

Enhancing the Role of the Local Community in the Marketing of Eco and Cultural Tourism Programs: Case Study, Siwa Oasis, Egypt.

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Abstract

One of the core elements of tourism development is to encourage local communities' participation in tourism industry. Using the case study of Siwa Oasis, this study evaluated the current role of the local community who participate in the marketing process of Echo and Cultural tourism programs in Siwa, to consider the prospects of this engagement in marketing development in the Oasis and to establish guidelines for a suitable enhancement approach. A field study was conducted based on both quantitative and qualitative data to bring together perspectives based on questionnaire survey with some stakeholders and interviews with different representatives from local community within the studied area.

The findings revealed the vital engagement of the inhabitants in the tourism industry, they are involved in many activities in a way that meets the stakeholders' and tourists' needs, and at the same time addresses the community's concerns. Findings also reflected that, although tourism in the Oasis faces many challenges and difficulties, its residents insisted to practice various activities to promote their beloved Oasis. These practices could be random in some cases; even though, their impacts cannot be ignored.

Keywords: *Siwa Oasis - Cultural & Ecotourism - Local Community - Marketing Tourism Programs.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The international tourism industry has two important constituents, namely, tourism supply and tourism demand. Tourism supply has to do with the natural and industrial tourism elements, as well as, the tourism services and facilities. Tourism demand, on the other hand, is concerned with the persons who want to travel to the different tourist attractions all over the world. Due to the many tourist attractions and tourism facilities that Egypt enjoys, the international inbound tourism movement coming to it has witnessed an increase lately. According to the statistics, the number of tourists visiting Egypt during the first seven months of 2018, increased by about 42% compared to the same period last year (2017). The total number of tourists during this period reached 6.146,560 tourists, compared to 4.341,747 tourists during the same period last year. (UNWTO,2018)

The relationship between local community and tourism sector is an important issue in the marketing management of tourist destinations in theoretical and practical terms. In recent years, as a result of the increasing competition between various tourist destinations, it has become important for those who aim to identify the best marketing strategies that enable them to compete and a strong presence in the international tourism market, one of the most important of these strategies, to be taken into account, is enhancing the role of the local community in the marketing processes.(Beirman,2003)

Problem of the Study:

Egypt has many destinations with several competitiveness such as Siwa which is characterized by its Natural resources and biodiversity as well as Cultural and creative resources. Despite efforts by members of the local community, in Siwa Oasis, to promote tourism programs, tourism demand for the Oasis remains weak. In effect, the tourism sector in Egypt needs to exert more efforts to promote tourism programs and services in Siwa Oasis, and to enhance the role of the local community in marketing the tourism sector in that region. Such campaigns aim at advocating the Egyptian tourism product to increase the international tourism demand in particular tourist areas with unique tourist potential suitable for many tourism activities. This research shed light

on the role played by the Siwans and how to enhance it to promote tourism programs which is in need to be well studied as it has not been the focus of Egypt's tourism development.

Objectives of the study:

- 1- Determining the role played by members of the community in Siwa Oasis and involvements that may affect the marketing development plan of the Oasis.
- 2- Shedding light on the importance of enhancing the role of the community in Siwa Oasis in marketing tourism programs and services.
- 3- Expanding the tourism supply base in Siwa Oasis by paying more attention to the development of Ecotourism and Cultural tourism in the region.
- 4- Ensuring that communities' potential involvement is tapped and maintained through active participation in the tourism industry.

II. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Research design

The research is strengthened by adopting a mixed method of using both quantitative and qualitative data which were collected by means of the questionnaire survey (distributed among about 30 stakeholders) and face to face interviews (with some members of the community in Siwa Oasis), parallel to researchers' observations, to increase the understanding of the community involvement and role in the case study area. As for secondary data, it was collected using desk research that depends on Egyptian and foreign researches and books, related periodicals, articles, journals, formal internet websites, published and unpublished studies and researches about Siwa Oasis.

Data analysis

The collected data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results and recommendations of the research are based on the analysis of the data obtained from questionnaires and interviews.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Local Community concepts:

(Weber and Secher, 2008) defined local community as a group of people who reside in a specific geographical area, who engage in political, economic and social activities and have a self-governing social unit with common values that they feel belong to. Examples of community: city, small city, village. Although the local community is a local geographical unit and provides its population with goods and services, it does not have to be determined by legal limits, as in the city; it does not necessarily have to be an independent political entity.

(Parsons, 2010) illustrated that Local community as actors gathered in a specific area to allow for the emergence of common daily activities. "This definition includes the interaction of individuals within a complex domestic system that provides basic services to individuals, taking into account that the community is not necessarily a self-sufficient unit.

(Alexander, 2014) stated that local community is "an area in which a common life prevails, whether it is a small village or city, so that this common life has a set of characteristics that make it distinct from other regions." Although raised in this matter, these elements have been essential to determine the concept of the community and its real implications.

(Brofenbrenner, 2006,) defined the community more specifically which "is characterized by a regional geographical location through which individuals, groups and activities are distributed, and a common living based on the interdependence of individuals.

In general, (Kohn and Slomczynski, 2002) illustrated that local community is "society is more than just an organization of interdependent relationships between individuals, and that the life of society includes a measure of psychological and moral integration, along with symbiotic integration or living, and that the researcher should consider the psychological and moral aspects as integrated, especially since living activities and associated symbiotic relationships are intertwined and linked to a set of sentiments, sensations, values, ethical standards, and other behaviors and daily interactions.

From the foregoing that conclude the community is a regular unit through which individuals all their daily needs, within a specific spatial area. With this sociological and anthropological use, the concept of "community" corresponds to the concept of "society" or "association". Therefore, the local community means personal relationships or face-to-face relationships within the framework of a limited social network (in contrast to the non-personal or contractual relationships that characterize modern industrial and urban societies). (Rubinstein, 2001)

Local community development:

The development of the community can be defined as the process of building a strong and distinguished society in many different and varied areas by strengthening and empowering the members of the society by providing them with the things they need so that they can achieve the skills, sciences, knowledge, life, scientific and practical experiences. Perhaps the capital capable of achieving and building special projects for each member of the community has great capabilities and potentials and creative and productive ideas. (Tryker, and Statham,2011)

The importance of community development:

Through the concept of development, societies seek to enable individuals and groups to have a positive impact on society by providing them with multiple skills. These individuals and societies are aware of how to deal with different segments of society and how they can influence community situations within the community and there are a huge number of different names of individuals working in the field of community development and service of its members so that these names vary between the higher public authorities, governmental and private institutions.

(Tajfel and Turner ,2004, p.21)

Local community Characteristics:

According to previous definitions of the community, it is clear that this concept includes a set of characteristics of the local community as follows:

1- Region or location:

The community is necessarily defined by a specific location. The boundaries of the community are defined or demonstrated by the way in which the population exercises activities. The term usually refers to a specific area with unique natural or artificial characteristics, Developed by society in a special way of social organization. and the importance of the property of the site is confirmed as an essential component of the community in many ways; on the one hand, the location or location defines the limits of both human assembly and social structure, the boundaries through which communities are differentiated. On the other hand, the site is the site of social and psychological guidance, since the relations of individuals and their origins are usually determined in the light of the area occupied by the community, either by way of origin or place of residence. Thirdly, the site has a clear impact on the organization of social activity and related social processes, such as cooperation or interdependence.(Beirman, 2003)

2-Independence and self-sufficiency:

The community represents a self-sufficient group of individuals. Within the community and its boundaries, individuals depend on one another for basic functions. Collective goals and individual activities are also linked to a wide variety of needs, interests and interests that no particular institution or organization can meet or satisfy. The community could absorb the whole life of the individual. While an individual cannot spend his life in a factory or organization, he can do so in a tribal tribe or in a city. As the basic criterion for the community, then, is its ability to absorb within its borders all the life of the individual and his social relations and aspects of his activity.(Turner, 2012)

3-Self-awareness:

Self-awareness is one of the most important characteristics of a community. This includes mutual recognition among individuals, as well as, a sense of belonging and distinction. This awareness translates into the attitudes of individuals, such as pride and camaraderie of the local community, loyalty and defense. Competition with other communities and enthusiastic support for local projects also underline mechanisms that unite individuals and groups in the community to which they belong. Such psychological and social trends and mechanisms often create psychological barriers of paramount importance among neighboring communities, which may sometimes outweigh the role of natural boundaries or barriers in this context. (Rubinstein, 2001)

4-Common values and standards:

One of the most important characteristics of the community from other forms of social organization is that it has special patterns of values and standards. Many absolute values are usually rewritten in the great culture, in the light of symbols and events of significance and significance in the local community context. The community's predominance of a particular value-based model can support agreement and communication between individuals in a distinct and integrated manner, while supporting a sense of self-awareness and

awareness among the members of the community, as well as, developing a sense of distinctiveness from everything outside society.(Tryker, and Statham, 2011).

5-The community as a psychological and cultural unit:

Sociologists explained that the local community represents a psychological unit, through which individuals acquire a sense of security, belonging and psychological stability. The same idea has been confirmed by some sociologists and anthropologists, who have adopted a purely cultural perspective in their analysis of the community; they have tended to unite individuals in their communities that are originally due to their participation in a number of common values, norms, objectives, beliefs, etc. Their view is a cultural unit in the first place. The same idea, in its psychological and cultural sense, was expressed by McIver and Big, meaning "awareness of sharing in one way of life in one common land or territory (Rubinstein, 2001).

The Area Profile:

Siwa Oasis situated in a natural depression at the northern edge of Egypt's Western Desert, 18m. below sea level and 82km.long. It is administratively part of Matrouh Governorate, located at about 300 km to the south of the Mediterranean city of Marsa Matrouh (Figure 1). According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); Siwa covers an area of about (250,000 Feddans); of which about 20940 Feddans are currently cultivated. In 2016, the human population of Siwa was reported to be around 28,300 persons. Siwans are of Berber origin, and have closer ties to nearby Libya, which has a large Berber population, than to Egypt, which has a negligible Berber population. Thus, the traditional culture of Siwa shows many features unusual in Egypt, some reflecting its longstanding links with the Maghreb and the fact that many of its inhabitants are of Berber origin. Until a tarmac road was built to the Mediterranean coast in the 1980s, Siwa's only links with the outside world were by arduous camel tracks through the desert. These were used to export dates and olives, bring trade goods, or carry pilgrims on the route which linked the Maghreb to Cairo and hence to Mecca.



Figure 1:location ofSiwa Oasis –
source:<https://www.google.com/maps>

Tourism Potentials in Siwa Oasis:

Siwa Oasis has several tourism potentials which permit its advantages as a tourist destination offering a variety of tourism products and amenities. This is certainly due to its different tourism resources such as cultural attractions, as well as, nature-based tourism including, ecotourism and safari tourism (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Siwa main attractions

source: <http://www.ecaa.gov.eg/portals/0/ecaaReports/protect/Leaflets/Siwa-english.pdf>

Cultural Features:

The history of Siwa has been formed by many civilizations (Abd EL Ghani, 2012), that left several historical sites which could be observed all over the oasis dated back to different eras: the ancient Egyptian, Greco Roman and Islamic and modern eras. Here are some of the key heritage sites in the Oasis:

Temple of the Oracle of Amun

The Temple of the Oracle of Amun stands magnificently amid the ruins of the oldest and abandoned village in the oasis, village of Aghurmi, located at the top of a small hill that give great view of the Oasis (Figure 3). This is the temple where the famous Oracle in the ancient time resided. The temple draws its fame from two historical events:

- 1- The visit by Alexander the Great who headed to it directly when he came to Egypt for the first time in 331 BC. Reputedly, it is believed that the Macedonian leader asked the oracle if he was going to 'rule the world,' legend has it that the answer was 'yes, but not for very long.'
- 2- The failed expedition of the Cambyses army¹.

(<http://www.sis.gov.eg/Story/1145/Siwa?lang=en-us>)



Figure 3: The Temple of the Oracle (Temple of Amun) at Siwa
<http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/templeoforacle.htm>

The Temple of Umm Ubayda:

The 2nd temple of Amun, it lies a short distance from the temple of the Oracle. It was built during the reign of Nectanebo II, 30th Dynasty. Little of the original temple remains today, and most of what we know of the temple's appearance comes from drawings by early European travelers (Domery, 2016).

The Old Fortress of Shali:

It was founded in the early 13th century by Siwans, who left El Aghurmi, for protection from the hostile Bedouin tribes who periodically raided the oasis (Bentley, 2002). The walls and houses are constructed from

¹ According to Herodotus 3.26, Cambyses II, the oldest son of Cyrus the Great, sent his army to destroy the Oracle of Amun at Siwa Oasis. 50,000 warriors entered the Egypt's western desert near Luxor. Somewhere in the middle of the desert the army was overwhelmed by a sandstorm and destroyed.

karsheef, a stone made of sunbaked clay, salt and fine sand which is dug from the edges of the salt lakes. Today, due its fragile material, Shali lies in ruins, except for some buildings and the old mosque (Abdel-Motelib et al., 2015).

Gebelel-Mawta, the Mountain of the Dead:

About 1 kilometer from the center of Siwa lies the old necropolis of Siwa atop a hill where Siwans buried the dead from the 26th Dynasty through Ptolemaic and Roman times. It contains a lot of engraved tombs cut into the rocks of the hill such as: Si-Amoun, Nbrbathut, Crocodile, and Messeu-Isis (Fakhry, 1950).

The Siwan Museum:

It is well known as the Siwan house. It was built from "Karsheef" on the same style of the old traditional houses in Siwa by Matrouh and the Canadian Government. Each room in the museum reflects a special aspect of the everyday life of Siwan people. The museum displays Bedouin handicrafts such as: wedding costumes, carpets, silver jewelry, baskets, ceramics, household utensils, traditional pottery, etc. (Abd EL Ghani, 2012)

Arts and Crafts:

The unique culture of Siwa boasts a variety of traditional arts and crafts (Figure 4), such as silver jewelry, colorful woven baskets, embroidered and beaded garments and accessories (Nofal, 2011).



Figure 3. Several Types of the Siwan Crafts
Source: <http://www.egypt.travel/attractions/siwan-crafts/>

Natural Features:

The lush depression of Siwa Oasis, thousands of years ago, had been cradled and protected by rocky plateaus. Through ages, sandblasting desert winds have cut reliefs from the plateaus, bringing about an exceptional landscape with different terrains ranging in size from large rounded rocks to mountains, these natural sculptures punctuate a fascinating landscape where the Great Sand Sea meets with natural springs, salt marshes, crystal-clear salt lakes, cultivated lands and significant biodiversity (Nofal, 2011). Examples of natural features:

Reliefs:

The Oasis is characterized by low relief; surface elevation ranges generally from zero to 18 m below sea level. In studied area two main geomorphic units are distinguished, each with its own land features. These units are the bounding uplands and the Siwa floor (Figure 5). The bounding uplands are represented by the northern tableland (+ 100 m to + 150 m) and the southern sand dunes (0 to + 80 m). The Siwa floor (0 to -18 m) displays numerous landforms. These include the salt marshes, the lakes and the cultivated lands. (Misak et al., 1997).

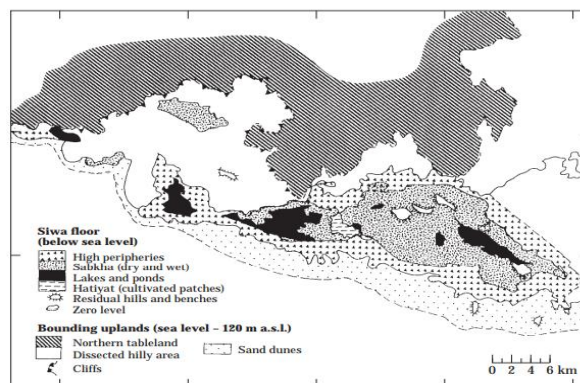


Figure 4: Geomorphologic map of Siwa (Misak, et al 1997, figure 2)

Natural Springs:

Ground-water is one of Siwa Oasis' most valuable resources. All springs in western Siwa issue from the Miocene limestone; those in the eastern part of the oasis emerge from the Eocene limestones (Idris, 1996). Hot springs and cold, salt and fresh, seem to occur haphazard. At one time it was said to possess 1000 (Stanley, 1912), now it contains about 230 springs (Samy, 2010), and of these only about 80 are of use for drinking and irrigation purposes. One of the most famous springs in Siwa is **Cleopatra spring** or Ain Juba, it is a stone pool fed by a natural hot spring, where the Egyptian queen herself is said to have swam on her visit to Siwa (Vivian, 2000). Tourists have all been doing the same for years now. Herodotus describes it as the eye of the sun in his Histories (Herodotus, 4.181.3 - 4).

"They have another spring of water besides, which is warm at dawn, and colder at market-time, and very cold at noon: and it is then that they water their gardens; as the day declines and the coldness abates, till at sunset the water grows warm. It becomes ever hotter till midnight, and then it boils and bubbles; after midnight it becomes ever cooler till dawn. This spring is called the spring of the sun."

Therapeutic Sand Baths:

Siwa is also well-known with its hot sand baths which are suitable for therapeutic tourism. One of the key spots for natural therapy is Dakroul Mountain, as a result of its hot sand, it is used to treat Rheumatism, Rheumatoid and General Weakness through burying the patient in hot sands (Abd el Azeem, 2010; Elsayw, 2012).

Salt Lakes:

Siwa has four principals Salt Lakes, these are El-Maraqi Lake, Siwa lake, Aghurmi Lake, and El-Zaituna Lake (Figure 6) They receive their water from numerous springs in their midst as well as from the fresh water fountains after they have irrigated the fields (El Hossary, 2013). Both locals and tourists can enjoy the natural beauty and swimming in these lakes with their crystal-clear water safely, as well as get a natural medical treatment for the eyes, skin and sinuses. Siwans traditionally utilize this salt in building their traditional houses and shaping their tools and lamps, believed to produce healing energy with the heat of the light source (Elkaftangui, et al. 2015).

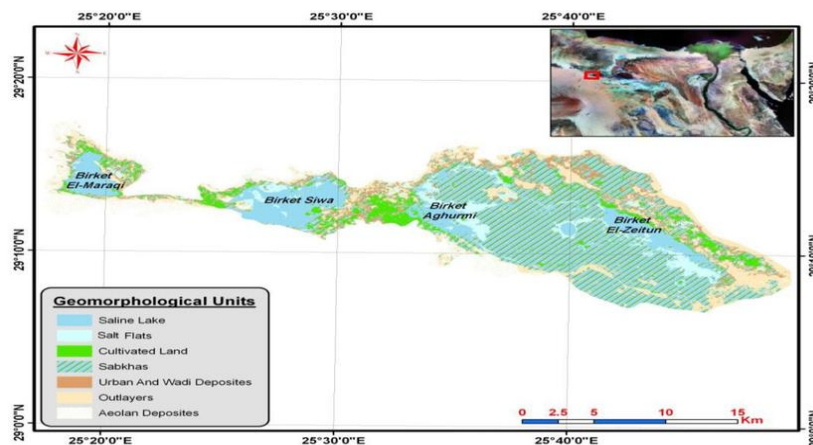


Figure 5: lakes of Siwa Oasis – (Abdallah, 2007)

The Great Sand Sea:

The Great Sand Seas considered one of the main attractions in Siwa (Figure 7). It covers approximately 150,000 km² and extends from Siwa Oasis on the north to the Gilf Kebir plateau on the south, its northwestern edge extends across the border into Libya (Haynes, 1982). Tourists are fond of enjoying the desert safari of rolling dunes along the Great Sand Sea.

Tourism services and facilities	0	0	0
Encouraging Investment Climate	1	5	5
Total	22	100	100

As shown in Table (3), 95% of stakeholders and members of local community think that natural tourism potentials are the most tourism attraction that attract investors in Siwa Oasis, while 5% of them think that it is due to the Encouraging Investment Climate.

Question 4: What are the Development Fields that Siwa Oasis still needs?

Table No (4) The Development Fields that Siwa Oasis Still Needs.

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Water Station	7	10	10
Power Station	8	12	12
Communications	9	13	13
Sanitation	14	20	20
Roads	19	27	27
Transportation	10	14	14
Others	3	4	4
Total	70	100	100

* More than one answer possibility.

It can be noticed from the data tabulated in Table (4), that 27% of stakeholders and members of local community think that roads infrastructures development is the most important field to be developed in Siwa Oasis, while 20% of them think that Siwa Oasis needs sanitation, 14% thinks the transportation is more important to be developed in Siwa Oasis, while 13% of them chose communications, another opinions think that water station, power station are also in need to development.

Question 5: What are the most attractive tourism patterns for tourists?

Table No (5) The Most Attractive Tourism Patterns for Tourists.

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Cultural Tourism	3	7	7
Ecotourism	13	26	26
Safaris Tourism	17	35	35
Adventure Tourism	3	7	7
Relax Tourism	12	25	25
Others	0	0	0
Total	48	100	100

* More than one answer possibility.

From the data illustrated in Table (5), 35% of answers stated that tourists always demand desert safari in Siwa, while 26% of them think that ecotourism is more attractive for tourists, 25% of them thought that Siwa presents perfect opportunities for tourists seeking relaxation, other 7% stated cultural tourism depending on monuments, historical sites and live heritage, another 7% of them thought adventure tourism is more attractive in Siwa.

Question 6: What are the most common reservation methods followed by tourists?

Table No (6) The Most Common Reservation Methods.

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Internet	8	29	29
Travel Agents	7	25	25
Personal Relationship	11	39	39
Others	2	7	7
Total	28	100	100

* More than one answer possibility.

Table (6) shows that 39% of answers emphasize the importance of the role of community members in booking tourism programs process through their personal relations with tourists, while 29% of them thought that electronic web-sites are more vital in booking and reservation process, 25% of answers chose travel agent and only 7% went to other methods.

Question 7: How did your tourism services are marketed?

Table No (7) Marketing Tourism Services.

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Internal Marketing Administration	7	30	30
External Specialized Marketing Companies	2	9	9
Personal Relationships with Tourists	14	61	61
Total	23	100	100

* More than one answer possibility.

From the data illustrated in Table (7), 61% answers emphasized that tourism services are marketed through personal relationships of local individuals with tourists, while 30% of them had internal marketing department to market their tourism services, and only 9% of them depended on external specialized marketing companies.

Question 8: What are the most common means used to market tourism programs in Siwa Oasis?

Table No (8) the most common means used to market tourism programs in Siwa Oasis

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Tv	1	4	4
Internet	20	84	84
Newspapers and magazines	0	0	0
International Exhibitions	2	8	8
Promotional Movies	1	4	4
Others	0	0	0
Total	24	100	100

* More than one answer possibility.

It can be noticed from the data tabulated in Table (8), that 84% of answers chose the Internet to be the most popular means used in marketing tourism programs in Siwa, while 8% chose International Exhibitions, and 2% went to TV and Promotional Movies.

Question 9: Is there any support from the government to market tourism programs in Siwa Oasis?

Table No (9) The Government Support to Market Tourism Programs in Siwa Oasis:

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	5	23	23
No	17	77	77
Total	22	100	100

From the data illustrated in Table (9), 77% of stakeholders and local community members consented that there is no effort from the Government side to support or assist marketing of tourism programs in Siwa, while 23% of them their answer was yes.

Question 10: If yes, what is the type of this support?

Table No (10) Type of The Government Support.

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Marketing Plans and Strategies	0	0	0
Joint Cooperation	1	20	20
International Exhibitions Participation	2	40	40
Training Programs	2	40	40
Others	0	0	0
Total	5	100	100

The previously mentioned particulars in Table (10) shows that 40% from the sample who chose (yes), supposed that Participation in International Exhibitions represents Government support, another 40% went to Training Programs, the rest 20% selected Joint Cooperation for marketing.

Question 11: What is the role played by the local community in marketing tourism programs?

Table No (11): The Role of Local Community in Marketing Tourism Programs in Siwa Oasis.

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Improving the Mental Image Abroad.	7	30	30
Launching Tourism Websites on the Internet	9	38	38
Marketing Tourism Programs for Travel and Tourism Agents.	4	16	16
Others	4	16	16
Total	24	100	100

* More than one answer possibility.

From the data illustrated in Table (11), 38% of the sample their opinion about the role of the local community in marketing tourism programs could be seen in their participations in Launching Tourism Websites on the Internet, 30% of them saw the community role is in Improving the Mental Image Abroad, while 16% supposed that the locals' role appeared in their efforts in marketing for travel and tourism Agents, while 16% chose others.

Question 12: What are the most common challenges that faced you in marketing tourism programs?

Table No (12) The Most Common Challenges That Faced Marketers.

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Technical Challenges	2	9	9
Administrative Constrains	1	4	4
Financial Challenges	11	46	46
Routine	2	9	9
Marketing Challenges	4	16	16
Others	4	16	16
Total	24	100	100

* More than one answer possibility.

The previously mentioned particulars in Table (12) shows that 46% of the sample thought financial challenges are the most common challenges for marketers, which according to their opinion could be overcome by attracting foreign capitals and facilitating loans from local banks, 16% of them supposed that the challenges are in the marketing process itself, as for the 9% whose selected technical challenges they called the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels – Matrouh University to provide them with some training courses to improve their skills in this field, the rest 16% supposed other challenged such as difficulties in communication with official authorities due to the geographical location of the oasis and its distance from the central administration.

Interviews Findings:

The analysis of the interviews with some experts, tourists, stakeholders and individuals indicated that the role of the local community in the marketing of this destination has until recently received very little attention on the national scale. On the other hand, a sense of shared visions and perceptions for tourism development appeared clearly among them, they also looked having a high awareness about the importance of tourism and its impacts, this could be summarized as follow:

- In common, there's agreement among interviewees about the importance of tourism to the local economy in Siwa,
- Many Siwans believe that tourism could soon become their main engine for economic growth alongside agriculture.
- They stated that their oasis has lots of tourism strengths and opportunities as well as great potential for tourism development.
- They do believe in their positive participation in presenting Siwa's cultural and natural heritage.
- They wish to see larger numbers of visitors coming to Siwa all over the year.
- Further, interviewees stressed their needs to many training and development courses in languages and digital marketing.
- They stressed their needs to more support from the government.

IV. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS:

The findings provide important insights into the value of community engagement in marketing planning of Siwa Oasis as a tourist destination. Local population proved their ability to control conditions and guides choices within their own territories according to the following findings:

- 1- Most of Capital invested in Siwa is done by investors from local community members through small tourism projects.
- 2- Most of the local investments are concentrated in hotels, restaurants and tourist trips, which are managed by individuals.
- 3- Natural tourism potentials are more common for investors to invest in Siwa Oasis.
- 4- Siwa Oasis needs infrastructure services such as roads, transportation, sanitation, power water stations.
- 5- Safari tourism, recreation and cultural tourism are among the most popular tourism types in Siwa Oasis.
- 6- Tourists depend on personal relationships with local community, internet and travel agents in organizing their tourism trips to Siwa.
- 7- There is rare support from the government towards tourism marketing that led the community to depend on their personal relations with tourists and the internet to market their tourism services.
- 8- The mentioned examples of the government support are the participation in international exhibitions and provision of some training programs.
- 9- The local community in Siwa played a major role in marketing tourism programs through: launching tourism websites on the internet, improving the mental image abroad, and marketing tourism programs for tourism agents.
- 10- Financial and Marketing challenges, administrative constraints and routine are among the difficulties and barriers that face the local community during their marketing process.
- 11- The local community proved that they have the ability to adapt to the world changing global market.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS:

The key recommendations drawn from the results and analyses presented in this study involve the following:

- 1- It is necessary to rethink marketing in a downturn to reframe challenges as a way to find new opportunities and looking with fresh eyes at the needs of people around us.
- 2- Tourism Marketing requires people who are affected by tourism to be involved in both the planning process and the implementation of policies and action plans.
- 3- Tourism Development in the Oasis is in need to be done with a high level of care and understanding of the local context particularly in regard to its the fragile economy, limited capacity and low levels of basic support services such as; transport infrastructure, health and education.
- 4- Enhancing collaboration between authorities, external private companies and local communities in order to achieve co-decision, co-production and co-management of tourism marketing programs.
- 5- Marketing planning of forms of tourism in Siwa required a balanced approach between the stated attitudes of the local population and the requirements of particular market segments.
- 6- Provide some institutional structure of marketing management in the oasis to enable effective control and optimal operation of all stakeholders of the supply of tourism.
- 7- The local community needs to be empowered to decide what forms of tourism facilities and programs they want to be developed in their respective communities.
- 8- Pay more attention to promote, support and capitalize cultural tourism programs in the Oasis.
- 9- Develop e-marketingstrategiesto enhance the promotionof Siwa's attractions worldwide.
- 10- Developing the life way for residents in Siwa commensurate with modern requirements without prejudice to the social and doctrinal aspects.
- 11- Take serious actions to develop or upgrade the infrastructure (paving the ways - sanitation - water - firefighting - electricity - communications)
- 12- Increase the role of High Educational Institutions within the area to improve the residents' qualifications to meet the needs of the labor market.
- 13- Provide several training courses in languages to improve the residents' skills in communicating with international tourists.
- 14- National and local governments should increase their responsibilities for the success of sustainable strategies and for the implementation of action programs in support of marketing process.
- 15- To maximize the contribution of tourism to the economic prosperity of the host destination.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The enhancement of host communities has become a major asset of tourist destinations. In doing so, this research was aimed to assess the current role of local community in Siwa in marketing Ecotourism and Cultural tourism programs, to identify possible and suitable actions to enhance their vital participation which, according to the research findings, proved its efficiency in overcoming some of the difficulties that faced the tourism industry in the oasis. Even if Siwa has many potentials to present several special types of natural and cultural tourism programs, it is not often the final choice of international traveler. As noted above, tourism in Siwa suffers from a number of weaknesses such as poor infrastructures; lack of integration at level of governance; inadequate personnel training for the international market; fragmented promotional activity abroad and scarce awareness of cultural tourism potentials and impacts. Actually, Siwa could be one of the top tourist destinations, but this requires lots of work to manage, promote, protect and make the most of its treasures.

It is believed that Siwa and its surrounding areas are among the most pristine and have a great potential to provide a very special visitors experience as well as, creating jobs, attracting private investments, bringing heritage to life again, and producing more wealth for local and national communities. But a radical change in tourism management and marketing policies should be done, before, to relaunch tourism services and facilities in these areas. Besides, tourism development should be increased with full participation, management and ownership of local people and without having negative impacts on them and the ecosystems of which they are a part. This development should also include: raising their living standards, developing facilities for visitors and them, and ensuring the types of development are consistent with the cultural, social and economic characteristics of this special community.

Finally, all indications show us a case of a community who proved that there is a better way to rethink marketing in a downturn instead of shrinking the business. According to the case study, members of the host community in Siwa proved that they are able to reframe current challenges to find out new opportunities and look with fresh eyes at the requirement of the changeable global tourism market.

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