

The role of tourism in achieving sustainable development in the Arab world

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Abstract:

Today, the tourism sector has become one of the vital and alternative sectors to achieve sustainable development goals at the global and Arab levels, and given the natural, cultural, archaeological, historical, tourism components and qualifications that the Arab world possesses that develop the role of tourism in sustainable development, we tried in this study to describe the role of the Arab tourism sector through its contribution to Some economic indicators and analysis of its competitiveness, and we concluded that the political instability and security deterioration in some Arab countries such as Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Libya, along with weak tourist infrastructure, technological delays, and low quality of tourism services, especially financial ones, led to the weakness of its sustainable development role.

Keywords: Tourism, sustainable development, the Arab world

Jel Classification Codes: z3,z32

1. Introduction:

Today, the tourism sector at the global level has become one of the most important sectors in achieving sustainable development goals and diversifying sources of income, especially for countries that suffer from a lack of natural resources such as oil, natural gas and minerals. From year to year, Arab tourism varies between medical, sports and religious tourism, so that the Arab world has sulfur and hot water and various medicinal herbs in order to practice medical tourism, such as Tunisia and Algeria, in addition to religious places such as Hajj and Umrah in Saudi Arabia and the shrines of the prophets and the righteous saints of God in Jordan, Yemen, Syria and the deserts The vast desert for desert sports.

With the beginning of the millennium, the number of tourists in the Arab world decreased due to wars and political instability in many Arab countries, which were considered among the most important Arab regions that attract tourists, such as Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen. Infrastructure and the provision of various means of transportation in the tourist areas, while providing security and improving the quality of tourism and banking services in order to keep pace with the ranks of developed countries.

Problematic Study

To what extent does the tourism sector contribute to achieving sustainable development in the Arab world?

Hypotheses of Study:

- The Arab world possesses important tourism potentials to increase its sustainable development role.
- The tourism sector contributes significantly to sustainable development.
- The tourism sector in the Arab world suffers from several imbalances and shortcomings.

Study Methodology

In our study, we have relied on the descriptive analytical approach, through data collection, analysis and extrapolation, through the World Tourism Organization and the World Bank, with reliance on books and magazines in the theoretical aspect.

Study Axes: In our study we have relied on three main axes:

First: Addressing the concept of tourism, its objectives and types.

Second: Defining the concept of sustainable development, methods of achieving it and its indicators.

Third: Studying the role of tourism in sustainable development in the Arab world by mentioning the elements of Arab tourist attraction, and the contribution of tourism to the gross domestic product, employment and exports

2. Literature review:

- A study labor- (هاني، 2013) under the title “The Competitiveness of the Tourism Sector in the Arab Countries.” This study aimed to focus on some indicators of the competitiveness of the tourism sector in the Arab countries, and concluded that despite the comparative advantages these countries have in attracting tourists, However, its share of world tourism is still much lower than its potential, because the tourism sector in these countries faces major constraints, including the lack of investments in infrastructure and basic services

- A study (2020، سيدا عمر،) entitled “Affordable Tourism, a New Pattern for Upgrading Tourism in Some Arab Countries.” This study aimed to identify the concept of tourism and facilitation and analyze tourism indicators in the Arab world, with an introduction to the initiatives of Arab countries in order to establish inclusive and easy tourism. It concluded that the category of people with special needs constitutes 10% to 15% of the volume of tourists around the world, which represents 98 million tourists with disabilities. Therefore, several initiatives were presented to encourage inclusive tourism, especially in the Arab world.

-A study (2021، حراث، رضاني، و فاتحي،) entitled “The competitiveness of the tourism and travel sector in some Arab countries of the Maghreb according to the report of the World Economic Forum.” This study aimed to analyze the competitiveness of Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco in order to extract the strengths and weaknesses of each country , by analyzing competitiveness indicators according to the report of the World Economic Forum, and the study concluded that there is a relative difference between the sample countries in the variables of the competitiveness report, with the presence also missed in terms of tourism competitiveness globally, and Algeria has the opportunity to excel in desert and fever tourism while waiting for the development of desert tourism, and it remains for Tunisia Excellence in beach tourism and Morocco cultural tourism.

- A study (2022، مشتر و خثير،) entitled “The impact of the outbreak of the Corona virus on the tourism and air transport sectors in the Arab countries.” which resulted in a significant decrease in the number of travelers and tourism revenues, in addition to a decrease in its contribution to the gross domestic product and endangering millions of jobs in one of the most intensive sectors of the economy.

3. tourism:

3-1 The concept of tourism: The concepts of tourism have varied and developed with the economic and social development of countries, research that can be defined as “an activity that can be practiced by moving between

different countries or within one country, and then the term tourism refers to all the activities practiced by visitors to a place, whether they are visitors for one night Or they will prepare on the same day” (2008، ستيقن، 2008

3-2 The social and cultural dimensions of tourism:

There are several social and cultural dimensions of tourism, which are ethical considerations and deviations, tourism and terrorism, the impact on culture, the imbalance of priorities and the pattern of benefits distribution, competition for local resources, tourism and international understanding (2002، زيتون،)

Ethical considerations and deviations: international tourism has an impact on the host societies and this is the result of the arrival of tourists from different countries and social values, so that tourism affects young groups through prostitution, pornographic films and sex tourism, especially in East Asian countries, and that business tourists are the most practicing group of these Among the deviations that affect the host societies, especially the Islamic and Arab societies, such as immodest dress for tourists and eating forbidden things.

- ✓ **Tourism and Terrorism:** In addition to the behavior of tourists in the host countries, they may also be exposed to several crimes such as murder, rape and theft, and this is because of the large money they carry with them, especially in poor and insecure countries.
- ✓ **Impact on Culture:** Tourism has negatively affected the culture of local host communities sometimes, so that tourists pay huge sums to learn about the culture of Western societies such as Buddhist culture, attend Buddhist ceremonies and visit religious sites, which leads to crowding out the local population, especially on religious occasions due to the immoral behavior of tourists .
- ✓ **Imbalance of priorities and the pattern of benefits distribution:** Tourism can also have a negative impact on the host societies, as tourism requires high-cost infrastructure for tourist attractions such as roads, transportation, hotels, restaurants and banking services, while the local community suffers from a lack of treatment and health care facilities. Schools, clean drinking water, public utilities and social housing.
- ✓ **Tourism and International Convergence:** It is recognized that tourism plays a role in the convergence of peoples among themselves, but in fact the tourism activity results in several cultural and social

disputes, such as disputes between the tourist and the host, and the disputes between sectors within the host community, such as the conflict between the tourism sector and the fishing and agricultural sector, for example.

3-3 Tourism components:

There are several components of tourism that attract tourists, including:

- The factors and elements that attract visitors: they are represented in natural resources such as terrain, mountains, rivers, reserves, forests, seas and beaches, and also include human elements such as archaeological, historical and religious sites and cities of playgrounds and amusement parks.

Accommodation facilities and services: such as guest houses, hotels and tourist restaurants.

- Transportation services: It includes various means of transportation such as planes, trains, wagons, horses, ferries, etc.

Various services: such as travel and tourism agencies, police, treatment centers, banks, tourist information centers, and tour guides.

Infrastructure services: the existence of a network of roads, railways, communications, all means of wired and wireless communication, and potable water.

Institutional elements: include marketing plans and tourism promotion programs such as: enactment of legislation, laws, general organizational structures, motives for attracting investment in the tourism sector, and employee education and training programs in the tourism sector (دراكة، العلوان، ابو رحمة، و الكافي، 2014)

3-4 Types of tourism:

- ✓ **Green tourism:** is tourism that is based on the production of a tourist product while preserving the environment and various natural resources. Brandt commission report 1980: Any tourism development should include environmental care, World Tourism Organization declaration in Manila, WTO manila declaration 1980: Considering all resources to be the heritage of the peoples, United Nations Environment Protection Program / World Tourism Organization UNEP WTO accord 1982 Invitation To develop tourism on solid scientific grounds that preserve the environment in particular, Bruntland report 1987 Sustainable tourism development with ensuring economic growth, in addition to these agreements there are also other agreements and conventions held to preserve the

environment, including the Earth Conference in 1992 in Brazil as well as other forums in 1993 and 1999" (دراكة، العلوان، ابو رحمة، و الكافي، (2014)

- ✓ **Eco-tourism:** Eco-tourism is defined as "traveling to visit natural sites in order to enjoy nature and its accompanying cultural landmarks in a spirit of environmental responsibility that ensures the preservation of environmental sites and does not harm them, reduces the negative effects of the visit and provides opportunities for economic and social participation for the local population" (الرواضية، (2013)

Elements of ecotourism: In order to attract tourists, ecotourism needs several distinct elements, including:

Scarcity: The scarcity of environmental natural resources leads to an increase in the competitiveness of the eco-tourism product.

The difficulty of imitating the eco-tourism resource: The development of tourism has led to the emergence of ecological or non-environmental tourism products based on imitation of the original tourist sites, such as the establishment of ice skating fields in the hot environment in the Emirates, and this leads to competition from the original tourist products. The ability and ease of access to eco-tourism sites through the availability of infrastructure and various means of transportation.

- ✓ **E-tourism:** E-tourism is defined as "a type of tourism in which some of the transactions that take place between a tourist institution and another or between a tourist institution and a tourist consumer are implemented through the use of information and communication technology, so that offers of tourism services through the international information network, the Internet, meet the desires of the masses of tourists Those wishing to accept these tourist services provided via the Internet" (دراكة، العلوان، ابو رحمة، و الكافي، (2014)

- ✓ **Medical or medical tourism:** Medical tourism is one of the most important types of tourism for the tourist as well as for countries because it generates a lot of income. The sick tourist visits countries that are characterized by therapeutic tourist sites such as mineral water, hot springs, medicinal herbs, healthy climate, sand baths in addition to To hospitals and treatment homes for various diseases, such as rheumatism.

- ✓ **Seminars and conferences tourism:** “It is tourism that occurs as a result of meetings held to discuss a specific issue or problem, and the purpose of which may be to draw up a future strategy for an organization that includes more than one country. The conference sites are distinguished by their presence in major cities and tourist cities” (دراكة، العلوان، ابو رحمة، و الكافي، 2014)
- ✓ **Learning and training tourism:** “This type of tourism is focused on scientifically, intellectually, industrially and technologically advanced countries, as these countries encourage travel for the purpose of studying in universities or institutes or holding seminars or educational or training courses, such as a course in learning the art of cooking or studying a specific language Or in the field of computers and the Internet” (دراكة، العلوان، ابو رحمة، و الكافي، 2014)
- ✓ **Cultural tourism:** Metalka defined it in his dictionary of tourism as “a form of tourism that aims at the rich past of peoples through archaeological centers, historical sites, architecture and antiquities.” Another definition was mentioned in the Oxford Dictionary as “customs, civilization, and achievements in a certain period or in a people of peoples, arts and all manifestations the other for human intellectual achievement at the community level” (دراكة، العلوان، ابو رحمة، و الكافي، 2014)
- ✓ **Sustainable tourism:** It is the efforts aimed at reducing the negative environmental impacts associated with the wide range of tourism activities and the effective contribution to preserving the environmental characteristics and data within the framework of what has become known as sustainable development. The World Tourism Organization has defined sustainable tourism as “that which meets the needs of tourists and sites In addition to protecting and providing opportunities for the future, they are the guiding rules in the field of resource management in a way that fulfills the requirements of economic, social and cultural issues, and achieves cultural integration, environmental factors, biodiversity and support of life systems. (دراكة، العلوان، ابو رحمة، و الكافي، 2014)

Benefits of sustainable tourism: There are several benefits of sustainable tourism, including:

Ensure a fair distribution of benefits and costs.

- Better encouragement of tourists on the impact of the natural, cultural and human environment.

Creating local jobs in the tourism sector and other sectors related to tourism.

- Bringing in capital, which will benefit the local economy.

Sustainable tourism is based on improving infrastructure and various means of transportation.

4. sustainable development

4-1 The concept of sustainable development: sustainable development is defined as “achieving rates of development in the available resources beyond population growth rates and leading to the provision of the special needs of future generations from these resources” (فرغلي حسن، 2007) Therefore, sustainable development consists of the following elements: the balance of resources The natural available ones, including the quantity of water, the areas available for agriculture and buildings, the number of forest trees and fruit trees, in addition to oil and natural gas wells, green areas, various birds, pets and non-pets, and various elements of biological diversity.

4-2 Sustainable Development Goals:

-Rationalizing the management of the use of national natural resources.

- Exploit as much as possible from the resources of the industrially developed countries.

-Development within the framework of self-reliance within local and national borders and in the constraints imposed by natural resources.

-Providing assistance to the poor.

-Development that preserves the environment and achieves stable productivity and profit rates as much as possible in the long run.

- Focusing on the human element and its role in the foregoing goals (دراكة، العلوان، ابو رحمة، و الكافي، 2014)

4-3 Methods of achieving sustainable development: To ensure sustainable development, there must be several methods that must be taken into account, as follows:

- **Efficiency of environmental management systems:** To reduce environmental pollution and depletion of natural resources, an environmental policy must be followed that works to reduce the waste of factories and production units in order to combat environmental pollution.

-**The optimal distribution and use of the available resources:** a policy must be adopted by the state that works on the optimal distribution of the available natural resources because of their limitations and non-renewal, such as oil

wells and water, for example, and the search for other renewable resources such as solar energy, for example.

-Utilizing the available production capacities: Industrial and service establishments must produce products and provide services according to market needs for their continuity and optimal use of their available production capacities in order to achieve development goals.

4-4 Indicators of sustainable development: There are several indicators of sustainable development developed by the United Nations, as follows (زاوية، سمايل، و بوخزنة، 2019):

➤ **Human Development Indicators:** This indicator is represented in achieving human development through the following:

- A decent standard of living can be achieved by increasing the average per capita income.
- Educational level, nutrition and health care needed.
- Providing jobs.
- Individuals enjoy political and social freedom.

➤ **Environmental Indicators:** This indicator includes all efforts made to preserve the environment through:

- Per capita share of arable agricultural land.
- Change in forest areas: this indicator shows the percentage change in the area of green lands to the total area of the country. If the percentage of this indicator is high, it indicates the possibility of increasing agricultural production, while the opposite indicates the expansion of desertification.
- Desertification: the measurement of the lands affected by desertification and their ratio to the total area of the country. Reducing the desert area is one of the conditions for achieving sustainable development.

➤ **Economic indicators:** They are as follows:

- Per capita GDP.
- The share of total fixed investment to GDP.
- Exports and imports of goods and services.
- Annual per capita energy consumption.
- Current account balance as a percentage of GDP.
- Total external debt as a percentage of GDP.
- Net development aid as a percentage of GDP.

➤ **Social Indicators:**

- Unemployment rate: the ratio of unemployed persons to the total labor force.
- The human poverty rate.
- Population living below the poverty line: it is expressed as the percentage of the population living below the country's normal standard of living.

-Population growth rate: It is an average annual change in relation to the size of the population.

-Literacy rate for adults.

- Gross secondary school enrollment rate.

-Average life expectancy at birth.

-The number of people who do not have access to safe water and health services.

5. The role of tourism in sustainable development in the Arab world.

5-1 Elements of tourist attractions in the Arab world: The Arab world possesses a group of diverse and distinct tourist destinations that lead to attracting tourists every year, and increasing the importance of the Arab tourism sector in achieving the requirements of sustainable development. Continents with the Arab countries enjoying the ancient cultural and historical heritage, in addition to their moderate climate throughout the year, which the tourists urge for and the multiplicity of its tourist attractions among the ancient mosques, ancient churches, museums, beaches, cities and tourist amusement parks, and the most important elements of Arab tourism are the following(2022، كردي) :

- ✓ **Coasts:** extending to the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, the Gulf of Oman and the Arab, in addition to the diversity of the coastal plains in terms of climate and nature. Desert plains such as Mariout in Egypt and the Jafara plain in Libya, and there are narrow coastal plains such as the plains extending on both sides of the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea and parts of the Gulf of Oman, and the coastal plains overlooking the Arabian Gulf are sandy coastal plains mostly low covered by some marshes such as Sabkhat Al-Mati .
- ✓ **Archaeological and historical areas:** such as the pyramids, Luxor and Aswan in Egypt, the Gardens of Babylon in Iraq, the city of Palmyra in Syria, Petra in Jordan, the Kasbah in Algeria, the old city of Sanaa and the historical city of Zabid in Yemen.
- ✓ **Places, places of worship and religious shrines:** Tourism constitutes a large part of the income of a number of Arab countries. Among the most prominent religious tourist attractions: the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Palestine, Al-Azhar University in Egypt, the Great Mosque of Bani Umayyah in Syria, the University of Al-Qarawiyyin and Hassan II Mosque in Morocco, the Great Imam Mosque in Iraq, and

the Great Mosque in Samarra Iraq, Uqba Ibn Nafi Mosque in Kairouan, Tunisia, Al-Zaytouna Mosque in Tunisia, and Sheikh Zayed Mosque in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

- ✓ **Advanced tourist facilities:** in Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Sharm El Sheikh and Hurghada in Egypt, and Fez, Marrakesh and Agadir in Morocco. Jerash in Jordan, and various tourist cities in Lebanon such as Baalbek and Sidon, as well as Syrian tourist cities.
- ✓ **Arab deserts:** The Arab deserts represent an important tourist destination to attract tourists and this is the result of their human, biological and cultural diversity, so that tourists flock every year to the Arab deserts and this is for the sake of practicing desert sports or for treatment or enjoying the landscapes and getting to know the desert culture or for hunting, The Arab desert consists of several important elements, including sand, plants, oases, animals, rocks and water. These components lead to the diversity of Arab desert tourism, including (2012 غرايبيية خليف،):

- **Arab desert eco-tourism:** by setting up camps and trips on camels, cars or planes to see the sand dunes, in addition to holding cultural festivals in Arab oases such as Hail Oasis in Saudi Arabia, Palmyra in Syria, Warm in Jordan, Tamanrasset Oasis in Algeria, and Siwa Oasis in Egypt, Qrnaw in Yemen, the oases of Ouarzazate in Morocco, and the oases of Ghadames and Murzuq in Libya.

- **Arab desert sports tourism:** There are many types of desert tourism between ancient and modern, including the practice of hunting of various kinds, such as hunting deer and rabbits, in addition to hunting snakes and scorpions that are used in medical treatment, with desert sports such as safari and rallying, the Pharaohs Rally in Egypt and the Hail Rally in Syria, in addition to sports Horse and camel racing, mountain climbing, parachute jumping.

- **Arab religious desert tourism:** The Arab deserts contain a group of religious tourist attractions, including the presence of several Islamic mosques, the shrines of the Companions and their mausoleums, in addition to the shrines of the guardians of the righteous. The Girls' Monastery in Sinai, Egypt.

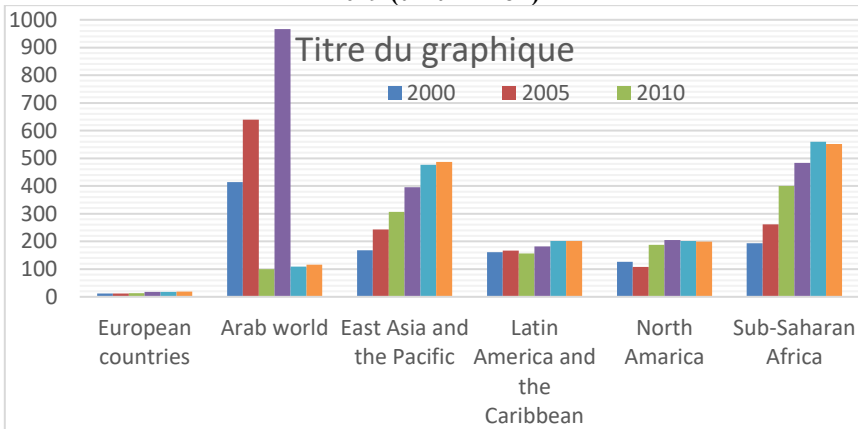
- **Historical and archaeological Arab desert tourism:** Civilizations have left over time a group of archaeological and historical monuments,

including the desert palaces, the most famous of which are the palaces on the Tunisian side, numbering 150 palaces, and each palace contains more than 300 rooms. His age and Qasr Al-Kharana and Qasr Al-Hallabat.

-Therapeutic Arab arena: This type of tourism depends on air, mineral baths, sand, and a healing weapon that depends on the clean air that abounds in the Arab deserts, especially for people who suffer from allergic diseases, in addition to medical tourism that relies on mineral baths and sand, especially for people. Those who suffer from rheumatism and skin problems.

5-2 The number of tourists coming to the Arab world: The tourism sector is one of the sectors that have been greatly affected by the health crisis at the global and Arab levels, and this has led to a decrease in the number of tourists during the years of the crisis, but the tourism sector in the Arab world has been affected by the number of security and political stability, and we will try to The figure below analyzes the evolution of the number of tourists in the world during the period 2000-2019, that is, before the pandemic.

Fig .1. The evolution of the number of incoming tourists during the period 2000-2019 (unit million)



Source: Prepared by the researcher based on World Bank statistics

We note from the above figure that the number of tourists in most regions of the world is constantly evolving from the year 2000 to the year 2019, except for the Arab world, in which the number of tourists in 2015 reached about 990 million, which is the largest number because the Arab world is rich in several tourism components. Important, including archaeological, cultural and historical, then this number decreased during 2018 and 2019 to about 100 million tourists due to insecurity and political instability in several countries,

including Iraq, Syria, Libya, Lebanon, and Europe came in last place in terms of the number of tourists, that is, less About 50 million tourists in all years.

5-3 The contribution of tourism to the GDP: The contribution of tourism to the GDP in the Arab world has declined due to the cessation of tourism, whether international or local, as it did not exceed 8% as a percentage of GDP during the year 2020, especially for Saudi Arabia due to the cessation of religious tourism in it, which is Hajj, Umrah, conference tourism, exhibitions in the United Arab Emirates, beach tourism in Egypt, and medical tourism in Tunisia and Algeria as a result of closing all mineral baths.

Table 1. The contribution of travel and availability to the GDP in the Arab world during the year 2019-2020

Country	The percentage of the gross domestic product		The value is one million dollars	
	2020	2019	2020	2019
Algeria	3.6%	5.6%	4,693.7	9,119.0
Egypt	3.8%	8.8%	14.4	32.0
Iraq	4.2%	7.9%	21.5	41.8
Jordan	4.7%	16.3%	1,910.8	6,909.7
Kuwait	3.3%	5.3%	3,492.8	7,117.6
Lebanon	4.2%	19.4%	3,637.5	9,041.5
Libya	1.5%	2.7%	571.5	2,145.4
Morocco	6.2%	12.1%	7,044.6	14,634.4
Oman	3.4%	7.0%	2,260.6	5,332.6
Qatar	7.5%	10.4%	11,727.4	17,891.3
Saudi Arabia	7.1%	9.8%	48.5	79.2
Sudan	2.4%	4.3%	1,339.8	2,767.3
Syria	3.4%	8.7%	527.6	1,445.9
Tunisia	7.3%	14.0%	2	5,991.1
United Emirates	5.4%	11.6%	19,482.1	49,115.0
Yemen	3.4%	5.5%	899.2	1,530.6

Source: World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)

The above table shows that the contribution of tourism to the gross domestic product in the Arab countries has decreased significantly from 2019 to 2000 in all countries, and this is due to the beginning of the Corona pandemic in 2019 and its continuation during the year 2020, which led to the total closure, which led to a decrease in tourism revenues, Lebanon ranked first during 2019 with a rate of 19.4%, followed by Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco, UAE and Qatar

with 16.3%, 14.0%, 12.1%, 11.6%, 10.4%, respectively during the same year, so that Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco possess archaeological and historical tourism components as well as these Countries have the components of medical tourism, such as mineral baths and therapeutic water, while Qatar and the UAE have advanced and non-traditional tourism investment, such as infrastructure and advanced transportation, with the presence of modern tourist resorts. Countries such as Syria, Iraq and Libya, as for other countries, they have important tourist qualifications, but they do not have infrastructure, important means of transportation, and banks such as Algeria, but during the year 2020, the percentage of contribution to all countries did not exceed Countries 8% and this is due to the Corona virus.

5-4 The contribution of tourism to the provision of jobs: Employees in the tourism sector have been affected in a very large way compared to other sectors due to the Corona pandemic on the one hand and on the other hand the security instability in some Arab countries, so that the percentage of tourism’s contribution to employment did not exceed 18% in all Arab countries, as shown In the figure I, as a result of the closure of hotels and restaurants and the suspension of transportation, and there are economic expectations regarding the return of the activity of the tourism sector during the year 2023.

Table 1. The contribution of travel and tourism to employment in the Arab world during the years 2019-2020

Country	The percentage of the total employment		number of jobs [thousand jobs]	
	2020	2019	2020	2019
Algeria	4.4 %	5.8 %	457.1	634.1
Egypt	6.2 %	9.2 %	1,571.1	2,415.2
Iraq	6.5 %	7.4 %	1,544.9	1,852.0
Jordan	15.3 %	(18.6 %	195.8	255.6
Kuwait	5.0 %	5.8 %	104.6	133.2
Lebanon	(17.4	19.1 %	318.5	430.4
Libya	2.1 %	3.0 %	40.3	60.0

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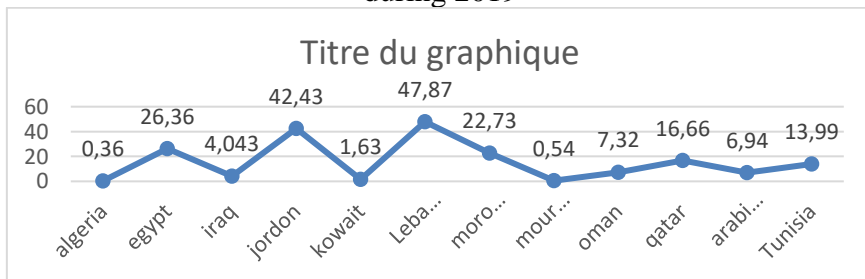
Morocco	8.7 %	12.3 %	929.3	1,345.6
Oman	5.8 %	7.0 %	117.9	150.0
Qatar	10.2	12.5 %	210.3	262.3
Saudi Arab	(11.0 %	12.2 %	1,424.6	1,584.4
Sudan	4.3 %	6.3 %	399.5	606.6
Syria	5.2 %	6.2 %	126.5	163.4
Tunisia	7.7 %	11.0 %	260.1	378.6
United Emir	9.4 %	11.2 %	574.3	749.2
Yemen	4.1 %	4.9 %	233.2	290.5

Source: World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)

We also note the decrease in the number of jobs in the tourism sector from 2019 to 2020, and this is the result of the pandemic in all Arab countries, and the percentage of tourism’s contribution to employment during the year 2020 Lebanon ranked first with 17.4%, followed by Jordan with 15.3%, then Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the Emirates by 11 %, 10.2% and 9.4%, respectively, and this is the result of the presence of tourism components with the development of tourism services in these countries, and Libya ranked last with 2.1% due to political instability.

5-5 Contribution of tourism to exports: The percentage of tourism’s contribution to exports has also decreased as a result of the pandemic in the Arab countries, and we will explain in the figure below by analyzing the contribution of tourism to exports during the year 2019, i.e. the beginning of the pandemic.

Fig1. The percentage of tourism's contribution to exports in the Arab world during 2019



Source: Prepared by the researcher based on World Bank statistics

We note from the above figure that the percentage of tourism’s contribution to exports did not exceed 50% during 2019 in all countries. Lebanon ranked first with 47.87% because Lebanon is a non-oil country and mostly depends in its exports on tourism, then Jordan came in second place with 42.44% Because it has important tourism components with the development of the performance of tourism services as we mentioned previously, Egypt came in third place with 26.63%, then Morocco in fourth place with 22.73%, while Mauritania, Kuwait and Algeria reached the last ranks, in which the percentage of tourism’s contribution to exports did not exceed 2% This is a result of the low level of tourist services provision, as these countries depend largely on petroleum and minerals for their exports.

5-6 Competitiveness of the tourism sector in the Arab world: To ensure sustainable tourism development, the Arab countries must provide an appropriate tourism environment in order to continue in the market in the face of foreign competition, and work to top the ranks of global tourism competitiveness. The World Economic Forum has prepared a report on the competitiveness of tourism and travel For the first time in 2007, in order to rank countries and indicate the strengths and weaknesses of each country through the overall travel and tourism index, this indicator measures international openness, travel and tourism priorities, information and communication technology readiness, human resources and the labor market, health and hygiene, safety and security, environment Business, competitive price, degree of environmental sustainability, air transport infrastructure, port infrastructure, tourism services infrastructure, natural and cultural resources, and we will try in the table below to analyze the ranking of Arab countries’ competitiveness during 2015, 2017, 2019

Table 3. Ranking of Arab countries in terms of tourism and travel competitiveness for the year 2015, 2017, 2019

country	{140}2019		{136}2017		{141}2015	
	score	Rank	score	Rank	score	Rank
Algeria	3.1	118	3.1	116	2.9	123
Bahrain	3.9	64	3.9	60	3.9	60
Egypt	3.9	65	3.6	74	3.5	83
Jordon	3.6	84	3.6	75	3.6	77
Kuwait	3.4	96	3.3	100	3.3	103
Lebanon	3.4	100	3.4	96	3.3	94
Mauritania	2.7	135	2.6	132	2.6	137
morocco	3.9	66	3.8	65	3.8	62
Oman	4.0	58	3.8	66	3.8	65
Qatar	4.1	51	4.1	47	4.1	43
Arabic Saudi	3.9	69	3.8	63	3.8	64

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Tunisia	3.6	85	3.5	87	3.5	79
The United Arab Emirates	4.4	33	4.5	29	4.4	24
Yemen	2.4	140	2.4	136	2.6	138

Source: Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index 2019 edition

By reading the above table and analyzing it, we find the following:

Most of the Arab countries declined in their international ranking for the overall travel and tourism index from 2015 to 2019 due to several factors, including the State of Qatar, which fell from 43rd to 51st place, while maintaining the index's score at 4.1 during all years, and this is a result of the decline in its tourism performance, where it achieved the rank 88 in the Travel and Tourism Priorities Index 92 in cultural resources and business travel, and Saudi Arabia from 64th with a degree of 3.8 to 69th with a degree of 3.9 due to lack of international openness, lack of cultural and natural tourism resources and poor environmental sustainability, so that it ranked last in these indicators, which is ranked 137, 133, 106 as well As for Tunisia, due to lack of international openness, 103rd and lack of cultural resources, 88th, it moved from 79th, with a score of 3.5, to 85th, with a score of 3.6, in the overall index of competitiveness of travel and tourism. As for the United Arab Emirates, from 24th to 33rd, while maintaining a score of 4.4 due to lack of resources. Natural tourism, where it ranked 103 internationally, and Morocco from 62nd with a degree of 3.8 to 66th with a degree of 3.9 due to the deterioration of security, where it ranked 28th internationally In this indicator, and as a result of the weak tourist trade environment, lack of health and hygiene, poor tourism security and a lack of human resources in the health sector, Jordan fell from 77th to 84th rank while maintaining the supervisor's score with 3.6, as well as for Bahrain from 60th to 64th rank with Maintaining a score of 3.6 during all years.

- Some countries improved their ranking internationally for the overall index of travel and tourism from 2015 to 2019 first, Algeria from 123rd place with a score of 2.9 to rank 118 with a degree of 3.1. To attract tourists, it ranked 76th in the health and hygiene index and 53rd in the security and safety index. Second, Egypt ranked from 83rd with a score of 3.5 to 65th with a score of 3.9 due to the priority given to the importance of travel and tourism and its low prices, ranking 3 internationally in the price competitiveness index and 31 in the ranking of travel and tourism priorities. Thirdly, Kuwait ranked from 103rd with a degree of 3.3 to 96th with a degree of 3.4, where it achieved a remarkable development in the field of information and communication technology with security, with a rank of 39 in the ICT readiness index and 44 in security and safety, fourthly, Oman from 65th with a degree of 3.8 to 58th

with a degree of 4 due to the development of Its technological, security and price environment by achieving the 3rd rank internationally in the security and safety index, 31st in price competitiveness, and 46th in the readiness of information and communications.

- The UAE ranked first in the Arab world in the overall competitiveness index for travel and tourism during all years, Qatar ranked second in the Arab world, and Yemen ranked last in the Arab world and internationally during all years due to the poor performance of all its competitive indicators, only the price competitiveness index ranked 17th internationally.

6. Conclusion

Tourism has a great and important role in achieving sustainable development in the Arab world, and this is the result of its diverse tourism potentials, which vary from one country to another. And restaurants, and tourism is one of the most important sources of income, and one of the most important components of exports, but through our study, we concluded the following:

- Diversity of the Arab world with resources, components and tourist areas to attract tourists.

- Lack of tourism investment in many Arab countries, despite having important tourism qualifications, such as Algeria.

Weak infrastructure in the Arab world and the poor quality of tourism and banking services.

The lack of tourist information in the Arab world.

Arab tourism has been greatly affected by the pandemic.

The reluctance of tourists in some Arab countries as a result of the lack of security and political stability, such as Iraq, Yemen and Syria.

- Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Tunisia, Qatar and Morocco occupy the first positions in terms of the percentage of tourism's contribution to GDP, employment and exports.

- The occupation of Algeria, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen and Kuwait the other centers in terms of the percentage of tourism's contribution to the GDP, employment and exports as a result of the poor quality of tourist services and the general political stability.

In order to develop Arab tourism and achieve sustainable development goals, we offer some of the following recommendations:

Providing tourist security in the Arab world, especially for foreign tourists who are frequently exposed to robbery and kidnapping for ransom demand.

- Increasing tourism spending in order to develop infrastructure and means of transportation.

Establishing banks and improving the quality of banking services.

Establishing tourist resorts and encouraging desert sports.

Improving the quality of providing tourism services, especially in hotels and restaurants, through speed and cleanliness.

Restoration and protection of historical tourist monuments, such as ancient cities.

- Interest in information and tourist guides.

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