long been difficult to define. However, authenticity is not a neoteric concept; Mac Cannell (1976) was the first who stated the crucial role of authenticity in this field. He declared that authenticity is considered the driving force of tourism and one of the essential motivations for tourists to visit a site¹². Some scholars criticized this declaration; as in the case of Disney Land which is an authentic product based on fantasy and illusion.¹³ The tourists' motivations cannot be described in terms of the traditional concept of authenticity¹⁴. Authenticity is an untrue reality¹⁵. Understanding the elements that affect touristic experience could help marketers promote travel to their destination¹⁶. Authenticity continues being an important issue in the tourism sector regardless of how one views it¹⁷.

Authentic Experience of Festivals and a Destination Identity

Festivals are social gatherings when people from all walks of life come together to achieve a common goal. They assist in achieving specific societal goals, notably regarding tributes. Festivals give social, religious, or physical groups a sense of belonging, fostering a sense of community. Festivals have just started to grow as most countries try to optimize the socioeconomic effects of their latent growth in the tourism industry.

Festivals are based on the significant and unique cultural and natural heritage of various nations. Utilizing and protecting these resources is crucial for fostering a sense of national and regional pride, strengthening the tourism industry, and attracting visitors who will value this fascinating heritage¹⁸.

Giving participants a sense of realness is a vital objective for festival managers¹⁹. The sustainable development of a festival requires building up its identity with the participants²⁰. Hence, understanding the involvement of authenticity by festival

⁹ ASSIOURS et Al. 2015: 538.

¹⁰ LU et Al. 2015: 36.

¹¹ ROOSTIKA 2020: 437.

¹² MIRANDA 2021: 19.

¹³ TAYLOR 2001: 7.

¹⁴ WANG 1999: 351.

¹⁵ COHEN 2002: 267.

¹⁶ YONGJUN et Al. 2021: 3716.

¹⁷ YEOMAN et Al. 2007: 1128

¹⁸ LADISLAUS & VITALIS 2022: 19-20.

¹⁹ GETZ & PAGE 2016: 594.

²⁰ LEE & CHANG 2017: 453.

participants, and their opinion regarding the festival, and its location's identity can give profitable data for the festival organizers. Some tourists look for real experiences at culturally significant locations, and authenticity is an essential component for tourists hoping to explore different cultures²¹.

Overview of the Festivals Calendar in Ancient Egypt

The calendars are regarded as the primary source for all Egyptian festivals throughout history. In the Old Kingdom, there were two calendars: The Sahure calendar, of which only remnants remain. The second is the calendar of Neuserre at Abu Sir temple²².

No monumental temple calendar from the Middle Kingdom has yet to be discovered because most of its temples were destroyed by the later kings. Regarding the New Kingdom, several calendars have been discovered. During the Ramesside period the calendars associated with Ramesses II at Abydos & Thebes, and then Ramesses III at Medinet Habu serve as primary sources of documentation²³.

However, the calendar of Ramsis III at the Medient Habu temple is almost completely protected and thought to be the largest one. It records 8 monthly celebrations and, at least, 25 yearly ones. It appears that out of 365 days, more than 180 days were marked by festivals during Ramses III's region, these celebrations lasted more than one day. The calendar contains famous festivals such as the Opet Festival, the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, the Feast of Sokar, the Feast of Victory, and so on²⁴.

Opet festival

One of the most significant annual celebrations in the Theban area was Opet h'scelebration, also known as «Opeth's Magnificent Feast», in ancient Egypt. The private and secret apartments that are adjacent to the holy sanctuary of the god Amon of Luxor are referred to as «Opeth», which means «secret chamber»²⁵.

During the twenty-first dynasty, celebrations lasted for twenty-seven days, with temple priests always carrying the god's boat on their shoulders. Priests, government representatives, soldiers, acrobat dancers, drummers, musicians, the king's chariots, and the king himself led the procession. Benched with food, beverages, and offerings were placed along the street leading from the river procession to the temple²⁶. This was practiced in the Middle Kingdom of Egypt, but it gained prominence in the New Kingdom²⁷. Textual and visual evidence shows that the Opet and New Valley feasts were thought to be celebrated together.

²¹ VOLKAN & SERAY 2022: 530.

²² ANWAR 2019: 3.

²³ ELSABBAN 2000: 187-188.

²⁴ MASASHI 2019: 2.

²⁵ MIRONOVA 2010: 279.

²⁶ KOSTORI 2019: 20.

²⁷ DARNELL 2010: 1.

New Valley festival

One of Thebes' most well-known feasts, the beautiful fest of the Valley, appears to have been celebrated as early as the Middle Kingdom and persisted until the Ptolemaic and Roman eras. The images of Amun, his wife Mut, and their child Khonsu were placed on a boat and carried down the east bank while the other royal barks began the beautiful feast of the Valley procession at Karnak. The statues then crossed the Nile to the opposite bank (the west bank of Thebes). The procession's final stop during the Middle Kingdom was the mortuary temple of Mentuhotep Nebhepetre (*3h-swt*), while it reached Hatshepsut's mortuary temple during the New Kingdom (*dsr-dsrw*). After Hatshepsut's reign, Thutmose III altered the route to his temple (*hnkt-nh*). Most of the kings attended this feast because it was devoted to Amun. The procession used to make a circuit of all the funeral temples on the west bank of Thebes²⁸.

Feast of Sokar

Sokar was an Egyptian agriculture god during the early dynastic period (3150-2613 BC), and Osiris eventually adopted some of his traits. The festival—in its first form—was a very solemn occasion, but it evolved to also commemorate Osiris' resurrection. In Egypt's Late Period (525-332 BC), the festival was observed for nearly a month. During the festival, people planted Osiris's gardens and crops. The tradition of sowing seeds during the festival likely originated with the early worship of Sokar²⁹.

III. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

On one hand, this study was designed to examine the effectiveness of the EGAPT (Egyptian General Authority for the Promotion of Tourism) current calendar of *festivals*, *Secondly, this study investigates to what extent does the experience of an ancient Egyptian festival affect the visitor's perception of authenticity, image, identity, and satisfaction.*

Regarding the first issue, tourism representatives—at the managerial level- from various industry organizations with a high level of expertise and knowledge (tour operators, tourism chambers, and hotels) were chosen based on their capability to assess the efficiency of the Egyptian festivals calendar. Interviews with official managers at EGAPT were also conducted. The respondents were questioned for 45 minutes to 1 hour. The interviews were planned for July and August 2022; all respondents were given confidential assurance; hence no respondents' identities are revealed in this research.

Concerning the second part, the questionnaire was designed, then given to 20 random people by the authors to verify the questionnaire validity to be used with the study sample. The internal consistency of the questionnaire statements was evaluated using Spearman Correlation to assess the questionnaire's validity. As the correlation ranged from (0.588) to (0.885) and was significant at the level of (0.05), the questionnaire statements are accurate in terms of what they purported to measure. Also, it was discovered that the value of Spearman correlation, which is significant at the level of (α =

²⁸ LEIBOVITCH 1953: 74-75.

²⁹ GABALLA & KITCHEN 1969: 2-3.

0.05), measures the structural validity of the questionnaire factors and ranges from (.517) to (.859).

In the context of authentic experience and its effectiveness on other factors, the study focused on the participants of the Sun festival. A self-completion questionnaire was used to survey around 380 attendees during October 2021 and February 2022 festivals. For the first time, 121 questionnaires were retained.

The adaptation of Structural Equation Modeling requires at least a sample of 200 persons. Hence the trial was repeated and 240 questionnaires were collected at this time. Two of the researchers distributed the questionnaires, offered instructions on how to fill them, and gave the respondents some time to respond before collecting the forms. The questionnaires were available in English, French, and German to make it simple for most visitors to respond³⁰. To assess the authenticity of the festival as an experience, this study refers to items covered by some researchers who proposed that the tourists' understanding of the festivals' authenticity is related to tangible and intangible elements³¹. The tangible factors include the ambiance and environment in tourist attractions. The intangible elements are primarily related to traditions and customs, like clothing, art, festivals, and so on. With a total of 7 elements, respondents were asked about to what extent they felt the event to be «authentic». However, the demographic characteristics of the sample included nationality, age, gender, marital status, and level of education.

Validity and Reliability

For the researchers to produce useful results the scales utilized are crucial components. Understanding how the validity and reliability of the scales are accurately measured by researchers is so important³².

Statistical Validity

The authors determined the statistical validity value (means the extent to which drawn conclusions of a research study can be considered accurate and reliable from the statistical test) from a sample of 37 respondents (coefficient of reliability) and reached a coefficient of statistical validity (Cronbach's Alpha =0.954). Accordingly, the questionnaire items have a high statistical indicator of validity.

The Spearman Equation-Brown approach was used to have higher statistical validity. Each variable phrase was divided into two halves, including a first segment of values derived from the responses of specific words; the area is made up of remarks about marital values. Referring to the results it is evident that the reliability coefficients for variables (Spearman-Brown coefficient= 0.981) have a high level of stability. Hence, it can rely on their findings that lead to the final form of the questionnaire.

³⁰ ANDRESON & GERBING 1988: 412.

³¹ RICKLY et Al. 2012: 269; YI X et Al. 2016: 1032; CHEN et Al. 2020: 2950.

³² LUTFI & AHMET 2020: 2695.

Data Analysis

The information gleaned from the interviews gave the authors a clear idea of the current strategy used for festivals in Egypt. The processing of collected data through questionnaires depended on SPSS 20 for the frequencies and AMOS 22.0 for the analysis of correlation and confirmatory factors.

Any questionnaire with missed data (more than 10%) was eliminated. However, a sample of 361 respondents was valid for analysis. The demographic characteristics of the sample included nationality, age, gender, marital status, and level of education. The relations between the authentic experience and other factors were tested.

IV. FINDINGS

The Interview Results

The declarations of the interviewees shed light on some inquiries as follows:

- Regarding the current situation of the national tourism calendar in Egypt stated that during the last 20 years, the attitude toward festivals in Egypt has developed as the private business sector began to propose the establishment of international and regional festivals. Thirty festivals have been planned throughout the year, fixed and continuous. The festivals are divided into three types: tourist, cultural, and sports festivals. The most famous tourist event is the perpendicularity of the sun in the temple of Abu Simbel which occurs biannually. The most prominent cultural festivals are the Cairo International Film Festival, the Alexandria Film Festival, the African Film Festival, the European Film Festival, and the Short Film Festival. The most notable sports festivals are the Rally Festival, fishing festivals, camel racing, and the Arab Horse Festival.
- While most of the respondents emphasized that festivals are supposed to be an important element for publicity and increasing tourism, they added that travel agencies, for example, can promote such events as additional attractions and prepare an integrated tourism program. In reality, though the Egyptian tourism sector doesn't incorporate the calendar in their promotional strategies. Some travel agency managers commented that this may be due to the lack of coordination between the sector and EGAPT. The respondents agreed that Egyptian tourist posts can use festivals for development and marketing initiatives. Local economies can be boosted by attracting tourists to new areas, or already frequented sites during the off-season
- All respondents agreed that festivals in general - not only ancient or cultural ones - can have an effective role in the development and promotion of Egyptian sites, but opinions differed on the extent of their impact as follows:
 - Enhancing the image of the destination
 - Supporting social cohesion by providing chances for interaction.
 - Boosting the economy by attracting tourists and creating job opportunities.
 - Combating seasonality, as most of the mega-events are not held in high tourist seasons.

- In the context of the factors that restrain the development of the Egyptian tourism calendar, most interviewees mentioned that during the last few years, most of the festivals faltered. Some of the failures are due to circumstances such as the ramifications of the January 25 revolution, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Russian-Ukrainian war, while the other obstacles are summarized as follows:
 - 1- Although there are several festivals, many of them lack managerial sophistication. Very few of the festivals are engaged in goal setting, marketing, strategic planning, and structured fund-raising ventures, and proper evaluations of attendance and economic consequences were frequently unavailable. Techniques for understanding and utilizing the external environment are frequently absent.
 - 2- There was a lack of coordination among authorities in the timing of the festivals. This led to repetitions of the event, which may make them less important.
 - 3- The plans for promoting the festival calendar seem to be ineffective even inside Egypt.
 - 4- Although sponsorship plays an important part in marketing communications, some events have no international one, there is sometimes incongruence between the festival and local sponsor.
 - 5- There is a lack of geographical distribution of festivals organized in Egypt, which is affected by the nature of the event and the required facilities.
 - 6- The bureaucracy that affects tourism in general and special events in particular, for example, anything involving passports and customs. It is sometimes necessary for a festival organizer to bring in technological equipment from abroad, but this means they may face problems in the entry and exit of these supplies.
 - 7- The plan for promoting festivals and events-sometimes- is not based on researching the touristic image of Egypt, but studying the strengths and weaknesses of the product, and developing it to suit the requirements of the market.
 - 8- The theme of listed festivals in the calendar does not capitalize on the history of the Egyptian community or benefit from the different tourist attractions.
 - 9- The slums in some areas of events, for example, the place where the Arabian Horse Festival is held (Zahraa Farm in Cairo) surround a lot of street vendors.
 - 10- The evaluation process after the event often does not receive as much.
 - 11- Attention as in its planning stages.

The Questionnaire Results

The demographic characteristics (n= 361) results indicate that 41.6% of the attendees' age was between 21 and 30 years, 29.1% were aged between 31 and 40 years, and around 53% of participants were unmarried while 57.7% had high education. The percentage of male participants was almost the same of females (50.1%).

Most of the visitors were foreigners (79.8%) and mainly came from France (34.5%), Germany (29.6%), and the USA (22.7%). This indicates there is an international audience interested in these kinds of events. Most respondents were visiting Aswan for their first time.

The awareness about the festival among participants is relatively high, the majority heard about them from friends or family (over 60% of foreigners), the

information gathered from the internet 19% and from books (less than 10% of foreign tourists). This emphasizes the necessity of paying closer attention to social media promotion.

In this context³³, Krittanai & Pei-Ying mentioned that social media is so important in promoting tourism. It is largely used by people in their daily lives in general and for festivals in particular. Before an event, one’s online friends may share photos and videos about it. Accordingly, these posts pique people’s curiosities, persuading some to read more comments on that post, and finally feeling compelled to click the link to the event. By publishing pictures, commenting on their experience at the event, or recording the event live, people show their support for the celebration. After the event, people frequently leave comments, or share memories on social media. Festival organizers can have feedback on participants’ opinions and use it to improve the event in the future [TABLE 1].

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Reveal the past	203	56.2%
Be an original event	234	64.8%
Part of the history	257	71.2%
Real heritage	294	81.4%
Show the local community	51	14.1%
Represent cultural attractions	330	91.4%
Reflect customs and traditions	225	62.3%
The main reason for the visit	196	54.3%

[TABLE 1]: Perceptions of the Festival Authenticity © Done by the researchers

The questionnaire assessed practitioners’ feelings about festival authenticity as mentioned in the previous table. The results may indicate that tourists interpret authentic experiences in several ways. However, the majority agreed that the sun festival was an authentic experience. More than 60% of foreigners of locals were motivated to visit Aswan, particularly for the event. Both international and domestic tourists consider the sun festival as an authentic event. The research adopted the study of Yi& Tsung³⁴ to determine the items that affected the image, tourist satisfaction, and destination identity for the sun festival. The previous table shows that the majority (82.3%) stated that the festival reflects the cultural image of the destination, while (74.5%) considered the experience to be unique [TABLE 2].

³³ KRITTANAI & PEI-YING 2020: 23-24.

³⁴ LIN & LEE 2020: 361.

Factors and Measured Elements	Frequency	Percentage
Festival Image		
The festival promoted better inter-personal relations	127	35.2 %
The festival can serve as a representation of the Egyptian heritage	297	82.3 %
The event facilitated intercultural exchange and knowledge expansion	131	36.3 %
The variety of facilities is enough	153	42.4 %
The services are high quality	145	40.2 %
The theme is original	269	74.5 %
The events featured special and extensive programming	161	44.6 %
People of all ages can enjoy the event	251	69.5%
Satisfaction of Tourists		
The festival is worth the money, time, and effort spent on it.	272	75.3 %
The value delivered exceeds expectations.	247	68.4 %
In comparison to other festivals, this one is more valuable.	239	66.2%
Feeling satisfied in general	257	71.2%
Destination Identity		
The festival is a reflection of who I am	69	19.1 %
I feel very strongly connected to Egypt	72	19.9 %
Egypt means several things to me.	85	23.5 %
I feel a deep connection to Egypt	61	18.9 %
I feel like I belong to Egypt very much	64	17.7 %

[TABLE 2]: The Affected Elements of the Festival © Done by the researchers

Most of the participants (75.3%) believe that their sacrifices were worth the value of their participation in the event, and it differs from that of other festivals (66.2%) which indicates that the experience lived up to their expectations. It is not surprising that the festival affects a person’s sense of identity, as with 94.5% of locals stating that they felt a sense of belonging. Twenty-two percent of international tourists and 28.8% of Egyptian viewed the festival as a good means of identity.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

In this study, CFA was used to analyze latent variables and measure the link between observed indicators and measurement models. Table 3 displays the findings for each factor. However, each factor’s fit is deemed to be reasonable for the structural model analysis [TABLE 3].

Factor	X2	DF	P	Q	GFI	AGFI	RMR	NFI	TLI	GFI	RMSEA
Authenticity of Experience	136.424	53	.000	2.479	.957	.928	.027	.996	.982	.985	.055
Festival Image	4.801	2	.092	2.402	.995	.995	.006	.997	.994	.998	.053
Tourist Satisfaction	3.675	2	.158	1.837	.996	.996	.006	.997	.995	.998	.041
Destination Identity	370.181	1.54	.000	2.372	.932	.932	.032	.907	.962	.969	.053

[TABLE 3]: Confirmatory Factor Analysis © Done by the researchers

Pearson Correlation Analysis

The analysis measured whether there is a linear relationship between 2 variables (given by P- value) and how strong it is (given by the coefficient r in between -1 &+1). According to the presented findings in Table 2 presented *** P<.01 refers that there is a correlation between authentic experience, festival image, tourist satisfaction, and destination identity [TABLE 4].

Factor	Average	Std. Dev	Correlation between Factors			
			Authenticity of Experience	Festival Image	Tourist Satisfaction	Destination Identity
Authenticity of Experience	3.3213	.73957	1			
Festival Image	3.6544	.96067	.769**	1		
Tourist Satisfaction	3.4993	.91482	.788**	.804**	1	
Destination Identity	3.3266	.50365	.407**	.425**	.399**	1

**p< .01

[TABLE 4]: Analysis of the Correlation © Done by the researchers

Assessment of the Research Model

AMOS 22.0 was used to evaluate the structural model based on the findings of the confirmatory factor analysis, the analysis fit was $\chi^2=278.643(p=.000)$, $DF=105$, $Q=2.637$, $GFI=.934$, $AGFI=.905$, $RMR=.032$, $NFI=.961$, $TLI=.968$, $CFI=.975$, $RMSEA=.058$, demonstrating a reasonable fit overall and clarifying that authenticity of experience had positive effects on the following:

- Festival image, with a path coefficient of .862, and a t value of 21.995 (p<.01)
- Tourist satisfaction, with a path coefficient of .958, and a t value of 21.933 (p <.01).
- Destination identity, with a path coefficient of .374, and a t value of 4.301 (p<.01).

V. LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

There are several limitations to this study. Firstly, the analyzed sample only included the attendees of the Sun Festival. Future research must confirm whether the suggested paradigm can be applied to other festivals. Secondly, the study explains the relationship between different elements of an authentic experience related to festival image, level of satisfaction, and place identification. Future studies could examine additional factors to create a more comprehensive relevance model for the connections. Finally, festivals may be important components of the destination image as they display unique features encompassing lifestyle, environment, and history. Future studies on the use of festivals as a destination's image-maker will be valuable additions to the events tourism literature already in existence.

VI. CONCLUSION

This paper creates a theoretical framework model for festival visitors and findings can be used as guidelines for festival organizers. The study demonstrates how relationships with identity, satisfaction, and authentic experience interact, and how it is crucial to increase the authenticity of these factors. Numerous elements are considered key drivers of the event's success. Including the event's distinctive topic, extensive media promotion, and sponsors with national or international interests, these are what draw individuals to attend the event. According to the previous findings, it could be concluded that ancient festivals may contribute to presenting a destination in a positive light. Event planners in Egypt should take advantage of their ancient historical enhance and diversify the national tourism calendar. At the same time, a mixture of festivals is typically required to support the various aims of events. Sports events -for instance- might encourage people to participate and attract media attention, while cultural festivals may contribute to the maintenance of cultural infrastructure and increase social cohesiveness in the host destination. As a part of its worldwide marketing strategy, Egypt must hold some significant modern and ancient events that will strengthen the country's reputation in the tourism industry. One of the most popular and recent tactics Egypt should rely on is social media. It is an important tool to enhance the destination's image, promote the festival calendar, foster social interaction, and offer e' WOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) channel that influences how consumers make decisions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ANDERSON, J.C., & GERBING, D.W.: «Structural Equation Modeling in Practice: A Review and Recommended Two-Step Approach», *Psychological Bulletin* 103/3, 1988, 411–423.
- ANWAR, D.: «The Religious Festivals in Ancient Egypt», *Egyptian Journal of Tourism and Hospitality* 26/1, 2019, 1-22.
- ASSIOURAS, I., LIAPATI, G., KOULETSIS, G. & KONIORDOS, M.: «The Impact of Brand Authenticity on Brand Attachment in the Food Industry», *British Food Journal* 117/2, 2015, 538-552.
- BERNADETTE, Q.: «Arts Festivals and City», *Sage Journals* 42 (5-6), 2005, 27.
- BATINOLUHO, L., & BASERA, V.: «Festivals and Tourism Development: Examples from Tanzania and Zimbabwe», *Journal of Tourism, Culinary, and Entrepreneurship* 2/1, 2022, 18–33.
- CAI, W., GOEBBELS, M., & WAN-ZAINAL-SHUKRI, W.H.: «Performing Authenticity: Independent Chinese Travelers' Tourism Dining Experiences in Europe», *Tourism Management* 86, 2021, 104339.
- CHAPAGAIN, N.K.: «Contextual Approach to the Question of Authenticity in Heritage Management and Tourism», *Journal of Heritage Management* 1/2, 2017, 160-161.
- CHEN, Q., HUANG, R. & HOU, B.: «Perceived Authenticity of Traditional Branded Restaurants (China): Impacts on Perceived Quality, Perceived Value, and Behavioral Intentions», *Asian Tourism* 23, 2020, 2950-2971. doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2020.1776687
- COHEN, E.: «Authenticity, Equity & Sustainability in Tourism», *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 10/4, 2002, 267-276.
- CORNELIS, M.: *Authenticity and Sustainability in Tourism and Tourism Studies Conflicting Truths and Practices*, Rotterdam, Netherlands (Erasmus University Rotterdam) 2021.
- DAI, T., ZHENG, X. & YAN, J.: «Contradictory or Aligned? The Nexus Between Authenticity in Heritage Conservation and Heritage Tourism, and its Impact on Satisfaction», *Habitat International* 107, 2021, 1-2.
- DARNELL, J.Y.: «Opet Festival», Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, Los Angeles(UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology) 2010.
- EL-SABBAN, SH.: «Temple Festival Calendars of Ancient Egypt» UK (Redwood Books) 2000, 187-88.
- FUKAYA, M.: *The Festivals of Opet, the Valley, and the New Year Their Socio-Religious Functions*, Oxford (Archaeo Press Publishing Ltd) 2019.
- GABALLA & KITCHEN: «The Feast of Sokar», *Nova Series* 38/1, 1969, 2-3.
- GETZ, D. & S.J. PAGE: «Progress and Prospects for Event Tourism Research», *Tourism Management* 52, 2016, 593-594.
- GETZ, D.: «Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research, Tourism», *Tourism Management* 29/3, 2008, 403-428.
- GREG RICHARDS: «Culture and Authenticity in Traditional Events: The Views of Producers, Residents, and Visitors in Barcelona», *Event Management* 11(1-2-), 2007, 33-44. Doi.org/10.3727/152599508783943228
- RAMKISSOON, H. & UYSAL, M.: «Testing the Role of Authenticity in Cultural Tourism Consumption: A Case of Mauritius», *Tourism Analysis* 15/5, 2010, 571-583(13). Doi.org/10.3727/108354210X12889831783396
- KOTSORI, I.: «Ancient Festivals and Their Cultural Contribution to Society», *Open Journal for Studies in History* 2/1, 2019, 19-26.
- KRITTANAI, N. & PEI_YING, W.: «Using Social Media as a Tool for Promoting Festival Tourism», *International Journal of Computer Science & Information Technology* 12/3, 2020, 17-32.
- LEE, T.H., CHUNG-JEN, F., & CHANG, P.S.: «The Support of Attendees for Tourism Development: Evidence from Religious Festivals», *Tourism Geographies* 17 /2, 2015, 223-243.
- LEE, T.H. & CHANG, P.S.: «Examining the Relationships Among Festivals Cape, Experiences, and Identity: Evidence from Two Taiwanese Aboriginal Festivals», *Leisure Studies* 36/4, 2017, 453-467
- LEIBOVITCH, J.: «Gods of Agriculture and Welfare in Ancient Egypt», *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 12/2, 1953, 73-113.
- LIN, Y.H. & LEE, T.H.: «How the Authentic Experience of a Traditional Cultural Festival Affects the Attendee's Perception of Festival Identity», *International Journal of Event and Festival Management* 11/3, 2020, 357-373.

- LU, A.C., GURSOY, D. & LU, C.Y.: «Authenticity Perceptions, Brand Equity, and Brand Choice Intention: The Case of Ethnic Restaurants», *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 50, 2015, 36-45.
- LUNCHAPRASITH, TH.& MACLEOD, D.: «Food Tourism and the Use of Authenticity in Thailand», *Tourism Culture & Communication* 18/2, 2018, 101-116.
- MIRONOVA, A: «The Relationship Between the Space and the Scenery of an Egyptian Temple: Scenes of the Opet Festival and the Festival of Hathor at Karnak and Deir el-Bahari under Hatshepsut and Thutmose III», *Mosaikjournal: Raumdimensionen im Altertum*, MARIA KRISTINA LAHN & MARENGRISCHA SCHRÖTER(eds.), *Interdisziplinäres E-Journal zur Erforschung der Materiellen und Schriftlichen Hinterlassenschaften alter Kulturen*, 2010, 279-330.
- NGUYEN, TH.H. & CHEUNG, C.: «Chinese Heritage Tourists to Heritage Sites: What are the Effects of Heritage Motivation and Perceived Authenticity on Satisfaction? », *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research* 21/11, 2016, 1155-1168.
- PARK, E., CHOI, B.K. & LEE, T.J.: «The Role and Dimensions of Authenticity in Heritage Tourism», *Tourism Management* 74, 2019, 99-109.
- ROOSTIKA.R: «An Analysis of Local Product Authenticity and Customer Attachments», *Advances in Economics, Business, and Management Research* 115, 2020, 437-442. Doi: 10.2991/aebmr.k.200127.088
- RICKLY-BOYD, J.M.: «Authenticity & Aura: A Benjaminian Approach to Tourism», *Annals of Tourism Research* 39/1, 2012, 269-289.
- SÜRÜCÜ. L & MASLAKÇI. A: «Validity and Reliability in Quantitative Research», *Business, and Management Studies: An International Journal* 8/3, 2020, 2694-2726.
- TAYLOR, J. P: «Authenticity and Sincerity in Tourism», *Annals of Tourism Research* 28/1, 2001, 7-26.
- TUSSYADIAH, P., WANG. D., JUNG T.H, CLAUDIA, D.: «Virtual Reality, Presence, and Attitude Change: Empirical Evidence from Tourism», *Tour Manage* 66, 2018, 140-154.
- GENC, V., & GULERTEKIN,S.: : «The Effect of Perceived Authenticity in Cultural Heritage Sites on Tourist Satisfaction: The Moderating Role of Aesthetic Experience», *JHTI* 6/2, 2022, 530-548.
- WANG, N.: «Rethinking Authenticity in Tourism Experience», *Annals of Tourism Research* 26/2, 1999, 349-370.
- XIAO, FU: «Existential Authenticity and Destination Loyalty: Evidence from Heritage», *Journal of Destination Marketing& Management* 12, 2019, 84-94.
- YEOMAN, I., BRASS, D., & MCMAHON-BEATTIE, U: «Current Issue in Tourism: The Authentic Tourist», *Tourism Management* 28, 2007, 1128-1138.
- YI, X., LIN, V.S., JIN, W., LUO, Q.: «The Authenticity of Heritage Sites, Tourists Quest for Existential Authenticity, and Destination Loyalty», *J. Travel. Res.* 56/8, 2016, 1032. Doi.org/10.1177/0047287516675061
- YONGJUN, SU., JUNJIE, XU., SOTRADIS. M & SHIWEI, SHEN: «Authenticity, Perceived Value, and Loyalty in Marine Tourism Destinations: The Case of Zhou Shan, Zhejiang Province, China», *Sustainability* 13/7, 2021, 3716. Doi.org/10.3390/su13073716