

EVALUATING TOURIST SATISFACTION IN ACCORDANCE TO TOUR GUIDES PERFORMANCE: HERITAGE GUIDED TOURS IN EGYPT

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Tourism is one of the top priorities for many countries, because of its contribution to economy in terms of foreign exchange earnings, creation of employment opportunities and promoting international understanding. Furthermore, Cultural heritage tourism has become an increasingly important factor for tourist destinations, and cultural tourist as the one who is interested in experiencing the culture of the destination spends money, time and other resources on a trip or visit to receive an experience that provides psychological benefits. Happy and satisfied customers are more likely to return and more likely to say positive things about the service they have experienced. If tour guiding service is a core component of heritage tour, then the tour guides (TGs) as being a frontline employee in the tourism industry play an important role in shaping tourist experience in a destination. This study evaluates the relationship between tour guide (TG) performance and tourist's satisfaction in terms of psychological, spiritual and practical content during heritage guided tours in Egypt. A questionnaire was distributed among 200 tourists of different nationalities. Results derived from the respondents showed that (TG) performance affects tourist experience. For a satisfied tourist transmits his/her positive experience (word of mouth) to third persons as well as repeating his/her visit. Finally the study ends up by a set of recommendations for TGs to consistently emphasize a creative approach in order to maintain high standards of TG performance.

Keywords: *Heritage, Guided tours, Tourist Satisfaction, Tourist experience, Word of mouth, Repeating visit.*

JEL Classification: *L83, M1, O1*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world as being one of the top priorities for many countries, for its contribution to economy in terms of foreign exchange earnings, creation of employment



opportunities and promoting international understanding (Rajeev & Shyju, 2008). Due to World Travel and Tourism council (WTTC) report in 2012, Travel and Tourism contributed to GDP in USD 194.9bn (7.7% of GDP), and supported 4,411,000 jobs equivalent to 6.8% of total employment (www.wttc.org). For this purpose Tourism was designed to meet a very different set of leisure needs (Falk, 2009).

Visiting cultural heritage sites has become a powerful tourist attractions (Laws, 1998), for heritage is not only about what occurred during the past, It is about the present generation who continues to cherish and to learn about vibrant and glorious history, culture and past civilization and cultural traditions that people proudly preserve (Chai, 2011). Therefore cultural heritage tourism carries both tangible and intangible values; tangible as sites, structure, as well as natural features and land scape that have cultural significance, while intangible refers to social practices and rituals that define the identity of a society (Dimitriyadis et al, 2012). In the broadest sense cultural assets can attract tourism to specific destination, and tourism can bring new and fresh resources to the cultural section and the entire region (Alberti et al, 2012), also become major force in economic and urban revitalization (Alzua et al, 1998).

Furthermore, Cultural heritage tourism has gained an increasing importance at different levels of the economy and that regions may build their competitiveness leveraging their cultural heritage (Alberti et al, 2012).

Christou (2005) signified that cultural heritage tourist as one who experience historic sites, monuments, and buildings; visits museums and galleries; attends concerts and the performing arts, and interested in experiencing the culture of the destination spends money, time and other resources on a trip or a visit, to receive an experience that provides mainly psychological benefits, so the experience the tourists derive from interacting with the service is an important factor. And heritage interpretation according to Coccossis (2005) is an important part of any visitor management plan. In order to be highly effective, a variety of measures for site interpretation should be chosen with the intention of making the visit as enjoyable and informative as possible in contrast to the needs of different categories of visitors. In the sense tour guiding service is a core component of any package tour as tour guide (TG) is a frontline employee in the tourism industry who plays an important role in shaping tourist experience in a destination. (Huang et al., 2010).

According to the World Federation of Tourist Guides Association (WFTGA) a tour guide is the person who guides visitors in the language

of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area, and who normally possesses an area-specific qualification usually issued and/or recognized by the appropriate authority (WFTGA, 2003). While Heung (2008) defined TG as one who bears different roles throughout the journey, including information giver, instructor, motivator, ambassador, entertainer and leader. Instrumentally, TG monitors the itinerary. On the other hand, a TG serves the role of motivator and entertainer with the responsibility to stimulate tourists' positive feelings and create a warm atmosphere during the tour, as tourists require a large amount of information to understand tourism spots (Fang Jin-yun, 2008).

While Gale & Beefink (2005) referred to the importance of TGs' knowledge, skill, and ability on participants' satisfaction as they create special moments for their groups and make ordinary moments of itinerary extraordinary, also as being in a continuous and intense contact with the tour participants. Therefore they are responsible for achieving customer satisfaction throughout the tour's entire duration.

Based on the previous information, this study was undertaken to evaluate TGs performance on heritage guided tours in Egypt and its reflection on creating visitor satisfaction, positive word of mouth and repeat visitation. In essence, this means presenting descriptive statistics based on the opinion of the respondents to determine: TG performance in terms of interpretation skills, personal attributes, interpersonal skills, and emergency handling ability in accordance to government regulations and safety policy, and to evaluate its effect on tourist experience.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Satisfaction relates to visitor's experience, so tourist satisfaction is defined as the quality of visitors' experience and the psychological outcome derived from interaction with different service facets in a destination (Huang et al., 2010). Ellis & Vogelsong (2002) stated that past travel experiences significantly influence future destination selection, and tourist satisfaction is significantly related to customer loyalty, repeat visitation, and positive social communication. Therefore tourists experience has an impact on tourism demand that influence tourist destination (Rajeev & Shyju, 2008).

Being able to offer an attractive tourist destination indicates having a deep understanding of the motives that leads a tourist to choose one particular destination among all alternatives. Furthermore, the activities performed during the stay at the holiday destination and the experiences during these activities are clear source of satisfaction for the tourist

(Armario, 2008). This means that customer satisfaction influences the choice of a destination, the consumption of products and services and the decision to return, for this reason customer satisfaction is increasingly becoming a corporate goal, and more and more companies strive for quality in their product or service (Esu & Arrey, 2009).

Interpretation service creates visitor satisfaction, positive word of mouth reports and repeat visitation, as interpretation translates an expert's technical account into a message in the language of the visitor, relating the context to his/ her everyday life and experiences and involving visitors in the explorative learning and entertainment process (Papathanasiou-Zuhrt et al, 2005).

Armario (2008) asserted that the level of tourist satisfaction is crucial for business success in tourism management, and so Kozak (2001) has mentioned that customer satisfaction been dominated by measurement of guest satisfaction with tourism services, taking into consideration the expectations generated before and during the trip, as well as the tourist's perception of the service received (Armario, 2008).

Consequently customer satisfaction as a feeling or an attitude of a customer towards a service after it has been used (Esu & Arrey, 2009), often subjects upon levels of individual effort and expectation (Ellis & Vogelsong, 2002). As happy and satisfied customers are more likely to return and more likely to say positive things about the service they have experienced (Christou, 2005).

Understanding what drives satisfaction for a tourist has become one of the most relevant areas of research for the tourism industry, for satisfied tourist tend to transmit their positive experience to others and to repeat their visit (Armario, 2008). Hence visitor satisfaction is the goal that both private and public heritage tourism organizations strive to achieve (Christou, 2005). Then again TGs as Heung (2008) mentioned are important to the tourist's perception of the whole tour, for TGs primary responsibilities are to lead the tour, solve problems and assure customer satisfaction during the journey.

Additionally TGs can enrich the visitor's experience thus their knowledge and skills are very important. So they need to be carefully selected, trained, motivated, monitored and regularly evaluated (Coccosis, 2005).

As previously mentioned satisfaction is always associated with service quality, so TGs quality service to tourists is essential to the success of the tour also critical to the overall image of the destination they represent. End result TGs are highly responsible for achieving tourist

satisfaction (Huang et al., 2010) as being a critical service feature in package tours (Heung, 2008).

STUDY HYPOTHESES

The study aims at testing the following hypotheses:

H1: TGs performances affect tourist experience.

H2: TGs performances influence the success of the heritage guided tours in Egypt.

H3: TGs performances influence visitor overall satisfaction.

H4: TGs performances affect word of mouth and repeat visitation.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

The study is an analytical study divided into two main sections. The reviews of literature discuss the role of TG on heritage guided tours, and its importance to formulate tourist experience. In addition how TGs performance influence visitor satisfaction, which direct word of mouth and repeat visitation. The literature study was based on journal articles, books, and similar studies, the internet played a role in this study. The data was collected from a questionnaire distributed among a random sample of tourists. The questionnaire was divided into three parts; the first part was concerned with measuring the performance of the TGs in forty three statements. The second part concluded ten statements focusing on the effect of TG on tour experience. While the third part revealed tourists personal information, and consisting of eleven statements to know the demographic features of a sample of tourists visiting Egypt on heritage guided tours. The respondents were required to answer according the Likert scale that ranges from (1) to (5), as (1) matches strongly disagree/ very unsatisfactory answer, while (5) matches strongly agree/ very satisfactory answer. The questionnaire was mainly based on the study developed on previous studies, the review of literature therein and the researcher view. Face validity and reliability of the questionnaire was applied through two experts; one in the field of tour guiding and one academic. The questionnaire was reviewed according to the remarks given.

Respondents were requested to fill the questionnaire in aspect to their tour experience in accordance to TG performance. Two hundred self-administered questionnaires were distributed by the researcher on tourists during their guided tours in Egypt. It took about twelve months to complete distribution around the years 2010 and 2012, due to continued

tensions in Egypt during the year 2011, but international tourist arrivals in the Middle East were estimated at 52 million in 2012 with a rebound (+18%) to Egypt (www.unwto.org). The distribution produced 150 questionnaires representing a response rate of 75%.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The profile of the respondents highlighted specific characteristics related to gender, marital status, age, educational background and nationality. The results revealed that male tourists are almost equal to female ones equivalent to 53.3% and 46.7% respectively. A percentage of 31.3% were single in contrast to 66.7% married. Most of the studied sample were young travellers as 39.3% their ages range between 18 to 28 and 20.7% their ages range between 29 to 39, while 40% of the respondents were distributed by 12% for the ones between 40 – 49, 2.7% for 50 – 60 and 1.3% for above 60.

The studied sample showed that 85.3% with a frequent number of 128 respondents visited Egypt for leisure reasons, this increasing popularity of Egypt as a tourism destination was obvious among the European tourists, with Russian tourists accounting for the largest share of arrivals at 24% followed by the British travellers with 16.7%. Also the rates of the other nationalities were for European tourists as Italians, Germans, Danish, French, Greeks, Belgium, Bulgarians, Croatians and Icelandic tourists participated by 14%, 13.3%, 8.7%, 6%, 4.7%, 4%, 4%, 3.3% and 1.3% correspondingly. Future expectations indicates that international tourist arrivals to increase at a healthy rate of over 12% with Europe as the primary source of tourism for Egypt (www.researchandmarkets.com).

Table (1) showed the results regarding the evaluation of the importance of the aspects of TGs performance during guided tours. According to the results collected from the respondents; the statements S1- S9 and S40 - S43 with a positive mean that ranges between (4.3 – 4.5) and (4.4 – 4.5) illuminated that TGs demonstrated an excellent level of interpretation skills in terms of giving full knowledge of the destination in reference to heritage site locations, historical and geographical background, paying attention to details, humanities and customs related to these heritage sites, in addition to tailoring content to fit different audiences in timely manner.

Table 1. Aspects of tour guide (TG) performance

Aspects of Tour Guide performances	Strongly disagree 1		Disagree 2		Not sure 3		Agree 4		Strongly agree 5		Mean
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1. She/he gave full knowledge of the destination.	1	0.7	4	2.7	4	2.7	64	42.7	77	51.3	4.4
2. She/he clearly explained the locations and layouts of heritage sites.	1	0.7	3	2.0	-	-	65	43.3	81	54.0	4.5
3. The information offered is sufficiently detailed to enjoy the attraction.	1	0.7	2	1.3	4	2.7	67	44.7	76	50.7	4.4
4. She/he paid attention to detail.	2	1.3	4	2.7	5	3.3	74	49.3	65	43.3	4.3
5. She/he understood history, geography and the humanity of historical interest.	1	0.7	1	0.7	1	0.7	74	49.3	73	48.7	4.4
6. She/he demonstrated interest and enthusiasm.	1	0.7	5	3.3	1	0.7	82	54.7	61	40.7	4.3
7. She/he was punctual.	1	0.7	4	2.7	-	-	75	50.0	70	46.7	4.4
8. She/he showed good time management skills.	2	1.3	4	2.7	-	-	78	52.0	66	44.0	4.3
9. She/he modified the content to fit different audiences.	1	0.7	4	2.7	2	1.3	74	49.3	69	46.0	4.4
10. She/he treated people with respect.	-	-	2	1.3	-	-	42	28.0	106	70.7	4.7
11. She/he generated friendly atmosphere.	1	0.7	3	2.0	2	1.3	53	35.3	91	60.7	4.5
12. She/he appeared neat and tidy.	-	-	3	2.0	-	-	55	36.7	92	61.3	4.6
13. She/he enjoyed serving people.	2	1.3	4	2.7	6	4.0	60	40.0	78	52.0	4.4
14. She/he was a good team player.	1	0.7	2	1.3	2	1.3	57	38.0	88	58.7	4.5
15. She/he demonstrated good moral, conduct, and honesty.	-	-	2	1.3	-	-	54	36.0	94	62.7	4.6
16. She/he exhibited self-disciplined.	1	0.7	4	2.7	-	-	94	62.7	51	34.0	4.3
17. She/he actively conserved the environment.	-	-	3	2.0	3	2.0	83	55.3	61	40.7	4.3
18. She/he interacted well with the visitors.	1	0.7	3	2.0	1	0.7	84	56.0	61	40.7	4.3
19. She/he helped visitors with realistic visiting experience.	1	0.7	4	2.7	1	0.7	85	56.7	59	39.3	4.3
20. She/he accommodated visitors' special needs.	2	1.3	4	2.7	-	-	91	60.7	53	35.3	4.3

21. She/he continuously asked for feedback on the tour.	1	0.7	3	2.0	3	2.0	85	56.7	58	38.7	4.3
22. She/he showed interest in our customs, life style, etc.	2	1.3	2	1.3	2	1.3	92	61.3	52	34.7	4.3
23. She/he changed in presentation styles.	1	0.7	5	3.3	-	-	90	60.0	54	36.0	4.3
24. She/he handled obstacles in quick and skillful fashion.	1	0.7	2	1.3	3	2.0	89	59.3	55	36.7	4.3
25. She/he generated an atmosphere full of vividness.	1	0.7	5	3.3	-	-	85	56.7	59	39.3	4.3
26. She/he welcomed mentoring trainee guides.	-	-	2	1.3	6	4.0	86	57.3	56	37.3	4.3
27. She/he showed appropriate use of oral and body language.	-	-	-	-	-	-	68	45.3	82	54.7	4.5
28. She/he spoke in a good/clear accent.	-	-	-	-	-	-	71	47.3	79	52.7	4.5
29. She/he showed good communication skills.	-	-	3	2.0	3	2.0	70	46.7	74	49.3	4.4
30. She/he responded to emergency situations rapidly.	-	-	2	1.3	5	3.3	78	52.0	65	43.3	4.3
31. She/he could perform first aid in emergency.	-	-	2	1.3	6	4.0	77	51.3	64	42.7	4.4
32. She/he maintained the safety of oneself and tourists.	-	-	-	-	4	2.7	78	52.0	68	45.3	4.4
33. She/he informed us of safety policies.	-	-	-	-	5	3.3	72	48.0	73	48.7	4.5
34. She/he showed leadership skills during the tour.	1	0.7	2	1.3	2	1.3	58	38.7	87	58.0	4.5
35. She/he handled repetitive situation in a know-how fashion.	1	0.7	1	0.7	3	2.0	61	40.7	84	56.0	4.5
36. She/he had quick response in unforeseen situations.	2	1.3	1	0.7	13	8.7	77	51.3	57	38.0	4.2
37. She/he was self-confident and open-minded.	-	-	3	2.0	3	2.0	62	41.3	82	54.7	4.5
38. She/he perceived strong problem solving abilities.	1	0.7	2	1.3	6	4.0	47	31.3	94	62.7	4.5
39. She/he could understand differences among us and respond accordingly.	-	-	5	3.3	2	1.3	60	40.0	83	55.3	4.5
40. Her/his way of escorting the tour gave the impression that she/he is well trained.	-	-	4	2.7	2	1.3	66	44.0	78	52.0	4.5
41. She/he used to brief us on daily itinerary.	-	-	-	-	3	2.0	74	49.3	73	48.7	4.5
42. She/he informed us about destination's customs.	-	-	5	3.3	-	-	73	48.7	72	48.0	4.4
43. She/he gave information about forbidden and limited behaviors at the attraction.	-	-	5	3.3	-	-	71	47.3	74	49.3	4.4

The statements from S10 to S20 with a positive mean that ranges between (4.3 – 4.7) were concerned with the TGs personal attributes, according to respondents TGs accompanied them showed what job required; from being dedicated as illustrated by the mean (4.4) and (4.5) for S13 and S14 respectively, also persistence and having the ability to deal tactfully with tourist as asserted by the respondents in S18 and S19, for 56% agreed and 40.7% strongly agreed in S18 on TGs interacted well with the visitors while in S19 56.7% agreed and 39.3% strongly agreed on TGs helping visitors with realistic visiting experience. Also respondents stated that their TGs were able to put people at ease by being friendly in S11 with a positive mean (4.5), polite in S10 with a positive mean (4.7), outgoing in S12 and S15 with a positive mean (4.6), helpful in S20 with (4.3) mean, and responsible in S16 and S17 with (4.3) mean.

According to the respondents TGs showed their concern to self-development by showing skills of leadership during the tour as mentioned in S34 with a positive mean of (4.5). As for S24, S36 and S38 with a mean (4.3), (4.2) and (4.5) correspondingly respondents agreed that their TGs handled obstacles and unforeseen situation in quick and skillful fashion, also handled repetitive situation in a know-how fashion, in addition to problem solving abilities. They pointed out that TGs asked for continuous feedback in S21 with a positive mean of (4.3). Apart from the previous the respondents appreciated that TGs had cross-culture awareness as mentioned in S22 with a positive mean (4.3) for being interested in tourists' customs and lifestyles, also respondents in S39 with a mean of (4.5) specified their understanding of the differences among his/her clients. Furthermore, respondents emphasized that their TGs in S25 with a mean of (4.3) generated an atmosphere full of vividness.

Additionally, respondents mentioned in S23 that TGs focused on changing presentation styles with a mean (4.3), and showed good communication skills in S29 with a positive mean of (4.4) by the appropriate use of oral and body language as asserted in S27, and the good/clear accent followed in S28 with a positive mean of (4.5).

The respondents agreed on TGs demonstrating emergency handling ability by responding to emergency situations in S30 with a positive mean (4.3), performing first aid in case of emergency in S31 with positive mean (4.4), maintaining of oneself and his/her clients in S32 with a mean (4.4), and informing his/her clients of safety policies in S33 with a positive mean (4.5).

Table 2. Effect of TG performance on Tour experience

Effect of Tour Guide on Tour experience	Very unsatisfactory 1		Unsatisfactory 2		Not sure 3		satisfactory 4		Very satisfactory 5		Mean
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1. The quality of this tour.	1	0.7	4	2.7	-	-	45	30.0	100	66.7	4.6
2. The guide influence on your experience.	2	1.3	3	2.0	-	-	47	31.3	98	65.3	4.6
3. The information provided by the tour guide in accordance to your expectations in relation to the following:											
• Egyptian customs	-	-	4	2.7	2	1.3	81	54.0	63	42.0	4.4
• History	-	-	1	0.7	-	-	56	37.3	93	62.0	4.6
• Geography (e.g. pattern of city development)	-	-	5	3.3	1	0.7	84	56.0	60	40.0	4.3
• Current events	2	1.3	7	4.7	8	5.3	94	62.7	39	26.0	4.1
• Shopping	-	-	2	1.3	7	4.7	97	64.7	44	29.3	4.2
• Recreation facilities	-	-	4	2.7	2	1.3	94	62.7	50	33.3	4.3
• Special sites	-	-	4	2.7	1	0.7	85	56.7	60	40.0	4.3
• Landmarks	-	-	4	2.7	1	0.7	82	54.7	63	42.0	4.4
4. The tour guide's attempts to encourage social interaction with your fellow passengers.	-	-	4	2.7	1	0.7	83	55.3	62	41.3	4.4
5. The ease of understanding information presented by the guide.	-	-	4	2.7	-	-	54	36.0	92	61.3	4.6
6. The guides' presentation.	-	-	3	2.0	1	0.7	46	30.7	100	66.7	4.6
7. The overall satisfaction level of this visiting experience.	-	-	4	2.7	1	0.7	48	32.0	97	64.7	4.6

Table (2) revealed the respondents opinion regarding TGs performance in terms of meetings their expectations in relation to Egyptian customs, history, geography, current events, shopping, recreation facilities, special sites and landmarks with a positive mean that ranges between 4.1 and 4.6 for the sub-statements of S3, in addition to TGs capability of developing the information in a professional manner as stated by the respondents in S5 and S6 with a positive mean of 4.6, Also

TGs encouraged social interaction with the respondents fellow passengers as in S4 with a mean 4.4.

According to the respondents 96.7% were satisfied and very satisfied with the quality of their tour as stated in S1. Also they affirmed that TGs had a satisfactory influence on their experience in S2 with a positive mean 4.6. S7 concluded that the respondents were overall satisfied with their visiting experience with a mean 4.6.

Table 3. Tourist response in relation to their satisfaction with TGs Performance

Statements	Strongly disagree 1		Disagree 2		Not sure 3		Agree 4		Strongly agree 5		Mean
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1. I feel at home in this tourist destination.	2	1.3	2	1.3	7	4.7	65	43.3	74	49.3	4.4
2. I will revisit this tourist destination again.	1	0.7	5	3.3	7	4.7	44	29.3	93	62.0	4.5
3. I will recommend this tourist destination to my friends and relatives.	-	-	4	2.7	6	4.0	43	28.7	97	64.7	4.6

And in table (3), S1 showed that 92.6% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they feel at home in Egypt, also they agreed and strongly agreed in S2 and S3 with a positive mean of 4.4 and 4.6 respectively on repeat visitation and word of mouth recommendation.

Regarding the previous results, table (1) showed that 51.3% of the respondents with frequent number of 77 agreed and 44.7% with a frequent number of 67 strongly agreed on the skills acquired by TGs (TGs performance), that explains the importance of interpretation as being relevant to tourism and recreation, for interpretation is a key to ensuring the quality of a tourist experience (Alzua et al, 1998), for it is known that

information on its own is not interpretation. Interpretation is an art, whether the materials being presented are scientific, historical, architectural or environmental and the chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation. So interpretation aims to present a whole rather than a part (Sigala, 2005).

In accordance to the fact that increasing numbers of people view cultural sites as an opportunity to promote a free choice of learning experience (Alzua et al, 1998), most heritage tourists are accompanied by guides to provide them with information to help them enjoy their visit (Laws, 1998), respondents in S3 affirmed by the positive mean of (4.4) that the information offered by their TGs is sufficiently detailed to enjoy the attraction. Also heritage interpretation as mentioned by Papatthanasious-Zuhr (2005) is a multidisciplinary process of message communication, aiming to reveal effectively to visitors a place's natural and cultural wealth, S1 and S2 with a positive mean of (4.4) and (4.5) respectively stated that TGs gave full knowledge of the destination. Furthermore, acted as mediators between the site and the visitor to make these two realities come together as one (Falk, 2009).

As both leaders and hosts, TGs accept the challenges of creating a harmonious and cohesive atmosphere in which people can be comfortable, learn, and enjoy themselves (Ponds, 1993: 123), which required a basic understanding of human nature through the positive mean of (4.4) in S9, an attitude of respect as in S10 with positive mean of (4.7), willingness to serve, and interest in people as in S6 with positive mean of (4.3). In addition TGs as public speakers, they must possess the ability to communicate in an engaging way in order to formulate the images that they should project to travelers (Ponds, 1993: 137) that was asserted by the positive mean of (4.4) in S29.

As for table (2), the results emphasized the effect of TGs on tour experience for 96.7% of the respondents with a frequent number of 145 were satisfied and very satisfied with their TGs performance, which proved that TGs play an important role during the tour as the tourists may rely on the tour guide to ensure what core services is performed (Heung, 2008), also proved that business ethics is important to meet expectations of all customers (Ayob et al., 2009).

Table (3) showed that 62% with a frequent number of 93 strongly agreed, and 30% with a frequent number 46 agreed on the positive influence of TGs performance on their future destination decision, Ellis & Vogelsong (2002) mentioned that quality service leaves a positive impression on visitors, for Tourists' satisfaction with their holiday experiences at a destination as stated by Kozak (2001) is important to the

decision – making. Furthermore many tourists tend to gather information by word of mouth (Furutani & Fujita, 2005). It is significant that the studied sample showed that 84% of the respondents had visited Egypt more than 4 times.

Table 4. Correlation between different items of the study.

		Aspects of tour guide performance	Effect of Tour Guide on Tour Experience	Tourist Satisfaction in accordance to TG Performance
Aspects of tour guide performance	Pearson Correlation	1	0.724	0.568
Effect of Tour Guide on Tour Experience	Pearson Correlation	0.724	1	0.649
Tourist response in relation to their satisfaction with TGs Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.568	0.649	1

Subsequently the study revealed that there was a highly significant association between the three items of the study as shown in table (4) as each item is positively related to the other according to Pearson's correlation.

Table 5. Cronbach's alpha of different items of the study

	Cronbach's alpha
Aspects of tour guide performance	0.898
Effect of Tour Guide on Tour Experience	0.921
Tourist response in relation to their satisfaction with TGs Performance	0.907

Also there was a high level of stability and reliability among the three items of the study according Cronbach's alpha as shown in table (5).

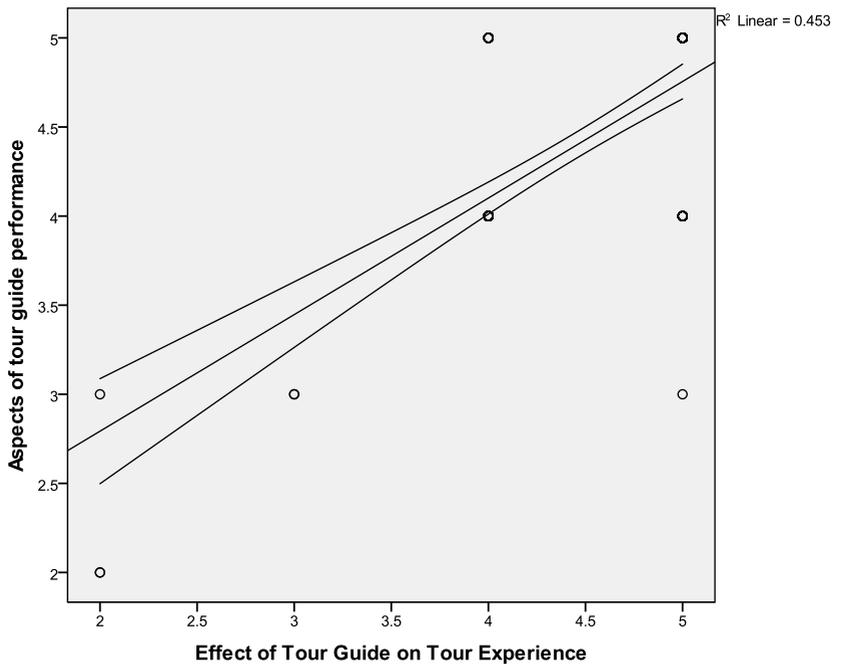


Figure 1. Effect of TG on tour experience in accordance to TG performance

Accordingly visits to heritage sites are influenced by individual prior experience, and TGs can excite one member with a different level of interest, knowledge, and understanding (Laws, 1998) as shown in figure(1) that demonstrated a high significant association between effects of TG on tour experience in accordance to aspects of TG performance. Nevertheless positive past experiences contribute to future tourism decision (Gale & Beefink, 2005), and figure (2) and (3) showed that there was a high significant association between Tourist response in relation to their satisfaction with TG performance in accordance to aspects of TG performance, and Tourist response in relation to their satisfaction with TG performance in accordance to effect of TG on tour experience.

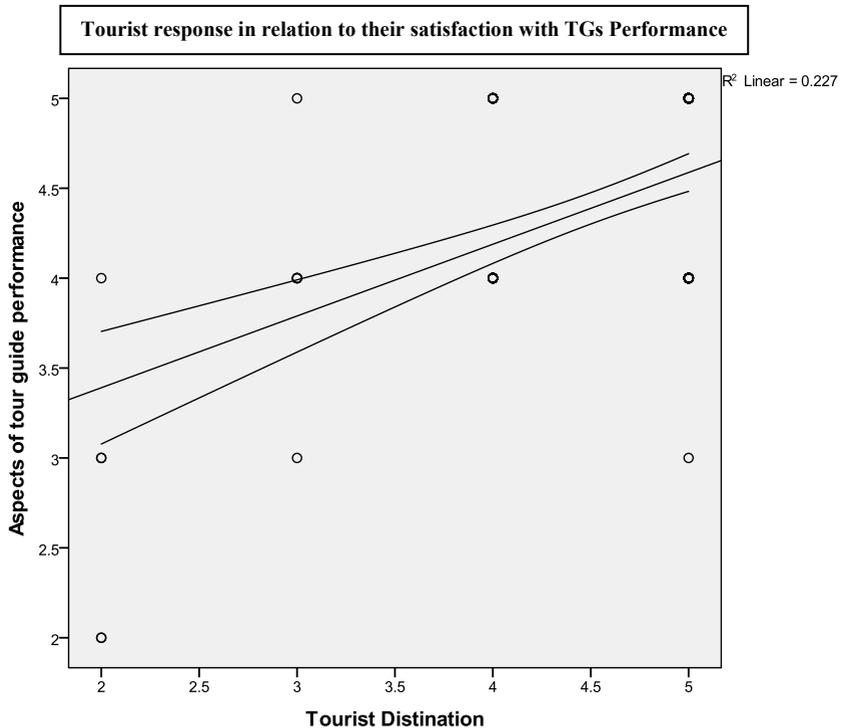


Figure 2. Tourist response in accordance to TG performance

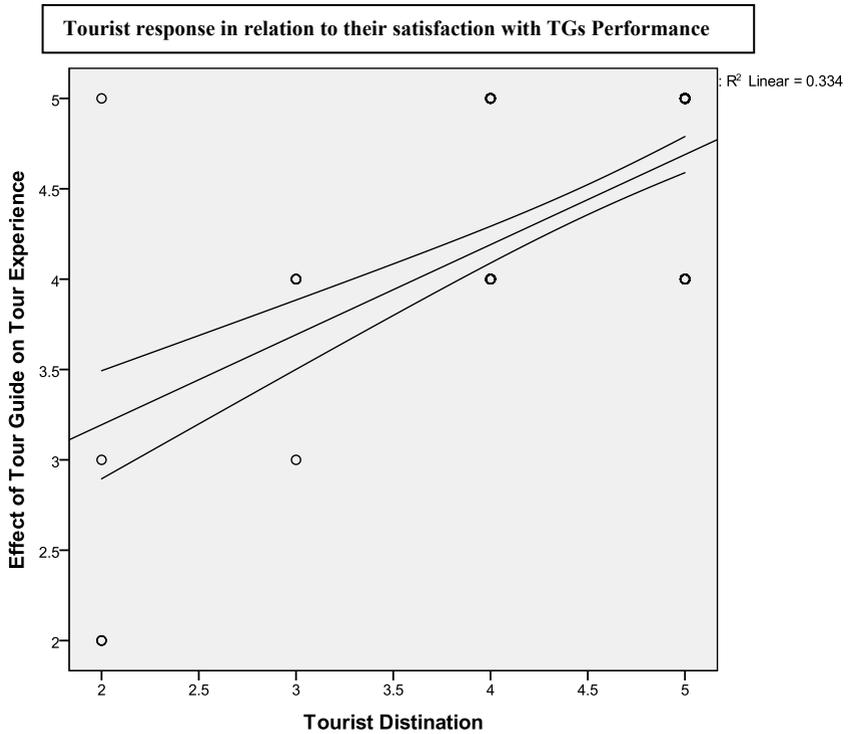


Figure 3. Tourist response in accordance to tour experience

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Visits to Egypt rose from 1.5 million in 1982 to 14 million in 2010, as Egypt has no competitors because of its unique cultural heritage tourism resources (planbleu.org). Although inbound tourists during the year 2011 to Egypt were 9,497,000 partly explained by mass arrivals of Palestinians and Libyans in comparing to the 14,051,000 tourists that arrived during the year 2010 (wdi.worldbank.org). There were good signs of recovery that occurred in October 2012 by a growth rate of +18% compared to the 37% decline seen in the previous year (www.euromonitor.com).

Despite global economic uncertainty one billion tourists had travelled the world in 2012, this development of tourists' destinations to be

considered as a central theme in the tourism literature (Henderson, 2006) for the outstanding value of cultural and natural heritage sites to humanity.

In essence a TG is a key cluster for long-term success of region as he/she should communicate well with tourists providing visitors with a unique experience to create a certain level of satisfaction. Therefore there is a definite relationship among tourist satisfaction, intention to return and positive word of mouth communication and TG quality service.

In order to perform a high level of quality TG service it is recommended to implement:

1. A score monitoring system on TG practice.
2. Policies to regulate TG practices and ensure TG performance.
3. Provide training programs to develop TG skills in order to acquire a creative approach to offer more reasons for repeat visitation.
4. A flow chart on two phases before service and after service.

Also Travel agencies should place great significance on TG performance as this dimension is a key feature for agency reputation and customer word of mouth, Therefore they should pay particular attention to the recruitment and selection of TG and offer programs that help their staff to develop a professional attitude.

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