

## **The Role of Special Events in Branding Egypt as a Tourist Destination: A case Study of EXPO 2020 Dubai**

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### **Abstract**

Egypt is one of the world's most ancient and historically richest countries in the world, boasting a wealthy heritage of cultural treasures. In the 21st century, with the wave of modernity and the country's great potential, Egypt can offer a lot more than just sightseeing.

Special events are one of the main components of tourist product and they play an immensely vital role in marketing the tourist destination and creating a powerful image.

Egypt can make use of the special events industry in promoting and branding its tourist product. In order to improve the special events industry in Egypt, the benchmarking method can be applied. The Dubai model can be followed as a benchmark due to its significantly impressive and global contribution to the sector of MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) tourism.

Dubai is a significant destination for hosting all-year-round various special events such as conferences, exhibitions, festivals and trade shows. In November 2013, Dubai won the bid to organize the world EXPO 2020 that is considered one of the most important mega cosmopolitan events.

EXPO 2020 will be held in Dubai – United Arab Emirates (UAE) from 20th October 2020 to 10th April 2021. Its importance stems from the fact that EXPO 2020 Dubai is the first World Expo to be staged in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (MENASA) with expected 25 million of visitors, 190 country participants and supporting 94,400 job opportunities including 51,100 job opportunities in the tourism sector.

The main purpose of this study is to highlight and summarize the expected economic, sociocultural and tourist impacts of EXPO 2020 on Dubai's tourist

brand to become the “Global Beacon” for travel and tourism and how to use that as a benchmark to develop the special events industry in Egypt.

The study is based on a solid theoretical framework by reviewing literature on special events and its importance in branding Egypt as a top tourist destination. The framework is then tested by using EXPO 2020 Dubai as a model case study.

The Major findings indicate that Expo 2020 is expected to deliver great value to the UAE economy both directly and indirectly and will contribute to shape the future of Dubai as well as that of UAE. The study, therefore recommends to develop the Egyptian special events calendar and support MICE tourism in Egypt.

**Keywords:** Special Events –Egypt - Dubai – EXP 2020 – Tourist Destination – Brand

## **Introduction**

Nowadays, the Egyptian destination faces a great competition with other tourist destinations. This competition has become one of the critical factors that influences globally the tourism industry and affects directly Egypt’s rank as a tourist destination. Hence, the necessity of developing the Egyptian tourist product, the country’s reputation and its mental image in all tourist markets becomes more urgent. Special events can be used as a strong competitive advantage for the sake of promoting and branding Egypt as a cosmopolitan, global tourist destination.

Dubai is one of the most visited cities in the world where tourism is considered the major component of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Dubai is a home to a versatile number of special events of all types and forms because of the set of the unique facilities the city boasts such as safety, discipline, infrastructure, trade centers, IT services and transportation communication systems and networks.

The Dubai's experience in the field of organizing special events is an experience worthy of respect and application in other countries like Egypt. Dubai has succeeded to host EXPO 2020 which is considered to be one of the biggest International Registered Exhibitions. It will be held in Dubai for six months from 20th October 2020 to 10th April 2021. Experts predict that EXPO 2020 Dubai will be one of the best world special events and its impacts will cover all sectors not only in the UAE, but also regionally.

# **The Role of Special Events in Branding Egypt as a Tourist Destination: A case Study of EXPO 2020 Dubai**

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## **Part One: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

### **1. Special Events**

#### **1.1. Special Events Definition**

Despite the fact that special events, as a term, has already become an important and essential element in the tourism industry, there is still no unified and standard definition of the term. It has been given various definitions due to the different perspectives from which “Special Events” has been approached. However, generally, it can be said that the definition of special events can be flexible to adapt to different situations (Nguyen, 2017).

According to Cambridge dictionary, the term “Event” is referred to “as anything that happens, especially something important or unusual” (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>, 2019).

Events are also seen as celebrations that provide an opportunity to meet, recreate and share happy moments with family members, relatives, colleagues and friends (NCERT, 2018).

Thus, In general, events are unusual incidents such as birthday parties, weddings and festivals that are planned for. Accordingly, regular actions that may happen or take place automatically or spontaneously without planning or intention cannot be treated as “events”. For example, for Firefighting organizations that specialize in responding to wild land fires, an accident is not a rare event but rather a routine practice or occurrence. (Müller-Seitz and Schüßler, 2013).

Most theorists tend to use “events” and “special events” alternatively, while others consider “Special Events” as a subset of “Events” as a whole. So, in such a context, special events are usually of large scale and involve relatively newer technologies, content, and relatively bigger budgets. (Chon and Maier, 2010).

Special Events are thus coined as organized and temporary events. They take place rather than the daily routine of the participants. They target to satisfy previously monitored goals by presenting specific activities in a celebratory framework (Bowdin et al., 2006).

## 1.2. Special Events Categories

There are many different ways of categorizing special events. Special events can be categorized according to their size and scale as follows: - (Bowdin et al., 2006)

- a. Local events: this kind of special events refers to the local festivals or events that carry a distinctive popular character and express a cultural, historical or social heritage that distinguishes the host country, region or city from other places. Local audience is typically its targeted one.
- b. Major events: they attract a large number of participants from outside the region. They include significant marketing and media coverage such as sporting events that involve competition between teams representing a number of countries.
- c. Hallmark events: The term 'hallmark events' refers to those events that are associated with the name of a particular place, city or region, so when we mention the name of the special event, then the name of the place comes to our mind automatically. They are meant to preserve the tourist destination predominance and attract long-distance and international audience. Sao Paulo carnival in Brazil, Wimbledon championship in UK and Verdi's Opera Aida in Egypt are instances of Hallmark events.
- d. Mega Events: Mega-events are those events that are so large that they affect whole economies and reverberate in world media. These events are generally developed following competitive bidding. They include the Olympic Games, the Paralympic Games, the FIFA World Cup, the IAAF World Championships and World Fairs, but it is difficult for many other events to fit into this category.

Matthews (2008) categorized the events regarding its nature into five as follows: -

- a. Religious events: the celebration of Ramadan Month, Eid Alfitr, Eid Aladha and Christmas or Easter events.
- b. Political events: Presidential inauguration ceremonies and coronations and political party fundraising dinners.
- c. Social events: National Day and unique cultural performances and practices.
- d. Educational events: conferences and exhibitions.
- e. Commercial events: sales events, trade shows and shopping festivals.

# **The Role of Special Events in Branding Egypt as a Tourist Destination: A case Study of EXPO 2020 Dubai**

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## **1.3. Special Events Characteristics**

The main characteristics of special events can be illustrated as follows:-

- a. Special events are “temporary” in the sense that they occur during a limited time period. That period may be as long as about six months such as EXPO 2020 Dubai. In any case, the special event must be for a specific and limited period of time, no matter how long it takes, otherwise it will be transformed from a special event to a regular event.
- b. A special event must be unique in its nature to make it different from the ordinary daily events.
- c. Special events must be planned to achieve a specific goal.
- d. Special events should be in a celebratory framework including an integrated set of activities to achieve the goals of the event's organizer in addition to satisfying the desires, needs and expectations of the participants.

## **2. The Importance of Tourist Destination Brand**

The American Marketing Association offers a definition of a brand as a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's goods or services as distinct from those of other sellers (<https://www.ama.org/>, 2019).

Dinnie (2008) has sorted out the reasons for countries to brand themselves as the following:

- a. Global competition that countries now face globally.
- b. Stimulating inward investment and to boost exports.
- c. Increasing currency stability, restore international credibility and investor's confidence.
- d. Strengthening international political influence.

Tourism is a vastly growing sector, and by doing so, there is an ongoing concern on building a destination brand with a strong and representative image. Destination branding is in turn, an important marketing tool for a tourist destination since it capitalizes unique distinctions between destinations, and as a consequence, it results in potential market opportunities. The image projected by a brand becomes a vital component in creating ideal and effective marketing strategies by demonstrating its unique characteristics, which can become an opportunity to face the competitive market (Pereira, et al., 2019).

Tourist destination brand can be invested through using the unique regional features that provide with the tourist assets, which form the basis for building a brand unique character or what is termed as “identity” (Iliachenko, 2005).

The growing role and importance of brands in tourism has resulted in the fact that strong brands that accompany public images have an immediate positive impact on the increased confidence of customers and tourists. A strong brand provides added value, brings a powerful identity benefit, motivates consumers’ behavior, influences their perceptions of reality, opens doors, creates trust and respect and raises expectations of quality and integrity. In short, it is about consolidating strong place reputations. A strong destination brand must deliver distinctive, compelling, memorable and rewarding experiences to its target audience (Mikić, et al., 2017).

The creation of the brand is a long lasting process and an established brand sticks permanently in tourists minds and memories. It is necessary to have the long-term vision of the destination brand based on the knowledge and cooperation of all that are included in the creation of destination tourist product. In spite of the difficulties in the destination brand creation, it will become the heavy weapon in winning and attracting the market (Radišić, and Mihelić, 2006).

### **3. The Impact of Special Events on Egypt Tourist Destination Brand**

Egypt is a unique country that boosts a strategic location on the crossroads of Asia and Africa. Egypt was known throughout its history as a destination for tourists and travelers since it was visited by "Herodotus" during the ancient times, when he got fascinated by the vast difference between Egypt and his homeland. Egypt maintained this image throughout the middle and modern history. The discovery of the Pharaonic antiquities long time ago has added a special charm to Egypt, besides its unique religious and cultural monuments. On the other hand, Egypt enjoys a geographical location, and a moderate climate all the year-round, along with its smooth vast coastlines, and beaches with its unique treasures of coral reefs, providing Egypt with advantages of a competitive edge (<http://www.sis.gov.eg/>, 2019).

In addition to the above mentioned factors, no one can deny that special events in Egypt can play an important role in shaping and adding to the strength of its tourist brand. The most important Special Events in Egypt are Coptic Christmas, The World-famous Abu Simbel Sun Festival, Islamic New Year, Mawlid AL Nabi, Ramadan month, Eid AlFitr, Eid Al Adha and others.

In general, special events greatly impact the development of a destination. Many countries have used events for the sake of capitalizing on

## **The Role of Special Events in Branding Egypt as a Tourist Destination: A case Study of EXPO 2020 Dubai**

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their achievements, endorse commerce and trade and assist in the process of opening their countries to global influences (Oklobdžija, 2015).

Egypt as a tourist destination can make use of special events for a variety of reasons that can be discussed in the following points:-

- Special events can be considered as one of the most important attractions in tourist destinations that used to promote for both natural and man-made attractions (Jago, 1997).
- Special events lead to the increase in the number of tourists. They are a way to achieve the diversification of tourism product. They play an important role in tourism sustainability through improving the living standards of local population through investments, the common participation of local stakeholders for public interests, and possibilities of showcasing of cultural heritage of the local area (Mihajlović and Mag, 2017).
- Special events can be used to provide off-season benefits to a destination. Special events are an incentive to attract first time customers to the destination. An event can also provoke additional demand in a regular tourist season to help boost arrivals and occupancy rates in hotels. Events may encourage regular customers to extend their stay in a destination in order to attend an event or a show they had not originally planned to see (Dimanche, 2002).
- The main role of the special events is to promote tourism through the autonomous power of attraction of the event itself and to complement the tourist supply of a particular destination (Šušić and Đorđević, 2011).
- Many destinations throughout the world have developed events portfolios as a strategic initiative to attract tourists and to reinforce their brand (Trošt et al., 2012).
- Special events are a set of manifestations that are intended to convey specific messages to target audiences (Zetiu and Berteau, 2015). In this context, Special tourism events can greatly contribute to the overall marketing by helping to create an image, promote, position and brand a destination. (Dimanche, 2002, Nguyen, 2017).

Based on the above discussed ideas, it is concluded that special events play a very important role in the sustainable development of Egypt tourist destination.

According to the world's future brand global index that measures the success of the top 75 countries around the world in terms of visitors, accommodation, investment and stability. In 2019, The UAE is the first country in the Middle

East and ranked the 16th position in the world, while Egypt ranked the 3rd position in Africa and ranked the 55th globally (Future Brand Country Index, 2019).

Special events are one of basic factors that help UAE to get its high brand ranking. The Emirate of Dubai has been home to MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) tourism as it hosts various events around the year such as trade shows, art exhibitions, musical shows, literature fests, economic and sports events. Established in 1979, the Dubai World Trade Centre hosts major international events, such as Arabian Travel Market which is believed to be a landmark in the history of tourism and hospitality exhibitions (Vij, et al., 2019).

This means that Egypt can use the UAE experience of special events in order to elevate its brand ranking. EXPO 2020 Dubai is the best model of mega special events that will be held in Dubai and it will have a variety of impacts which will reshape Dubai brand and UAE future.

## **Part Two: The Case Study: Expo 2020 Dubai – UAE**

### **1. Dubai Tourism**

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federation and sovereign state that was founded on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1971. The country is made up of seven emirates, namely Abu Dhabi (the capital), Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain, Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah.

Ever Since the union of the seven Emirates, the UAE has grown to become a global tourist destination. The country has set forth and encouraged the growth of some of its national brands into global ones such as Etihad and Emirates and become a business, entertainment, and creative hub (The National UAE Newspaper, 2019).

Dubai is one of the seven emirates that make up the UAE. It is located on the southeast coast of the Arabian Gulf. Located between 25°16' North and 55°18' East. It is stretched along the Arabian Gulf coast for 72 km and has a total area of 3,900 square kilometers. Dubai shares borders with Abu Dhabi in the south, Sharjah in the northeast, and the Sultanate of Oman in the southeast (<https://mediaoffice.ae/>, 2019).

There is no doubt that Dubai is a flourishing tourism destination and that its growth is assured through wise and visionary leadership. However, the booming of Dubai as a destination (and probably all other tourism destinations) would be further enhanced through the global removal of outdated and discriminatory travel visa restrictions, the fully considered



## **The Role of Special Events in Branding Egypt as a Tourist Destination: A case Study of EXPO 2020 Dubai**

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implementation of facilities for the full range of tourists with permanent or temporary disabilities, the enactment of a carefully constructed digital roadmap and the sponsorship of innovation (Jauncey and Nadkarni, 2014).

Dubai boasts having hundreds of world-class hotels, modern architecture, entertainment and dining venues, traditional markets, shopping centers and sporting events. Dubai key tourist attractions include the Burj Khalifa (opened in 2010), Dubai Mall (opened in 2008), Dubai Opera (opened in 2016), Atlantis Hotel (opened in 2008), Burj Al Arab (opened in 1999), Ski Dubai (opened in 2005), IMG Worlds of Adventure (opened in 2016), all turning it into a unique tourist hub (<https://www.government.ae/en/#/>, 2019).

The Dubai Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is diversified and falls into twenty economic categories. The most growth was recorded in Tourism including food and accommodation. Tourism was the sector with the highest growth rate. GDP Growth Rate in tourism was 8 percent, making tourism a leading contributor to Dubai's overall GDP Growth Rate in 2017. The continual rise in the number of international visitors to Dubai has had a major positive economic impact on the Emirate's development across various sectors and resulted in a rise in the labor force (Dubai Economic Report, 2018).

With Dubai's pioneering feats in Tourism, UAE Tourism was ranked (33rd) globally and the first in Middle East in 2019 making it a 21st century modern commercial and tourist global hub (The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report, 2019).

Dubai is one of the most visited cities in the world. Dubai has retained its position as the fourth most visited city in the world for the fifth year in a row. The Emirate welcomed 15.93 million international overnight visitors in 2018 and the city is expected to continue building on its success in 2019 (Global Destination Cities Index report, 2019) (Table No. 1).

**Table No. 1**  
Global Top 10 Destination Cities by International Overnight Visitors (2018)

Rank	destination city	2017	2018	2019 (Growth rate forecast)
1	Bangkok (Thailand)	21.09	22.78	3.34%
2	Paris (France)	17.41	19.10	2.24%
3	London (United Kingdom)	19.83	19.09	3.47%
4	Dubai (UAE)	15.79	15.93	1.68%
5	Singapore (Singapore)	13.90	14.67	4.00%
6	Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia)	12.58	13.79	9.87%
7	New York (United States)	13.13	13.60	2.94%
8	Istanbul (Turkey)	10.70	13.40	8.14%
9	Tokyo (Japan)	11.93	12.93	10.02%
10	Antalya (Turkey)	9.42	12.41	8.14%

Source: Global Destination Cities Index report. (2019). MasterCard.

The tourism statistics refer to that during the period of January – November 2019, the number of tourist nights reached 29.10 million, the tourist’s length of stay is 3.4 nights and the Average Daily Rate is AED 405 (Dubai Tourism Performance Report, 2019).

According to the vision of Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTC), Dubai Tourism has defined its 2022-25 Strategy to ultimately drive all players in the ecosystem towards a common goal: to make Dubai the most visited destination with more than 23 million visitors by 2025 (<https://www.visitdubai.com/en/department-of-tourism>, 2019).

## 2. An Overview of EXPO 2020 Dubai

Officially known as International Registered Exhibitions, World Expos are global gatherings of nations dedicated to finding solutions to common challenges by offering a journey inside a universal theme via engaging and captivating activities and practices. World Expos welcome tens of millions of visitors, allow countries to establish maga pavilions (<https://www.bie-paris.org/site/en/>, 2019).

The concept of the “World Expo” originated in France. The first World Expo – the Great Exhibition – was held in London in 1851. The EXPO we are familiar with today, is a large-scale public exhibition that is held every five years in different international locations around the globe. World Expo is a platform for the global community to share innovations and engage in

## **The Role of Special Events in Branding Egypt as a Tourist Destination: A case Study of EXPO 2020 Dubai**

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debates about the key issues for the sake of facing international challenges (Holland+you, 2018).

In November 2013, the United Arab Emirates won the right to host the World Expo in Dubai in 2020. This will be the first time that the World Expo is staged in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (MENASA) (Emirates News Agency, 2015).

The United Arab Emirates has gained a new international achievement by winning the bid to organize Expo 2020, the biggest and most prestigious world exhibition as Dubai could successfully overcome the competitors in the voting process that took place in the Paris, France. Votes were exclusive limited to the Member States in the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), the responsible authority for organizing the Expos, and in charge of controlling the hosting countries selection process (Altamayoz news, 2013).

The celebrations at the time of winning the bid indicate the potential of this international event to create a real buzz for Dubai and enhance its position as the magnet for talent and innovation in the region. (ME PoV, 2014)

The Dubai World Expo 2020 will host the world for 173 days as it is scheduled to run from 20 October 2020 to 10 April 2021. The theme of the Dubai World Expo 2020 is “Connecting Minds, Creating the Future”, a concept that is built around the three pillars of Opportunity, Mobility and Sustainability, which have been identified as key drivers of global development.:-

- Opportunity - Unlocking new possibilities for people and communities to become successful contributors to the future.
- Mobility - Creating smarter and more productive physical and virtual connections.
- Sustainability - Pursuing our hopes of progress without compromising the needs of future generations. ([www.expo2020dubai.ae](http://www.expo2020dubai.ae), 2019).

The Dubai Government spending for the Expo 2020 is estimated to be US\$9 billion over a seven-year period (ME PoV, 2014).

In March 2016, Expo 2020 Dubai revealed its new logo, which was inspired by a ring found at the Saroug Al Hadeed archaeological site. The UAE connected ancient civilizations and continues to be a hub that connects the world (Figure No. 1).



**Fig. No. 1**  
the Official Logo of EXPO 2020 Dubai

### **3. The Impacts of EXPO 2020 Dubai on Tourism Industry**

The impacts of EXPO 2020 on Dubai tourism can be divided into two categories: - direct and indirect impacts as follows:-

#### **3.1. The Direct Impacts**

Expo 2020 Dubai coincides with the UAE's 50th anniversary in 2021, marking an important milestone for the UAE as a vastly growing country . This mega event will be a celebration of the UAE Vision 2021 by supporting the growth of tourism (<https://www.vision2021.ae>).

Expo 2020 can be effectively used to attract more tourists in Dubai. Dubai will welcome 300,000 visitors on a daily basis during Expo 2020. 70 per cent of the expected 25 million visitors will come from abroad. (Holland + you, 2018).

Hosting a successful EXPO generates economic benefits over time as experienced by cities such as Shanghai (EXP 2010) and Milan (2015). The number of tourists visiting Milan in 2016 rose by 2.1 per cent to 5.6 million the year after it hosted Expo 2015 (Dubai Economic Report 2018).

The hotels and restaurants sector is expected to have a large share of the value added from the exhibition. In a city where hotel occupancies are already high, Expo 2020, in addition to other growth factors, is estimated to require an additional 50,000 rooms in over 200 properties of all categories from budget through to luxury. The impact is therefore also bound to be felt in neighboring cities, particularly Abu Dhabi (ME PoV, 2014).

Dubai Expo will offer world-class attractions, which will be especially created for the event. These attractions include creation of Crocodile Park, traditional souks, fish market, and a safari park. Travel and tourism will be boosted further with the expansion in Dubai international airport facilities and capacities to control the expected hike during the Expo 2020.

World Expo 2020 will certainly cement Dubai's status as one of the leading business hubs in the world. It provides further evidence of Dubai's ability to deliver on the global stage, alongside other leading cities. The real

## **The Role of Special Events in Branding Egypt as a Tourist Destination: A case Study of EXPO 2020 Dubai**

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opportunity would be strengthening the Dubai brand beyond tourism, showcasing to the world Dubai and the UAE's diversified portfolio of economic sectors. In addition to construction, tourism and trade sectors, the wider economy is set to benefit enormously. This event, as part of the overall maturing state of the UAE's economy, will provide significant and sustainable business opportunities in the run-up to, and beyond, 2020. (ME PoV, 2014)

### **3.2. The Indirect Impacts**

Indirect impacts refer to the impacts on UAE's Economy and sociocultural impacts of EXPO 2020 Dubai which affect Dubai tourism indirectly.

#### **3.2.1. The Impacts on UAE's Economy**

According to the EY (Ernst & Young Middle East (Dubai Branch)) report entitled: "The Economic Impact of Expo 2020 Dubai" issued in April 2019, it is predicted that:-

1. EXPO 2020 Dubai is expected to attract 25 million visits and 190 country participants.
2. The total contribution of EXPO 2020 Dubai during the period from November 2013 to December 2031 is estimated to be:-
  - a. Expo 2020 Dubai will contribute AED 122.6 billion of Gross Value Added (GVA) to UAE's economy from November 2013 to December 2031.
  - b. Expo 2020 is also expected to provide 905,200 full-time equivalent (FTE) job-years in the UAE from 2013–31, which is equal to approximately 49,700 FTE jobs per annum in the UAE over this period.
3. The Pre-Expo contribution (November 2013 to October 2020) is expected to be as follows:-
  - a. The GVA impact is estimated to be AED 37.7 billion.
  - b. Average 37,500 jobs supported per annum (262,400 FTE Jobs-years).
4. During-Expo contribution (October 2020 to April 2021) is expected to be as follows:-
  - a. The GVA impact is estimated to be AED 22.7 billion.
  - b. The During-EXPO period is expected to support 94,400 FTE jobs. These include 51,100 FTE jobs in the restaurants and hotels sector.
5. The Legacy contribution (May 2021 to December 2031) is expected to be as follows:-

- a. The GVA impact is estimated to be AED 62.2 billion.
- b. A total of 548,300 FTE job- years which is equal to approximately 53,800 FTE jobs per annum in the UAE over this period.

A range of important impacts are also likely in the Legacy period. They are foreseen to influence UAE economy for a number of years. These include: - (Ernst & Young Middle East, 2019)

- I. Improved trade relations at a country- to-country level from relationships developed during the Expo.
- II. Improved business relations at a firm-to-firm level from the relationships developed during the Expo.
- III. Increased international profile of Dubai and the UAE as a business, work and investment locale.
- IV. Increased international profile and attractiveness of Dubai and the UAE as a tourist destination.

According to (Emirates NBD Research and Treasury, 2019), the hosting of a mega-event like EXPO 2020 can attain two important goals: -

- I. The establishment of new infrastructure to drive longer-term economic growth in the host city, or to speed up the execution of infrastructure projects that might have taken longer to achieve without such an event.
- II. To boost the image of the host city on the world stage, showcasing what the host city can offer from a business, tourism and investment perspective and also to highlight the host city's potential and capability to successfully plan, manage and execute a mega world event.

Many cities left after holding such enormous events burdened, deeply indebted, and regretting the establishment of many useless structures. However, Dubai has planned the sustainability of the expo's main venue. The main venue hosting the exposition "District 2020" is announced as a mixed-use community. It has 700,000 square feet of residential districts in addition to educational institutes, cafes, restaurants, parks, and many recreational facilities. UAE National Pavilion will remain as an events center, while the Sustainability Pavilion will transform to a center for child and scientific education. District 2020 will include also commercial spaces. A lot of companies agreed to build a presence in the site like Siemens and Accenture (<https://www.justproperty.com/en/blog/>, 2019).

### **3.2.2. The Sociocultural Impacts**

In addition to economic benefits in the form of job creation, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth and enhanced investment, the Expo will have tremendous social impact in terms of national identity, civic pride and community cohesion (ME PoV, 2014).

## **The Role of Special Events in Branding Egypt as a Tourist Destination: A case Study of EXPO 2020 Dubai**

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The world EXPO 2020 is expected to generate an enormous amount of press for the emirate which will be used as a tourism marketing tool. Expo 2020 will involve events, exhibitions, performances, meetings and many other activities and the host intends that these activities will reflect the culture of the UAE and the Gulf.

### **Findings and Conclusion**

Based on what was reviewed in this study, some important results can be drawn as follows:-

1. There are many forms and types of special events in the world, and they are increasing amazingly.
2. Special events occupy a great importance for various fields, especially tourism as the majority of events are tourist driven.
3. Special events contribute to the achievement of sustainable tourism development in all tourist destinations.
4. Special events can greatly contribute to highlighting the historical and cultural components of the Egyptian tourism product and support its tourist brand and mental image in all tourist markets.
5. Dubai is one of the pioneering cities in the field of tourism industry and in organizing special events as well. Dubai occupies an advanced position in all global competitiveness reports in various fields, the most important of which is the field of tourism.
6. The contribution of a special event to shape the tourist destination's brand depends mainly on the event's impacts timeline and scale. The impacts timeline refer to the duration of those impacts. The impacts scale refers to the number of sectors influenced by the event.
7. Regarding the impacts timeline: the impacts timeline of most events are limited to the event duration, but for EXPO 2020 Dubai, The impacts started in November 2013 and will continue until December 2031, so the effects of that event are not only limited to the duration of that event, which is the six months from 20th October 2020 to 10<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (During-Expo contribution), but the impacts extended almost 7 years before the start of event (The Pre-Expo contribution) and those impacts will extend beyond the event duration for approximately 10 years (The Legacy contribution).
8. Regarding the impacts scale: the impacts scale of most events are limited to one or two sectors, but for EXPO 2020, there is a wide range of impacts of that event on different sectors including: tourism, infrastructure, real state, media, Retail, finance, communication and others.

According to the above illustrations, it is concluded that EXPO 2020 Dubai has long-term and wide-scale positive impacts which will be seen in the global reputation and the positive permanent mental image of Dubai and UAE in all tourism markets during the upcoming period, so briefly, Expo 2020 is expected to deliver value to the UAE economy directly and indirectly and will contribute to shape the Dubai and UAE future.

## **Recommendations**

According to the above findings, case study and literature review, the recommendations can be divided into two categories as follows:-

### **1. Recommendations for Egypt official tourist authorities**

- a. The authorities responsible for managing tourism industry in Egypt should give adequate attention to the field of organizing special events as it is one of the most important components of Egypt tourism promotion in the various tourism markets.
- b. Egypt tourism vision must include hosting some international special events that highlight the Egypt tourism reputation and develop its mental image abroad.
- c. With its great history, it is easy for Egypt to host many global special events, but this depends on some key factors like the availability of appropriate infrastructure, safety and security, economic stability, high technology, tourism awareness and the unlimited government support.
- d. Social media special events marketing strategy is one of the most common and recent strategies that Egypt should depend on to promote and to market all its special events.
- e. Adopting a new strategy to provide qualified human resources to work in the field of organizing special events and training them on the latest findings of that field in developed countries.
- f. MICE tourism has become one of the most popular tourism patterns that attract many tourists at the present time. Egypt should pay more attention to MICE tourism as it can contribute significantly to the development of Egypt tourism destination in a rapidly changing and developing world.

### **2. Recommendations for Future Research Directions**

This study is conducted before the official commencement of EXPO 2020 Dubai, so it gives “The Pre-Expo contribution” perspective only. The



## **The Role of Special Events in Branding Egypt as a Tourist Destination: A case Study of EXPO 2020 Dubai**

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following issues and concerns are recommended for future research directions:-

1. After the end of that event (April 2021) some studies should be prepared to evaluate the actual impacts of During-Expo contribution phase.
2. Before the next World EXPO 2025 and after December 2031, some other studies should be prepared to evaluate the legacy contribution phase impacts.

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## **The Role of Special Events in Branding Egypt as a Tourist Destination: A case Study of EXPO 2020 Dubai**

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## ملخص الدراسة باللغة العربية دور الأحداث الخاصة في صياغة العلامة التجارية لمصر كمقصد سياحي: دراسة حالة لمعرض إكسبو ٢٠٢٠ بدبي

تعتبر مصر واحدة من أشهر وأقدم المقاصد السياحية الغنية بتراتها الثقافي والحضاري، كما أنها دولة حديثة يمكنها أن تقدم أكثر من مجرد مشاهدة معالمها السياحية.

تعد الأحداث الخاصة أحد المكونات الرئيسية للمنتج السياحي حيث تلعب دوراً حيوياً في تسويق الوجهة السياحية وخلق صورة ذهنية جيدة عنها.

يمكن لمصر الاستفادة من صناعة الأحداث الخاصة في الترويج لمنتجاتها السياحي بشكل كبير، ويمكنها تطوير صناعة الأحداث الخاصة بها من خلال الاعتماد على أسلوب القياس المقارن بالتطبيق على اماره دبي بدولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة بسبب شهرة دبي العالمية في مجال تنظيم الأحداث الخاصة (الاجتماعات والمؤتمرات والمعارض).

في نوفمبر ٢٠١٣، فازت دبي باستضافة تنظيم المعرض العالمي إكسبو ٢٠٢٠ والذي يعتبر أحد أهم الأحداث الخاصة العالمية. سيقام معرض إكسبو ٢٠٢٠ في دبي - الإمارات العربية المتحدة خلال الفترة من ٢٠ أكتوبر ٢٠٢٠ إلى ١٠ أبريل ٢٠٢١. يعد معرض إكسبو ٢٠٢٠ أول معرض عالمي يقام في منطقة الشرق الأوسط وشمال إفريقيا وجنوب آسيا، والمتوقع أن يكون عدد زواره ٢٥ مليون الزائرون، ويشارك فيه ١٩٠ دولة، ويوفر قرابة ٩٤٤٠٠ فرصة عمل، من بينها ٥١١٠٠ فرصة عمل في قطاع السياحة.

تهدف هذه الدراسة بشكل أساسي إلى تسليط الضوء على الآثار الاقتصادية والاجتماعية والسياحية المتوقعة لمعرض إكسبو ٢٠٢٠ بدبي والذي سيحول دبي الى "منارة عالمية" للسفر والسياحة وكيفية الاستفادة من صناعة الأحداث الخاصة في تطوير وتنشيط صناعة السياحة في مصر.

تنقسم الدراسة الى جزئين، يناقش الجزء الأول الإطار النظري من خلال مراجعة الأدبيات الخاصة بالأحداث الخاصة وأهميتها في الترويج للمقصد السياحي المصري، ويتناول الجزء الثاني من الدراسة معرض إكسبو ٢٠٢٠ بدبي كدراسة حالة والتأثيرات المتوقعة لهذا الحدث العالمي الكبير.

تشير النتائج الرئيسية لهذه الدراسة إلى أنه من المتوقع أن يحقق معرض إكسبو دبي ٢٠٢٠ الكثير من الفوائد للاقتصاد الإماراتي بشكل مباشر وغير مباشر، كما سيسهم في تشكيل مستقبل دبي والإمارات العربية المتحدة، لذلك يوصى بتطوير أجندة الأحداث الخاصة والفعاليات في مصر ودعم سياحة الأحداث الخاصة بها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأحداث الخاصة - مصر - دبي - معرض إكسبو ٢٠٢٠ - المقصد السياحي - العلامة التجارية.