

The strategy of developing the domestic tourism sector in Algeria in light of the Corona pandemic

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Abstract:

Domestic (internal) tourism is currently considered as an important strategic option, as it is one of the most important sectors contributing to achieving economic and social development goals, as Algeria has natural, cultural, and heritage tourism potentials that make it a tourist destination and a tourist attraction by excellence, and we have relied in our research on the descriptive approach in an attempt to know the strategy followed by the government in order to advance this sector in light of the significant decline left by the Corona Covid-19 pandemic, the results showed that appropriate strategies must be followed that target the internal tourism markets in order to attract more tourists by providing various services and entertainment at the same time, at competitive prices with diversification of promotional activities and marketing through social networking sites, in addition to attention to monitoring, evaluation and follow-up of tourist destinations and attention to their cleanliness.

Key words: tourism, domestictourism, Algeria, development, element of tourist attractions.

JEL Classification Codes :M310,N01,O1,Q01.

Introduction:

Orientation to domestic tourism has become an imperative in light of the health conditions experienced by the world in general and Algeria in particular, represented by the Corona pandemic (COVID-19), which affected the tourism sector in a very important way, according to the World Tourism Organization, the tourism sector lost 1300 billion dollars a year By 2020, due to restrictions on movement, 100 to 120 million direct jobs are threatened, especially in small and medium enterprises. However, the destination of Algerian tourism remains unknown to many tourists, both internally and externally, which is what had to be worked on in the coming period to turn Algeria into a tourist destination with distinction, given the many destinations that shorten the four seasons and rich human civilization treasures.

The stagnation experienced by the sector requires everyone to strengthen joint cooperation to contribute to achieving sustainable tourism development and making it wealth-generating through the promotion of domestic tourism.

Domestic or local tourism is the tourism activity that is carried out by the citizens of the country for its various cities that have tourism attraction or tourist attractions worth visiting and that are within the borders of the state and do not go outside its borders.

Given Algeria's availability of many tourism components (natural, human...) the authorities have attached great importance to the advancement of the sector, and this interest is represented in the formulation of the guideline for tourism development (SDAT2030), and the latter includes in its content a strategy that makes Algeria a tourist image with distinction and enables it to achieve the desired objectives of the sector by focusing on the aspect of internal tourism to Algeria and giving it a high priority no less important than international tourism (external tourism).

The problematic: How can domestic tourism contribute to revitalizing the tourism movement in Algeria?

For solving this problematic, we have to answer the following questions:

1- What is meant by domestic tourism, and what are its types and objectives?

2- Does Algeria have the necessary ingredients to stimulate domestic tourism?

3- What are the obstacles to domestic tourism in Algeria? What are the best ways and means to increase the volume and activity of domestic tourism in Algeria in light of the Corona pandemic?

Hypotheses:

1- Domestic tourism is considered as an economic engine for the regions in which it is located, as its contribution is mainly in providing jobs in restaurants, hotels, traditional industries and all structures and facilities in which they are practiced.

2- Algeria possesses natural, historical, cultural and civil components thanks to its distinguished geographical location, and this is what makes it a destination for tourists and gives it the opportunity to promote internal tourism.

3- Domestic tourism suffers from a number of obstacles that hinder its growth and development. These obstacles may be administrative, environmental investment and others, and there is a set of strategies that can be applied to reduce obstacles of domestic tourism in particular and tourism in general.

Study Objectives: Through this research paper, we aim to:

- Shedding light on the concept of internal tourism and its importance in achieving economic and social development.
- Presentation of the most important elements of domestic tourism in Algeria.
- Identifying the most important obstacles to domestic tourism in Algeria.
- Presenting the most important mechanisms that can contribute to the activation of domestic tourism in Algeria, and its impact on the development of tourism in Algeria.

Study Methodology: The descriptive analytical method was relied on, by collecting and categorizing information. And then analyze it and reveal the relationship between its various dimensions in order to adequately explain it and reach general conclusions that contribute to understanding the subject of the study and diagnosing reality and its causes.

Study divisions: We decided to divide the study into three axes: where the first axis included the theoretical framework of internal tourism, while the second axis reviewed the relationship of

internal tourism with tourism and the third axis was devoted to how to activate tourism to activate internal tourism in Algeria.

Firstly. Theoretical framework for internal tourism:

In this axis, we will address the various concepts related to the variables of the study, where the concept of internal tourism, types, objectives and components of internal tourism in Algeria will be presented.

1. Theoretical aspect of domestic tourism:

1.1 The concept of domestic tourism: Before addressing the definition of domestic tourism, we turn to the most important definitions given to tourism, as the first attempts to define the phenomenon of tourism began in the eighties of the nineteenth century, and the first specific definition of tourism belonged to the German scientist GuyerFreuler in 1905 AD. As: "a modern phenomenon that emerges from the increasing need for rest and relaxation, changing the atmosphere, feeling the beauty of nature and tasting it, and feeling the joy and pleasure of residing in areas that have their own nature, and it is the fruit of providing transportation" (Ibrahim, 2010).

The problem with the previous definition is its neglect of the economic aspects of tourism activity.

The definition of «S.KALFIOTIS» defines tourism as follows: "a temporary movement of people, individually and socially, from their place of residence, to another direction for self-entertainment, satisfying spiritual desires, raising morale and cultural needs, which leads to the emergence of a new economic activity". (G.Wakermane, 1988)

This definition adds something new, which is considering tourism as an economic activity.

The World Tourism Organization "WTO" defined tourism as: "a human activity and a social phenomenon based on the movement of individuals from their permanent places of residence to areas outside their communities for a period of time not less than 24 hours and not more than a whole year for the purpose of well-known tourism". (Hassin, 2020/2021)

Algeria has adopted the definition of the World Tourism Organization, but it has added some concepts, with the aim of allowing a reasonable use of tourism-related information. (Khaled, 2007)

Through the previous definitions, it can be said that tourism is an economic activity concerned with the movement of people outside their usual places of residence, which is temporary and exceeds 24 hours, for the purpose of entertainment, rest and recreation, health, or sports...etc.

As for domestic tourism, it means the movement of tourists within the political borders of the state. It differs from one country to another, and in general, two basic patterns of domestic tourism can be identified:

- ✓ Recreational trips of less than 24 hours.
- ✓ Domestic tourist trips of more than 24 hours. (Laila, December 2017)

Through the previous definitions, it can be said that domestic tourism is the movement of residents (local) and non-residents (expatriates) within the country, and in order for the activity to be considered as tourism, it must be at least 24 hours, not for the purpose of work, but for the purpose of entertainment and recreation or for other purposes.

2.1 Types of domestic tourism: There are many motives that lead to tourism activity and in the light of which determine the types of tourism, and they differ from one person to another, and tourism in Algeria varies according to the diversity of its components and culture, we can mention: Family and social tourism, Coastal tourism, Rural tourism, Urban tourism, Health tourism, Desert tourism, Conference and business tourism. (Rahma, 2019).

3.1. The objectives of domestic tourism: Domestic tourism has several objectives, including:

- An increase in domestic tourism spending, meaning an increase in revenues;
- Increasing the volume of domestic tourism;
- Enhancing the level of tourism culture within the country, especially among young people;

- Sometimes it replaces tourism outside the country and serves as an alternative opportunity for foreign tourism;
- Creating a balance in the tourist areas within the country, in the sense of achieving justice in focusing on the tourist areas;
- Revitalizing the economic movement inside the country and the interaction between all economic sectors (Abd Essalem, September 2018).

4.1. The components of internal tourism in Algeria:

Algeria possesses important and distinct tourism potentials, which are the basis of tourism activity, as well as its position in regional and international tourism, especially with specialized bodies such as UNESCO, which qualifies it to develop its tourism sector. These components are manifested in the following:

A- Natural and geographical possibilities:

Algeria is located in the northwest of the African continent, overlooking from the north the Mediterranean Sea, from the east by Tunisia and Libya, and bordered by Mali and Niger to the south, while it is bordered to the west by Morocco, the Saharawi Arab Republic and Mauritania, and occupies an area of about 2,381,741 km², which is the tenth largest country in the world in terms of area. The area of agricultural land in Algeria reached 414,310 km², which constitutes 17.4% of the area of Algeria, while the area covered by forests reached 19,560 km², or 0.8%, and extends across the territory of Algeria is the Great Sahara, which covers 80% of its total area, thus making it contain a variety of natural and geographical possibilities represented in:

- Location and diversity climate
- Desert areas.
- The Algerian coast.
- Mineral stations: There are 282 mineral water sources in Algeria (natural sources), and the most important of these baths are the Riga bath in AinDefla, Bouhanifia Hammam in Mascara, Bouhajar Hammam in AinTemouchent. These mineral sources are

characterized by many characteristics therapeutic for several diseases such as skin diseases, rheumatism...etc.

- Mountainous areas: The most important characteristic of the mountains of Algeria is the presence of the Atlas Hills and the Saharan Atlas and the highlands such as the Chrea and the Chilia mountains in the Aures in the east, the Lala Khadija summit in the Djurdjura mountains in the Kabylie region. Mountain tourism is one of the most important attractions in the country.

- National tourist parks: Algeria has several national parks distributed across the country, such as the national park of Djurdjura, the national park of Thniet El Had.

B - Urban and historical capabilities: Algeria has a historical and cultural heritage, characterized by the diversity of civilizations and the multiplicity of archaeological sites such as the Roman, Berber and Arab Islamic civilizations. As for the archaeological sites, we mention the Kasbah neighborhood in the capital, Roman ruins in Jemila, in addition to antique mosques such as the Great Mosque (1097) and the Ketchaoua Mosque (1794) in the capital, the Kawthar Mosque in Blida (1533), and the Pasha Mosque in Oran (1792). On the other hand, Christian tourism is present in Algeria due to the presence of many sanctities through the Cathedral of St. Augustine in Annaba, the old church in Laghouat, St. Philip's Cathedral and the Church of Notre dame of Africa in Algiers, and museums such as the Bardo National Museum with excavations on the origin of peoples, Timgad Museum, the National Museum of the Moujahid in Algiers , Bani Hammad Castle...etc.

C- Cultural components: They are as follows:

- Folklore.

- Traditional industry and traditional cooking.

- Capabilities and Infrastructure: Infrastructure supports the aforementioned capabilities as elements to attract tourism and are represented in:

- Banks and Financial Institutions: Algeria contains more than 37 banks and financial institutions with branches distributed across the entire country.

- Transportation: Algeria owns 54 air airports and 13 seaports for transporting tourists, whether internal or external, in addition to a road and rail transport network.
- Hotel: Algeria has more than 1,200 hotels across its entire territory.
- Tourist agencies: Algeria has more than 750 travel agencies distributed across the country, and it is obliged to encourage domestic tourism in the current times in accordance with new preventive health standards and measures, knowing that it has several alternatives in the choices of tourists throughout the year, and the most important of these purposes we find:
 - Sidi Fredj Beach: a tourist complex that includes an open theater and special facilities for physiotherapy using sea water.
 - The city of Cherchell: visiting the Roman ruins.
 - Constantine: the city of suspension bridges and traditional handicraft products and industries.
 - The city of Tamanrasset: It has a mountain chain called Al-Ahgar or Al-Hoggar, and it has the most beautiful corridors in the world, the Askram corridor, from which you can watch the most beautiful sunrise and sunset in Algeria.
 - The Tassili Park (the desert), and the Kala National Park in El Tarf northeastern Algeria, with protected areas classified by UNESCO, with rare herbs, plants and birds.
 - Algiers: We find the Garden of Experiments in Hamma (Jardind'Essai) at low prices and regulated by the state. It contains rare animals, plants and trees, Bardo Museum, the old Kasbah neighborhood...etc.

The various possibilities that Algeria abounds in make it an attractive destination for internal and external tourism if it is rationally exploited, valued and preserved, which makes it able to compete in the global tourism market.

Secondly. Obstacles to domestic tourism in Algeria:

Since the independence, the government has sought to exploit and develop tourism potential, but it still suffers from many obstacles, the most important of which are as follows:

- 1- Bureaucracy and lack of transparency.
- 2- Deterioration of security and health stability.
- 3- Absence of Arab international tourism blocs.
- 4- Weak incentives for tourism investments.
- 5- Absence of tourist culture.
- 6- Obstacles related to strategic planning.
- 7- Human resource challenges. (Iman, January 2020)

Third. Ways to activate internal tourism in Algeria:

The success of the tourism sector in Algeria does not depend on the enactment of laws and measures only, but rather a real and effective will working to develop this sector and make Algeria a competitive and global tourist destination.

1- Ways to activate domestic tourism:

1-1- Structures and infrastructure development: Structures and infrastructure include road services, transport, ports, airports, communications, energy, water, etc., and Algeria suffers from a clear shortcoming in the provision of such services. Despite the financial envelopes that were monitored for infrastructure development, the transportation and communications infrastructure index was negative, according to the report issued by the "Davos" authority, as Algeria rolled into the global ranking in terms of road quality from 99th in 2013 and 97th in 2014 to 105th in 2015. The forum evaluates this indicator on the basis of 3 other factors: "the extent and quality of infrastructure", and Algeria ranked 92nd with a score of 3.7 out of 7, "the extent and quality of transport services", and ranked 115th with a score of 3.4, "the extent to which information and communication technology is used in trade." Foreign Affairs" and ranked 115 with a score of 2.6.

- 1-2- The problem of financing investment projects.
- 1-3- Improving the quality of tourism services.
- 1-4- Tourist real estate.
- 1-5- Activating cultural tourism.

1-6- Attracting tourism investments: To ensure this, Algeria must work on valuing its image in the global tourism markets and making it able to attract tourism investments, especially foreign ones, through a set of procedures and policies in addition to financial and tax incentives.

In order to encourage and attract tourism investments, a number of mechanisms should be employed based on the following:

- ✓ Scientific and comprehensive tourism strategic planning: given that tourism is a stand-alone science, it needs strategic planning as a necessary tool for the modern international economy, whether in developed or developing countries;

- ✓ Promotion of tourism investment opportunities: quantitative and qualitative studies of tourism products resulting from the investment process and the possibility of selling them in foreign markets should not be neglected.

1-7- Effective regulation of tourism investments: There is a need for a good and effective organization that works to develop tourism investments so that their beneficial effects appear at the local, regional and international levels, in addition to the volume of tourism movement;

Rehabilitation and training of workers in the tourism sector: Tourism training in general is considered one of the most strategies for developing human resources working in providing services to tourists, because the lack of staff in tourism institutions in a way that does not respond to modern management requirements negatively affects these institutions, especially since they are in direct contact with tourists.

1-8- Tourism promotion: Countries and tourism institutions seek to increase their share of the flow of tourists, and to achieve this, they depend on tourism promotion as one of the marketing methods that aim to convey the characteristics of the tourism product to consumers.

The Internet is considered as an appropriate tool for the promotion and distribution of hotel and tourism services due to the nature of these services, which depend for their

success on providing sufficient, appropriate and attractive information capable of attracting tourists.

Algeria has enormous tourism potentials that qualifies it to occupy an important position and valorize its image in the global tourism markets, and pushes it to attract local tourists as well as attract foreign tourists and thus become a market for the employment of tourism investments, especially foreign ones, because tourism has become an industry that tops other economic sectors, and has become an important vital and strategic activity in social, cultural and political development.

2- The Guideline for Tourism Development Horizons 2030: The growth of domestic tourism in Algeria is encountered by many obstacles that we discussed previously, which are related either to structural or social obstacles. To reduce these obstacles and in order to develop the tourism sector in Algeria, the state has issued several legal measures and the development of a guideline for tourism preparation for the year 2030.

2-1- Content of the guideline for tourism development Horizons 2030: The guideline for tourism development Horizons 2030 is a reference to a new policy adopted by the Algerian state. It includes social advancement, economic efficiency and environmental sustainability. The plan aims to:

- Making tourism a sector contributing to the development of the economy and an alternative to the hydrocarbon sector;
- Ensuring the involvement of other sectors, such as the public works sector, the agricultural sector and the culture sector;
- Reconciling the promotion of tourism and the environment;
- Valorization of the cultural, historical and religious heritage;
- Permanently improving Algeria's image.

2-2- The foundations of the master plan for tourism development Horizons 2030: The master plan for tourism development is based on five dynamics, namely:

- Valuing the Algerian destination to increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of Algeria, according to criteria that respond to internal demand and are profitable on the social and economic level;
- Developing distinguished tourist poles and villages through rationalizing investment and development;
- Publication of the tourism quality plan to develop excellence in national tourism offers by integrating training through professional upgrading, education and openness to information and communication technology;
- Activating the partnership between the public and private sectors, as tourism requires concerted efforts and actions between many vital sectors and the recruitment of all public and private partners in order to create a tourist destination with a franchise mark;
- Tourism financing plan, given the specificity of the tourism sector as it requires huge investments on the one hand and its returns are slow on the other, the master plan came to address this difficult equation through a financial accompaniment system for promoted investors and project owners and help them make financial decisions, and ease procedures for granting bank loans and extending duration. (Lotfi, 2020)

3-2- The activation of strategy of the domestic tourism in Algeria in light of the Corona pandemic: In order to activate the contribution of domestic tourism to achieving sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimension, the future tourism development plan must include the following elements:

A - Rehabilitation of human resources: by training the human element well, and qualifying frames and workers in the tourism sector by organizing seminars and study days, national and international forums;

b- Rehabilitation of tourism energies: by providing appropriate tourism energies in the necessary quantity and quality, especially in the field of hotel, catering and transportation... and rehabilitating poor tourist structures;

C- Develop a comprehensive plan for the development of the tourism sector: this is by linking economic development with tourism development, encouraging national and

foreign investments, providing all concessions, removing obstacles and improving the investment climate, while reconsidering bank financing for the development and revitalization of investments, especially in desert areas that possess important tourism potentials, as well as this type of tourism does not know much competition compared to other types of tourism, as the Algerian desert is one of the most beautiful regions in the world.

As for the strategy followed in light of the Corona pandemic, it will be coexistence with the health situation, where the Algerian state has taken several measures to confront the pandemic, as follows:

- ✓ Educating tourists about the need to adhere to preventive measures;
 - ✓ Assessing the quantitative impact of the Corona crisis on the tourism sector (tourism and travel agencies, spas, hotels, desert tourism...etc) in order to know the economic feasibility of these bodies.
 - ✓ To be socially responsible towards the tourist and the environment;
 - ✓ Employing technology, especially social networking sites and influencers, in order to increase local tourism demand.
 - ✓ Establishing special crisis management offices for each tourism agency, for example.
 - ✓ Studying the local tourist market in order to know the type of incoming tourists and what their preferences are, especially since the tourist has lost a degree of confidence due to the pandemic.
 - ✓ Providing an appropriate marketing mix for the tourist through:
 - Presenting and diversifying the tourism offers programs: visiting the natural, archaeological and cultural heritage...
- Offering different suitable prices that take into account the income of the tourist, especially with the catastrophic situation left by the pandemic, for example, offering free offers during a tourist trip.

- Intensifying promotional efforts using all tools known to focus on the Internet through social networking sites and social influencers.

- Tourism authorities must play a motivating and convincing role in order to restore the tourist's confidence in travel.

Training and qualifying employees, especially how to deal with the Corona crisis.

- The necessity of paying attention to the cleanliness of the building, staff and tourist destinations (Kaddour, June 2021).

Conclusion: Through our treatment of the topic of research, the elements of activating and revitalizing domestic tourism in Algeria, the following results were reached:

1- Algeria possesses natural, historical, cultural and civil components thanks to its distinguished geographical location, and this is what makes it a destination for tourists and gives it the opportunity to promote internal tourism;

2- Domestic tourism is considered as an economic engine for the regions in which it is located, as its contribution is mainly in providing jobs in restaurants, hotels, traditional industries and all structures and facilities in which they are practiced;

2- Domestic tourism suffers from a number of obstacles that hinder its growth and development. These obstacles may be administrative, environmental investment and others;

3- Algeria seeks to promote the tourism sector through the Tourism Guideline 2030, which aims to value the tourist areas and increase the number of tourist facilities, hotels and restaurants, as well as improving the quality of tourism services;

4- There is a set of strategies that can be applied to reduce obstacles to domestic tourism in particular and tourism in general. These strategies are represented in the rehabilitation of human resources, the rehabilitation of tourism energies, and the development of a comprehensive plan for the development of the tourism sector.

5- Coexistence with the health situation in light of the Corona pandemic is one of the best strategic options adopted by the government, and this is through:

Providing an appropriate marketing mix for the tourist, especially with regard to prices;

- Awareness and the need to adhere to preventive measures;

Monitoring, evaluating, following up and paying more attention to the cleanliness of the building, staff and tourist destinations.

- Carrying out economic feasibility studies for tourism authorities;

- Establishing special crisis management offices for each tourism agency, for example;

- Focusing on increasing tourists' confidence in tourism products, and linking some of them to entertainment, such as febrile tourism, for example.

Suggestions and recommendations: In light of the findings, the following suggestions and recommendations can be made:

- Awareness of the importance of domestic tourism as an alternative to foreign tourism, especially in light of the health conditions the world is witnessing - the Corona pandemic-

- Pay more attention to desert tourism, because this type does not know much competition compared to other types of tourism, such as medical tourism or ... etc;

- Encouraging investment in domestic tourism, providing all facilities and improving procedures;

- Paying attention to tourist attractions and equipping them with all comfort requirements;

- Improving services by supporting and enhancing training to qualify the human resource;

- Paying attention to the marketing aspect of domestic tourism through upgrading the tourism product, diversifying offers, reconsidering prices ... etc;

- Spreading the tourism culture among individuals and enhancing their awareness of the need to adhere to well-known Algerian customs, such as generosity, hospitality, the welcoming of others;

- Pay attention to the provision of means of transportation and the opening of lines for them towards all internal tourist areas;

- promotion of destinations within the framework of tightly planned tourism programs and information about them, participation in exhibitions and salons, direct marketing

and organization of educational tours through the involvement of schools, vocational training centers and universities;

- Developing supply and demand and achieving competitiveness in this activity by diversifying services and programs to attract tourists of different ages and reviewing the price policy.

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