

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Challenges of Tourism in the Countries of the Arab Spring Revolutions

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ABSTRACT

While global tourism has seen clear mutations recently due to modern progress in the field of information technology, means of communication, and the widespread of the concepts of globalization and free trade, the tourism sector is witnessing a significant negative decline to a number of Arab countries. Such countries have been swept by the waves of political revolutions and security unrests, known as the Arab spring, which affected the tourism sector. This paper is trying to shed light on this problem and discuss its dimensions in order to reach to appropriate results and recommendations that may contribute to solving this problem imposed by the political and security situation. This paper is focus on two aspects; first, the current situation of Arab tourism after the spring revolutions, included review of the importance of tourism in the countries of the spring, the negative impact of the crisis in general, and identifies aspects of the dimensions of the crisis. The second revolves around the analysis of the effects of the crisis on Arab countries, includes the evaluation of losses generally by the experts, the classification of countries based on the effects of the crisis, and discusses the assumptions and solutions. Then the conclusion which states the most important findings and recommendations. Although the abbreviation of this paper, it manages to deal with globally important issue with consequent problems that need urgent responses within the subject of this research. The first is the slump in the number of tourists' arrival to some Arab countries that have been dependent on this sector as a source of income, in spite of the shortcomings leading in its entirety to the failure to keep up the world. The second is the unexpected influx of extra tourists to a number of Arab countries at the expense of other Arab countries that lost the boom in tourism, which requires further attempts to deal with this increase, otherwise, entailed certain problems. Therefore, the situation requires more cooperation between the Arab countries in the field of tourism. We hope that this paper is a modest contribution towards solving such problems that have occurred recently. We pray to Allah the Almighty to bless our efforts.

Key words: Arab Tourism - Arab Spring Revolutions - Security and Stability - Tourism Investment - Recovery and Development.

Introduction

The countries of the Middle East in general and Arab countries particularly, are destinations of choice for tourists from around the world. The tourism industry of its various kinds considered as an important source of national income in these countries. The Arab countries are rich with abundant historical and archaeological own distinct. Such significant include the mild climate, the nature of a variety stunning, the strategic location of distinct and the shores of a long extended between the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, making the sectors of tourism productive and contributed effectively in the national income and economic development of these countries.

The significance of this study indicates the extent of the impact of the political crisis and the insecurity referred to, on the movement of tourism in the countries of the Arab Spring Revolutions and its implications for economic and social aspects.

The tourism sector in the Arab countries witnessed a significant decline after more than a year of the Arab Spring Revolutions, because of the insecurity and political disturbances, namely, in countries as Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Syria and Libya, as well as Morocco, Jordan and Lebanon. The impact of events has led to the decline in this sector significantly.

In spite of the adverse effects referred to, we find a number of Arab countries in the region have benefited positively from the course of events, where the growth of the tourism sector increased to varying clear degrees. Such countries include the United Arab Emirates Qatar and some other Gulf countries. However, that growth

does not mean be free of problems, although this growth has emerged the signs of failure especially with regard to appropriate services to accommodate those great waves of unexpected arrivals of tourists, which is also worthy of study within this research paper. The objectives of the research include:

1. Reveal the dimensions of the crisis caused by the tourist insecurity and political events in the countries the Arab Spring Revolutions through the current reality, information and data provided by relevant sources, compared to the situation before the crisis.
2. Uncover the economic impacts in trying to suggest possible solutions.
3. Find the appropriate mechanisms to overcome the crisis to activate and recover the tourism sector in the region again.

The Arab Spring Revolutions to be assumed as independent variable, while the tourism sector to be assumed as changing variable in an opposite inverse relationship, in the sense that as the crisis intensified, the more affected the tourism sector in the country concerned by the decline and vice versa.

The impact of the crisis is supposed to be transient and that the tourism sector in that country will tend to recover quickly after the reform of political and security stability. Besides the possibility of improvement for the better, by activate the new mechanisms, restore political stability, and the formation of political regimes pursuing freedom, justice and democracy, rather than systems that caused the Revolutions and the laxity of security which was primary cause of damage to the tourism sector

Spatial dimension: the area of research is the tourism sector in the Arab countries in which the Revolutions have taken place, and then hit the tourism sector, as well as the countries in the region that have benefited from this situation and thus the tourism sector was affected with a positive. Temporal dimension: Since the start of the Arab Spring Revolutions spark in 2010, and perhaps a little earlier as the beginning of the revolt movements to the present

Method of inductive and analytical approach was followed in this study aimed at highlighting the problem in question, with the statement of its dimensions, and devise appropriate solutions. As an essential step in order to assist the competent authorities to take decision based on findings of this study, although it is summarized, in the pursuit of controlling the existing problems in the said tourism sectors, which no doubt it impact on the economy of the countries in question.

The primary sources for this paper included collection of information from some academic papers, articles, reports, press releases, books, journals, and data from the relevant websites. It should be noted that the most important problem faced by the researcher in this regard is the lack of references, especially in terms of books and scientific research on the subject mater as it has newly occurred.

Section I:

Status of Arab Tourism after the Arab Spring Revolutions:

First - The Importance of Tourism in the Countries of the Revolutions:

According to information sources, the Arab Spring Revolutions was defined in the media, as a peaceful protest movement set off in all the Arab countries during late 2010 and early 2011, influenced by the Revolution of Tunisia, sparked by Mohammed Bouazizi self-immolation in protest of police corruption. The Tunisian Revolution succeeded in the overthrow of former President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. The main causes of its spread included corruption, economic stagnation and poor living conditions, in addition to the political and security restrictions and lack of integrity of elections in most Arab countries. With the success of the protests in Tunisia, a wave of unrest sparked by the Tunisian "Burning Man" struck Algeria, Jordan, Egypt, and Yemen then spread to other countries. (Wikipedia 2012).

Tourism is in some Arab countries, considered as the backbone of the economy, as it is the primary source of hard currency in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and provides hundreds of thousands of jobs. However, since the Arab revolts and the subsequent protests and violence, the image of these countries as a tourist destination shook, particularly in the eyes of the Europeans who were covering 80% of the tourism market.

Subsequently, the general atmosphere that accompanied the revolutions, recorded a sharp decline in tourism during the past few years has affected tourism sectors in the Arab region. However, it is now beginning to regain some of its lustre in some of these countries, although the recent violence has contributed to change the destination points of some world travel agencies, to other countries of the Mediterranean.

Second - The Negative Effects of the Crisis:

The tourism industry in the countries of Arab spring faced uncertain fate, with the sharp decline in the number of tourists coming to these countries, because of the escalation of tension and the continuing insecurity. Subsequently a collapse in tourism revenues, especially for countries that depend on the tourism sector as a

source of national income, as is in the case of the countries of North Africa, such as Egypt and Tunisia, as well as Syria and Yemen.

Despite the success of the Revolution of Tunisia in the overthrow of former President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, then the success of the Egyptian Revolution to dislodge the regime of Hosni Mubarak. However, this success did not crown the stability of a security, a matter that led the companies of tourism to exclude Egypt and Tunisia from their programs for fear of insecurity that accompanied the revolutions and apparently continues until this moment.

With raging civil war witnessed by Libya between the rebels and supporters of the Libyan late leader Muammar Gaddafi, and in Syria with the continuing protests and bloody confrontations between demonstrators who demanded reform and the army loyal to President Bashar al-Assad, the European tourists are less inclined to take risk of adventure to visit either of these two countries.

It seems that the promotional campaigns carried out by some of those countries targeted tourism markets of Western and Arab alike, have failed to reduce the roof of fears of insecurity. Reports confirm that the decline in the tourism industry is still dominant of the situation, and that the redirection of tourist destinations has become a substitute for the adventure to insure stability of the situation within the countries of the Arab Spring.

Most of the of Arab tourism destinations have been affected negatively following the Arab Spring Revolutions, that have forced tourists to change their directions to other destinations, more secure and less risking. According to analysts, the first of those destinations that have been affected is Egypt, followed by Syria, Yemen and Morocco as well, and there are some countries that have been affected positively; turned into tourist destinations on the expense of the Arab Spring countries, such as Turkey, UAE, and some countries in Southeast Asia.

Third - The Dimensions of the Crisis:

The negative impact of the crisis has covered all interfaces of life in those countries concerned, including tourism in the Arab countries. All activities and economic sectors have been affected to varying degrees as well. However, tourism sector was the most interepected because of the depth of the political and the security crisis that cast a heavy shadow on the country one the hand, and the high sensitivity of this activity towards the changes and developments at all levels, especially the security and political on other. Such effects had been demonstrated through:

1. Severe decline in the volume of incoming tourism to the Arab countries were foreign or regional, with rising rates, opposite to security and political levels.
2. The decline in tourist revenue from taxes, fees on tourists and tourism activities associated with tourist facilities such as hotels.
3. Workers engaged in the tourism sector and activities associated with them, were affected. Moreover, the problem was worsening due to national unemployment that reached record levels.
4. Loss of interest in the countries concerned as important tourist destination for tourists from Iran, Iraq, Gulf countries and others, heading to alternative destinations such as Turkey, the countries of Eastern Europe and some Asian countries such as Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and others.
5. Low income levels of families and individuals due to the faltering domestic tourism in light of poor security and economic conditions.
6. Damage to tourist facilities and hotels because of the decline in tourists numbers and the low occupancy of hotel rooms, especially those located in hot spots.
7. Sectors and activities related to tourism such as real estate, contracting and construction, transportation, banks and others were also have been affected.

Section II:

Analysis of the Crisis Effects on the Arab countries:

First - Determination of loss generally:

Arab Tourism Compared to the Global Tourism:

Tourism activities increased worldwide, as the European continent has seen a growth rate of 6% in the number of tourists last year, while South America region has witnessed a growth of 10%. Records showed transfer of tourists from the Middle East and North Africa contributed to the achievement of positive results in central and Eastern Europe, Southern Mediterranean and East Asia. Recording the best results with a growth rate of 8% last year, at the time saw the Asia-Pacific growth rate of 6%, while regions of South Asia and

Southeast Asia grew by 9%, noted that demand for travel to countries of "Arab Spring" was limited only on the residents, as is the case of Egypt.

All regions of the globe have seen an increase in the number of tourists during the first five months of 2011, where tourism has grown in the region of Latin America 17%, South Asia with 14%, and South East Asia with 10%. However, the Middle East and North Africa showed negative exception, compared to the rest of the world in terms of the number of tourists during the period.

Rates of Decline in the Region:

The Middle East and North Africa witnessed clear decline, especially in Tunisia and Egypt. Statistics of the World Tourism Organization showed that in March the number of tourists in the Middle East fell by 8.4% in 2011, reached to 54.8 million after an increase of 14.9% in 2010. (Journal of Time International 2012). In North Africa, the percentage declined to 9.9% with 16.9% in 2011 after witnessed a 6.5% increase in the previous year. Tourism activities fell by 41% in Syria, 32% in Egypt, 31% in Tunisia, 24% in Lebanon and 16% in Jordan in the first seven months of 2011. Bearing in mind, that tourism is major contributor to the GDP in most of these countries. (Journal of Time International 2012).

Change of Tourist Destinations:

Options for tourists and passengers turned from the Arab countries to the Eastern Asian and European, because of the unrests, insecurity and unstable political situation witnessed by a number of countries in the region for more than a year. The demand for travel, whether for tourism or business, declined by between 20 to 25% to the Middle East in general and especially to Egypt and Syria, to other destinations such as Turkey, European and some Asian destinations such as Bangkok, Singapore, Malaysia and China, to become alternative for travellers in light of current events.

Tourism from Europe and America towards the Arab countries included Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Syria, Jordan and Yemen decreased as important tourist destinations in the region, and the decline was following the events and political changes in the Arab world that caused by the Arab Spring in the events of paralysis in the hospitality industry, restaurants, causing heavy losses.

Recent statistics of the World Tourism Organization have revealed that the number of international tourists, who visited the Middle East, declined 14% during the first five months of this year, and in the countries of North Africa by 11%. This resulted the average rate of decline across the Arab region in the range of 12%, and the organization - according to a press statement on its website - attributed this decline to the impact of recent events in the region.

The French newspaper "Le Figaro" reported according to the Association of French tour operators that in the context of consequences suffered by the tourism sector in some countries of the "Arab Spring", between the months of November 2011 and February 2012, recorded sales of tours to North Africa decreased by 6.26% ". (Le Figaro, 2012).

The tourism in the countries of the Arab Spring has seen a significant decline over the past years ranged between fifteen and eight percent. According to some estimates, the Arab countries may have suffered a loss estimated at about \$ 45 billion and the number of tourists dropped by 7.5 million visitors since the end of 2010.

Unrests took place in the countries Arab Spring, despite the calm conditions to a large extent in the tourist areas in these countries, hindered tourists from coming to the areas and thinking defer travel to countries in the Arab Spring, until the situation stabilizes in the final.

Second - Classification of Countries Based On the Effects of the Crisis:

The First Category (The Adversely Affected Countries):

Experts classified the countries affected with the waves of political changes into three categories; the first countries have been harmed directly, which include Egypt and Tunisia where tourism is considered as an important source of their income, besides Yemen, Libya and Syria. In the following points, we will review the most important aspects that affected the tourism situation in these countries; it is among the greatest of the Arab countries affected.

Egypt:

The number of tourists who visited Egypt in 2011 was about 9.5 million tourists, declined by nearly 35% from the previous year and revenue from tourism fell to 8.8 billion from \$ 12.8 billion, loss amounted to \$ 4.5 billion. In addition, the aviation industry that is closely linked to the movement of tourists was affected and the

air traffic declined following the drop in the movement of tourists as well as various Egyptian airports affected negatively as dependent on the revenues of the economic activities such as the movement of aircrafts, landing and departure fees, accommodation, and other services.

The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics of Egypt in Cairo, stated that Arab tourists coming to the Arab Republic of Egypt recorded a decline of 7.5% during the month of September, by 126,809 tourists, compared to the same period last year. While some specialists said, that Egypt was receiving between 11 - 13 million tourists a year, spending about \$ 13 billion annually. (Ashraf Railway, 2012).

Tunisia:

Tunisia employs about 400,000 people in the field of tourism, visited with about 7 million tourists annually and accounts for 5.2 billion dollars in national income per year, the percentage declined in the number of tourists coming to Tunisia reached 45% in 2011 after the overthrow of the president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. The events that took place in Tunisia since the Revolution had damaged the tourism sector, which recorded a terrible fall, exceeded 33% and losses reached up to 3364 million TD. The events had also caused the closure of 17 hotel units, which led to the loss of 3 thousand citizens to their permanent income as well as the loss of 20 thousand citizens to their seasonal income, because of the lack of political and social stability and the absence of security in the country.

Syria:

Tourism sector was the most affected by the events took place in Syria, where it received a strong and straight blow, led to the decline in tourism during the first four months of the year 2011 compared to the same period of the previous year, which witnessed growth by 26%. However, the followed sixth months witnessed a noticeable decline in tourism by more than 60 % indicating that the decline came mainly from tourism of the European, U.S. and Gulf countries.

The most important impacts witnessed by the tourism sector in Syria in the light of political turmoil and the existing security, included the decline in tourism by (8)% during the months (January - February - May 2011) in comparison with the corresponding period of previous year, according to an official report issued by the Syrian Ministry of Tourism. The flights occupancy to Syria fell by about 70% compared to the period that preceded the political unrests there. Among the problems arising from the events, was the refusal of insurance companies, to cover tourism for those wishing to travel to Syria. The decline of medical tourism in Syria, resulted in the effect on (80%) of the dentists in the country, and other doctors, with the realization that hospitals, clinics and health centres were receiving thousands of visitors in the past for treatment from Iraq, Jordan, Iran, Yemen and other countries.

Yemen:

Yemen was affected by the collapse of the tourism sector, since the start of a wave of anti-government protests since in February 2011, the losses incurred by Yemeni companies reached up to between 400 to \$ 560 million. Reports indicated that the travel agencies have closed 40% of tourist facilities, while 30% of workers in tourism sector were laid off and 35% were granted compulsory holidays without payment of the volume of employment in this sector. Moreover the departure of nearly 250,000 foreign tourists. As well as cancellation of reservations for about half a million tourists from different foreign countries, and thus reduce the occupancy rate in addition to accommodation prices fell by about 50%. Therefore, some government officials and observers, expected that the local tourism revenues may decline for several years to come, due to abstain of foreign tourists to visit Yemen, besides, the growing concerns about possible attacks from (al-Qaeda) in light of continuing declared war between government forces and elements of the said organization, and confrontations in many areas.

The Second Category (The Countries Affected Relatively by the Events):

Jordan and Lebanon:

Jordan and Lebanon have not much affected by the tourist setback in the region. However the two were hit (relatively) by the hot conditions in the neighbouring countries. These two countries are still recording absence in this field. The tourism sector suffered a painful blow, in both countries, regardless of the stable situation, because in the absence of awareness of advertising and media, the tourist will treat all countries as a single block.

For example, we noticed that tourism advertisements and promotions to Israel, spread throughout the Russian capital Moscow, so that the Russian citizen may believe that the Dead Sea area and the city of Petra, of Jordan are within the territories of Israel, while it is rare to see a single of advertisement for Jordan within many years.

It may be claimed that "Tourism is important to quality, not quantity" but in fact, the tourist quantity has an effective role in the dissemination of culture and civilization of the country as evidenced by the UAE, which attracts tourism for shopping from around the globe through the budget commensurate with the per capita income average. Jordan has fallen 16% in the first seven months of 2011, despite contribution of tourism by 14% of the GDP in this country. (Journal of Time International 2012)

The same applies to Lebanon, where officials do not make any effort in promoting the wonderful art panel located on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Besides the country was affected by the political events in Syria.

Libya:

Some may consider tourism in Libya was affected by the Revolution and wonder about classifying Libya in this category, but in fact, tourism was hit in this country before the escalation of the events and the eruption of Revolution.

Libya is considered as one of the tourist countries that have not been marketed properly as a tourist destination, except a simple and timid in the media, because of the sanctions and the country's total dependence on oil. Therefore, was not much affected by the events because of the Libyan state policy under Gaddafi's regime, in terms of lack of concern for the tourism industry. Despite the deteriorating of security situation in Libya, experts expect growth in the tourism sector to become the locomotive task in the economy, especially if we take into account the fact of the large tourist wealth enjoyed by Libya such as the shores of the Mediterranean, the impressive Roman monuments and the closure to Europe as important tourism markets.

Morocco:

We classified Morocco in this category even though it has some achievements during the Revolutions, however; such achievements were not significant and seem to be of counter reaction strategy. Morocco is a stable tourist destination for European tourists. Tourism was not much affected by the events of some public protests in the streets of Moroccan cities calling for reform, but overall considered small compared to the mass movements sweeping in Egypt, Tunisia, Syria, Libya, and Yemen. King Mohammed VI hurried to launch a series a row of concrete political reforms. ([Http://www.oujdatimes.com](http://www.oujdatimes.com) 2012). Therefore, Morocco is just on the safe shore with success to control the situation.

The Third Category (The Positively Benefited Countries):

This category includes the United Arab Emirates, Turkey and Israel, which have registered a huge tourist influx from around the world. In addition, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, and Turkey despite the decline curve in the Arab region; some destinations have achieved positive results such as the said countries.

The United Arab Emirates:

Tourism to the UAE had risen by 10% during the years (2011 - 2012). The experts pointed out that the reason for this rise is the European tourists heading to the cities of the UAE instead of the countries of North Africa and Syria, where political unrest and demonstrations known as (Arab spring). Patrick Antaki (tourist expert in the UAE), told the German Press (D. B. A) that since the outbreak of demonstrations (Arab Spring) and the subsequent incidents, the number of tourists received by the hotels of UAE, has increased to a range between 7 to 10% and this increase continued over the past year and months that have elapsed this year. He added that more nationalities that increased orientation of the UAE is German, Russian, British, pointing out that the hotel capacity of the UAE is able to accommodate the continued increase in tourists. Abu Dhabi has achieved a year of the most successful in terms of the number of hotel guests as 2,111,611 million people lived in its hotels and hotel apartments, above expectations for 2011 (two million a) by increase of 6.5% (more than a hundred thousand visitors). Accordingly the revenue increased by 3% to reach about 4.375 billion dirham (1.2 billion dollars).

Turkey:

Turkey has received 1.4 million Arab tourists during the first eight months of 2011 compared to 1.2 million during the same period of 2010. It was expected that the total number might reached to 1.7 million for the year 2011. Turkey has seen a significant increase in visitor's numbers from Syria and other Arab countries after the lifting of the requirement to obtain a visa for many countries in the region in 2009. Nevertheless, in the shadow of violence in Syria and the attempts of citizens to adapt to life after the Revolution in other countries, the numbers from the Middle East decreased. Turkey has attracted about 31.46 million tourists in 2011, with an increase of about 10%. Tourism revenues exceeded \$ 23 billion. Some experts said that it was expected to visit Turkey for more than 30 million tourists in 2012, adding that also tourism revenues will reach up to \$ 30 billion with his country is seeking to focus on the sectors of visitors for generating more revenue. ([Http://cars.bezzat.com](http://cars.bezzat.com) 2012).

Qatar:

The Tourism Authority for Tourism in Qatar Revealed in its annual report for 2011 a significant increase in the number of tourists from the GCC countries by 49% compared with 2010, show that the city of Doha welcomes 1.16 million visitors per year from Saudi Arabia Kingdom alone. The General Authority for Tourism revealed that Doha is on track to become one of the main destinations of the citizens and residents of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), where the tourists coming from Saudi Arabia, formed the bulk of the total GCC tourists by 59%.

Saudi Arabia:

Despite the decline curve in tourism within the Arab region, some destinations have achieved positive results such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, according to the World Tourism Organization. Statistical report of the World Tourism Organization has revealed that the number of visitors, who to Saudi Arabia during 2010 amounted to 10.85 million, spent \$ 6.8 billion (25.5 billion riyals), compared with 10.9 million visitors spent \$ 7.8 billion (29.25 billion riyals in 2009). (Ayman Rashidan / Financial Times Ltd 2012 .

Saudi Arabia has received a percentage share amounted to 17.8 % of the number of arrivals to the Middle East, compared with 20.6 per cent in 2009. The report pointed to the rank of Saudi Arabia as second among Arab world and 22 among the top countries by number of visitors during 2010 compared to the rank of 20 in 2009. Therefore ranked in the fifth place among the Arab world and 37th in the same year in terms of receipts compared to rank 31st in 2009. (Report of the World Tourism Organization entitled World Tourism 2011).

It seems that the Kingdom has benefited from the Islamic religious tourism in the worship of the ongoing annual pilgrimage, which was not affected by these revolutions; in addition to the dominant situation of stability, tourist activity organizer, which attests to the benefit of experience in this area and the Kingdom standards of quality assurance in tourism.

Discussion:

- Unrest in the countries of the Arab Spring Revolutions, caused tourism sectors to fall significantly in countries such as Egypt, Tunisia and Syria, while other destinations benefited such as UAE, Qatar and Turkey, as tourists looking for places of safety. The decline of tourists' numbers included the international tourism sector, or tourists from outside the Arab world as well as regional tourism, or the sector of tourists from within the Arab world.
- The crisis in the tourism sector had a negative impact on the sectors of air transport, travel agencies, and traditional industries, in addition to hotels, restaurants, resorts, markets and other facilities, which finally impacted on the economic situation of the countries concerned.
- It is natural that the influence of those Revolutions and the accompanying decline of the reality of security, may impact negatively on the situation of tourism in the Arab world because the sector is linked to a large extent with the situation of stability in the country targeted by the tourist.
- Experts believe that the features of the overall scene for North Africa suggest that the number of tourist arrivals will begin to grow, however slowly as improvement will be dependent on the implementation of political reforms promised by the Revolutions of the region.
- Despite the lack of clarity of vision recently some experts emphasize on the possibility of gradual recovery, which is perhaps linked to several factors, including being able to remove the political dictatorial systems, corrupt and bring systems adopt freedom, justice and democracy which will reflect positively on the situation of tourism, especially in terms of security and achieve political stability. In addition, factors that will help accelerate the recovery of tourism include wealth of attractive nature, temperate climate, cultural

- heritage and archaeological monuments. Besides the wealth of financial and material resources in the Arab countries concerned and therefore it can be said that the change of tourists' destinations following the Revolutions of Arab Spring, is temporary for the time being, and if the security achieved in the Arab streets, quickly returns the tourism investments and return the region more attractive than ever before.
- Observers believe that the continued security tensions in the countries of Arab Spring, imposes on the workers in the tourism sector to manage the crisis with a scientific planning leads to the reduction of losses suffered by the sector. However, this should not stop marketing campaigns and publicity for tourism in the Arab countries, with offers of low prices to attract Arab and foreign tourists, especially as prices still considered high despite the drop in tourist numbers.
 - The Arab countries demanding greater cooperation aimed at promoting tourism to take advantage of the historical relations enjoyed by these countries, noting that the Arab cooperation in the field of tourism is dominated significantly with the political arena, such claim is translated in the action of some Arab countries, prevent their citizens to visit the states of Revolutions.
 - Some experts believe that there is no role for tourism companies in stabilizing the tourism industry, and that restoration of tourism to the status prior to the Revolutions is dependent upon governments in the return of stability and security as the tourism commodity related mainly to security and political stability. It could be taken for granted that the restoration of the numbers prior to the Arab Revolutions depends largely on the seriousness of the political reforms in those countries and the ability of governments to provide security for travellers.
 - The information gap is causing defects in terms of dealing with the crisis as the importance of tourism information systems seem evident for being the most important factor in the process of determining the characteristics of tourism, the true reflection about the reality of the situation and the tourism impact on the economy of the country. Tourism information Systems are the result of data collection in the tourism sector and tourism product, such as the number of tourists entering and leaving the country, spending, the rate of accommodation and booking, the number of tourist facilities, and other data on the tourism product. Such data subject to the processing and analysis to reach the necessary information that reflect the reality of tourism in the country for effective planning, management and taking right decision in tourism marketing. The process of tourism management based on the tourism information that must be provided accurately as well as the possibility to use such information correctly to achieve the desired goals in the process of tourism and development (Symposium organized tourist information and its impact on tourism development in the Arab States Tunis 2009).
 - The achievement of last point will lead to the conviction of tourists by providing guidance about the situation in terms of safety, following planed strategy, in order to achieve the purposes of their tour. We note that the Revolutions of Arab Spring did not target the security of tourists and their safety in any of the countries concerned, however the absence of role of the information-oriented strategies and plans increased tourists concerns, as they lack of information, where media promotion is not enough alone in this regard. Besides media should be used properly to play important role in the circumstances of such crisis, otherwise misuse will inflict great damage to the tourism sector (2nd UNWTO conference on tourism & media Egypt 2012).
 - Activation and development of regional tourism, or the so-called (Interfacial Tourism) which means international and regional cooperation among a group of states through tourism to strengthen relations with each other and achieve mutual relations among them. Since most Arab, countries spend a lot of money on foreign tourism instead of tourism to the Arab countries. Arab States are urged to enhance bilateral relations with each other. Some researches based on statistics showing that there are more than 20 million Arab tourists spend between \$ 25 to \$ 28 billion annually, and most of this Arab money wasted on travel and tourism to foreign countries other than the Arab region. Therefore, it is recommended to trend for the local area as compensation to the current crisis in tourism until the situation stabilizes, the tourism sector recovers and the global tourism or foreign activity returns. (Mishal Zuaiter Hale 2010).
 - Finally we noted that the Revolutions of Arab Spring (although inevitability) have caused great effect on the economic infrastructure, including the tourism sector in the countries concerned, for example the loss of wealth under the control of previous politicians of dissolved systems, as in the case of Libya, where the fate of the wealth of the late President Gaddafi, is not known, especially in the western countries. In addition, the moral effect on the reputation of the tourism in those countries, where tourism is radically dependent on the promotion and advertising and implantation of trust and confidence in the hearts of tourists.

Conclusion:

In this research paper, we reviewed and the various dimensions of the problem based on the available information sources in the scope of the topic. The paper has focused on two sections. The first is the current situation of Arab tourism following the Revolutions of Arab Spring. The second analysis of the effects of the

crisis on Arab countries, then followed the discussion and review of the information, and finally in conclusion the research reached to a number of results and recommendations are summarized briefly as follows:

- While the tourism sector witnessed a steady growth in all parts of the world, the tourism sector within the countries of Arab Spring Revolutions witnessed a significant decline at the same time. The researcher suggests that the main reason for this decline is the lack of political stability and security in addition to the absence of special mechanisms to deal with emergencies, which led to the turmoil in the variables of tourism activities.
- Some countries in the region have taken advantage of the situation to benefit positively in terms of tourism; however these countries may face some problems for example how to deal with the increased unexpected flux of tourists, and the provision of adequate services.
- Proposal to the trend towards diversification of tourism and the necessity of activating intra-regional, cultural and religious tourism beside leisure tourism and to pay more attention to the qualitative side as well as the quantitative.
- Specialists and decision-makers particularly politicians, have to introduce integrated planning for the tourism sector, and this suggestion is including the areas of administrative, legal, investment, security, and try to form departments or special committees to deal with the crisis to move during the emergency, beside the development of services and enhance of safety and security process.
- Introduce the use of modern means such as tourism promotional electronic means, with focus on inter-regional instead of foreign tourism by facilitating border legal procedures, local investment, and reduce the prices of means of transport and accommodation.
- Encourage investment in tourism projects, the establishment of joint tourism activities, activate tourism conferences by coordination among Arab countries periodically to achieve the qualitative and quantitative development of tourism, to make further use of information technology in the field of tourism, directed and planned media activity. In addition, to facilitate services of tourists started from visa procedures for tourists' arrival to the departure of the country, besides the use of more promotional tools to attract tourists.
- Improve the level of qualitative development of tourist services beside the quantitative development taking into account the proper planning to accommodate the development of quantitative, noting the role played by the tourism sector in the growth of other productive sectors of the economy.
- Focus on tourism investments and lower interest rates in the light of the crisis and increase the economic convergence between the Arab countries to reach a common economic vision. For example:
 - Work on the currency union between the Arab countries for example the establishment of funds and seeking joint tourist.
 - Strengthen and activate tourism conferences in the Arab countries, distribution and coordination among Arab countries annually.
 - Establishment of common Arab tourism projects that have high efficiency and not limited to traditional services.
 - The formation of special committees to deal with the emergency and crisis situations, especially during the security problems.

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