



TOURISM VERSUS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG)

TOURISM – AN ELEMENT OF ECONOMIC GROWTH OF METROPOLITAN CITIES, ENTREPRENEURS

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ABSTRACT

Oman's economy highly depends on oil revenue since it accounts for more than half of all its export incomes. Other sectors like fishery and agriculture are some of the other major sources of income that are perceived to have some influence on minimizing the economic gaps of the population while contributing constructively to the country's GDP. Oman being strategically and geographically located gives it a better chance to add to the sources of its revenues. Tourism is hence seen as a key contributor to the economy and its sustainability. The reason behind this is the fact that Oman possesses great tourism potential in terms of its culture, climate, and natural environment. Proper understanding of the relationship that exists between the contribution from tourism and the SDGs is important in the development of the sector to improve development within the area. This research elucidated the constructive economic effects of tourism in Oman that can generate revenues and maintain sustainable economic growth, which in turn can help the country achieve its SDGs.

Keywords: *Sustainable tourism SDGs, Tourism and SDGs, Tourism in Oman*

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

1. Tourism contributes to the GDP of Oman key for SDGs.
2. There exists a high potential for growth in tourism in Oman.
3. Further improvement can be made in the tourism industry to improve its impact on Oman.

Research Objectives

The study aims at:

- Finding the economic impact of tourism in Oman.
- Determination of the effect of tourism on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Determination of the tourism potential impacts on the achievement of the SDGs within Oman.

The objective is significant in the determination of the strategies that would promote tourism to improve the SDGs.

Literature Review

The diversification of the economy by the government has had a significant positive impact on tourism. Saxena (2002) argues that like other oil-producing nations, Oman's economy greatly depends on oil and gas. However, the country supplements its economy through other sectors, particularly tourism since overdependence on only one sector is risky for the country. According to Omari (2019), political stability is a major factor that has contributed to the growth of tourism in Oman. Moreover, economic insecurity and fluctuations in the oil market have also considerably contributed to the success of the tourism sector (Callen, et al., 2014). The oil and gas industry is volatile and susceptible to external forces. Countries that rely on oil face an unreliable future in their economy if they only rely on oil and gas for

revenue. Therefore, their governments have enforced policies that focused on promoting diversification of the economy through tourism to minimize overdependence on oil solely (Hvidt, 2013, Hertog, 2013, Cherif & Hasanov, 2014).

Methodology

The approach given to the study involves research and analysis of existing work on sustainable tourism to determine the perception of other authors. Content analysis is the strategy considered in handling the research while conducting the bibliometric and thematic analyses. The work considered runs from 2010 through 2018. The approach gives to the work will be a critical analysis to determine whether there exists synchrony in the research already conducted.

The researcher chose articles from the Journal of Sustainable Tourism (JST) since it is a reputable tourism journal. Also, full-length research articles were the only ones used since they give comprehensive information about the theoretical concepts or frameworks, research methods, and managerial guidance (Nunkoo, Smith & Ramkissoon, 2013). The selected articles were analyzed using content analysis to guarantee their completeness and quality (Fong, Law, Tang, & Yap, 2016; Mohammed, Guillet & Law, 2015; Xiao & Smith, 2006).

The study used two scientometric programs namely, Cite Space and VOS viewer to help in visualizing the results. The analyzed aspects of the selected articles include impact analysis, collaboration analysis, thematic coverage, and collaboration analysis since they were deemed sufficient to the study's research question. Conclusions will be drawn from personal experience and research in existence.

Results

Tourism has greater economic benefits to the citizens of Oman since its expansion will improve the quality of life and will help its people acquire novel skills, knowledge and capabilities, employment, and development of businesses across the nation (Liu & Wall, 2006). The opportunities that come due to tourism can not be ignored. Many people can expand their businesses through investment in hotels and accommodation to take advantage of the visitors getting into the country. Furthermore, the country is able to preserve its values and cultural assets and consolidate its domestic pride and its citizen's identity (Henderson, 2015). Besides, tourism will also help Oman to achieve its SDGs. The nation is also bound to improve services like education and transport making sure that the country attracts more tourists. This in turn helps the natives to better their lives.

Findings

The following findings were discovered out of the research:

- Tourism can generate revenues enough to contribute to the sustainable economic growth within Oman.

- Achievement of the country's SDGs depends on the availability of revenue generated through the tourism industry.
- Actionable, and enforceable policies must be initiated to support tourism to drive SDGs in Oman.

Originality value: The study examined the impact of tourism on the achievement of SDGs in Oman.

Conclusion

Although tourism plays a great role in the generation of revenues needed to maintain a sustainable economy, actionable and enforceable policies must be initiated to improve the tourism sector in Oman. Moreover, Oman's higher learning institutions should initiate professional courses that will boost the tourism industry in the country. Tourism has a huge potential in Oman and its development can cushion the country against shocks in the oil industry, thereby helping the country to achieve its SDGs on time.

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