



مجلة بحوث الشرق الأوسط

مجلة علمية مُدكَّمة
(مُعتمدة) شهرياً

العدد الثاني والتسعون
(أكتوبر 2023)

السنة التاسعة والأربعون
تأسست عام 1974

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مركز بحوث
الشرق الأوسط



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مجلة بحوث الشرق الأوسط

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- تنشر الأعداد تبعاً على موقع دار المنظومة.



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والدراسات المستقبلية - جامعة عين شمس

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الرؤية

السعي لتحقيق الريادة في النشر العلمي المتميز في المحتوى والمضمون والتأثير والمرجعية في مجالات منطقة الشرق الأوسط وأقطاره .

الرسالة

نشر البحوث العلمية الأصيلة والرصينة والمبتكرة في مجالات الشرق الأوسط وأقطاره في مجالات اختصاص المجلة وفق المعايير والقواعد المهنية العالمية المعمول بها في المجالات المُحكَّمة دولياً.

الأهداف

- نشر البحوث العلمية الأصيلة والرصينة والمبتكرة .
- إتاحة المجال أمام العلماء والباحثين في مجالات اختصاص المجلة في التاريخ والجغرافيا والسياسة والاقتصاد والاجتماع والقانون وعلم النفس واللغة العربية وآدابها واللغة الانجليزية وآدابها ، على المستوى المحلى والإقليمي والعالمي لنشر بحوثهم وإنتاجهم العلمي .
- نشر أبحاث كبار الأساتذة وأبحاث الترقية للسادة الأساتذة المساعدين والسادة المدرسين بمختلف الجامعات المصرية والعربية والأجنبية .
- تشجيع ونشر مختلف البحوث المتعلقة بالدراسات المستقبلية والشرق الأوسط وأقطاره .
- الإسهام في تنمية مجتمع المعرفة في مجالات اختصاص المجلة من خلال نشر البحوث العلمية الرصينة والتميزة .



مجلة بحوث الشرق الأوسط

- رئيس التحرير د. حاتم العبد

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شروط النشر بالمجلة

- تُعنى المجلة بنشر البحوث المهمة بمجالات العلوم الإنسانية والأدبية ؛
- يعتمد النشر على رأي اثنين من المحكمين المتخصصين ويتم التحكيم إلكترونياً ؛
- تقبل البحوث باللغة العربية أو بإحدى اللغات الأجنبية، وترسل إلى موقع المجلة على بنك المعرفة المصري ويرفق مع البحث ملف بيانات الباحث يحتوي على عنوان البحث باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية واسم الباحث والتايتل والانتماء المؤسسي باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية، ورقم واتساب، وإيميل الباحث الذي تم التسجيل به على موقع المجلة ؛
- يشار إلى أن الهوامش والمراجع في نهاية البحث وليست أسفل الصفحة ؛
- يكتب الباحث ملخص باللغة العربية واللغة الإنجليزية للبحث صفحة واحدة فقط لكل ملخص ؛
- بالنسبة للبحث باللغة العربية يكتب على برنامج "word" ونمط الخط باللغة العربية "Simplified Arabic" وحجم الخط 14 ولا يزيد عدد الأسطر في الصفحة الواحدة عن 25 سطر والهوامش والمراجع خط Simplified Arabic حجم الخط 12 ؛
- بالنسبة للبحث باللغة الإنجليزية يكتب على برنامج word ونمط الخط Times New Roman وحجم الخط 13 ولا يزيد عدد الأسطر عن 25 سطر في الصفحة الواحدة والهوامش والمراجع خط Times New Roman حجم الخط 11 ؛
- (Paper) مقياس الورق (B5) 17.6 × 25 سم، (Margins) الهوامش 2.3 سم يمينًا ويسارًا، 2 سم أعلى وأسفل الصفحة، ليصبح مقياس البحث فعلي (الكلام) 21×13 سم. (Layout) والنسق: (Header) الرأس 1.25 سم، (Footer) تذييل 2.5 سم ؛
- مواصفات الفقرة للبحث: بداية الفقرة First Line = 1.27 سم، قبل النص = 0.00، بعد النص = 0.00، تباعد قبل الفقرة = 6pt (تباعد بعد الفقرة = 0pt)، تباعد الفقرات (مفرد single) ؛
- مواصفات الفقرة للهوامش والمراجع: يوضع الرقم بين قوسين هلاكي مثل: (1)، بداية الفقرة Hanging = 0.6 سم، قبل النص = 0.00، بعد النص = 0.00، تباعد قبل الفقرة = 0.00، تباعد بعد الفقرة = 0.00، تباعد الفقرات (مفرد single) ؛
- الجداول والأشكال: يتم وضع الجداول والأشكال إما في صفحات منفصلة أو وسط النص وفقًا لرؤية الباحث، على أن يكون عرض الجدول أو الشكل لا يزيد عن 13.5 سم بأي حال من الأحوال ؛
- يتم التحقق من صحة الإملاء على مسئولية الباحث لتفادي الأخطاء في المصطلحات الفنية ؛
- مدة التحكيم 15 يوم على الأكثر، مدة تعديل البحث بعد التحكيم 15 يوم على الأكثر ؛
- يخضع تسلسل نشر البحوث في أعداد المجلة حسب ما تراه هيئة التحرير من ضرورات علمية وفنية ؛
- المجلة غير ملزمة بإعادة البحوث إلى أصحابها سواء نشرت أم لم تنشر ؛
- تعتبر البحوث عن آراء أصحابها وليس عن رأي رئيس التحرير وهيئة التحرير ؛
- رسوم التحكيم للمصريين 650 جنيه، ولغير المصريين 155 دولار ؛
- رسوم النشر للصفحة الواحدة للمصريين 25 جنيه، وغير المصريين 12 دولار ؛
- الباحث المصري يسدد الرسوم بالجنيه المصري (بالفيزا) بمقر المركز (المقيم بالقاهرة)، أو على حساب حكومي رقم : (9/450/80772/8) بنك مصر (المقيم خارج القاهرة) ؛
- الباحث غير المصري يسدد الرسوم بالدولار على حساب حكومي رقم : (EG71000100010000004082175917) (البنك العربي الأفريقي) ؛
- استلام إفادة قبول نشر البحث في خلال 15 يوم من تاريخ سداد رسوم النشر مع ضرورة رفع إيصالات السداد على موقع المجلة ؛
- المراسلات : توجه المراسلات الخاصة بالمجلة إلى: merc.director@asu.edu.eg
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رضوى حماده عشوش

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يسر مركز بحوث الشرق الأوسط والدراسات المستقبلية صدور العدد (92 - أكتوبر 2023) من مجلة المركز « مجلة بحوث الشرق الأوسط ». هذه المجلة العريقة التي مر على صدورها حوالي 49 عامًا في خدمة البحث العلمي، ويصدر هذا العدد وهو يحمل بين دافتيه عدة دراسات متخصصة: (دراسات قانونية، دراسات تاريخية، دراسات اقتصادية، دراسات إعلامية ، دراسات لغوية) ويعد البحث العلمي **Scientific Research** حجر الزاوية والركيزة الأساسية في الارتقاء بالمجتمعات لكي تكون في مصاف الدول المتقدمة.

ولذا تُعتبر الجامعات أن البحث العلمي من أهم أولوياتها لكي تقود مسيرة التطوير والتحديث عن طريق البحث العلمي في المجالات كافة.

ولذا تهدف مجلة بحوث الشرق الأوسط إلى نشر البحوث العلمية الرصينة والمبتكرة في مختلف مجالات الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية واللغات التي تخدم المعرفة الإنسانية. والمجلة تطبق معايير النشر العلمي المعتمدة من بنك المعرفة المصري وأكاديمية البحث العلمي، مما جعل الباحثين يتسابقون من كافة الجامعات المصرية ومن الجامعات العربية للنشر في المجلة.

وتحرص المجلة على انتقاء الأبحاث العلمية الجادة والرصينة والمبتكرة للنشر في المجلة كإضافة للمكتبة العلمية وتكون دائمًا في مقدمة المجالات العلمية المماثلة. ولذا نعد بالاستمرارية من أجل مزيد من الإبداع والتميز العلمي.

والله من وراء القصد

رئيس التحرير

د. حاتم العبد



الدراسات اللغوية

LINGUISTIC STUDIES

تأثير وسائل الإعلام

الالكترونية

على السياحة كأحد أعمدة العلامة التجارية
لمصر

**The Effect of Online Media on the
Tourism Dimension of Egypt Nation
Branding**

رضوى محمد حماده عشوش

دكتورة في الآداب قسم علوم الاتصال والإعلام

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المخلص:

تعد العلامة التجارية الاممية ممارسة تتبعها العديد من الدول وذلك بتطبيق تقنيات ومفاهيم العلامة التجارية الخاصة بالسلع والخدمات بهدف ترويج تلك الدول وتمييزها بين منافسيها. وتعتبر وسائل الاعلام الالكترونية الناقل للعلامات التجارية عبر مختلف الثقافات. تهدف هذه الدراسة الى فهم تاثير وسائل الاعلام الالكترونية على السياحة باعتبارها واحدة من اعمدة العلامة التجارية الاممية. وتستخدم الباحثة استمارات استبيان الرأى لتحديد الرأى العام بين غير المصريين لصورة مصر كعلامة تجارية وكوجهه سياحية. ومن خلال مراجعة الدراسات السابقة، اتضح تناول العديد منها لمفهوم العلامة التجارية الاممية، وممارسته، وادارته، وفوائده. وعلى الصعيد الاخر، هناك ندره في الدراسات التي تناولت نفس الالوجه بالنسبة لمصر او الدول العربية. واستخدمت الباحثة كاطار نظري نموذج حقوق ملكية العلامة التجارية المستندة على العملاء (Customer-Based Brand Equity Model). واستخدمت الباحثة استمارات استبيان الرأى لتحديد العوامل الاساسية التي ترتبط بمعرفة غير المصريين لمصر كوجهه سياحية، والخصائص التي تهمهم عند اختيارهم لوجهتهم السياحية. كما القت الدراسة الضوء على اهم العناصر المرتبطة بالسياحة كواحدة من اعمدة العلامة التجارية الاممية. وقد قامت الباحثة بتحليل نتائج الدراسة وقياس مدى ارتباطها بفروض البحث، والدراسات السابقة، والاطار النظري. وعليه، قامت الباحثة بتحليل النتائج وفقا للممارسات المرتبطة بالعلامة التجارية الاممية ووسائل الاعلام الالكترونية وتطبيقاتها على السياحة. كما تلى ذلك تقديم الباحثة لبعض التوصيات الخاصة بالمجال السياحي والبحث العلمي المرتبط بالعلامة التجارية الاممية والسياحة.

**Abstract:**

Nation branding is a practice that has been adopted by a number of countries where the techniques and concepts of branding products or services are applied to nations for the purpose of promoting them to their key stakeholders and identifying them among their competitors. Online media has been the carrier of nation brands across cultures. This study aims at understanding the effect of online media on the tourism dimension of Egypt nation branding. The researcher uses the survey to identify the general perception of non Egyptians on Egypt's brand image and its perception of it as a touristic destination. Through the study of the literature review, it has been obvious that a number of international studies have covered the concept of nation branding, its practice, management, and benefits. On the other hand, there has been a lack of similar Egyptian and Arabian studies. To stand upon the theoretical framework of the practice of nation branding, the research employed the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Model. The study results identified key elements and how they relate to the perception of non Egyptians of Egypt and the characteristics they look for when visiting a country for tourism. It provides a closer look on tourism being one of the most important dimensions of nation branding. It examines the public opinion of key stakeholders on the dimension in question. The researcher analyzed the data collected and measured the findings in relation to the research hypotheses, literature review, theoretical framework, and the employed research techniques. This enabled the researcher to draw the final analysis building on themes tackling mainly the practice of nation branding in relation to the tourism dimension and online media. Following this, the researcher drew some conclusions and made some recommendations for the business and research fields related to nation branding and tourism.



INTRODUCTION

A brand can be defined as a cluster of tangible and intangible characteristics intended to create identity and awareness, and to construct the reputation of a product, service, organization, place, or person, differentiating them from their competitors. Branding is a key marketing tool concerned with the creation of an identity (Sammut-Bonnici, 2015). This concept has extended to nation branding, which applies corporate marketing concepts and techniques, and deals with a country as a product country image. Nation branding is a practice that defines, unifies and highlights the main dimensions that characterize a nation and distinct it from its competitors. It brands the nation in a way that makes it recognizable among its key stakeholders. Nation branding is carried out by copying tactics of corporate marketing and adapting them to a country. It is a beneficial practice adopted by a number of countries to promote their nation's image, raise their profile, and attract people in different domains of business. It positively affects nations in many economic, social and political aspects (Anholt, 2010). Nation branding encompasses a variety of factors and associations covering political, economic, historical, and cultural dimensions. It serves to promote exports, tourism, investments, and immigration for the purpose of studying or living. Nation branding also builds on the heritage and culture of a nation, the population of natives and residents living in the country temporarily or permanently, as well as the legislations guiding the life of people, practices, and businesses (Fan, 2006).

Egypt could benefit from the concept of nation branding to create a clear and distinctive image, built around cognitive and emotional qualities, and understood by diverse audiences.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The main objective of this research is to understand the role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt. To do so, a survey was put together to stand upon the perception of non Egyptians of Egypt, tourism in Egypt, the role of online media in tourism and nation branding, and the main characteristics that affect their travel perception.



Statement of the Research Problem

Nation branding is a concept that has been adopted by a number of countries to build a specific brand image for themselves, and distinguish these countries from their competitors. Online media has been the carrier of nation brands across cultures. Through the study of the literature review, it has been obvious that a number of international studies have covered the concept of nation branding, its practice, management, and benefits. On the other hand, there has been a lack of similar Egyptian and Arabian studies, albeit the fact that some international studies surveyed nation branding in Egypt and other Arab countries. Hence, the research problem can be formulated as follows: This study aims at examining the public opinion of non Egyptians on the tourism dimension, and stand upon the practice role of online media in branding Egypt as a touristic destination.

Research Design

This study belongs to the descriptive research aiming at understanding the effect of online media in branding Egypt as a touristic destination. The background data pertaining to the study was collected by conducting literature review explaining the history, development, practice, management, benefits, and challenges to nation branding. The primary research employed a quantitative research technique.

Research Methods

The survey was used to identify the perception of non Egyptians of Egypt as a touristic country, the elements that affect their perception, the influence of tourism online marketing campaigns on them, and the effect of online media on Egypt's brand image among non Egyptians.

Research Questions

1. How do non Egyptians perceive Egypt as a touristic country?
2. What are the elements that affect the perception of non Egyptians of Egypt from a tourism standpoint?

Hypotheses



H1. There is a statistical correlation between the exposure of non Egyptians to online media and their perception of Egypt as a touristic country.

H2. There is a statistical correlation between the exposure of non Egyptians to online media and Egypt nation branding.

Sampling

Research Population

The survey research population was represented in non Egyptians, aged between 25 years or below and 55 years or above. The reason behind the choice of this age group was the financial independence and feasibility of making travel decisions.

Sample

The survey was conducted on a non probability purposive sample of 303 non Egyptian respondents, and the purposive sample's type was the homogeneous sampling where all the items in the sample are selected because they share identical or similar characteristics. For this study, the shared characteristic was a demographic one related to the fact that respondents were all non Egyptian. The sample comprised non Egyptians from different demographic and psychographic backgrounds including a variation of nationalities, gender, age groups, employment, and lifestyle comprising different travel and media habits.

Instrumentation

The Survey Process

The purpose of the survey was to test the general perception on Egypt, and tourism to it, and the effect of online media as a nation branding tool. The survey was distributed online by posting it on Facebook groups including non Egyptians living in Egypt such as Foreigners Living in Egypt, and groups visited mostly by non Egyptians such as survey exchange groups. The survey was conducted online using Google Docs, and tabulated and quantified using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software.



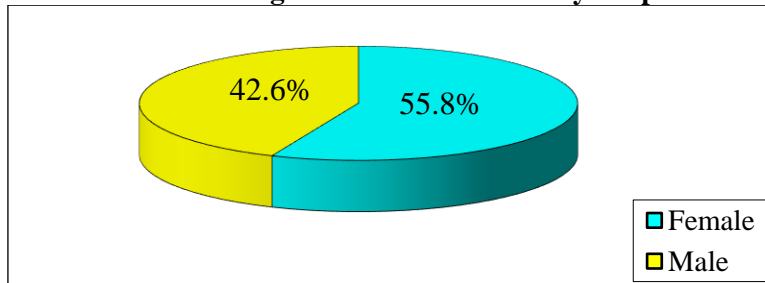
Questionnaire Design and Measures

The survey comprised 28 questions, 24 open-ended and 4 close-ended. The questions varied from multiple choice questions, rating scale questions, and Likert Scale questions. The survey sections were: Section One: Perception Questions, Section Two: Tourism Questions, Section Three: Media Habits Questions, Section Four: Lifestyle Questions, and Section Five: Demographic Questions.

Sample Size and Characteristics

The survey was distributed online to 303 respondents, non Egyptians, males and females, aged from 25 years and below to 65 years and above. This age bracket was chosen because it represents travelers - who can mostly be individuals who have means to earn a living and can thus make travel choices, and those who generally have their share of knowledge on travelling.

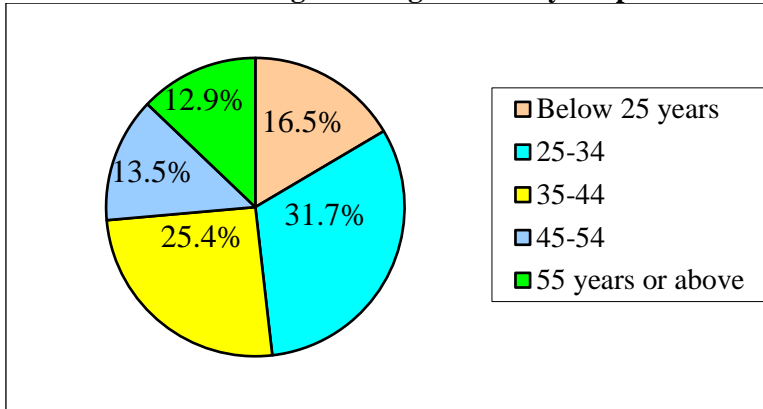
Figure 1: Gender of Survey Respondents



The females comprised 171 respondents (55.8%), while the males comprised 132 respondents (42.6%).



Figure 2: Age of Survey Respondents



The highest age group of respondents was that between 25-34 comprising 96 respondents (31.7%), followed by 35-44 year olds comprising 77 respondents (25.4%). The least were the 55 year olds or above, and they comprised 39 respondents (12.9%).

Pilot

The researcher conducted an online pilot study on 40 randomly-selected respondents to make sure that the survey design was easy to follow, and that the questions were simple to understand. None of the respondents within the pilot group reported any problems on the survey.

Validity

Validity is defined as the degree to which a tool measures what it was devised to measure. Theoretically, validity is measured through the construction and representation of an idea in operational measures. Empirically, validity is measured through quantitative analysis that involves statistical procedures (Edwin, 2019). Face validity is considered a subjective assessment of the researcher as to how clear, reasonable, and relevant the measuring instruments are (Oluwatayo, 2012), and that it measures what it is supposed to assess (Edwin, 2019). This study employed the face validity of the survey via a thorough revision of the questions and employment of simple and concrete terminologies to eliminate any ambiguity or complexity within the survey.



Content Validity

To access the validity of the survey, the researcher sought the feedback of the arbitrators¹ listed below, and amended some of the survey structure, order, and words accordingly:

Construct Validity

According to Trochim (2006), construct validity refers to how a concept can be translated into operating and functioning actuality. Construct validity mainly takes place within the cause and effect relations, hence, justifying their existence (Edwin, 2019). It comprises two components: discriminant and convergent validity. The former refers to the extent to which two variables that should not be related are in fact not related. The latter refers to the extent to which two variable that should theoretically be related are actually related (Taherdoost, 2016). This study employed the convergent validity depicted through the correlations established between several measures.

Reliability

According to Drost (2011), reliability is the degree to which measurements are consistent when performed by different people, under different circumstance, and during different timings. Verifying the reliability is essential because it signifies the consistency element across the measuring techniques (Taherdoost, 2016), and enables the identification of unbalanced items and incoherent responders (Revelle & Condon, 2018). To ensure reliability of the survey, a pilot study was conducted on 40 non Egyptian respondents.

Data collection and Analysis

The data pertaining to the survey were analyzed using the SPSS, after extracting the input on an Excel Sheet comprising the 303 survey responses. The researcher analyzed the data, drew correlations between variables, and tested the hypotheses using Pearson, One Way Anova, Chi-Square, and T-Test. Other statistical tools were also used including the Mean, Standard Deviation, and Significance which ranged between



0 and 1, indicating a correlation at ≤ 0.05 and no correlation at ≥ 0.05 (Sedgwick, 2014).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview on Nation Branding

Lee (2009) states that nation branding can have several definitions based on what a nation brand entails. Both Anholt (2004) and Dinnie (2008) agreed that a nation brand is a blend of people's perception about a country based on cultural, tourist, political, investment potential, commercial, and human assets. Unlike corporate branding where the concerned stakeholders have to adapt to the created brand, it is unreasonable to ask citizens to acclimatize their ordinary behavior to go with an artificially-generated brand. Nevertheless, the availability of multiple stakeholders is a similarity shared between nation branding and corporate branding (Dinnie, 2007).

As a practice, nation branding is concerned with creating a distinctive and identifiable brand image that different stakeholders can configure, and which can help reach nation brand equity (Lee, 2009). The brand image itself comprises subjective perceptions of impressions, ideas and beliefs. Dinnie (2008) specified that the focus of a nation branding strategy is the creation of a competitive advantage in various segments like tourism, investments and exports. According to Gilmore (2002), every nation has its own brand that includes positive and negative stereotypes and associations. These stereotypes are means to understand information and make easier decisions. Stereotypes can be distorted positive or negative images about a country, and are shared by a big number of people, whereas an image is usually a more personal perception, simpler than a stereotype and relies on information (Kotler & Gertner, 2002). According to Anholt (2007) and Lee (2009), a nation brand identity refers to how the nation means the brand to be perceived, whereas the brand image is how it is really perceived by the audiences. While Anholt (2003) uses nation branding, country branding and state branding interchangeably, nation branding remains the most widely used.



Usually, nation branding is conducted by marketing and branding agencies who act as advisors to governments as to the strategies that need to be adopted and their implementation (Szondi, 2008). The role of the government is to set the ground for the nation to compete with others and strengthen its brand. This ground includes tone, influence, and laws, just to name a few (Gudjonsson, 2005). To handle nation branding, Anholt suggested creating a national centralized media center whose main role is providing a single point of contact to all media interested in covering the country in any context and making sure the messages are all harmonious. The media is not the only carrier of national reputation. Direct experience and word-of-mouth (WOM) are equally significant. Previous tourists, immigrants, investors, or students pass on their impressions to others (Anholt, 2010).

Benefits of Nation Branding

Nations become keen on creating a nation branding for the sake of fulfilling three major objectives: to draw tourists, to motivate inward investment and to enhance exports. Furthermore, some nations have the objective of attracting talents including higher education students and workers with special skills. In turn, these objectives help accomplish gains including stability of the currency, reinstatement of investor confidence and international trustworthiness, upgrade of international ratings, enhancement of political power internationally, stimulation of stronger international alliances, and distancing these countries from the outdated political and economic systems that economic and political system that prevailed before this evolution. The right nation brand positioning also gives a nation a competitive advantage over others, and defies stereotypes (Dinnie, 2008).

Challenges and Opportunities for Nation Branding

According to Fan (2006), national identity is difficult to define due to its complexity. Moreover, assessments of a nation could be based on a variety of things including personal experience during travels, education or knowledge, prior use or ownership of a product made in that country, the depiction of the country through media channels,



stereotypes, etc. The history of a country affects the way it is perceived and the future events taking place as well. Some countries possess a strong cultural heritage but may still have economic disadvantages including lack of vital capital formation, infrastructure and concentration of enterprise, unskilled workforce, or political instability. These countries have a minor chance to develop an assertive nation brand because it simply lacks the tangible sources upon which it is built. Nation branding cannot solve the problems of a country, but rather serves as a complimenting practice that completes the last piece of a puzzle mainly focused on economic development. Anholt (2003) considers citizens the spokespersons of a successful nation branding who, not only speak well to one another, but also project the best of the brand to the external publics. Olins said that modern brands succeed by appealing to the needs of customers. Because nations always aspire for acceptance and understanding of publics, they need to use the power of branding to communicate their values to the widest range of audience (Jojin, n.d.).

The Tourism Dimension of Nation Branding

When Anholt defined nation branding and named the six areas of national competence, he pointed that each nation's strengths and weaknesses rely on each pillar of the hexagon. Among the six angles that identify the key components of the notion of the nation brand, tourism is considered of vital importance in nation branding research. Tourism is also considered one of the most manageable and tangible elements within the concept of the nation brand. Tourism has been identified as occupying a common base with nation branding more than any other aspect related to a country's international publicity (Giannopoulos et al., 2011). Anholt (2003) sees tourism as often the main stakeholder in the promotion of the national brand. These two concepts can be confused because tourism is the only way countries market themselves to the outer world. Branding countries and promoting tourism is not the same thing, tourism is only a part of it.

Tourism image change relies on the assessment of perceived images (Cai, 2002) including those held by the locals – being an



important stakeholder of a destination. Moreover, branding is related to the development and promotion of a destination in which locals play an important role in influencing the experience of tourists by personally reflecting the core values of this destination. Accordingly, both local residents and tourists equally engage to help bring forward an effective destination branding (Papadimitriou et al., 2018). The complexity of the concept of tourism destination is derived from the fact that it is based on a multitude of diverse services, products and experiences all managed and consumed by various stakeholders including tourists, hoteliers, authorities, residents, and destination management entities, without having clear rules to guide the relationship between them all (Giannopoulos et al., 2011).

Applying strategies of destination branding enables the country to attract more tourists; however, all stakeholders need to work jointly focusing on a unified futurist national strategy. Nations have to pursue a long-term plan in order to prosper within the international market for tourists, investors and consumers at large, and gain the attention of the global media and governments. Raising awareness is the primary step in nation branding - and any kind of branding at large, because awareness of the existence of a country enables people to develop positive perception about it before even thinking of visiting it. Consumers' thoughts about countries include associations and beliefs about the country, and associations and beliefs about its products. Competition over customers within the tourism industry will not be bound by pricing strategies, but rather by the emotional and cognitive attributes that will be the core of a successful destination brand (Hakala et al., 2013).

Online Media and Nation Branding

Unlike traditional media, online media opens the doors for two-way communication, and provides unlimited opportunities for knowledge. Online media allows for interconnectivity and wealth of content regardless of the distance or time (Fawkes & Gregory, 2000). According to De Moya & Jain (2015), when it comes to nation branding



and reputation building, online media is considered the most effective, and it is mostly utilized for tourism promotion. Nation branding has benefitted mostly from social media because this two-way communication platform has created more possibilities of interaction and participation among target audiences who enjoy the sense of individual recognition encouraged through such a tool (Schopf, 2015). The information overload makes people argue that the internet is not a reliable marketing platform. Keeping the customers interactive is difficult because of time constraints, which leaves minimal time for brand engagement. Over years, the internet has become an important medium of viral and WOM marketing. Despite the shortcoming of receiving negative publicity without taking time to invalidate it, brands cannot still stay away from this kind of media; otherwise, they will just become extinct and ultimately lose contact with their customers (Fegade, 2013).

Consumer loyalty is guided by a number of elements. The first element is the trust in the product and those promoting it. The second is the positive value perceived in comparison to the competitors'. The third is the emotional attachment that the first two factors create, and which is manifested in commitment to the brand and the resistance to change to another one. Schlosser et al. (2006) found that investing in website design reflects on consumer trust and online purchase intentions. The interactivity that is available online, invites users to choose from among various product and message alternatives, and the whole process is controlled by the consumer. Online marketers are specifically challenged to generate trust instantly, present a value that can be clearly perceived by consumers, and initiate a long-term relation with them. One way to boost consumer trust is to encourage consumers to share their personal experience with others (Pitta et al., 2006). Social media - also known as interactive media - provide numerous opportunities for its users to become the consumer and the creator of the media at the same time. Accordingly, this has allowed diverse perspectives and user-generated content (Moreno & Koff, 2015).



Egypt and Nation Branding

According to Gay (1998) as cited by Gharib (2013), Egypt was the first country in the Middle East to become a tourist destination. This reputation started back in the late 1860s with the introduction of Thomas Cook to some tours in Egypt. In the late nineteenth century, the Suez Canal acted as a means to encourage international travel. After the 1952 Revolution, and despite the instability that followed, Egypt still retained its touristic stance yielding an economic resource. Under President Anwar El Sadat's liberalization, a number of foreign investments were directed to the tourism sector, increasing it considerably in the mid 1970s. More travel operators were introduced in the Egyptian tourism market during the 1970s and 1980s, and tourism became an important factor in the economic development and a solution for the unemployment and poverty in the 1980s. In the mid 1980s, tourism became an even more important agenda, but was facing challenges related to the infrastructure needed for this sector to flourish. This was when new resorts were introduced in the Red Sea area and state-owned hotels were established and managed by foreign operating companies.

According to Muskat et al. (2013), the elements of the nation brand are responsible for building the brand character, therefore, each country needs to focus on a set of elements that will create this character for it and distinguish it from its competitors. In the case of Egypt, there are sector-specific branding characters that help with the Egyptian tourism. The fun, feelings, and fantasies formulate what is known as the three Fs of the tourism cluster, and they are the elements that deliver the brand character promise and outline the customer experience in a particular destination (Nikolova & Hassan, 2013). Klaus & Maklan (2011) and Hassan & Mahrous (2019) criticized the fact that most tourism marketing and nation branding studies focus on the destination rather than the customer. According to Al Abdulrazak (2018), Egypt has gained its international image through developing its image as a producer of high quality products, such as the cotton, and through tourism. Following the 2011 and 2013 Revolutions, the international



market has found it difficult to place Egypt on the tourism map due to the resulting instability. The notion of 'Egypt: Where It All Begins' aimed at promoting the know-how that Egypt has gained over the past few years. The Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities initiated a number of inspiring campaigns to market the array of tourism options in Egypt. Other supporting campaigns have been launched as well, including the 'Proudly Made in Egypt' label in 2016 promoting the Egyptian textile industry, and supporting other businesses such as the traditional Egyptian kiliim. Entrepreneurship has also been on the rise with encouragement from the government to small businesses and startups. In order to prevail, these initiatives were reinforced by a powerful nation brand to promote Egyptian services and products. Tourism as an industry needs to be backed up by technology and partnerships between governmental entities and global firms for events management, both to expose Egypt to the outer world and include it on international programs.

Tourists need to have a sense of safety related to their wellbeing during their visits, and their financial security when buying services or products through the reinforcement of fixed prices. In addition, tourists must be encouraged through the behavior of the locals to come back to the country. This can be done through training programs and the soft power that highlights Egyptian sports, arts, and cultural celebrities (The Narrative Public Relations Summit, 2017). The Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS): Egypt Vision 2030 underlines that as part of the strategy, "Egypt will possess a competitive, balanced and diversified economy. It will depend on innovation and knowledge, based on justice, social integrity and participation, in order to improve the Egyptian quality of life" (Al-Ashkar, 2020).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Overview on the Customer-Based Brand Equity Model

The CBBE Model – also known as the Brand Resonance Model – was developed by Kevin Keller in 1993 as part of his famous text book titled 'Strategic Brand Management', where Keller suggests that brand equity can be created by providing customers with the right



experience through shaping how they think and feel about the product. This task is carried out by marketing and branding specialists whose role is to manage the thoughts, feelings, beliefs, perceptions, and opinions of customers. High positive experience means high brand equity, and this in return translates into brand loyalty and increased sales. Brand equity is defined as the assets which consumers associate with a brand and represented in aspects like brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. Brand awareness refers to the ability of consumers to recognize the brand, whereas the brand association represents the memory linked to a brand. The perceived quality refers to how consumers perceive the superiority of a brand in comparison to other alternative ones. Brand loyalty on the other hand is perceived as a behavioral dimension that refers to the consumer's inclination to be loyal to a specific brand and making it their primary choice (Yoo et al., 2000).

Management of the Customer-Based Brand Equity

Brand equity can be measured in a direct approach which focuses on consumer preferences or utilities, according to, Srinivasan (1979), Kamakura & Russell (1993), Swait et al. (1993) and Park & Srinivasan (1994), as cited in Christodoulides & de Chernatony (2010). On the other hand, the indirect approach to measuring brand equity takes place through its demonstrable manifestations according to Pappu et al. (2005) and Yoo & Donthu (2001).

Benefits and Challenges to the Customer-Based Brand Equity

Because of the complexity of brand equity, it has been the subject of several models, the most cited of which is by Aaker (1991) as cited in Atilgan et al. (2005) who concluded two important implications for brand equity. The first is the importance of focusing the effort of marketing practitioners on brand loyalty because it helps increase market share, gain new customers, support extensions to the brand, and strengthen the brand against competitive threats. The second implication is the need to identify the determinants of brand equity across different countries and different industries, which in return will



provide a better understanding on the brand by country effects. It is important to use associations to examine the relation between them and brand equity.

Criticisms to the Customer-Based Brand Equity Model

Brand equity research needs to examine if the consumer assessments of product attributes differ across variable product categories. In addition, research could also analyze the causal relation between the brand name related benefits and the product related benefits (del Rio et al., 2001a). Future research should examine the equivalence of CBBE measures across different cultures, and understand that branding is not just essential for products, but for services as well for which specific brand equity measures should be developed. Because, according to Rust et al. (2004), brand equity may differ considerably across different target audience clusters, future research needs to address the intensity of brand equity in relation to the type of user.

The Application of the Customer-Based Brand Equity Model onto This Study

This study will employ the CBBE Model through examining the variation of consumer assessments of Egypt's attributes. In addition, the study will analyze the relation between Egypt nation brand and the associated perceptions.

SURVEY RESULTS

Table 1: Media Mostly Used by Respondents

Media Mostly Used	Frequency	Percent
Online media	207	68.3
TV	35	11.6
Netflix	38	12.5
YouTube	14	4.6
International press	6	2.0



TikTok	2	.7
Instagram	1	.3
Total	303	100.0

The majority of respondents use online media the most with 68.3%. Only 11.6% use TV. This dictates the importance of creating more online content, some of which can also be used on TV, such as promotional videos, and posted on YouTube and Instagram because they were chosen by 4.6% and .3% of the respondents respectively.

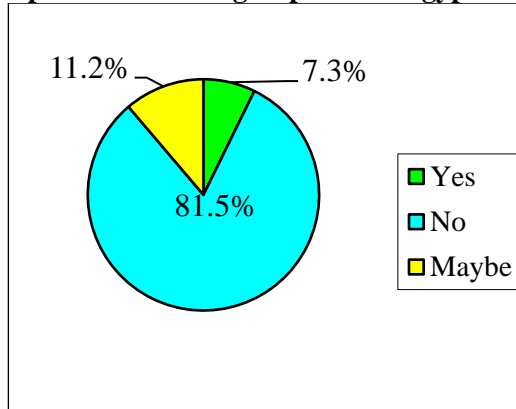
Table 2: Daily Duration Respondents Use Online Media

Daily Duration of Online Media Use	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 hour per day	20	6.6
Between 1 and 3 hours per day	163	53.8
Between 3 and 5 hours per day	83	27.4
More than 5 hours per day	37	12.2
Total	303	100.0

Most of the respondents use online media between 1 and 3 hours per day, followed by 27.4% who use it between 3 and 5 hours per day. Only 6.6% responded that they use online media less than 1 hour per day. This dictates the importance of keeping the online platforms updated around the clock so that users will always see updates throughout the day.

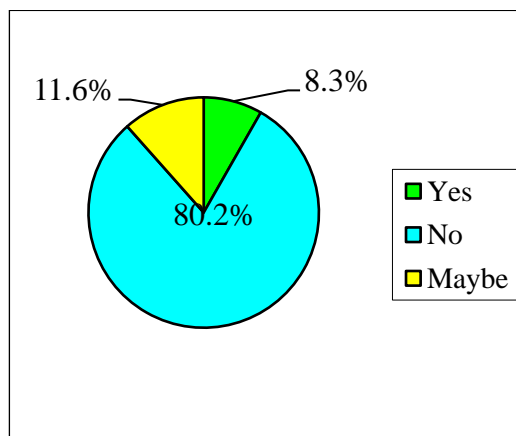


Figure 3: Respondents Visiting Experience Egypt Facebook Page



A high majority of respondents summing up to 247 respondents (81.5%) said they have not previously visited Experience Egypt Facebook page. This indicates that apart from promoting tourism to Egypt on this page, it is important to promote this online platform.

Figure 4: Respondents Visiting the Website of the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities



Again, a high majority of respondents - comprising 243 respondents (80.2%) - have not previously visited the website of the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities. Again, this dictates the



necessity of promoting all online platforms that the governmental entities use to promote tourism in Egypt. Without this kind of promotion, the reach on these platforms will remain low, hence, wasting efforts and budgets spent on the production of the promotional material on these pages.

Table 3: Online Media Effectiveness for Branding Purposes in Comparison to Traditional Media

Respondents' Agreement on the Effectiveness of Online Media for Branding Purposes	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	129	42.6
Agree	110	36.3
Neutral	61	20.1
Disagree	2	.7
Strongly disagree	1	.3
Total	303	100.0

Compared to traditional media, 42.6% of the respondents who strongly agreed that online media is more effective for branding purposes, followed by 36.3% who agreed. In comparison, only 1% of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed on this statement. These results synchronize with the majority of respondents - 68.3% - who said that online media was their most used kind of media (Table 1, p. 41). These results also indicate that heavy users of online media rely on it as a source of information and education when it comes to brands. In return, this emphasizes the importance of using online media as a branding platform for tourism in Egypt because of its reach and value to their users.

**Table 4: Respondents' Association with Egypt**

Association with Egypt	Frequency	Percent
Knowledge of Egypt from the media	88	29.1
Associations through friends / family in Egypt	74	24.5
Associations through others who have been to Egypt	71	23.5
Previously visiting Egypt	70	23.2
Having lived in Egypt	59	19.5
Having purchased Egyptian products	59	19.5
Having worked in Egypt	56	18.5
Having knowledge of Egyptian celebrities	34	11.3
Having studied in Egypt	26	8.6
Having been married to an Egyptian	17	5.6
Having had Egyptian friends in the country of residence	13	4.3
Being half Egyptian	10	3.3
Having visited Egypt for medical purposes	9	3.0
Having studied Egyptian history	7	2.3
Having no association with Egypt	64	21.2

(N = 303)

The results show that 29.1% of the respondents had knowledge of Egypt from the media, followed by 24.5% who had friends or family in Egypt, 23.5% had knowledge of Egypt from others who have been to Egypt, and 23.2% visited Egypt. These percentages indicate the importance of the WOM as it contributes to how people have knowledge of Egypt. On the other hand, 21.2% said they have no association with Egypt. Additional associations were mentioned including the fact that a respondent's company had a distribution partner in Egypt, having family members working for Egyptians, and having half-Egyptian relatives.



Table 5: The First Three Things That Come to Respondents' Minds When Thinking of Egypt

Characteristics Mostly Identified in Egypt	Frequency	Percent
Museums / monuments / the Pyramids	205	67.9
History of Egypt	200	66.2
Nile River / Nile cruises	112	37.1
Egyptian food	64	21.2
Beaches / sea	53	17.5
Egyptians	53	17.5
Tourists	36	11.9
Deserts / safaris / camels	33	10.9
Diving / snorkeling	20	6.6
Terrible traffic	15	5.0
Hand crafts	12	4.0
Sexual harassment of women	12	4.0
Family / friends	11	3.6
Streets / town center	10	3.3
Mosques / churches	9	3.0
Mohamed Salah	8	2.6
Festivities / night life	4	1.3

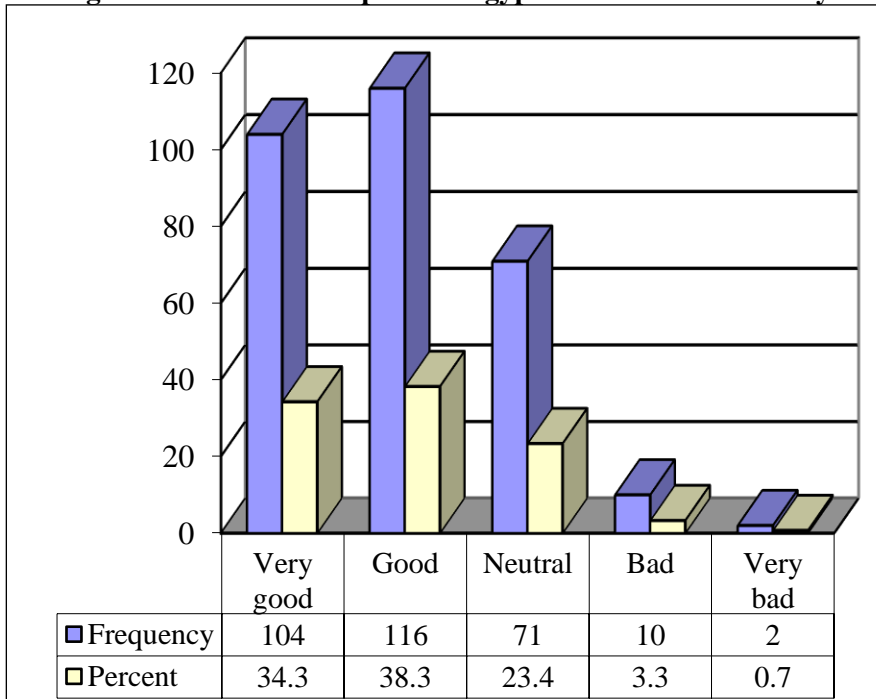
(N = 303)

The results show that the top three things that came to respondents' mind when they thought of Egypt were the museums, monuments and the Pyramids comprising 67.9%, the history of Egypt comprising 66.2%, and the Nile River and Nile cruises comprising 37.1%. Some of the popular things to visit or do in Egypt were thought of including beaches and sea comprising 17.5%, deserts, safaris, and



camels comprising 10.9%, diving and snorkeling comprising 6.6%, and festivities and night life comprising 1.3%. Some of the features Egypt is remembered by are Egyptian food comprising 21.2%, Egyptians comprising 17.5%, tourists comprising 11.9%, hand crafts comprising 4.0%, family and friends comprising 3.6%, and Mohamed Salah comprising 2.6%. Negative associations were also mentioned including traffic and sexual harassment of women comprising 5.0% and 4.0% respectively. In addition, 22 respondents mentioned other characteristics including the land, pollution, religious childhood stories, corruption, high expenses of life, respondents' own university, political unrest, government problems, cruelty to animals, and poverty.

Figure 5: General Perception of Egypt as a Touristic Country



Egypt as a touristic country was seen by 38.3 of the respondents as good, and by 34.3% as very good. This was followed by those who found it neither good nor bad at 23.4%, most likely those not having any association with Egypt. The number of respondents who thought Egypt was a very bad touristic country were only two, comprising .7%.



This indicates that Egypt is generally regarded highly as a touristic country that has the reputation of a country very good for tourism.

Table 6: Factors Affecting the Perception of Non Egyptians

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		M	S F D
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Reviews affect my decision to visit a destination.	4	1.3	10	3.3	11	3.6	35	11.6	72	23.8	88	29.0	83	27.4	5.50	1.38
Informative marketing messages affect my perception of touristic destinations.	4	1.3	11	3.6	22	7.3	46	15.2	77	25.4	75	24.8	68	22.4	5.24	1.44
Emotional marketing messages affect my perception of touristic destinations.	27	8.9	20	6.6	41	13.5	75	24.8	62	20.5	47	15.5	31	10.2	4.29	1.69
The image of a country and / or its people affects my intention of visiting it.	5	1.7	14	4.6	18	5.9	62	20.5	68	22.4	71	23.4	65	21.5	5.14	1.48
Stereotypes affect my perception of a country.	53	17.5	23	7.6	40	13.2	90	29.7	42	13.9	36	11.9	19	6.3	3.76	1.77
Tourism is an integral part of Egypt's brand image.	4	1.3	0	0	18	5.9	65	21.5	52	17.2	79	26.1	85	28.1	5.44	1.36



On a scale from 1 to 7 - 1 being the lowest and 7 being the highest - 29.0% of the respondents chose point 5 to indicate the effectiveness of informative marketing messages on their perception of touristic destinations, while point 4 was chosen by 24.8% of the respondents to indicate the effectiveness of emotional marketing messages. When comparing these two elements, the informative marketing messages were found to be more effective than emotional ones represented by a Mean of 5.24 and 4.29 respectively. The highest point 7 was achieved when respondents were asked about the extent to which tourism is an integral part of Egypt's brand image. The highest Mean of 5.50 belongs to the statement on reviews affecting the respondents' decision to visit a destination. This could be verified through the keenness of a big number of hospitality organizations to encourage their customers to write reviews on their experiences with them either on these organizations' platforms or on other online travel platforms such as Trip Advisor. Hospitality organizations treat these reviews seriously to rectify any negative ones and maintain the positive ones. The majority of respondents - comprising 29.7% - ranked stereotypes as an effective factor on their perception of a country at point 4, meaning they perceived it as a neutral element. This was followed by 38.3% who ranked it at points 1 through 3, indicating that generally non Egyptians did not think of stereotypes as a decision-altering factor.



Table 7: Respondents' Perception of the Touristic Features of Egypt

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	STD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Egypt has an internationally-recognized brand.	1	.3	15	5.0	74	24.4	127	41.9	86	28.4	3.93	.86
Egypt is an exciting country for tourism.	2	.7	6	2.0	32	10.6	138	45.5	125	41.3	4.25	.77
Egypt has interesting historical monuments.	1	.3	1	.3	7	2.3	61	20.1	233	76.9	4.73	.55
Egypt has amazing beaches.	3	1.0	10	3.3	74	24.4	83	27.4	133	43.9	4.10	.94
Egypt has a variety of activities to enjoy.	1	.3	4	1.3	83	27.4	105	34.7	110	36.3	4.05	.84
Egypt is a lively country.	1	.3	6	2.0	83	27.4	99	32.7	114	37.6	4.05	.87
Tourism in Egypt is reasonably-priced.	4	1.3	24	7.9	115	38.0	93	30.7	67	22.1	3.64	.95



Egypt is a safe country.	8	2.6	53	17.5	110	36.3	77	25.4	55	18.2	3.39	1.05
Egyptians are friendly and accommodating.	1	.3	10	3.3	93	30.7	106	35.0	93	30.7	3.92	.87
Egyptians are a good source of information about their country.	7	2.3	22	7.3	103	34.0	113	37.3	58	19.1	3.64	.94
Egyptians know how to market their country.	24	7.9	42	13.9	144	47.5	63	20.8	30	9.9	3.11	1.02
Egyptians are good ambassadors for tourism in Egypt.	18	5.9	35	11.6	130	42.9	83	27.4	37	12.2	3.28	1.01
Egypt exerts effort to promote tourism.	6	2.0	25	8.3	124	40.9	112	37.0	36	11.9	3.49	.88
Egypt is an expensive destination.	23	7.6	96	31.7	123	40.6	49	16.2	12	4.0	2.77	.94
Egypt as a brand is not well-known internationally.	48	15.8	127	41.9	61	20.1	52	17.2	15	5.0	2.53	1.10

The statement that received the strongest agreement of 76.9% of the respondents was that Egypt has interesting historical monuments with a Mean of 4.73, followed by 41.3% to the statement on Egypt being an



exciting country for tourism. On the other hand, the statements of Egypt being an expensive destination and Egypt not being a well-known brand internationally received strong disagreement of 2.77% and 2.53% of the respondents respectively. These results indicate that some factors are givens about Egypt as a tourism brand including the value of its monuments, and the excitement it is well known for as a reasonably-priced touristic destination. Respondents strongly agreed on statements on Egypt having amazing beaches, Egypt being a lively country, and Egypt having a variety of activities to enjoy, with 43.9%, 37.6%, and 36.3% respectively. These responses indicate Egypt's internationally-regarded reputation as a destination that caters to the needs of different kinds of tourists. On the other hand, Egypt was neutrally perceived as a safe country by 36.3% of the respondents. This may have been gathered from the political instability that Egypt has witnessed for few years following the 25 January Revolution, and the aftermath of numerous terrorist attacks on public figures and key governmental buildings. Accordingly, this result advocates for a message strategy that reinforces the safety measures applicable at different sites, and including testimonials by tourists who have visited Egypt and can share their experience on the level of security they feel.

When it comes to the respondents' perception of Egyptians, 30.7% were neutral about Egyptians being friendly and accommodating, and the same percentage of respondents strongly agreed to this statement. The highest percentage of respondents felt neutral about statements on Egyptians being a good source of information about their country (34.0%), Egyptians knowing how to market their country (47.5%), and Egyptians being good ambassadors for tourism in Egypt (42.9%). The responses to these statements were probably inspired by personal experiences with Egyptians. Therefore, it is vital that necessary actions are taken in order to enhance the product knowledge element among Egyptians, especially those working in the tourism industry. Moreover, attention should be given to building awareness of the importance of tourism and tourists among young generations. These initiatives will help cultivate a more receptive



culture for tourists and reinstate the trust in Egyptians as providers of touristic services and as part of the population pillar upon which nation branding is built.

In response to the statement about Egypt exerting effort to promote tourism, 40.9% of the respondents were neutral, and 37.0% agreed. This generally indicates that there is still room for the entities overlooking the tourism portfolio to grow in terms of their marketing and branding efforts.

The statements related to Egypt's brand image had a Mean of 56.27, and an STD of 7.74. Whereas, generally speaking, the role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt had a Mean of 31.62 and an STD of 3.22.



Table 8: Respondents' Perception of Online Media

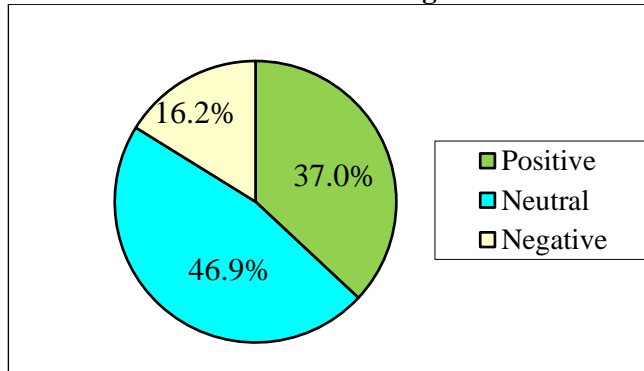
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		M e a n	S t d
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Online media portrays tourism to Egypt with quality.	0	0	20	6.6	149	49.2	109	36.0	25	8.3	3.46	.74
Online media portrays tourism to Egypt as much as necessary.	3	1.0	45	14.9	162	53.5	71	23.4	22	7.3	3.21	.81
The way destinations are portrayed online affect my intention of visiting them.	3	1.0	18	5.9	71	23.4	170	56.1	41	13.5	3.75	.79
Online media is an effective kind of media used for branding purposes.	0	0	8	2.6	47	15.5	148	48.8	100	33.0	4.12	.76
Online media provides a positive image about tourism to Egypt.	0	0	16	5.3	156	51.5	103	34.0	28	9.2	3.47	.73
Online media can help brand tourism to Egypt.	0	0	2	.7	53	17.	16	53.	87	28.	4.1	.69
Egypt is well portrayed in online media.	4	1.3	31	10.	16	55.	87	28.	14	4.6	3.2	.75
Online media cannot brand Egypt as a touristic destination.	26	8.6	151	49.8	101	33.3	18	5.9	7	2.3	2.44	.82
There is not enough portrayal of tourism to Egypt in online media.	1	.3	30	9.9	162	53.5	94	31.0	16	5.3	3.31	.73

The quality and quantity of online portrayal of tourism in Egypt was seen as neutral by 49.2% and 53.5% of the respondent respectively. This could be due to the fact that the majority of the respondents have not visited two of the most important official online platforms in charge of tourism in Egypt, the Experience Egypt Facebook page and the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities website. By the same token, 51.5%



of the respondents were neutral to whether online media provides a positive image about tourism to Egypt, and 55.1% were also neutral to whether Egypt is well portrayed in online media. The value of online media in branding touristic destinations can be seen with the responses to questions on whether the way destinations are portrayed online affect one's intention of visiting them, whether online media is an effective kind of media used for branding purposes, and whether online media can help brand tourism to Egypt, scoring an agreement of 56.1%, 48.8%, and 53.1% of the respondents respectively. The highest Mean of 4.12 belonged to the statement on online media being an effective kind of media used for branding purposes. Whereas the lowest Mean was 2.44, and belonged to the statement denying that online media cannot brand Egypt as touristic destination. Accordingly, these two statements are in line with each other because they jointly emphasize the effect of online media in branding, and tourism to Egypt might as well benefit from such an influence.

Figure 6: The Role of Online Media in Creating a Nation Branding for Egypt

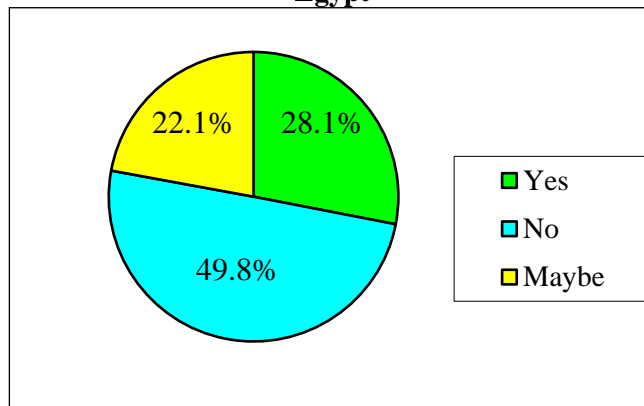


The results show that 142 respondents (46.9%) of the respondents were neutral about the role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt, while 112 respondents (37.0%) were positive. These results could be tackled from two perspectives. The first is the effect of online media, which is subject to demographic and psychographic variables including the age and media habits of the respondents. The second perspective to tackle the results is the perception of Egypt as a brand, which is again subject to demographic



and psychographic variables including the age and travel habits of the respondents. Since age, media habits, and travel habits are uncontrolled variables, then what can be controlled is the branding practices that require proper strategies specifically designed for different kinds of stakeholders.

Figure 7: Respondents Seeing Online Marketing Campaigns about Tourism to Egypt



Almost half the respondents (151 respondents) did not remember seeing marketing campaigns about tourism to Egypt. Out of the 85 respondents (28.1%) who said they did, 10 were unsure about the campaign name or provided irrelevant associations, nine were able to specify the campaign names including 'This is Egypt' and 'Egypt: Where It All Begins'. In addition, 10 respondents were able to relate to campaigns that publicized for specific events such as the Parade of the Mummies, Gouna Film Festive, and the Art D'Egypte Exhibition. Five respondents mentioned where they saw these campaigns which was mostly on social media platforms including YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook, and some even said they saw them on Experience Egypt Facebook Page or the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities Website. Another two respondents said they saw campaigns on television (TV), and another two mentioned names of destinations. The remaining 67 respondents (22.1%) were unsure whether they have or have not seen marketing campaigns promoting tourism to Egypt. This indicates that the majority of effort exerted on these campaigns is not employing a



proper communication strategy to guarantee high reach. On the other hand, those who remember seeing the campaigns possibly do not get exposed to the right media mix or the proper number of frequency of these campaigns, hence resulting in advertising waste.

Table 9: Ways Respondents Prefer to Gain Knowledge of Tourism in Egypt

Ways of Gaining Knowledge of Tourism	Frequency	Percent
Official online platforms	110	60.4
Tourists who have visited the place	103	56.6
Cultural channels such as movies and events	85	46.7
Egyptian citizens and residents	85	46.7
Customer-based online travel platforms	63	34.6
Non-governmental online platforms	51	28.0
Tour operators	22	12.1

(N = 182)

Out of the 182 respondents who were interested to gain more knowledge about tourism to Egypt, the majority chose to receive this knowledge via online platforms. This was followed by respondents preferring the WOM of Egyptian citizens and residents and tourists who have visited Egypt. Three respondents chose other media including online travel platforms and trusted travel guides such as Lonely Planet. The majority of online platforms chosen were official ones at 60.4%, followed by 34.6% choosing customer-based online travel platforms, hence, combining the WOM factor together with the online platforms as a medium. The least preferred online platforms were the non-governmental ones at 28.0%. Cultural channels such as movies and events accounted for 46.7% of the responses, reflecting a huge role for the soft power in attracting tourism to Egypt. These responses synchronize with the fact that some respondents name events such as El Gouna Film Festival, the Parade of the Mummies, and the Art d'Egypte Exhibition as distinctive things tourists perceive as marketing campaigns promoting tourism in Egypt. The responses also synchronize



with the 28.4% choosing El Gouna as a destination in Egypt that comes to their mind when thinking about tourism. The least preferred way to gain information about tourism in Egypt is via tour operators. This goes in line with the transition of the travel consumer behavior to choosing online platforms to learn about destinations, ratings, recommended activities, sharing experiences, bookings, and the sort.

SURVEY HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Table 10: The Relation between the Use of Online Media and the Perception of Egypt and Its Brand Image

	Intensity of use of online media	
	r	p
Egypt's brand image	.01	.86
General knowledge about Egypt	.14	.01
General perception of Egypt	.01	.75
General perception of Egypt as a touristic country	.06	.25

According to the Pearson Correlation in this table, there is no correlation between the intensity of use of online media and most of the variables including Egypt's brand image, the general perception of Egypt or the perception of it as a touristic country. However, there is a correlation between the intensity of use of online media and the general knowledge about Egypt. The Pearson Correlation indicates that regardless of the consumption patterns of online media, the efforts of creating a brand image and a positive perception about Egypt lie in the hands of entities responsible for this task. From a tourism standpoint, tourist destinations are described in a number of contexts. Brand awareness is perceived as the existence of a destination in people's minds when considering a travel context. Brand image signifies the impressions or associations linked to a destination and comprising a range of perceptions related to several destination characteristics. Brand



quality is about the perceptions of how a destination can meet the needs of tourists based on the superiority of the service (Bigne et al., 2005). Brand loyalty is concerned with the CBBE concept measured by the visitors' intentions to revisit a destination or to recommend it to others (Herrero et al., 2017).

Table 11: The Relation between Seeing Online Marketing Campaigns about Tourism to Egypt and Egypt's Brand Image

	Have you seen any online marketing campaigns about tourism to Egypt?	N	Mean	STD	df		F	Sig .
					Between Groups	Within Groups		
Egypt's brand image	Yes	85	59.82	6.54	2	300	25.78	.00
	No	151	53.35	7.74				
	Maybe	67	58.37	6.58				
	Total	303	56.27	7.74				

According to the results shown in the table and differences shown through the One Way Anova Test, there is a difference in Egypt's brand image between those who have seen online marketing campaigns, those who have not, and those who were not sure. However, the most positive relation is between those who have seen the online marketing campaigns, and its Mean is 59.82 in comparison to the other two. This indicates that being exposed to the marketing activities help create a positive brand image. In this case, it is advisable to increase the quantity of the online marketing campaigns, especially that 53.5% of the respondents were neutral about whether online media portrays tourism to Egypt as much as necessary (



Table 8, p. 54). There is a difference between Egypt's brand image among those who have seen online marketing campaigns about tourism to Egypt and those who have not. The difference also exists between those who may have seen these campaigns and those who have not. On the other hand, this difference is missing when it comes to comparing the respondents who have seen these campaigns and those who may have seen them. The mean difference indicates that this variation is the most positive between the two extremes of the answer, yes and no. These results indicate that the brand image is affected by whether people are exposed to marketing campaigns or not. Sources of awareness come in three kinds: previous knowledge, previous experiences and stereotypes. According to Fan (2010) and Beerli & Martin (2004), the previous knowledge, or cognitive evaluation, of a country includes knowledge of people, common social, economic and political conditions, its products, culture, national traits, and history, according to Knight et al. (2003), and its intangibles according to Kotler & Gertner (2002). Knowledge is usually obtained through official information available on authorized online platforms, news reports, media coverage, WOM, or better yet electronic WOM (eWOM).



Table 12: The Relation between Seeing Online Marketing Campaigns about Tourism to Egypt and Knowledge and Perception

	Have you seen any online marketing campaigns about tourism to Egypt?	N	Mean	STD	df		F	Sig.
					Between Groups	Within Groups		
The role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt	Yes	22	32.18	3.71	2	300	14.85	.00
	No	247	31.53	3.17				
	Maybe	34	31.85	3.32				
	Total	303	31.62	3.22				
General knowledge about Egypt	Yes	22	3.68	.78	2	300	16.94	.00
	No	247	3.42	1.24				
	Maybe	34	4.15	.95				
	Total	303	3.52	1.20				
General perception of Egypt	Yes	22	4.14	.88	2	300	7.88	.00
	No	247	3.92	.83				
	Maybe	34	4.00	1.01				
	Total	303	3.94	.85				
General perception of Egypt as a touristic country	Yes	22	4.41	.79	2	300	10.66	.00
	No	247	4.00	.85				
	Maybe	34	3.91	1.05				
	Total	303	4.02	.87				

The results of the One Way Anova Test show that there is a difference between respondents who said agreed, disagreed or were unsure about the role of online media in creating a nation branding for



Egypt, have general knowledge about Egypt, and have general perception of Egypt as a touristic country. When it comes to the role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt, the highest Mean is of those agreeing on this statement. This indicates that people are mostly positive about the relation between online media and nation branding. The results show that when it comes to the role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt, the general perception of Egypt, or the perception of Egypt as a touristic country, there is a difference between those who have seen online marketing campaigns about tourism to Egypt and those who have not. However, this difference does not exist with those who were unsure whether they have or have not seen these campaigns. This indicates the effect of online marketing campaigns in creating a nation branding and forming the general perceptions. With regards to the general knowledge about Egypt, the most positive result is that of the respondents who had a bit of knowledge about Egypt followed by the respondents who had a great deal of knowledge about Egypt. Again, the highest Mean is of those who had a bit of knowledge about Egypt. This difference does not exist when it comes to the general knowledge about Egypt which is not affected by being exposed to online marketing campaigns. This could be justified by the fact that there are other sources of knowledge about Egypt including media (Table 9, p. 57). Both the general perception of Egypt and the general perception of Egypt as a touristic country show differences between responses, and both also have the highest Mean of those who accessed their perception as being very good. This indicates that the associations that respondents have with Egypt and its existing brand image has created a positive perception about Egypt and tourism.

According to Zhang et al. (2018), the framing of marketing messages has a strong effect on the travelers' destination selection process and decision making. Gain-framed and loss-framed messages yield different levels of influence on consumers, and the same variation applies to the effects of cognitive versus emotional attributes within a marketing message.



Table 13: The Relation between Visiting Experience Egypt Facebook Page and Egypt's Brand Image

	Have you previously visited Experience Egypt Facebook page?	N	Mean	STD	df		F	Sig.
					Between Groups	Within Groups		
Egypt's brand image	Yes	22	57.90	9.07	2	300	1.09	.33
	No	247	55.96	7.65				
	Maybe	34	57.47	7.46				
	Total	303	56.27	7.74				

The results of the One Way Anova Test indicate that there is no difference between those who have visited, have not visited, or unsure if they have visited Experience Egypt Facebook page in how they perceive Egypt's brand image. The Mean of 57.90 indicates that the most positive relation is that between Egypt's brand image within the respondents who visited Experience Egypt Facebook page, and this is followed by those who said they may have visited the page with a Mean of 57.47. In relation to Egypt's brand image, there is no significant difference between those who said they have previously visited Experience Egypt Facebook page, those who may have visited it, and those who have not. However, the highest mean is among those who have visited the page in terms of their positive perception of Egypt's brand image. This indicates that Egypt's brand image is not bound by one particular online platform, but rather a combination of branding initiatives across multiple media.



Table 14: The Relation between Visiting Experience Egypt Facebook Page and Knowledge and Perception of Egypt

	Have you previously visited Experience Egypt Facebook page?	N	Mean	STD	df		F	Sig.
					Between Groups	Within Groups		
The role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt	Yes	25	32.28	2.37	2	300	1.42	.24
	No	243	31.46	3.19				
	Maybe	35	32.22	3.88				
	Total	303	31.62	3.22				
General knowledge about Egypt	Yes	25	4.04	.88	2	300	7.62	.00
	No	243	3.39	1.21				
	Maybe	35	4.06	1.05				
	Total	303	3.52	1.20				
General perception of Egypt	Yes	25	3.76	1.01	2	300	4.11	.01
	No	243	3.91	.83				
	Maybe	35	4.31	.79				
	Total	303	3.94	.85				
General perception of Egypt as a touristic country	Yes	25	4.12	.92	2	300	3.00	.05
	No	243	3.97	.88				
	Maybe	35	4.34	.72				
	Total	303	4.02	.87				

The results of the One Way Anova Test show that there is a difference between the general knowledge about Egypt, the general perception of Egypt, and the general perception of Egypt as a touristic



country among those who have, have not, and may have previously visited Experience Egypt Facebook page. Nevertheless, the Mean indicates that this difference is more positive among those who have or may have visited the page than among those who have not. This indicates that visiting such specialized pages increases the knowledge of a country and creates some sort of perception about the country and tourism to it. The content and interactivity on this page has possibly helped visitors to envision destinations in Egypt and monitor reviews of others about their experiences visiting Egypt. This in return may have helped respondents to have a certain perception of Egypt and tourism in it. This can be verified by considering that the respondents who have not visited the Facebook page had the least of knowledge and perception about Egypt and tourism in it. This also indicates that although the visitation to a tourism-oriented Facebook page does not affect the level of knowledge respondents had about Egypt, it still reflected a more likelihood of the existence of this relation among respondents who have actually visited the page. This in return reflects the impact of such platforms on how far people have knowledge of a country - even if they do not realize that this page might be part of how they accumulate their knowledge.

When it comes to the role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt, there is no difference among respondents who have, have not, or may have visited the Facebook page. This can be attributed to the fact that branding is a long-term process, and that the online existence is one part of it, but cannot work independently to enhance knowledge or create perception. Nevertheless, these platforms must be taken into consideration as part of the nation brand, and the consistency among social media platforms and other online and offline media all contribute to building a unified and clear nation brand.



Table 15: The Relation between Visiting the Website of the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities and Egypt's Brand Image

	Have you previously visited the website of the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities?	N	Mean	STD	df		F	Sig.
					Between Groups	Within Groups		
Egypt's brand image	Yes	25	57.76	5.61	2	300	3.93	.02
	No	243	55.68	8.05				
	Maybe	35	59.31	5.95				
	Total	303	56.27	7.74				

The results of the One Way Anova Test show that there is a difference in Egypt's brand image within respondents who have visited, have not visited, or may have visited the website of the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities. This can be attributed to the fact that websites generally give legitimacy to entities, and being a governmental one, makes it even more legitimate. Accordingly, this might have instilled a deeper sense of trust in the platform more than the social media one. In addition, the website provides content that is mostly informative in nature, and according to the responses, 47.2% of the respondents chose points 6 and 7 as to the statement on the extent to which informative marketing messages affect their perception of touristic destinations. On the contrary, 25.7% of the respondents chose the same points when asked to evaluate the extent of emotional marketing messages affecting their perception of touristic destinations, which is the kind of appeal mostly used within the content of social media.



Table 16: The Relation between Visiting the Website of the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities and Knowledge and Perception of Egypt

	Have you previously visited the website of the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities?	N	Mean	STD	df		F	Sig.
					Between Groups	Within Groups		
The role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt	Yes	85	32.83	3.39	2	300	14.85	.00
	No	151	30.67	2.83				
	Maybe	67	32.20	3.22				
	Total	303	31.62	3.22				
General knowledge about Egypt	Yes	85	4.06	.96	2	300	16.94	.00
	No	151	3.17	1.26				
	Maybe	67	3.63	1.05				
	Total	303	3.52	1.20				
General perception of Egypt	Yes	85	4.20	.87	2	300	7.88	.00
	No	151	3.76	.86				
	Maybe	67	4.03	.73				
	Total	303	3.94	.85				
General perception of Egypt as a touristic country	Yes	85	4.34	.81	2	300	10.66	.00
	No	151	3.81	.91				
	Maybe	67	4.09	.75				
	Total	303	4.02	.87				

The One Way Anova Test results show that there is a difference between the responses of those who have previously visited the website of the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities as to whether respondents agree, disagree, or are unsure about the role of online media



in creating a nation branding for Egypt. The most positive of these responses are those who consented to the phrase. This result is followed by those who were unsure. This indicates that people mostly realize the role of online media in branding in general and in nation branding in particular. In turn, this emphasizes the importance of using online media to brand Egypt, and to use the proper branding elements relevant to Egypt such as the history, monuments, and Nile cruises, chosen by 66.2%, 67.9%, and 37.1% of the respondents respectively as the main characteristics of Egypt (Table 5, p. 46). There is also a difference between those who have visited the website and those who know about Egypt, know a bit about Egypt, and those who do not know anything about Egypt. The most positive of these responses are those who have good knowledge about Egypt with a Mean of 4.06, followed by those who know a bit about Egypt with a Mean of 3.36. This indicates that being exposed to tourism online platforms increases the likelihood of having better knowledge about Egypt, hence, highlighting the role of such online platforms.

When it comes to the general perception of Egypt, the results also show that there is a difference between those who may have visited the website of the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities and those who did not in terms of their general perception of Egypt and their perception of it as a touristic country. The most positive of these responses are those who had good perception of both elements, followed by those who had a neutral perception. These results indicate that Egypt generally has a satisfactory base of knowledge and perception among non Egyptians. This can be triggered to the fact that Egypt has a well-known historical brand. In addition, many people have different associations with Egypt either through their knowledge of it from the media 29.1%, having friends / family in Egypt 24.5%, having knowledge of Egypt from others who have been to Egypt 23.5%, or having visited Egypt 23.2% (Table 1: Media Mostly Used by Respondents

Media Mostly Used	Frequency	Percent
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Online media	207	68.3
TV	35	11.6
Netflix	38	12.5
YouTube	14	4.6
International press	6	2.0
TikTok	2	.7
Instagram	1	.3
Total	303	100.0

The majority of respondents use online media the most with 68.3%. Only 11.6% use TV. This dictates the importance of creating more online content, some of which can also be used on TV, such as promotional videos, and posted on YouTube and Instagram because they were chosen by 4.6% and .3% of the respondents respectively.

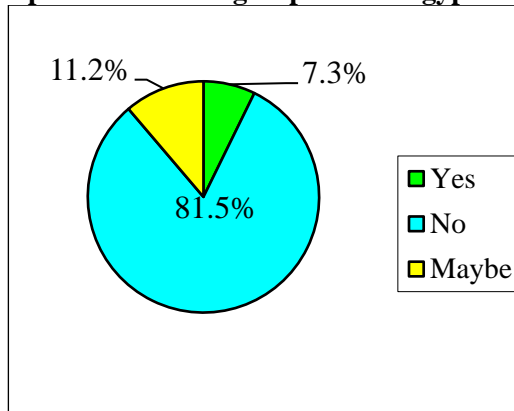
Table 2: Daily Duration Respondents Use Online Media

Daily Duration of Online Media Use	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 hour per day	20	6.6
Between 1 and 3 hours per day	163	53.8
Between 3 and 5 hours per day	83	27.4
More than 5 hours per day	37	12.2
Total	303	100.0

Most of the respondents use online media between 1 and 3 hours per day, followed by 27.4% who use it between 3 and 5 hours per day. Only 6.6% responded that they use online media less than 1 hour per day. This dictates the importance of keeping the online platforms updated around the clock so that users will always see updates throughout the day.

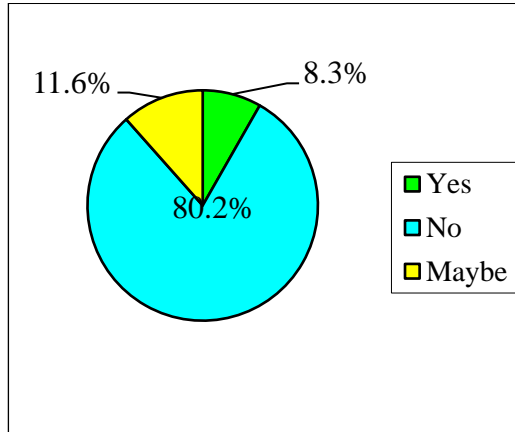


Figure 3: Respondents Visiting Experience Egypt Facebook Page



A high majority of respondents summing up to 247 respondents (81.5%) said they have not previously visited Experience Egypt Facebook page. This indicates that apart from promoting tourism to Egypt on this page, it is important to promote this online platform.

Figure 4: Respondents Visiting the Website of the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities



Again, a high majority of respondents - comprising 243 respondents (80.2%) - have not previously visited the website of the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities. Again, this dictates the necessity of promoting all online platforms that the governmental entities use to promote tourism in Egypt. Without this kind of promotion, the reach on these platforms will remain low, hence, wasting efforts and budgets spent on the production of the promotional material on these pages.

Table 3: Online Media Effectiveness for Branding Purposes in Comparison to Traditional Media

Respondents' Agreement on the Effectiveness of Online Media for Branding Purposes	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	129	42.6
Agree	110	36.3
Neutral	61	20.1
Disagree	2	.7
Strongly disagree	1	.3
Total	303	100.0



Compared to traditional media, 42.6% of the respondents who strongly agreed that online media is more effective for branding purposes, followed by 36.3% who agreed. In comparison, only 1% of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed on this statement. These results synchronize with the majority of respondents - 68.3% - who said that online media was their most used kind of media (Table 1, p. 41). These results also indicate that heavy users of online media rely on it as a source of information and education when it comes to brands. In return, this emphasizes the importance of using online media as a branding platform for tourism in Egypt because of its reach and value to their users.

Table 4, p. 41).



Table 17: The Relation between the Role of Online Media in Creating a Nation Branding for Egypt and Knowledge, Perception, and Egypt's Brand Image

	The role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt	
	r	P
General knowledge about Egypt	.11	.05
General perception of Egypt	.24	.00
General perception of Egypt as a touristic country	.34	.00
Egypt's brand image	.44	.00
Intensity of use of online media	.040	.48

There is a correlation between the role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt and the general knowledge about Egypt, general perception of Egypt, the general perception of Egypt as a touristic country, and Egypt's brand image. This indicates that in order for a country's nation branding to be created, stakeholders have to have a certain degree of perception of this country. In the case of Egypt, the perception of it as a touristic country serves the nation branding cause, as tourism is seen as an integral part of Egypt's brand image as rated 7 by 28.1% of the respondents on a scale from 1 to 7 (Table 6, p. 48). On the other hand, there is also no correlation between the role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt and the intensity of use of online media. The latter could be explained through the fact that the intensity of use of online media is not what will create Egypt's nation branding or enhance its brand image. What will accomplish such a change are the actual branding practices of Egypt as a touristic destination through clear, unified, consistent, and frequent campaigns.

Jokinen (2016) indicated that the overall impact of social media for branding is similar to that of traditional media; however, there can be some variations depending on the targeted segment. There is a strong correlation between demographics, social media and consumers'



perceptions of the effect of social media on brand image. Therefore, including social media in a branding strategy is vital due to the growing number of its users, and the fact that it has become portable and ever-present. From a branding and marketing perspective, the importance of social media is derived from the fact that users have power over the content they see, create, share, or interact with. Moreover, the marketing efforts related to online media are inexpensive, targeted and measurable in comparison to traditional media.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

Tourism is a vital dimension of nation branding, and when it is considered a major source for the national income, its role and impact are even more augmented. The tourism industry is not only dependant on the existence of a historical or cultural heritage, or natural resources that would attract visitors. It is affected by the existence of a proper infrastructure to facilitate the tourists' visit and stay. It is also bound to educating and training people to become receptive and responsive to tourists. In addition, it is subject to legislations whose role is to protect tourists and provide them with a sense of physical and psychological safety.

The rules affecting the alteration of public perception mainly employ impersonal and indirect communication to transform an existing image that has mainly been formulated through personal experience. This usually starts with positive images and secondary image aspects, and is then followed by establishing firm personal relevant through dimensions such as cultural relations, tourism, foreign policy, or exports. Afterwards, the target audience is addressed with consistent and continued long term campaigns building on cognitive and emotional factors, and building on the preexisting fragile primary and secondary associations in order to maintain credibility. An example is the use of tourism, exports and cultural relations to enhance the image of small countries within a highly admired region (Anholt, 2010).



There is a statistical correlation between Egypt's brand image and the perception of Egypt as a touristic country. It is important to extend perception outside the border of heritage and open opportunities for other forms of nation branding including talent acquisition, investments, and exports. The trust in a brand is linked to its products, and the country-of-origin (COO) concept may reflect on exports of certain products opening opportunities for small businesses especially those related to authentic Egyptian products such as handcrafts. Apart from the exclusive ancient Egyptian heritage that is the main attraction for tourists, Egypt is subject to competition from other nations on the leisure, meetings, incentives, conferences, & exhibitions (MICE), and religious tourism fronts. Therefore, the significance of identifying and highlighting Egypt's competitive advantages presents itself.

Sightseeing is considered the most sought characteristic that non Egyptians look for when visiting a country for tourism, and this is followed by the safety element, and the beaches. It is important to avoid cliché when it comes to sightseeing. It is vital to provide the feel of the experience that tourists will have and fictionalize the brand promise in a visual manner. Looking for hidden gems to deepen the feeling of exoticism and elevate the anticipation of tourists as to what they can see. Competitive advantage is important because beaches, sea, and nature can be found elsewhere, but the highlight should be on what is different and how it is different. Sightseeing can be categorized into different types and themes focusing on different types and promoting them seasonally and by nationality.

Luxor and Aswan and the pyramids are the most popular destinations followed by beach destinations such as Sharm el sheikh and Hurgada. Linking to the fact that sightseeing is the first characteristic that tourists look for when thinking of visiting a country for tourism, and that history is among the top things that come into people's mind about Egypt, makes the choice of Luxor, Aswan, and the Pyramids as the top choices of destinations in Egypt sensible. Because beaches are among the top sought characteristics, this led to the choice of Sharm El Sheikh and Hurgada as well. The recent celebration of the



opening of the Sphinx Avenue has shed the light on Luxor especially with it being the pilot for the visual identity project that targets main cities in Egypt. Luxor and Aswan in general contribute a great deal in the monumental heritage of Egypt. In addition, most of the visitors tour these cities via Nile cruises which are also one of the destinations identified by tourists as significant ones. On the other hand, the branding that events such as El Gouna Film Festival does - as a soft power - managed again to highlight the beauty and uniqueness of El Gouna in specific and Hurgada at large.

Generally speaking, the majority of non Egyptians have good perception of Egypt as a touristic country in particular. Egypt's brand image is an old and traditional one. Having interesting historical monuments and being an exciting country for tourism are the most identified images known about Egypt as a brand. Moreover, Egypt is known to be a reasonably-priced destination. As part of its brand image, Egypt is perceived as having amazing beaches, being vibrant, and possessing a number of interesting activities. Accordingly, Egypt's brand image is derived from the facts agreed on by non Egyptians, and which little arguments seem to be possible. Safety on the other hand is not a concrete aspect of the perception of non Egyptians of Egypt; most of the respondents perceived it as neutrally-safe. The history of Egypt, the monuments, and museums are the most important things non Egyptians know about Egypt. Egypt is generally perceived as having interesting historical monuments and being an exciting country for tourism. The image of Egypt as a touristic destination is built on an old nation brand, not nation branding based on elements not provided by people but rather nationally. Image as a touristic destination is derived from media and WOM. However, brand image is only based on one element and ignoring other competitive advantages. It is the role of the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities to promote these advantages including the variety of tourism types, religious tourism, medical tourism, tourism for couples and family, the weather, and other unique features. It is important to work on niche markets that come to Egypt for special reasons. One market could be business and MICE with the



development in the MICE infrastructure and showcasing capabilities of organizing events, this could be a great potential. There is also sports tourism and the new sports city in the Administrative Capital. Egypt can become candidates to host big and international cultural and sports events, especially with the infrastructure pertaining to transportation and digitalization of services and payments.

Egyptians are often perceived as friendly and accommodating. However, they are not considered a good source of information about Egypt, knowing how to market it, or being good ambassadors for tourism in Egypt. This was probably inspired by personal experiences, hence, the necessity to educate people and build awareness of tourism as an integral source of national income, and reinstate the trust in Egyptians as providers of touristic services and as part of the population pillar upon which nation branding is built. Respondents did not agree on Egyptians being good marketers or ambassadors hinting to the importance of providing quality service and value for money.

Tourism is firsthand experience attempted with all aspects of the daily life, and an arena for the manifestation of other nation branding dimensions including the heritage & culture, people, and governance.

There can be other dimensions of nation branding to work on from among those formulating Anholt's Nation Branding Theory. Survey respondents named safety as the second most important characteristic and the harassment of females in the Egyptian society is an issue covered in the media. This negates the safety factor and the people element and the legislations dimension of nation branding that a visitor knows there are laws and regulations to protect them while in Egypt.

There is a statistical correlation between the exposure of non Egyptians to online media and Egypt nation branding. Online media is perceived as an effective kind of media used for branding purposes, and it can help Egypt in particular brand tourism to Egypt. Most of non Egyptians are neutral about the role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt. However, the majority agrees that branding Egypt



can help promote tourism. The majority strongly agree and agree that online media is more effective for branding purposes. A big percent of the respondents were neutral about Egypt exerting effort to promote tourism, followed by a smaller number of those who agreed that the efforts were noticeable. This in return indicates that more effort needs to be made on multiple fronts to showcase Egypt as a touristic destination. Moreover, different kinds of media platforms should be employed for this purpose because media habits differ based on the age group of users. For example, older age groups might be using Facebook more, while younger age groups are more into YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. Most of the respondents use online media between 1 and 3 hours per day followed by those who spend between 3 and 5 hours per day. Most of the respondents have not seen any online marketing campaigns about tourism to Egypt. However, the majority is interested to. Respondents mostly named official online platforms as their main preference for the media through which they gain knowledge about tourism in Egypt. The second most preferred medium is the WOM from other tourists who have visited Egypt.

Most of the respondents have not previously visited Experience Egypt Facebook page or the website of the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities. This calls for more emphases on branding these pages and propagating for them as the official carriers of tourism messages, promotions, and news. This can also be done through the continuous updating of these platforms with communication messages that cater to different kinds of tourists and different demographics. In addition, it is important that multiple platforms are handled simultaneously to cater to different age groups and nationalities.

The survey results have shown that non Egyptians mostly know about Egypt from the media or through their association with friends and family members living in Egypt. There is also a considerable amount that has this knowledge through the WOM of those who have visited Egypt.



Media focusing on events and covering them is important because it is a form of propaganda and ensures that all governmental entities back the tourism agenda insinuating trust and elevating the brand promise. Media coverage of soft power elements to highlight destinations, such as El Gouna, is also of vital importance. It is important that unconventional means of propaganda are used to promote destinations in Egypt. It does not always have to be a direct promotional message because public relations, in general, is more trusted than paid advertising. It is worth mentioning that a number of events that take place throughout the year, manage to identify key cities in Egypt. The Youth Summit for example that takes place in Sharm El Sheikh, presents the city as a hub for young tourists who come to enjoy the vibrant city, diving spots, and beaches. In addition, the propaganda that is done accompanying events managed to focus on certain destinations in Egypt and showcase the continuous development within these destinations. In time, this will pave the path for an easy transition into a decentralized concept of tourism that is not focused on big cities only, but rather on exploring other destinations within Egypt that have some of the historical heritage, but have been in the dark for years due to the lack of infrastructure or the need for restoration of these historical sites.

There is a statistical correlation between the exposure of non Egyptians to online media and Egypt's brand image and the perception of Egypt as a touristic country. The CBBE Model can be manifested with the identification of Egypt as a brand, assigning a meaning of performance and image to Egypt's brand, and developing feelings and associations with the brand.

Despite the complexity that characterizes societies, brands mostly prefer projecting a simple and clear image that can become more complex over time. However, Anholt (2010) argues that simplicity is not applicable to nations because they embrace a heritage of cultural, social and political attributes to project. A country's identity exists within it and its population, and despite that fact that it cannot be directly manipulated, it still falls within the country's influence. The



country image, on the other hand, is even harder to impact because it is more complex, fragmented, rooted in the culture and traditions, and resistant to the intentional attempts of changing the national identity. Moreover, the identity is not present in the country itself, but rather in infinitely disseminated forms in the perception of millions of people around the world. Positive brand image goes before a country and its citizens, paving the path, creating trust and raising expectations of quality, competence and reliability.

Conclusion

The main research question of this study revolved around the role of online media in creating a nation branding for Egypt building on the tourism dimension. The study has provided in-depth understanding of the nation branding as a concept and practice. It has also shed the light on its importance to countries, and accordingly, on how it can benefit tourism in Egypt and the country at large. The researcher has employed diverse techniques to stand upon the study in question. The data collection has generated a wealth of insights onto the perception of non Egyptians of Egypt in general, and of it as a touristic destination in particular. The study has also shown that Egypt enjoys a significant brand image building on its reputation as a historical country. Through the study, a number of elements pertaining to the message strategy that can best fit the cause of nation branding showcased themselves. The visual, written, and verbal content, the message appeals, and the nature of the content presented online are all significant tools in branding Egypt via online media. The researcher has concluded that there is an existing potential to employ the tourism dimension of nation branding via the use of online media. This can be done through the realization of potential target markets of external tourists, identifying their diverse needs, developing a message strategy the addresses these need, and using online media as a platform to build Egypt's nation branding.

This study provides insight on key message strategies and elements that are used online to brand Egypt from a touristic standpoint. The study also presents an overview on the perception of non Egyptians



of Egypt as a touristic destination, and the development leads that can potentially be adopted in this area. Finally, the tourism dimension can be the starting point from which Egypt can fly to wider parameters of nation branding, building on the grandiose of Egypt's history and the unraveling opportunities at hand today, and providing visionary limitless horizons for the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for Practitioners

- Entities handling the tourism agenda in Egypt to create and maintain different online platforms to cater to the media habits of diverse segments of the target market and different nationalities
- Educators to enhance the awareness of students about the importance of tourism and the role of the human element in the tourism industry and the 'people' dimension of nation branding at large

Recommendations for Future Studies

- The role of internal tourism in enhancing the tourism dimension of nation branding

RESEARCH LIMITATION

Sample Size

Given the fact that the survey respondents were non Egyptians, there was a research limitation to reach the sample size of 400 respondents. Therefore, the researcher only surveyed 303 respondents considering it a niche sample.

Sample Profile

The survey respondents' sample profile was considered a research limitation because it comprised non Egyptian survey respondents. Moreover, it was difficult to reach respondents that would be representative of different nationalities, or equal in number from the same nationality.



Time

The build-up of responses to the survey caused a research limitation with regards to time due to the fact that respondents were non Egyptians and difficult to reach.



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