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FOREWORD

The International Journal on Optimization and Applications (IJOA) is an open access, double blind peer-reviewed online journal aiming at publishing high-quality research in all areas of : Applied mathematics, Engineering science, Artificial intelligence, Numerical Methods, Embedded Systems, Electric, Electronic engineering, Telecommunication Engineering... the IJOA begins its publication from 2021. This journal is enriched by very important special manuscripts that deal with problems using the latest methods of optimization. It aims to develop new ideas and collaborations, to be aware of the latest search trends in the optimization techniques and their applications in the various fields..

Finally, I would like to thank all participants who have contributed to the achievement of this journal and in particular the authors who have greatly enriched it with their performing articles.

Prof. Dr. Hanaa HACHIMI

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The role of digital marketing in the resilience of sustainable tourism destinations, a case study of the Imilchil region

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Abstract:

Actually, tourism remains a real strength of economic activity for all nations. However, this latest health crisis has really infected it negatively, and this is explained by the various damages that experienced the sector since the spread of the virus. As a result, several methods have been put in place to refresh the activity. Several visions lead to digital marketing, because it is the ideal and quick solution to get out of this situation.

Key words: sustainable tourism-digital marketing – resilience-sustainability-destination

Introduction

The tourism sector represents a fruitful sector and one of the revenue-generating and full-employment niches.

Today, in the era of the health crisis, the tourism sector has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) and by the travel restriction measures that have been adopted to limit the spread of the virus.

Admittedly, any organization with a tourist vocation develops in a context destroyed by the damage of the health crisis. However, to get back in shape, the development of a marketing strategy becomes vital. Indeed, digital marketing is effective and fast to increase sustainable tourism activity, because today we live in a world where digital is an integral part of our daily lives.

In addition, on a global scale no country has escaped the decimation of its tourism sector. According to revised scenarios, « this shock could cause the international tourism economy to contract by 60% to 80% in 2020,

depending on the duration of the crisis. »¹

According to available data taken from a subsequent study by the Ministry of Tourism, Handicrafts and Social and Solidarity Economy (MTAESS, 2021), tourism accounts for more than 6% of Gross Domestic Product. Overall, it

is the third most

important sector of the Moroccan economy. Tourism is one of the sectors most affected by the covid19 pandemic. Indeed, «arrivals at border posts experienced a drastic drop of -79% in

2020 compared to 2019 with 2.8 million non-resident tourists. »²

Hence the need to focus on the sustainable tourist product, which is essential and easy to relaunch compared to other tourist products, such is the case of the seaside resort which requires a lot of expenditure.

Take the example of our Beni Mellal-Khénifra region; and

more specifically the Imelchil area, which has been able to develop its tourist component thanks to the efforts made by tourist organizations such as the Tourism Delegation and the Regional Council of Tourism.

In this context, how does tourism combine technology and sustainable development strategies to stimulate and strengthen tourism activity?

To answer this, a series of questions arise:

- What marketing strategies should sustainable tourism adopt to be resilient?
- How to set up a digital marketing approach and develop it?
- How can the online presence of tourist organizations contribute to the attractiveness of the destination?

Faced with all these questions, we will first present a conceptual overview of the two notions “sustainable tourism” and “digital marketing”. We will then explore the relationship between the two notions and finally we will focus on the Imelchil region; cradle of a mixture of Béni Mellal-Khénifra culture. We will carry out a documentary study to better understand this subject.

Therefore, our objective is to show the importance of

¹ OECD. (2020). Actions taken in the field of tourism in the face of the coronavirus (COVID-19). Retrieved on 15/12/2021 from the site: www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses

² Ministry of Tourism, Handicrafts and Social and Solidarity Economy. (2020). Tourism: key figures. Retrieved on 15/12/2021 from the ministry's website: mtataes.gov.ma/Fr/tourisme/chiffres-clé-tourisme.

digital technology and the use of digital tools to strengthen sustainable tourism, an area of activity that puts sustainable development at the center of its priorities.

Sustainable tourism development in the Béni Mellal-Khénifra region

I. Sustainable tourism

1. Conceptualization:

Truly, tourism is a major economic sector globally. It is a transversal activity that affects many aspects of the receiving territory that we call the tourist destination. Indeed, it is an activity for which all the qualities of the territory are potential resources (Marsat, 2016).

The sustainable tourism industry has shown over the years that it can form an area of economic activity for the benefit of sustainable development strategies. Certainly, sustainable development occupies a major place in the lines of national economic policy.

It was in 1980 that the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) referred for the first time to the notion of "sustainable development" when publishing its global strategy for the conservation of the environment. (Godard, 1994).

Sustainable development is the set of economic actions that take into account the well-being of the local population of a geographical area. In addition, in 1987, Mrs. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Norwegian Prime Minister defined sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs.

A team of researchers from the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE, 2016) believes that "in 1992, the Earth Summit in Rio, held under the aegis of the United Nations, formalized the notion of sustainable development and those of the three pillars (economy/ecology/social): economically efficient, socially equitable and ecologically sustainable development.

2. Sustainable development and tourism:

Admittedly, integrating sustainable development at all levels of tourist activity constitutes one of the fundamental challenges of tomorrow's tourism. In order to set up an adequate tourist process with the foundations of sustainable development, it is necessary directly to the goals of sustainable development. In other words, it is essential to study the behaviors and expectations of the targeted tourists with regard to the sustainable development and sustainable tourism of the destination.

In addition, tourism is indeed a job-generating activity. However, like all economic activities, tourism contributes to economic development and faces the challenge of sustainability.

Moreover, tourism is a bright part of the economy, and especially in terms of regional development. Because it allows you to create more currency and also more work opportunities. From this we also note that this activity directly or indirectly influences the socio-economic and socio-cultural fabric of each territory.

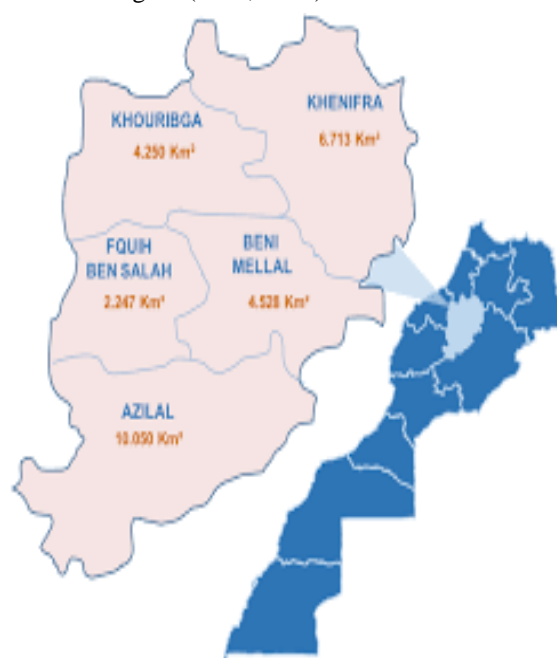
II. Sustainable tourism in the Béni Mellal-Khénifra region

1. Description of the Beni Mellal-Khénifra region

The Béni Mellal-Khénifra region is a region made up of five provinces: Azilal, Béni Mellal, Fquih Ben Salah, Khénifra and Khouribga, 135 communes including 16 Municipalities and 119 Rural Communes (HCP, 2022). Its position at the foot of the Middle Atlas mountain gives it a strategic location rich in natural and cultural resources.

In addition, the capital of the region is the province of Beni Mellal. «The Beni Mellal-Khénifra region covers an area of 28,374 km² or 3.99% of the national territory. It is limited to the north by Rabat-Salé-Kenitra, to the northeast by the Meknes-Tafilalet region; to the south and south-west by the Draa-Tafilalet region and to the east by the Casablanca-Settat and Marrakech-Safi regions³. »

Figure 1: administrative division of the Béni Mellal-Khénifra region (HCP, 2022)



In addition, the region has an important road network of 4296 km, "in

cluding 1136 km affected by snowfall during the winter period" (Agence Marocaine de Presse, 2021), and on the other hand it is estimated that 4296 km we find "339 km of national roads, 1488 km of regional roads and 2469 km of provincial roads (BTP News, 2021).

Indeed, this requires permanent interventions in order to safeguard the existing road heritage and to improve the level of service and the level of road safety of users to guarantee safety.

Indeed, the Ministry of Equipment, Transport, Logistics and Water provides programs in this regard which consist of the realization of 54 projects over a length of 682 km with a budget of 1212 MDH (BTP News, 2021).

³ HCP.(2021).Presentation of the Beni Mellal-Khénifra region.

Retrieved on 02/11/2021 from the site: https://www.hcp.ma/region-drta/Presentation-de-la-region_a32

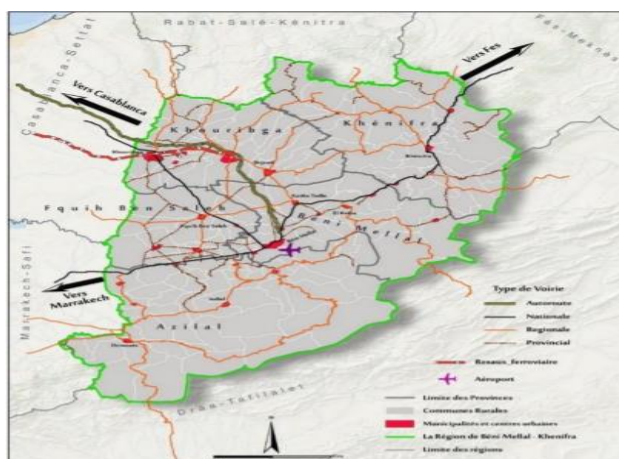


Figure 2: road network of the BéniMellal-Khénifra region (Ministry of Equipment, Transport, Logistics and Water, 2022)

2. Sustainable tourist activity in this region

Certainly, the year 2021 marks a resumption of tourist activity in the BMK region thanks to the launch of several programs aimed at supporting this sector, one of the most affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Recently, the Swiss-Morocco Sustainable Tourism program was launched, which aims to support tourism dynamics for the next four years in the Beni Mellal-Khénifra region (General Information Site of the BMK, 2021).

Indeed, after the health crisis we notice that; especially the province of Beni Mellal; was marked by the rehabilitation and development of several tourist sites and especially the park of Ain Asserdoune; classified national heritage since 1947.

In addition, the choice of this region as a target among the objectives of Sustainable Tourism Switzerland-Morocco is explained by its many assets: mountain ranges, varied flora and fauna. This program will also make it possible to "strengthen the capacities of local actors to manage the tourist destination. It also aims to improve the quality of tourist establishments and also to create several craft and agricultural cooperatives for the benefit of the local community. (The Economist, 2021).

However, in this region we find as a tourist niche, mountain tourism. Of course, tourism has a marginally major share in this area. Because it is rich in natural resources. It is in this regard that this region is included in the objectives of the Sustainable Tourism Switzerland-Morocco program.

According to previous studies, the ONMT has set up a funded report of almost 210 million dirhams in the deployment of the SMIT tourism development program (MAP Tourisme, 2021).

Digital marketing

I. Concept and definition of digital marketing

1. Etymology of marketing

The etymology of the term marketing refers to various interpretations. From the Latin mercatus which means market, "Marketing" is an Anglo-Saxon term formed from "market" (market) with "ing", suffix which marks an

action that is happening.

Many attempts to define marketing are made by all its proponents. Far from opposing, they complement each other. Of all the definitions, two are proposed by the great marketing theorists: «Kotler, Keller and Manceau in their reference work "Marketing management", they point out that to define this concept, "the main difficulty lies in the fact that marketing is both an "art" and a "science", since it involves finding a balance between creative capacities and analytical methods. »⁴

Then, they give an operational definition centered on the function of the organization which adopts a managerial orientation around marketing management: "Marketing management is the art and the science of choosing its target markets, then of attracting, retaining and to develop a customer base by creating, delivering and communicating superior value to its customers"⁵.

And they add another societal definition centered on the notion of exchange which emphasizes the role of marketing in society: "Marketing is the societal process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and what they they want; this process consists of creating, offering and exchanging valuable products and services with others"⁶. Its ultimate goal is to satisfy the current and future needs of consumers and the profitability of the company.

In short, "the first books to appear on the subject describe marketing management as a decision-making process"⁷. Marketing then presents itself as a set of methods and tools that allow market analysis, positioning offer and promote it optimally.

2. Digitalization of marketing

During all these periods, we realize that "in economic life, marketing makes it possible to adapt products or services to market needs, as well as distribution and communication methods"⁸

The impact of technological developments on marketing is undeniable. For example, with the progress of information and communication technologies (ICT), companies can process and exploit databases on their customers. Then, present them with offers in real time, stimulating their act of purchase, thanks to new methods of contact and distribution.

Therefore, marketing is constantly evolving and changes are

permanent. However, if technological progress allows companies to evolve, they must stay informed about the tools to master. Marketing reinvents itself over time to keep up with changes in consumer behavior. Thus, the rise of digital technologies and their use on the Web, social media and mobile applications contribute to the

⁴ KOTLER, KELLER, MANCEAU.(2015). Marketing management. (Pearson Education.p: 4).

⁵ KOTLER, KELLER, MANCEAU.(2015). Marketing management. (Pearson Education.p: 5).

⁶ KOTLER, KELLER, MANCEAU.(2015). Marketing management. (Pearson Education.p: 6).

⁷ KOTLER, KELLER, MANCEAU.(2015). Marketing management. (Pearson Education. p: 31).

⁸ Anthe Design.(2018).What is Marketing and what are its different techniques? . Retrieved on 01/21/2021 from the website: www.anthedesign.fr/marketing-2/le-marketing-techniques

development of marketing.

Indeed, ICT and the Internet have profoundly changed purchasing behavior. Digital culture is now essential for both companies and individuals. The latter now choose their way of consuming, obtain information and share their experiences on the web.

II. the integration of digital technology into the sustainable tourism policy

Nowadays, almost everyone goes through the web before getting a product or a service. Sustainable tourism is no exception to this rule. Increasingly connected, travelers have become accustomed to searching, comparing and booking their hotel rooms online for their stay. Finding out about the destination, reading recommendations, positive or negative opinions is now part of everyday life. Affected by technological advances in general and the innovations brought by digital technology in particular, sustainable tourism is today forced to follow the era of digitalization of the world. For this, it has adapted to economic and political changes. With online advertising, for example, the advertisements managed by the Moroccan National Tourist Office (ONMT) will be more attractive than the classic stand model.

There are many ways to promote this kind of tourism product. Indeed, this is based on the presence on the global web. Thus, the creation of a site makes it possible to increase the visibility. The use of social networks increases notoriety and visibility, with the objective of capturing a large number of potential tourists.

Research methodology and results: Case study: the Imilchil region

The methodology adopted to achieve this objective consists of documentary research only.

The Imilchil region “is a mountain valley located at an average altitude of 2300 meters. It is made up of 5 municipalities”⁹.

Population légale des communes d'Imilchil selon le recensement 2014		
Nom des Communes	Menage	Population
Total Cercle : Imilchil	5 862	34 672
Commune Ait Yahya	736	4 560
Commune Amouguez	798	4 840
Commune Bou Azmou	1 638	9 583
Commune Imilchil	1 517	8 870
Commune Ouerbat	1 173	6 819

Figure 3: legal population of the municipalities of Imilchil according to the 2014 census (HCP, 2014)

Sustainable tourism in the Imilchil region attracts many tourists from the Marrakech circuit every year. In addition, it also attracts hikers and mountain climbing enthusiasts.

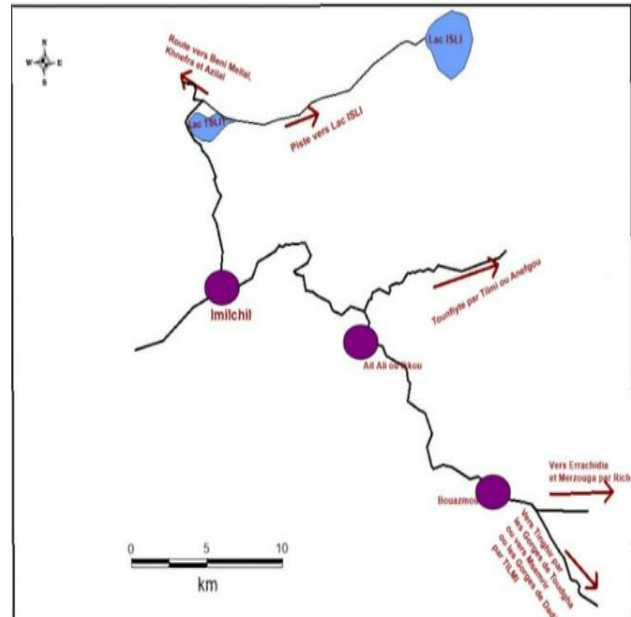


Figure 4 : tourist circuit of the Imilchil area (Portail du Sud du Maroc, 2016)

“Beyond its privileged position in the heart of the Eastern High Atlas Mountains, the tracks currently converted into asphalt roads have enabled the Imilchil site to be brought closer to the Moroccan tourist hotspots of the Todgha and Dadès gorges, Ouzoud waterfall...etc.”¹⁰

Besides that, this site is a tourist destination thanks to its various potentialities including the Engagement Moussem which is internationally renowned.

Admittedly, tourism is one of the sectors that has been most impacted by digitalization, and since it has been affected by the pandemic, several efforts have been put forward to save it. Consequently, some institutions opt for communication and digital marketing in order to attract national and international tourists. To do this, “the Regional Tourism Council (CRT) of the Draa-Tafilalt region in partnership with the ONMT has made efforts to promote and communicate the Draa-Tafilalt destination and the various neighboring provinces. In fact, the creation of the www.ntla9awfdraatafilalt.ma platform is seen as a fierce communication campaign, because it invites visitors on a long journey from Zagora, Ouarzazate via Tinghir, Midelt, Imilchil, Er-Rachidia for the discovery of opportunities and treasures of the region” (The Free Library By Farlex, 2021).

So, from this quote we notice that the Imilchil area is straddling the tourist development of neighboring areas. Its strategic location in the hearts of Morocco allows it to be the pivot of the tourist golden triangle formed by the imperial cities of the Kingdom.

In short, the results obtained reveal weak territorial planning and poor tourist activity in terms of digital strategies designed by tourism organizations in the Beni Mellal-Khénifra region; own region of the Imilchil area.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, tourist activity is a double-edged

⁹ Akhiam. (2021). Imilchil: when travel is in the service of man and nature. Retrieved on 02/12/2021 from the site : www.akhiam.org/tourisme/

¹⁰ Portail Sud du Maroc. (2016). Sustainable and solidarity tourism: Invitation to Imilchil-Amellago, in the heart of the Eastern High Atlas. Retrieved on 02/12/2021 from the site : www.portailsudmaroc.com/actualite/7016

weapon. Sometimes it maintains investments and regenerates revenue, sometimes it has harmful effects on the environment and the local population. In addition, this pandemic has precipitated the tourism economy into an unavoidable crisis.

For the past ten years, the Kingdom has had a Moroccan charter for responsible tourism. It then displayed its desire to develop tourism that respects people and the environment, which promotes the cultural, identity and intangible heritage of its different regions.

But we must not stop at this stage. It is therefore essential to initiate actions and put in place economic policies for sustainable development post covid-19. Thus, with the opening of the barriers, nothing is better than a digital relaunch for the emergence of the activity.

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The perception of sustainable tourism by students - in the case of the OFPPT students from the region of Beni Mellal-Khénifra

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Abstract:

Morocco is part of a development dynamic aimed at promoting tourism, as part of an advanced regionalization establishment, favoring the inter-regional balance in tourism, where durability remains the cornerstone to the sustainability of touristic destinations. In this perspective, an adapted academic training to the sustainable tourism crafts seems essential for a healthy tourism takeoff.

This research aims to study the perception of the sustainable tourism concept as well as the identification of other aspects or sustainable practices matured in the minds of students engaged in tourism training, and who will soon become involved by integrating the labor market. This allows us to re-establish bridges and fill the gaps between training and insertion.

To do this, an exploratory qualitative study will be privileged as sustainable tourism is a contemporary paradigm. The different aspects related to sustainable tourism according to the interviewees representations, demonstrate that the application of its principles is useful to the sector development. Starting from all the conclusions, some recommendations for professionals and politicians are proposed.

Keywords:

Perception; Sustainable tourism; Sustainable development; Tourist destination

Introduction:

The Rio Earth Summit (1992) identified tourism as one of the key sectors for sustainable development, which led the WTTC, UNWTO, and the Earth Council to launch Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism in 1994. This document was administered as a practical guide outlining appropriate actions and suggestions for the sound implementation of a sustainable tourism framework,

while emphasizing the importance of adhering to its principles in order to achieve sustainable development in tourism destinations.

Indeed, the ultimate goal of our study focuses on a very important part of the tourism ecosystem which is the students of the tourism professions, and focuses more precisely on the perception of these future professionals of the notion of "sustainable tourism", do they master well the connotations attributed to this scourge, their studies, their internships in tourism companies, do they contribute correctly to delimit the fundamental characteristics, the modules taught during the entire course, do they take into consideration the imperatives of sustainability, or the principle is provided independently of other content.

This sample represents a very important object of study, which will serve as a skeleton to the professional world of tourism, by a qualified and specialized workforce, having acquired professional attitudes and a level of languages more developed than the classic recurrent recruitments of the tourism establishments.

To do this, we used a totalitarian questionnaire, without claiming to be exhaustive, tested and validated by academics in the field, and whose items draw on both the content taught in class and in professional internships, and its effects on the learning cycle, and on the behavior and attitudes acquired by this group of students.

The outcomes of this study aim at adapting and improving the pedagogical content, to make more useful the classical methods of teaching the tourism professions, through recommendations to teachers, administrators, professionals of the professions, and especially to the laureates who aim at a career in tourism, so that the concept of sustainability takes a transversal place throughout the training curriculum.

Literature review:

In order to achieve and implement a comprehensive tourism development, it is obviously necessary to

inculcate the image of the different notions of this development in the memory and mind of the different stakeholders, as well as the principles attached to them in order to integrate them and take them into account in their committed behaviors and practices, from where it better exists education and training to imprint and profess such an orientation to promote the culture of sustainable tourism.

In fact, Previous studies that focus on the study of perception in the tourism sector, aim to understand the representations that the different parts of the tourism ecosystem have formed about sustainable tourism (Mello, Fernandes, Zimmermann, & Subhash, 2016). The work done has focused on studying the attitude and image perceived and engraved in the minds of tourists (Sair & Rahoua, n.d) and (Weijing, 2014) as a customer adopting responsible behavior and practice (Jain & Sharma, 2021), as well as that of residents (Cottrel, Vaske, Shen, & Ritter, 2007), (Hadinejad, Moyle, Noel, Anna, & Nunkoo, 2019), and internet users (Claire, 2012)... However, the study extends to understand the perception of the role of different stakeholders in promoting tourist satisfaction and the development of sustainable tourism (Halima, Ferdous, Nurain, Er, & A, 2014), starting from a comparison made in terms of the perception of tourism sustainability between rural and urban (Halim & Ervina, 2021), as well as between the female and male gender (Šenková et al., 2020), while raising the perception of the economic and social impact (Pinto Da Silva, Brandão, & Bruno, 2019), of the adoption of such a culture.

In addition, tourism is a discipline taught in higher education institutions (universities, colleges, vocational training institutes...) which are qualified by Unesco as a driver of change towards sustainability because they have a major role in achieving the goals of sustainable development by preparing learners to meet future challenges, and also by calling on them to take action.) which are qualified by Unesco as a driver of change towards sustainability as they have a major role in achieving the sustainable development goals by preparing learners to meet future challenges, and also calling on them to change their mindset and active engagement related to sustainable tourism (Dibra & Oelfke, 2013), hence each institution should follow its own path on the way to sustainability, depending on the evolution of its environment and situation (Unesco Commission, 2009). However, the concept of sustainable tourism, even if it takes space in the literature, it is not yet incorporated more in the educational programs of this discipline, so there is little research on the integration in higher education of such concept of sustainability (Busby, 2003) necessary to take the path to a more sustainable future (Tilbury, 2011). And thus, the inclusion of aspects of sustainable tourism in curricula (Henry & Jackson, 1995), as well as the inclusion of different pedagogical approaches that promote the development of competencies, skills, and

values in tourism education, remain essential (Belhassen & Caton, 2011).

In this sense, Research in tourism education has shown how student attitudes can be influenced by sustainability programs only if they are integrated throughout the curriculum, instead of being a separate component, as a single course (Slocum, Dimitrov, & Webb, 2019). Therefore, the educational system will have to respond to the challenge of providing graduate students in tourism with qualifying theoretical and practical training that allows them to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to enter the labor market as professionals (Hernández, Martín, Jiménez, Domínguez, & Bermúdez, 2010) capable of solving the problems they face, making good decisions based on reflection and analysis (Cárdenas-García, Pulido-Fernández, & Carrillo-Hidalgo, 2016), and fostering sustainable business practices that also stimulate tourism success (Belhassen & Caton, 2011).

For several decades, tourism has been a major concern for several countries whose growth and prosperity of the sector remain desirable. However, the rapid evolution of tourism is both an opportunity and a danger (Hugues, 2004) that requires a rational and rigorous management taking into account its impacts and its powerful effects both negative and positive on the environment and on the population, certainly in an era marked by shocks and convulsive crises. Faced with this observation, sustainable tourism appears as a major issue to meet the challenges of the 21st century by offering a clear strategic vision and planning likely.



Source: Asset France.

Moreover, sustainable tourism, which appeared in the early 1990s in the Rio Summit and Agenda 21 (Behnassi, 2008), is defined by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) as "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental

impacts, meeting the needs of visitors, professionals, the environment and host communities (sustainable-tourism.org, 2022)". It appears as a solution to the problems created by the current economic and climatic situation, the challenge is to see it in a broader context as a single development tool and to ensure that it is examined in the context of the local community as well as in a global perspective (Mcminn, 1997).

Sustainable tourism is one of the approaches in the tourism sector, which should help to make the best decisions in the tourism industry. They should be able to recognize its positive and negative benefits for the current and future population (Šenková, Vavrek, & Mitriková, 2020). Environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects are the foundations of sustainability, whose long-term maintenance is the result of the balance between these three aspects (United Nations Environment Programme & World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2005).

Nevertheless, sustainable tourism is a broader notion, and often confused with other sustainable forms of tourism (Juganaru, Juganaru, & Anghel, 2008), semantically close, or included in the lexical field of the term, which covers not only the protection of natural, environmental and ecological resources, but also focuses on the economic and social aspects that it contributes to develop. The confusion is made with concepts such as ecotourism, green tourism, rural tourism, agrotourism, solidarity tourism, responsible tourism... which are concepts that are opposed to mass tourism. The following diagram will tell you more about the scope of sustainable tourism:

In fact, the debate on perception has given rise to many psychological theories: "perceptual new-look" (Bruner & Postman, 1947), cognitive theory, (Marr & Vaina

In his reference work on phenomenology, (Maurice, 1945), emphasizes three rational approaches according to which one can apprehend perception: the physiological approach relating to visual perception which looks at the intrinsic performance of the vision system, the experimental approach aiming to apprehend the contextual and cognitive aspects of the visual, and phenomenology (Edmund, 1993) which is focused on the perceiving subject, and poses as a central question the meaning of "seeing" in the consciousness of the subject.

In addition, perception expresses the representation that any decision-maker makes of the national, regional or global environment (Hearn, 1986), it designates the cognitive and psychological process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environments (Robbins, et al., 2006). Visual or sensory perception results from the physiological capture of stimuli in the visual field according to

point of view of the perceiving subject on the one hand,

and the association of memory, attention, focus, selection of the relevant object and interpretation to meet personal expectations on the other hand (Lassance, 1998) It requires the integration of several sensations in order to make choices or decisions, taking into account factors that influence this perception such as personality, previous knowledge, past experiences, cognitive and affective motivations, attitudes, interests, expectations... (Robbins, et al., 2006).

However, this perception is influenced by invisible social and cultural conditions (The Washington Post, 2016), insofar as it is acquired and results from experience and learning according to William James, John Locke or Donald Hebb. This premise fits with our study of perception in an educational setting, and further justifies its choice of theme.

Methodology:

In order to answer this problem concerning the perception of sustainable tourism by the students of OFPPT of Beni-Mellal-Khenifra region, an exploratory study using a quantitative research method took place, and this through a questionnaire administered to the students pursuing their training in 2nd year in a branch of the tourism professions. This questionnaire was validated by scientists and tested on twenty people, to validate its quality, its feasibility, and its understanding, whose findings have allowed the necessary reformulations to be intelligible.

Designed using the Google-Docs/Form platform, this questionnaire consists of 26 items, inspired by the literature on the perception of sustainable tourism, and which has demonstrated a high level of reliability. These items broadly correspond to Likert scale questions with a range of 1 to 5 in terms of agreement and satisfaction (from "Very little" to "A lot"), and other multiple-choice questions. It is structured in 4 main sections, with direct questions on the concept of sustainable tourism, its aspects and values (i), training as a factor that can inculcate the concept and influence the attitudes and perception of students (ii) through taught modules, as well as the sustainable behavior to be adopted (iii) by these students as professionals in the field, transforming the knowledge, experience and skills acquired into opportunities and practices that serve the sustainability, continuity, and prosperity of the tourism sector, while devoting the last section (iv) to information on the profiles of respondents age, gender, educational level ... etc.

In order to draw good conclusions, it is essential to ensure the existence of a sufficient amount of information (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010) that corresponds to the contributions of a careful selection of respondents offering great robustness to the sample used (Abt, et al., 2020) whose size must be optimal for more precision (Mooi, Sarstedt, & Mooi-Reci, 2018), and for the relationships to be statistically significant (Kline, 2015).

A Given this, our sample must be representative and of an optimal size to give more value and credibility to our results. The size of this sample is estimated at 180 respondents among a population of 319 students in the tourism professions, always keeping a confidence level of 95%.

Results:

Based on the collected responses, the measurement of the internal consistency of the questions asked during the survey is an essential step to give more credibility and reliability to our results. For this purpose, Cronbach's alpha remains the most used indicator in psychometric research, whose value of 0.7 is necessary to attest to the homogeneity and consistency of the items measuring the same phenomenon (Nunnally, 1978), however, a value higher than 0.8 is recommended in research (Tappe, 2022). In this sense, the test results show a high degree of reliability of our questionnaire. With a very satisfactory alpha of 0.84 reflecting a good consistency of the items, which attests to the validity of the survey. The obtained answers reflect better the representations of the respondents on the phenomenon object of study.

By analyzing the results obtained, the socio-demographic characteristics of our sample, composed mainly of students of the OFPPT of the region, indicate that 64.2% are women against 35.8% of men, of which, 90.4% are specialized technicians, are distributed to 50% aged less than 20 years, 35.2% between 20 and 24 years, while 14.8% aged over 25 years. These students pursue their higher education at the training institutes of the cities of Beni Mellal and Khenifra, respectively to the tune of 61.1% and 11.1%, while the rest is distributed between

Fkih Ben Salah and Khouribga to 9.3% each (Figure 1).

Source: By the authors

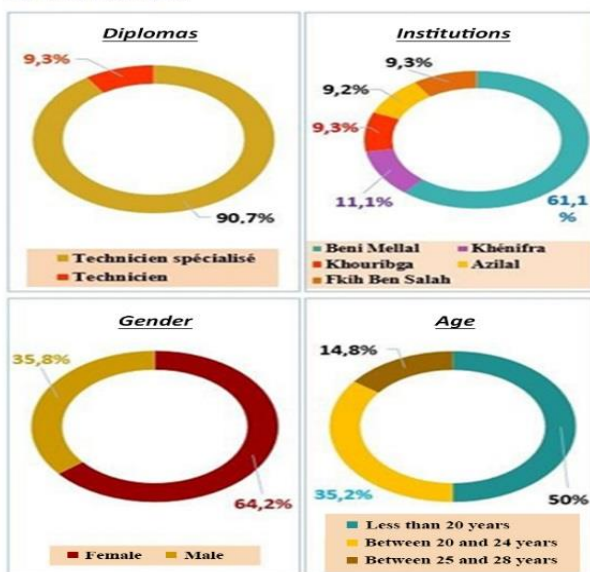
In order to assess the actual knowledge of the concept of sustainable tourism, respondents are asked to specify the source from which they first heard about sustainable tourism, and to define the phenomenon by offering them several response options. In this regard, 93.9% of the students declared having heard of sustainable tourism, compared to 6.1% of respondents who have never heard it before. The training institute (OFPPT, university), the media and social networks are the main sources where these students learned the notion respectively 49.5%, 31.3% of the answers (figure 2).



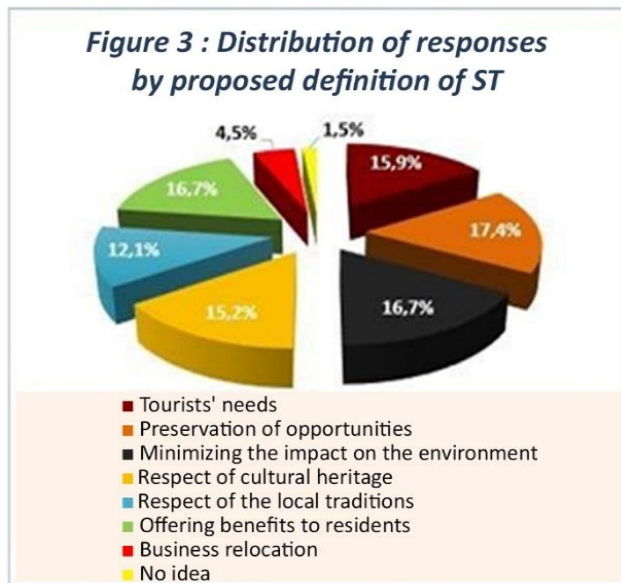
Source: By the authors

Indeed, following the attempt to define the concept of sustainable tourism (ST), the results show a strong confusion is clear in the learners' answers, who on average choose two propositions to form an incomplete definition of the phenomenon. The results indicate that only 1.5% of the respondents do not know anything about the concept of sustainable tourism, the rest of the students approached the concept of sustainable tourism by juxtaposing several propositions that better reflect their representations of the notion in question. Furthermore, 14.6% of the students consider sustainable tourism as a trip that meets the needs of tourists, 16.7% think that it minimizes the negative impact on the environment, 15.2% and 12.1% declare respectively that TD is based on respecting cultural heritage and local traditions, providing economic benefits

Figure 1 : Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample

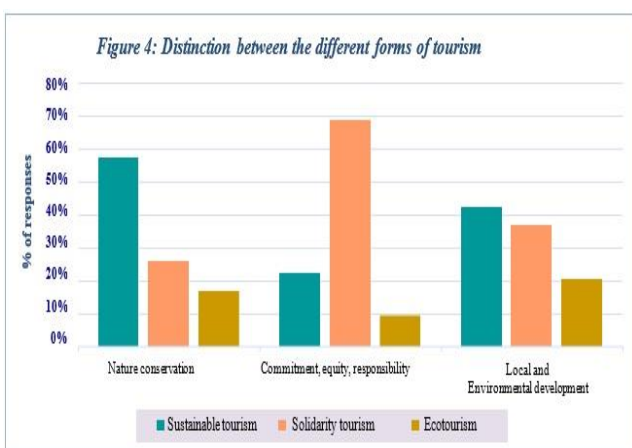


for residents and preserving opportunities for future generations (Figure 3).



Source: By the authors

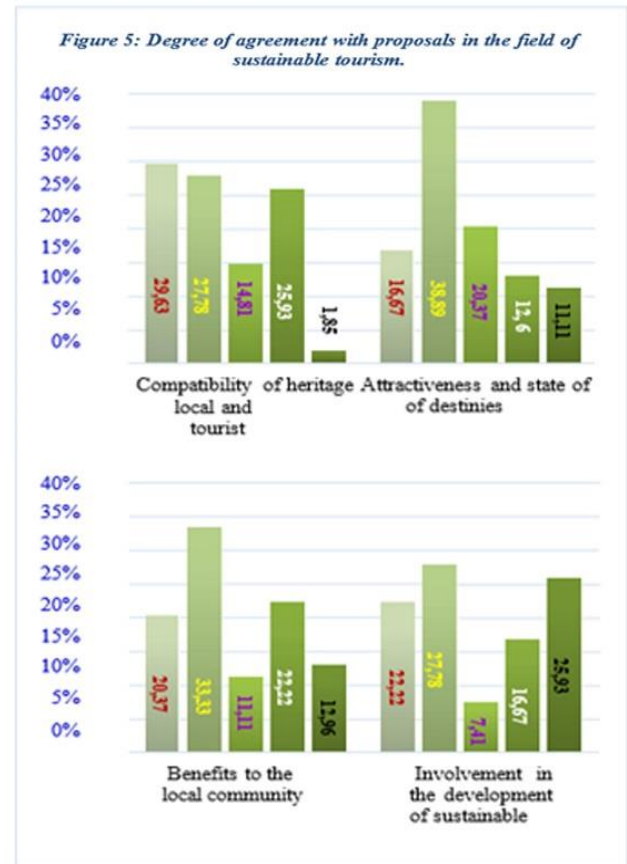
In addition, the responses indicate that learners find it difficult to grasp exactly what sustainable tourism means. Most respondents associated the notion of sustainable tourism with another form of tourism, including environmental or ecological tourism, mass tourism, business tourism, fair and solidarity tourism, these answers show that the learners were unable to distinguish the differences between the above-mentioned forms of tourism (figure 4). The notion of sustainable tourism is largely confused with that of ecotourism, while the notions of fair and solidarity tourism seem to be assimilable.



Source: By the authors

Given the learners' lack of knowledge, we attempted to investigate their perception of the phenomenon of sustainable tourism by asking them to express their level of agreement with a series of statements, using a Likert scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree". As shown in (Figure 5), over 58% of respondents

believe that there is no compatibility between local heritage protection and tourism activities.

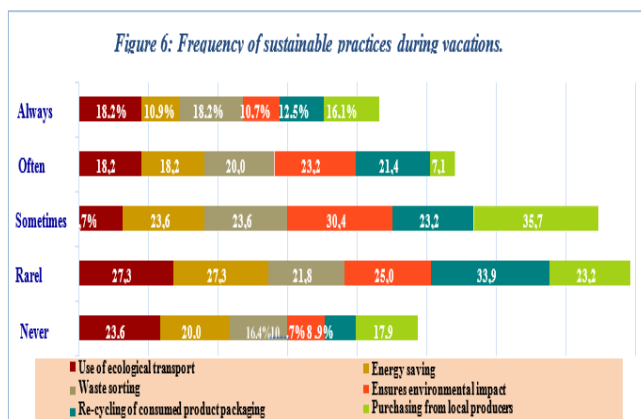


Source: By the authors

In fact, 55% of respondents disagree with the premise that ecologically managed tourist destinations, preserved in their natural state, are more attractive. However, 53.6% of the respondents recognize the obligation of the host community to take full advantage of the tourism activities, as well as half of them are not ready to adhere to sustainable development. This statement reinforces the lack of knowledge or even ignorance of the values and usefulness of sustainable tourism as an essential component of tourism development.

Insofar as behavior and attitude are influenced by knowledge and experience, we attempt to answer a question about the behaviors that these students adopt during their vacation. The results show that about 63.6% do not or rarely use bicycles or other low-impact transportation during their trip, 71% do not regulate their consumption level to save energy, and only 38.3% sort their waste in a habitual way.

On the other hand, 35.7% of students say that when purchasing a consumer product, do not consider its environmental impact, 33.9% prefer to buy local products to participate in the economic development of the residents, and only 33.9% ensure that the packaging is recyclable.



Source: by the authors

Discussion and Conclusion:

According to the results of this survey, we note that the learners in the tourism profession find it difficult to delimit the contours of the notion of sustainable tourism, which means that their perception is still embryonic and barely influenced by the training provided in the matter, contrary to our initial hypotheses which predicted that these students would perfectly master the concept and the practices attached to it. However, the level of French of the respondents, the interest they showed in the questionnaires, and the adjacent terminology of the different sustainable forms of tourism are the main causes of bias in the results, which our conclusion is taken independently.

In fact, following the insights provided by this study, the best way to improve the implementation of a pedagogical vision of sustainable tourism remains the revision of the globality of the taught content, and to integrate transversally the notion throughout the training course, in order to have a global scope on the whole of school and extracurricular activities, and to manage to anchor its principles in the learners, and surely to see sustainable attitudes in the professional environment.

Moreover, it is also appropriate to deduce that such an approach, to see the day, will have to rely on partnerships at the international, national and local levels, based on the establishment of links between the faculty and the various actors mentioned above, as well as the development of consultations and round tables around the exchanges between academics and professionals in the field of tourism sustainability.

In order to join the useful to the pleasant, the sustainable tourism will have to be a real lever of territorial marketing, because it represents a very interesting track to be improved, allowing to conciliate at the same time: Protection of the environment and socioeconomic development of the territory, especially for the benefit of the host populations.

A study of content will follow, to highlight the strong

points, as well as the shortcomings noted in the content of the modules currently taught, which will aim to offer a richer and especially more "Sustainable" training.

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Innovation tourism types: What are they and how Morocco use them as a solution after Covid-19

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented event in our lifetime. It has disrupted the economic, financial and social systems of most countries and its consequences will be difficult to assess; therefore, any factor that hinders travel, holidays can have a profound impact on the tourism industry. This includes pandemics such as COVID-19. It is therefore necessary to think carefully about the tourism crisis and its management post Covid. Indeed, the development of tourism under uncertainty conditions requires. Therefore, the article aims to study the importance of innovation on the Moroccan tourism industry.

Keywords: COVID-19, poste Covid, Moroccan tourism industry.

I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented event in our lifetime. It has disrupted the economic, financial and social systems of most countries and its short- and long-term consequences will be difficult to assess. the tourism industry saw a dramatic decline, a real catastrophe for a sector that handled more than 1.5 billion tourists per year, grew significantly faster than the world economy, contributed more than 10% of global GDP (Gross Domestic Product), and employed more than 300 million people (UNWTO, 2020) [1].

In Morocco, the tourism sector follows the same global trend in terms of impact, this sector contributing largely to increase prosperity and the reduction of unemployment, the Moroccan tourism ecosystem is composed of 20 international airports, 4000 classified accommodation establishments, 1980 tourist transport companies, 1500 travel agencies, 550000 direct jobs, 3,900 tourist guides, 866 classified restaurants, in fact it is the second contributor to the national GDP (11%) (CNT, 2020).

Moreover, given that the event related to the COVID-19 is

still evolving and the situation is largely unknown, the development of tourism necessitates the reinforcement of innovation In order to create new values and ensure a long-term recovery.

In recent years, the term "innovation" has been more frequently used to describe how tourism businesses have been acting. However, this growing application has usually ignored the reality that innovation is in fact a central issue in a research tradition that has gained recognition in the social sciences. For all that, the

traditional theories of innovation have much to offer tourism research [2].

This article presents in the first part a literature review to describe the most popular concepts in tourism innovation, We then examine the level of innovation in the tourism industry, analyze the market's motivations and typology in Morocco, and to do so, a second part will be devoted to the

research methodology, and then a third part will be devoted to the results and recommendations.

II. Literature review

a. Theories of innovation

Innovation is viewed as the primary driver of economic growth. The term "innovation" is derived from Latin and refers to the introduction of something new, a reform based on innovation, which means "renewal," or innovation, which means "renew" (Kopaliski, 1978, p. 433) [3].

As a result, innovation issues have been addressed in many publications, the most important of which are those of Schumpeter, considered the founding father of innovation theory with his work *The Theory of Economic Evolution* (1935); Schumpeter considers small businesses to be the main source of technical progress and triumphs the heroic entrepreneur as the engine of innovation.

The main topics of interest to researchers around the world interested in innovation issues in the economy are:

- Innovation policy (Furman et al., 2002; Grupp & Moge, 2004; Balezentis & Balkiene, 2014);
- Drivers of innovation in the economy (Hollenstein, 2003; Gault, 2011), including users (Urban, 2013);
- The innovative activity of firms (mainly production firms), (Tuominen et al., 2004; Perunovic & Christiansen, 2005), paying particular attention to technological progress and R&D expenditures and their roles in the innovation process (Aw et al., 2011; Urban & Czerska, 2016);
- Sectoral research on innovation in the economy (Garcia & Hollanders, 2009); Gallouj (2002), Gallouj & Windrum (2009) and Gault (2011, 2013) should be considered the leading researchers on service innovation issues at the international level;

- The innovative spirit of some sectors, such as tourism companies' enterprises (Hjalager, 2010; Szymańska, 2009, 2013);
- Innovative capacity in the context of a knowledge-based economy and in the process of globalization (Rycroft, 2003; Ejdys et al., 2015);

The research theses on innovation have been designed in accordance with the considerations reported in the literature [4]. As a result of these considerations, eight models of various types of innovation processes have been developed. Table 1 lists them in the order in which they appeared in the economic literature on innovation theory, beginning in the 1950s (linear systems) and ending in the last decade (UDI and diffuse systems).

Tab. 1. Innovation processes

No.	INNOVATION PROCESSES	CHARACTERISTICS OF MODELS
1.	Science pushed	A linear model of the innovation process pushed by science
2.	Pulled by the market	A linear model of the innovation process pulled by the market
3.	Conjugated	Interaction models where the connections among the individual elements result from the couplings between science, market, and enterprise
4.	Integrated and networked systems	Integrated systems based on networked connections – flexible, based on the system of a response related to the consumer, continuous innovation
5.	Parallel	Parallel-internal integration of the company and cooperation with suppliers and consumers, with emphasis placed on linkages and alliances
6.	Open innovation	The concept is based on the conviction that companies may, and even should, seek ideas and ways of creating innovations, not only within their structures but also their environment – among external partners (companies, organisations, and customers)
7.	User-driven innovation (UDI)	Demand-based approach to innovation – based on the conviction that consumers (users) have an increasingly large influence on the available commercial offers, participating in the process of creating products and services which they purchase
8.	Diffuse innovation process	Focus on open innovations inside and outside the organisation. Innovation is created (higher value is generated) by establishing an efficient knowledge flow system (inside and outside)

Source: Szymańska, 2013

Initially, innovation processes were viewed as a simple result of change (market needs or research findings) - see Table 1 points 1 and 2. They can be described as linear. The linear model of innovation, which considers that innovation has four successive phases, exemplifies this viewpoint. Indeed, innovation starts with basic research, followed by applied research and development, and ends with production and diffusion [5].

Kline and Rosenberg (1986), recognized that these processes could be more complex and developed the *chain-linked model of innovation*. This model views innovation as an interaction between external elements (the market) and internal resources (the knowledge base and the means) that can be subdivided into a number of sub-processes. The progression of the innovation chain, from conception (design) to development to production and market launch, is a backward process involving all stages and influencing parties, and it is frequently necessary to return to earlier stages to overcome difficulties. Thus, The success (or failure) of an innovation project will therefore depend on how well the phases of the innovation process are linked (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD, 1997) [6].

Following that, the studies became significantly more complex, and from the 1990s onwards, they all involved advanced computer technologies.

Open innovation (Chesbrough, 2003) began to influence innovation processes by combining their sources (including knowledge) available on the market by sharing

and optimizing them: the UDI concept was created on this basis.

Active customer involvement, which includes *co-creating* innovations (new goods and services), appears to be the best course of action for both consumers who communicate their needs and ideas during the creation process and for business owners who want to fill those needs because it increases their sales certainty.

Researchers demonstrate that the concept of customer co-creation is not only applicable to the creation of innovations, but can also be used to improve service quality (Urban & Czerska, 2016). It should be mentioned that the current change in innovation is based from technology-driven innovation to innovation driven by customers and other external parameters outside the enterprise.

Up until the present process, which started after 2000 and is characterized by a major focus on knowledge management, for example, a diffuse one, innovation processes developed linearly throughout the first half of the 1960s, through more complex systems. Open, UDI, and diffuse are three of the processes listed in the table that highlight the significance of consumers in the innovation process [5].

b. Innovation in SMEs: A brief overview of research on innovation in SMEs

Many scientists have proposed that the innovation activities of SMEs are significant determinants of their success (Rotwell, 1991; Joyce et al., 1994; Moore, 1993). Act and Audretsch's (1998) study of innovation in American SMEs. They proposed that innovation and research and development (R&D) are positively correlated with innovation. The effect of innovation on sales is a crucial indicator of innovation potential, according to Tether (1998).

For SMEs, the impact of innovation on sales is lower than that of large firms (Tether, 1998). In a similarly, Harris et al. (2003) discovered that big businesses are more inventive than SMEs. In the manufacturing sector, Mole et al. (2001) discovered that large enterprises adopt new technology more frequently than SMEs. Some investigations have discovered that SMEs' product/service innovation activities are more significant than their process innovation efforts (Pratten, 1991; Vaux et al, 1996; Goh and Ridgway, 1994).

c. Innovation in services

In the majority of OECD economies, the service sector is the most productive one. Recently, a number of authors (Sundbo 2001, 2007, Sundbo et al. 2007, Gallouj 2002, Schianetz et al. 2007, Miles 2005, Hjalager 2002, and Carvalho 2008) has done research on services. The variety of activities included in the service sector makes it difficult to describe the service. Initially, services were categorized as unproductive activities. Service products are defined by economists as "*anything sold in commerce that cannot be dropped on the foot*" (Hauknes, 1998, p.6). Table 2 provides some definitions of service innovation.

Services innovations are often small adjustments of procedures and thus incremental and rarely radical. Services innovation processes are normally very practical.	Sundbo and Gallouj (1999)
Service innovation is by definition multidimensional. Compared to, for example, manufacturing, service innovation is characterized by much more emphasis on the organizational dimension of innovation (new service concepts, new client interface and new delivery systems) relative the technological options.	Van Ark et al, (2003)
Services innovation is mainly an incremental process, which includes two components: - A non-technological component, dependent on the intangible human resources, organizational structure and factors that can add value to customer service (marketing, distribution channels, etc); - A technological component, nowadays inseparable from the first component, that depends on technology, especially Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).	Carvalho (2008)

Tab 2. Innovation in services

Service innovation involves changes in many areas, and sometimes process innovation and product innovation cannot be separated; in *"most cases, they cannot be stored, they must be produced in the dynamics of consumption"* (Gronroos, 1990): A new service product, a new manufacturing or service procedure, a new organizational structure, or the introduction of new technology.

We adhere to Sundbo and Gallouj's classification of service innovation (1999). Sundbo and Gallouj (1999) define service innovation as "four categories: product innovation, process innovation, organizational innovation, and market innovation" (p. 8). Organizational innovations were defined as "new general forms of organization or management, such as the introduction of self-directed groups, etc" (p.8). Process innovations are defined as "renewals of normative procedures for production and service delivery" (p.8) and can be classified as either production (back office) or delivery (front office) processes. Market innovations are new market behaviors, such as the creation of a new market segment or the entry of a competitor into an existing market [7].

d. Innovation in tourism

Tourism innovation research is still in its early stages. The low number of scientific studies in this sector is due to multiple reasons, including its heterogeneous nature and the difficulty in defining an adequate tourism product.

Schumpeter (1935)	Abernathy et Clark (1985)	Hjalager (2002)	OECD (2005), Hall (2009)	Hjalager (2010)	Aldebert et al. (2011)	Gomezeli Omerzel (2016)
Product innovation	Revolutionary innovation	Product innovation	Product innovation	Product or service innovation	Product or service innovation	Product / service innovation
Process innovation	Regular innovation	Process innovation	Process innovation	Process innovation	Process innovation	Process innovation
Market innovation	Niche innovation	Management innovation	Marketing innovation	Marketing innovation	Marketing innovation	General innovation
Organizational innovation	Architectural innovation	Logistics innovation	Organizational innovation	Organizational innovation of management (managerial)		Mix of innovations
Supply innovation (input)		Institutional innovation		Institutional innovation		Institutional innovation

Tab 3 Types of innovation in tourism

In fact, the tourism product is considered to be the provision of a combination of complicated tangible and/or intangible services (Chiadmi et al., 2009). For their part, Caccomo and Solonandrasana (2006) believe that the combinatorial nature of the tourism product is revealed on two levels: first, it combines private goods and services with public goods and services (natural heritage and spaces, infrastructure, etc.); second, it is presented as a set composed of market goods and services (reservations, transport, accommodation, catering, visits, etc.).

Despite this, the transversality of tourism, which includes production and service sectors with divergent innovation trajectories, makes studying innovation in the tourism industry particularly challenging (Damanpour, 1996). As a solution to the problem of service innovation, Djellal and Gallouj (2009) offer a technique made up of three approaches termed called the *"ADS" approach (assimilation, differentiation, synthesis)*. The assimilation approach studies innovation in services, including tourism services, in the same way that it studies innovation in industrial goods; the differentiation approach suggests that services, including tourism services, should be treated differently and specifically than industrial goods; and the synthetic approach proposes analyzing tourism services using methods that integrate both goods and services.

Furthermore, as tourism is not limited to the production of goods or services, Weiermair (2006) defined a tourism product as an experience. People as individuals embody a number of intangible characteristics. The sociological and cultural characteristics of the local population, as well as tourist behavior, can all have an impact on the tourism experience [[8].

Other difficulties are related to the characteristics of a tourism product, such as combined production and consumption (Weiermair 2006) and coterminality (Miles 2005): the tourism sector has a high level of heterogeneity. International hotels and golf courses are not comparable to family lodgings or small restaurants. According to some studies on innovation and entrepreneurship, hotels and restaurants have a lower survival rate because they are generally industries with very low barriers to entry, making it simple for people to start a new business on a non-innovative basis (Sundbo and Gallouj, 1999). The market characteristics of the high competitiveness sector force firms to innovate in order to maintain competition and protect their competitive advantage (Hall and Williams, 2008). (Porter, 1998).

e. Types of innovation in tourism

Given the difficulty of defining the concept of innovation in tourism, several typologies have been developed (see Table 3 for a summary of these typologies). In general, these typologies are inspired by *Joseph Schumpeter's* pioneering work, on which the emerging literature on tourism innovation is based (preparatory phase). Product innovation, process innovation, market innovation, organizational innovation, and supply innovation were all

mentioned by this author (1935: 319).

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) proposes four types of innovation based on Schumpeter's work: product, process, marketing, and organizational (2005: 16).

One of the typologies that differs from the « *Schumpériennes* » typologies is the one proposed by Benedict Abernathy and Kim B. Clark (1985: 8): breakthrough innovation, regular innovation, niche innovation and architectural innovation.

The typologies developed by Hjalager propose five types of innovation in tourism. A first version of the author (2002) proposes the following categories: product innovation, process innovation, management innovation, logistic innovation and institutional innovation (Novelli et al., 2006: 1143). Hjalager revised this typology in 2010, proposing the categories product or service innovation, process innovation, marketing innovation, organizational/managerial innovation, and institutional innovation (2010: 2).

In the case of Gomezelj Omerzel (2016), she bases her analysis on Hjalager (2010). She identifies the following types of innovation: product and service innovation, process innovation, general innovation, innovation mix, and institutional innovation (Gomezelj Omerzel, 2016: 526) [9].

There are certain limitations to Hjalager's (2010) typology. It is generally difficult to discern between the process and the product, which makes it challenging to utilize the conventional typologies (Gomezelj Omerzel, 2016: 522) because the categories are difficult to identify and are not exclusive (they are connected) (ibid.: 542). Since the tourist participates in the process, the tourism product is frequently a "tourism service" (see below about the characteristics of tourism services). This comparison makes it possible to highlight the particularities of each of the typologies of innovation, but above all their great similarity. The criticisms made, particularly with regard to the difficulty of distinguishing between categories of innovation and the relationships between them, therefore apply to most of these typologies. Therefore, the typologies' utility might be questioned because they include too many categories and make it difficult to comprehend the idea of innovation in tourism.

III. Research Methodology

a. Objective of the research

As mentioned above, the COVID-19 event is still evolving and the situation is unknown. However, there hasn't been much study on the innovation of tourism enterprises in the literal sense. In this paper, we aim to examine the innovation activities of travel agencies, hotels and individual entrepreneurs.

In order to make a benchmark between the literature and the empirical we aim to examine the degree of innovation in the tourism sector, to analyze the typology and the motivations on the Moroccan market, we proceeded in two steps: first to evaluate the demand during the pandemic, then to examine the efforts deployed by the

stakeholders of the tourism sector mainly in terms of innovation [10].

b. Data collection

The data was obtained by launching two electronic questionnaires during the period from November 2021 to January 2022, the first addressed to travelers, who were asked various questions regarding Frequency of travel in the last 12 months, mode of contact with the service provider;

The second was addressed to travel agencies, hotels and individual entrepreneurs who were asked questions about the media used to publicize their activities, the use and impact of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) and the degree of innovation introduced in the company [11].

From travelers-clients we received 77 questionnaires, 51 of whom had traveled in the previous 12 months. The analysis of the responses will be completed by this group of people.

For the actor part, we received 55 questionnaires between travel agencies, individual entrepreneurs and hotels. Of these, 23 hotels and 17 travel agencies and 15 individual entrepreneurs were found.

IV. Results and lessons learned

a. Customer Survey

Table 4 presents the profile of the respondents according to certain demographic characteristics and their travel habits.

We note that the majority of respondents are **men (70%)** and the most represented age groups are, in order, **26 to 35 years old (75%)**, we consider that it is from this age on that people acquire a certain autonomy [12] and can look at the health effects of the pandemic covid19, because this age group has the highest proportion of respondents who will be more interested in traveling or who will not change their travel habits once the pandemic is over. They seem to represent the less risk-averse or perhaps more adventurous travelers who have suffered from restrictions on (or prohibitions against) tourist travel. As for the **36-45-year old (15%)** and the **18-25-year old (10%)**.

Profile of respondents

Gender	%
Woman	30
Male	70
Age group	
18 to 25 years old	10
26 to 35 years old	75
36 to 45 years old	15
46 to 55 years old	0
56 to 65 years old	0
Frequency of travel with at least One overnight stay, in the last 12 months %.	
1 trip	70
2 trips	25
3 journeys and more	5

Tab 4 Profile of respondents and frequency of travel

The first question was aimed at valuing the tourist demand from which we find that the majority (70%) have

made at least one trip in the last 12 months. 25% have made 2 trips, 5% have made 3 trips. This demand was oriented more towards the region of Tangier-Tetouan-Al Hoceima with (67%).

b. Survey Actors

For the actor part, we received 55 questionnaires between travel agencies, individual entrepreneurs and hotels. Out of this number, 23 hotels and 17 travel agencies and 15 natural person entrepreneurs were found.

Having presented the sample and the profile of the respondents, we will now begin to comment on and interpret the results of the survey in relation to the direct object of our article, the measurement of the degree of innovation in Moroccan tourism enterprises.

The first aspect that interests us is the mode of communication used with the clients. In the first question, the actor is asked if he uses one or several communication channels [13]. The method of contact and "discovery" of the service provider is important to judge the degree of innovation integrated by this service provider. The question of how you knew your service provider (travel agency or hotel), in fact the method of contact by internet comes first with about 66% followed by the traditional method of advertising which is posters (14%) and to a lesser extent magazine with (13%) (See table below).

Contact mode	%
Internet	66
Display	15
Mobile telephony	3
SMS	3
Newspapers	0
Magazine	13

The presence of the Internet as a means of communication par excellence already tells us the degree of integration of new technologies as a mode of contact with potential customers. ICTs have facilitated access to information and increase the demand for alternative and more sophisticated products, so innovation in e-tourism is a crucial tool for the development of sustainable tourism [14].

The issue of innovation in the tourism sector can be seen from several angles and each provider uses it according to it means its experiences and its know-how always with the aim of keeping a competitive advantage over its rivals. In this approach that we asked the question: how your activity is differentiated from other providers in the tourism sector, so were the answers:

Types of structure	Hotels	Travel agency	Contractor natural person
Number	41%	30%	26%
Service/ product/ activities/ proposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human services. Add new services to the existing range. Add new payment methods. Proposal of new products programs environmentally sustainable accommodation facilities and events based on local tradition. and events based on local tradition. Central Reservation System. Improving quality standards, for example, from a two- to three-star rating. Organization of gastronomic visits. Redefinition of infrastructures, for example in response to environmental regulations. Let's improve pricing services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add new payment methods. Setting up commercial alliances, e.g. with specialized tour operators to access new customer groups. Proposal of new tourist products. Improve promotional methods and tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchange of experiences. Thematic and cultural visits. Guided tours by artists Social and ethical tourism

In direct relation with our problematic: to make a benchmark between the literature and the empirical we will examine the different types of innovation used by our sample in the table above:

Types of innovation	Innovation of product and service	Innovation of process	Innovation organizational	Innovation in marketing
Hotels/ Travel agency/ Individual contractor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Services à services. ✓ Proposal of new tourist products. ✓ Social and ethical tourism. ✓ Exchange of experiences. ✓ Setting up commercial alliances. ✓ Setting up commercial alliances. ✓ Central Reservation System. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Organization of gastronomic visits. ✓ Visits guided by artists. ✓ Add new services à the existence range. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Improving quality standards by example in from a two to three star rating ✓ Redefinition of infrastructures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Improve the pricing of services. ✓ Improve the methods an d tools of promotion.
Total Items	7	3	2	2

By analyzing the table below, we notice that the three structures are for and predisposed to the adoption of innovation in their commercial approaches: **07 items** for a type of product and service innovation, **3 items** for a type of process innovation, **2 items** for an organizational or architectural innovation and **2 items** for a so-called marketing innovation.

Thus the most prevalent type of innovation for our case is a type of innovation based on "products" or more exactly "services" 07 items, which is also well justified according to the results of studies by Pratten (1991), Vaux et al (1996) and Goh and Ridgway (1994), which they find that travel agencies and hotels, as stakeholders in the tourism

industry, rely on service innovation rather than on process innovation [15] [16].

V. CONCLUSION

Restarting tourism is very important for countries that rely heavily on this industry. There are economic reasons for countries to reopen their doors, but at the same time, the risk of new epidemics is high, and science has not yet found an effective solution to combat the virus. It is therefore important to encourage travelers to rationalize their decisions, balancing the need to travel with the risk involved.

Most countries have adopted measures to stimulate the economy (fiscal and monetary measures) as well as measures to support employment (UNWTO, 2020e). In this same context, the World Tourism Organization has identified innovation and sustainability as the seventh priority for reviving tourism (May 28, 2020).

Every segment of tourism is, in fact, affected by the pandemic. Moreover, innovation by improving an existing service or by making an existing service more accessible to the greatest number of people is another benefit resulting from this crisis. Adapting through innovation is thus a key lever for reaching a resilient tourism industry [17] [18].

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The impact of digital marketing on sustainable tourism: literature review

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ABSTRACT –

Some countries, including Morocco, have recognized the need to adopt sustainable and responsible tourism. Faced with this fact, professionals feel the need to adopt marketing strategies aimed at increasing the attractiveness and sustainability of their tourism products and services. Faced with changing customer expectations and perceptions, as well as their awareness and interest in sustainable development, tourism marketing has been adapted to this new concept aimed at making tourism more attractive and eco-responsible. Therefore, it is important to clarify and provide answers on the reconciliation between digital marketing and sustainable tourism.

Keywords- Sustainable development, sustainable tourism, tourism marketing, digital marketing, customer experience.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the middle of the 20th century, tourism has become a social necessity, a democratic right for every worker¹¹. Often considered as antonym of sustainable tourism, mass tourism concerns in particular the concentration of tourists towards a precise destination and for a short period of time. A study published in Nature Climate Change and reported by Le Figaro, showed that tourism generally involves nearly one tenth of global greenhouse gas emissions¹². This phenomenon is mainly based on the distribution and consumption of products that are harmful to the environment. This recent evolution in the tourism industry has led to a change in consumption patterns and behaviors of the population.

To face this phenomenon, an alternative form of tourism

was born: *sustainable tourism*. This new form of tourism is based on the protection and the development of the natural

wealth and heritage of the countries. It is also based on the development of employment, poverty reduction and social inclusion through the efficient exploitation of local resources and the preservation of the environment. It has been defined by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2006) as tourism that "*makes optimal use of environmental resources..., preserving essential ecological processes and contributing to the conservation of natural resources and biodiversity; respects the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserves their built and living cultural heritage, as well as their traditional values, and contributes to intercultural tolerance and understanding...*"¹³

In a logic of developing the customer loyalty, marketing is applied to tourism in order to create and promote the tourist offer. In 1971, J. KRIPPENDORF (quoted by R. LANQUAR and R. HOLLIER, 1981), tourism marketing was defined as "*a systematic and coordinated adaptation of the tourism policy, on a local, regional, national and international level, to an optimal satisfaction of the needs of certain determined groups of consumers, while obtaining an appropriate profit*". Tourism marketing is therefore a means of understanding consumer behavior in the tourism sector, but also a set of practices deployed by private and public companies as well as States in order to enhance the tourism offer.

Under the influence of technological innovations, our world has undergone profound transformations on all levels. A considerable change in society and more (Wenqi Zhou, 2019). The customer has become more sociable, more connected (Kotler et al., 2016). Thus, purchase decisions are conditioned by the opinions and reviews circulating on the internet, a cue and a trigger to act. In view of this evolution and complexity characterizing consumer behavior, the tourism sector is in need to be adapted to a more volatile environment and one more influenced by new technologies. Digital technology, in addition to marketing and customer experience, represents

¹¹ Gérard Ruiz, « Le tourisme durable : jouissance et protection de la nature », *Vraiment durable* 56, n° 1 (2014): 71-81, <https://www.cairn.info/revue-vraiment-durable-2014-1-page-71.htm>.

¹² Bertrand, « Du tourisme de masse au tourisme durable », *L'autre Livre* (blog), 6 février 2018, <http://www.lautrelivre.net/du-tourisme-de-masse-au-tourisme-durable/>.

¹³ Aziz Hmioui et Erick Leroux, « The place of sustainable tourism in Morocco’s tourism development strategy for 2020 », *Maghreb - Machrek* 239, n° 1 (24 mai 2019): 9-20, <http://www.cairn.info/revue-maghreb-machrek-2019-1-page-9.htm>.

Specifically, in consumer behaviors and characteristics, a major challenge for optimizing customer value in a digitalized environment (Lalla Saidia Hamidi, 2017).

Today, the upheavals caused by the Covid 19 have affected several sectors, including the tourism sector. The consequences of this crisis have affected the components of the value chain of the tourism industry and of any destination, and in the same way, have modified the way in which tourism companies operate, by directly and indirectly impacting the relationship with the customer/visitor. This crisis is also an opportunity to rethink the future of tourism in Morocco.

In sum, the objective of this work is to study the impact of the tourism sector in a crisis situation on our natural resources and ecosystems, by including the notion of digital marketing as a means of transforming and improving the tourism offer.

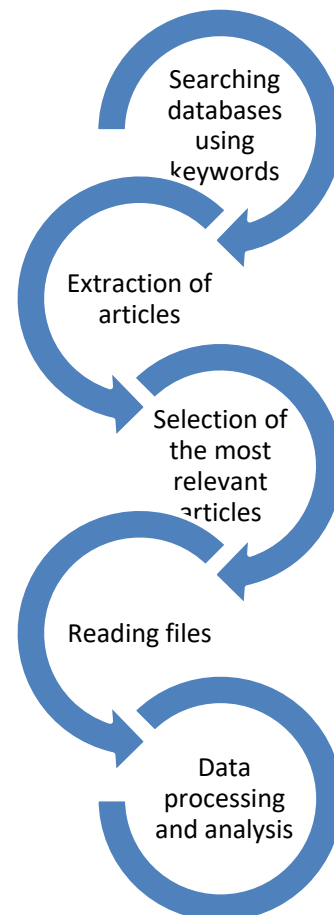
2. METHOD

This study is based on documentary research of the subject. The articles used come from the databases of the E-Resource platform set up by the IMIST and which allows access to the various international electronic resources acquired by the consortium. Five databases were used to gather information about digital marketing and sustainable tourism: - CAIRN, - SCIEDIRECT, - SCOPUS, - JSTOR, - SPRINGER. I also completed my research with Google scholar and worldwide science.

The above databases were searched using seven terms: sustainable development, sustainable tourism, e-tourism, ecotourism, tourism marketing, digital marketing, and tourism experience. We focused our research on the different concepts addressed by our problematic by spreading them over the years from the oldest to the most recent.

The method of extraction and selection of articles was based on three levels of classification: the first one was based on reading the title of the article to limit the number of results and select the most relevant studies; the second one was based on reading the abstract of each article to focus on the articles that deal with the main axes of the subject (digital marketing and sustainable tourism); the third one was based on in-depth reading of the most relevant articles. This reading was guided by objectively designed reading sheets reporting the most relevant elements of each article. Our sample consists of several articles that are considered relevant. These articles are classified and categorized in Zotero, a bibliographic reference management software. The collected data was then processed and analyzed in order to define and detail the different concepts that make up our topic and the relationship between them. We can summarize our methodology in the following diagram:

The objective of this work was to clarify the notion of sustainable tourism and the impact of marketing on the commercialization of tourism products and services,



while including the role of digital in the adaptation of the sustainable tourism offer to the context of technological and societal evolution.

We have partly addressed the evolution of the tourism sector from mass tourism to a more equitable and sociable tourism. In parallel, the weight of marketing in the tourism offers and the impact of digital technology on the improvement of marketing strategies which are now in line with the expectations of the new consumer.

3. Results:

Sustainable Tourism: A Special Interest in Sustainable Development

Following Brantland's landmark 1987 report entitled "Our Common Future", the concept of sustainable

development was introduced for the first time, thinking about this concept has gained momentum in many fields and has attracted the interest of researchers in a wide range of disciplines. In the same sense, in 1972, the report *"The Limits to growth"* by MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) was the first study to deal with the notion of sustainability. This may have raised *"awareness of the importance of conserving biodiversity in our daily environment"*¹⁴. This concept of sustainable development has been recognized by many, but its application remains different from one country to another and this even leads to and causes quite remarkable annoyances by scientists, companies and even the population.

In the 1970s, the world experienced a remarkable and dramatic rise in tourism. This brought a considerable number of social and environmental difficulties and challenged the notion of respect for local populations and the environment. Tourism has been defined by the UNWTO as *"Tourism that takes full account of its present and future economic, social and environmental impacts..."*¹⁵.

Initially known among the idle rich on the rivieras in

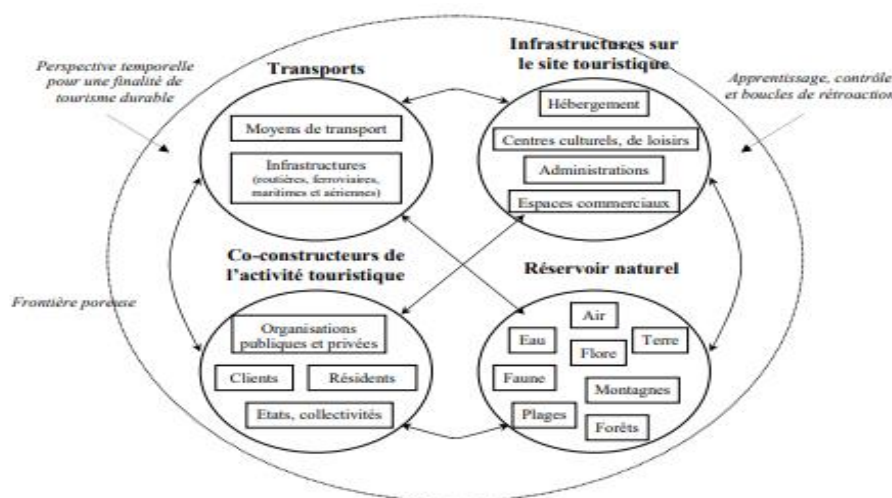
to the growth of low-cost air transport, a means to benefit the majority of intercontinental travel. It was also defined as an element of inequality in relation to the local population.

In response to these findings, a new form of tourism has emerged. A tourism that is more respectful of the environment, of the socio-cultural authenticity of the local populations and also more equitable. We are talking about sustainable tourism.

In 1995 at the World Conference on Sustainable Tourism in Lanzarote, Spain, also building on the elements put forward at the 1992 "Earth Summit" in Rio, sustainable tourism is seen as a solution to the difficulties associated with the negative impacts of mass tourism.

The studies put forward by Sandra Camus, Lubica Hikkerova and Jean-Michel Sahut, 2010, presented a systemic analysis for sustainable tourism by considering it as a complex set of interacting internal and external elements in order to achieve a specific goal. Sustainable tourism is seen as a set of interrelated sub-systems with the ultimate goal of preserving present and future generations. Below we present the model developed by these authors.

Figure: Systemic approach to sustainable tourism



Europe, it has developed internationally as the financial capabilities of the population have increased, with the development of mass consumption, leisure, and air and rail travel. The film Mr. Hulot's Holiday is the perfect representation of this new trend in holidays and leisure. At that time, tourism became more artificial and more playful. This made tourism move away from the notion of environmental and nature preservation.

Despite the impact of tourism on the economic growth in many countries, several studies have estimated the share of tourism in the emission of greenhouse gases at 5%, due

Source : Sandra Camus, Lubica Hikkerova, and Jean-Michel

This study has shown that systemic analysis provides a way of understanding tourism by treating it as a *complex social system*¹⁶. It also demonstrates that a sustainable tourism strategy can follow a virtuous circle through learning and feedback loops.

Marketing and Sustainable Tourism

Work and research in the existing literature on marketing and tourism has been accelerated. The relationship between tourism marketing and the notion of sustainable development has become the focus of much research.

¹⁴ Ruiz, « Le tourisme durable ».

¹⁵ Erick Leroux, « Vers un Tourisme Durable ou un écotourisme », *Management & Avenir* 34, n° 4 (2010) : 234, <https://doi.org/10.3917/mav.034.0234>.

¹⁶ Sandra Camus, Lubica Hikkerova, et Jean-Michel Sahut, « Tourisme durable : une approche systémique », *Management & Avenir* 34, n° 4 (2010).

This is due to the negative impact of 'mega tourism'¹⁷.. Today's customers have also become increasingly demanding and sensitive to sustainable development, hence the need for marketing to keep up with this new situation. Among the researchers who have studied the conciliation between marketing and sustainable tourism, M. Capron and F. Quairel (2004), spoke of two relational approaches: the first called substantial strategy and the second is called symbolic.

- *Substantial strategy*: considers sustainable development a real added value for marketing. A tool for differentiation and competitiveness;

- *The symbolic strategy*: sees sustainable development as a means of communication and marketing focusing more on the image and reputation of the company.

As a result of the interest in sustainable tourism, several countries and companies have started to adopt marketing strategies related to sustainable tourism. The aim is to raise awareness and introduce the customer to the concept of sustainability in the tourism sector and also to support the legitimacy of the organizations and the activity (Ch. Champels and M. Vandercammer 2009). It can be deduced that marketing applied to sustainable tourism is any approach that guarantees a responsible and equitable commitment at the environmental and socio-cultural level, at the level of the client or the tourism entity (BDS 2003).

The literature has referred to three types of customers (Marso Saida, 2022):

- *Clients who are sensitive to notions of sustainable development*;
- *The followers of "alternative" tourism: ecological, ethical, fair tourism, etc*;
- *Others who do not consider sustainable development a necessity*.

In a context of sustainable development, tourism companies and entities will have to be reactive and agile in order to respond as well as possible to the expectations of the different customer profiles. A demanding customer looking for a personalized offer that is more appropriate in terms of societal and environmental change.

Hence the need to pay particular attention to the notion of authenticity which has become fundamental in tourism marketing and has been discussed at length in anthropology (MacCannell, 1976; Olsen, 2002; Cousin, 2011). Two levels of authenticity have been declared in anthropological work. The first focused on the authentic feelings expressed by tourists through their travel experience, and the second attributed by its tourists to the countries and populations visited. Etienne Pauchant had announced that the demand for authenticity expressed by

tourists responds to the need for identity expressed by many populations, who invest in the search for their roots. This double movement of supply and demand has already triggered a huge wave of restoration measures, with a view to sustainable tourism... In many regions, the inhabitants cultivate their traditions and customs, as well as their social environment. These are examples of authentic societies. Authenticity can be seen as "*the bridge between supply and demand*" (Viviane Hamon, 2005).

The concept of digital marketing: a marketing revolution

Digital marketing is considered to be the set of marketing techniques using digital channels to promote or sell a product or service. It is based on the development of the use of the Internet and connected objects (Alaoui, Asbai and Benammi, 2018). We can refer to three fundamental concepts: Digital marketing or E-marketing, Internet marketing, Web marketing.

Marketing 4.0 does not in any way replace the old versions of marketing. They complement each other and each one brings new approaches likely to get closer to the consumer and at the same time to follow the trends of the global market. Frédéric Cavazza supports this observation by talking about 10.0 marketing: "*...this makes it possible to clearly understand the interest of combining these practices rather than trying to chase a miraculous innovation that will supposedly allow you to compensate for your weaknesses and catch up*"¹⁸.

4. DISCUSSION

As a result of the work and research carried out by several authors dealing with the relationship between marketing and tourism, we are now witnessing a very sustained interest in improving the tourism offer through marketing, which has been developed year after year.

Thanks to the development of new technologies, marketing has followed digitalization in its approaches and tools for commercialization and contact with the customer. An element of modernization and adaptation of the tourism offer to the new global context. In the case of the digitalization of sustainable development tourism, several tools and technologies are used to make the sustainable tourism offer more accessible. These include:

- *Web marketing*: an essential element in the promotion of sustainable tourism. It uses the Internet to develop the visibility of the offer among different customer segments.

- *The website*: a showcase and a perfect display of the different characteristics of the tourism offer. The ergonomics, style, design and colors of the website should represent the image that the company wants to

¹⁷ Marso Saida, « Contribution du marketing au développement du tourisme durable au Maroc », s. d., 12.

¹⁸ « Marketing 4.0 ».

convey, its values and convictions. In terms of tourism sustainability, this concerns the fact of exposing its values, labels and its environmental and societal commitments.

- *Social networks*: A visibility on the web but also means interaction and exchange with customers. On social networks we are now witnessing an improvement in visual content, using filters for photos, Reels used by Instagram or capsules by Tiktok. This has revolutionized digital content which competes with the advertising spot.

- *Professional networks*: LinkedIn a good contact network used by professionals in the tourism sector in order to keep in touch and exchange with customers and actors in the sector.

- *E-tourism platforms*: TripAdvisor, booking and others, platforms for referencing tourist establishments and destinations with the possibility of collecting and exposing the opinions of tourists of different nationalities. This highlights the notion of *e-reputation*¹⁹ which has become necessary for tourist establishments. This is referred to as the digital footprint and makes e-reputation paramount (Valat, 2018) and one that tourism businesses and destinations seek to develop and maintain in order to attract more prospects and retain and keep acquired customers.

- *Content marketing*: content is an essential element in sustainable tourism. It is about attracting and inspiring the customer, giving them the opportunity to project themselves into their next holiday and to find themselves in the offer. In sustainable tourism, the customer is looking for compliance with certain standards and requirements in terms of respect for the environment, local traditions, culture and equity. The content must be 'practical'²⁰. In this section, we can also mention UGC: user generated content, referring to consumers who create content and make a HASHTAG (photo, video and opinion by users for free). We also mention the important role of influencers in content creation and the impact they play in customer choice.

- *Mobile (Smartphone, tablet)*: Today's consumers are increasingly using the mobile to research and to contact tourism establishments (reservations, information, internet searches, navigation, etc.). Aware of the importance of this aspect, tourism companies have taken into consideration the mobility of the offer by adapting it to new technologies (retroactive website, mobile applications for booking and consulting offers...).

Sustainable tourism has begun to be known by the public, something that was not previously the case which given

the complexity of the concept. Today, the client is looking for more information on the subject. Sustainability in relation to the tourism offer has somehow changed the experience of the customers. A consideration made on an environmental and societal level. Marketing combined with digital has only enriched this experience and made it more attractive and interesting.

In the 2000s, Williams and Soutar (cited by Yousra Hallem, Lubica Hikkerova and Jean-Michel Sahut, 2017) understood the tourist's choice (in an adventure tourism context) by taking into consideration several functional, social, emotional and epistemic values (Sheth, Newman and Gross, 1991, cited by Yousra Hallem, Lubica Hikkerova and Jean-Michel Sahut, 2017). Nowadays, the consumer seeks new experiences with particular attention to the importance of environmental and cultural aspects (Prosser, 1994; Bergin-Seers and Mair, 2009, cited by Yousra Hallem, Lubica Hikkerova and Jean-Michel Sahut, 2017). This observation has been accentuated with the COVID 19 since 2020. A category of clients that is also willing to pay more for a sustainable tourism offer (Kazeminia et al., 2016; Kilbourne and Pickett, 2008, cited by Yousra Hallem, Lubica Hikkerova and Jean-Michel Sahut, 2017). Digital marketing has made the tourism offer more accessible and saleable and the customer more affordable. An improvement in the customer experience through digital tools that have facilitated contact with the customer, seeking proximity with the customer and influencing their choices.

The case of Morocco in the context of the COVID 19

In Morocco, sustainable tourism is in full expansion, and this was accentuated during the health crisis. It is considered a niche activity, targeting a small population. COVID 19 has therefore redistributed the cards. It accentuated inequalities by enriching some and weakening others. At the same time, it has made people more willing to travel and experience adventure. This customer segment has expanded and interest in sustainable tourism has grown. Travelers are looking for more tailor-made and personalized holidays.

Morocco is among the countries that have strategies for sustainable development projects. We can talk about the 2020 vision which is above all a desire and an ambition to enhance the natural, cultural and human assets of the country and to develop a responsible, authentic and human tourism. Technological advances have forced Moroccan companies to adopt digitalization in their marketing strategies while some remain behind for financial reasons or lack of skills.

During the health crisis and faced with a consumer who is both distrustful and demanding, Moroccan tourism companies have used several marketing tools. Before the opening of the borders, the companies were confronted

¹⁹ Youssef Badr, « mémoire présenté comme exigence partielle de la maîtrise en gestion de projet », s. d., 93.

²⁰ Alaoui Lalla Latifa, Asbai Mustapha, et Benammi Mohamed Hamza, « l'impact du marketing digital sur le tourisme marocain » 3 (2018): 17.

with a more demanding local clients looking for a tailor-made offer while respecting the safety elements related to the respect of distancing and sterilisation. A new situation to which companies should adapt. Digital was in a way a means of reviving the Moroccan tourism sector and an element of support for the experience and the customer journey.

5. CONCLUSION

Sustainable development associated with tourism makes sustainable tourism more attractive, even if sometimes not well understood. Moroccan companies have an exceptional potential to understand the new expectations and perceptions of the consumer. Digital marketing today is seen as a way to strengthen and support the marketing of sustainable tourism products and destinations by including different environmental and societal aspects. This work has allowed us to have a global overview of the concepts of sustainable tourism and digital marketing by focusing on the notion of customer experience and the role of digital marketing in the development and enhancement of the sustainable tourism offer in order to meet the expectations and requirements of a customer who seeks to enrich his experience and make it more lively and more responsible towards the environment and society.

Conventional and classic marketing is no longer meeting the requirements of today's consumer. Habits change and behavior evolves with time and with the developments and crises in the world. We talk about agile marketing.

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Sustainable tourism in Morocco: Several actions undertaken with great challenges to fit it into the goals of sustainable development

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Abstract:

The aim of this article is to outline the actions undertaken by Morocco for sustainable tourism in order to present the challenges allowing to include Moroccan sustainable tourism in the objectives of sustainable development. The theoretical framework is based on the need for sustainable tourism to be compatible with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Indeed, the realization of the objectives of the 2020 vision has invited Morocco to join a new redesigned and renewed framework which considers that sustainable development is a challenge and an opportunity of differentiation for Moroccan tourism. It is in this context that Morocco has been committed since 2010 through actions of design and formalization of a vision for the development of sustainable tourism, these actions constitute strategic axes of monitoring, promotion and promotion of all initiatives already undertaken in order to constitute a population sensitized to all aspects of sustainability in the context of tourism.

In this article, we are interested in presenting the results of a documentary analysis based on the identification and analysis of the actions undertaken by Morocco to define the Moroccan commitment to sustainable tourism and meet the challenges allowing it to be included in the goals of sustainable development.

Keywords:

Sustainable Tourism - Sustainable Development Goals - Commitment - Moroccan Tourism - Challenges.

I. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable tourism as defined by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is “a tourism that fully considers its current needs and future economic, social and environmental impacts, and that meets the needs of visitors, industry, the environment and host communities” (ATD).

It is in this context that the World Tourism Organization has always worked with the various governments and other partners to place tourism as a major sector that contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations in September 2015 by 193 states. The SDGs are collectively committed to achieving 17 SDGs by 2030, and they not only address environmental measures but include many points on human well-being to improve living conditions around the world. They take up the three fundamental pillars of sustainable development to cover all issues such as climate, biodiversity, energy, water, poverty, gender equality, economic prosperity or peace, agriculture and education.

Moreover, the Moroccan ambition set out in the “Vision

2020” has placed sustainable tourism at the heart of its strategy to achieve a new positioning of the Morocco product.

In order to support this desire, it is essential to include Morocco’s commitment to sustainable tourism in the sustainable development goals. And it is within this framework that this article is intended as an objective to present the actions undertaken by Morocco for sustainable tourism as well as the challenges and opportunities to integrate it into the goals of sustainable development.

II. METHODOLOGY

The objective of this research is to contribute to the global effort undertaken by tourism stakeholders to address the issue: How can Morocco’s commitment to sustainable tourism be included in the sustainable development goals?

For this reason, in this article, we will use a qualitative approach by referring mainly to the STABLER & GOODALL ¹ model which proposes the need to include sustainable tourism in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To do this, we first conducted a documentary analysis through the exploitation of laws, documents of several administrations and organizations (Ministry of Tourism, ONMT, OMT, UNDP, UNEP, etc.) to present the actions taken by Morocco for sustainable tourism, analyse their coherence with the SDGs and propose the challenges to include Moroccan sustainable tourism in the sustainable development goals, and an analysis of the scientific articles in order to delineate the theoretical framework.

The experience as a researcher and as a public actor of more than 14 years in the governance of tourism can only be a great contribution to this research work based on our experience in the field.

III. STRATEGIC AND THEORETICAL POSITIONING OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) works through technical assistance and capacity building to help achieve these global goals. The UNWTO works with governments, public and private partners, development banks, international and regional financial institutions, United Nations agencies and international organizations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, with a particular focus on United Nations 2030 Agenda Goals 8, 12 and 14 (UNWTO 2016):

- **Goals 8:** Promote sustained, shared and sustainable economic growth, full productive employment and decent work for all;
- **Goal 12:** Establish sustainable consumption and production patterns;
- **Goal 14:** Conserve and sustainably use oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Moreover, the concept of sustainable tourism has been the subject of several studies, and all these studies seem to highlight the precise nature and very few studies speak of the broad nature of the concept by integrating its three fundamental pillars: economic, environmental and social. In line with this finding, several authors suggest tourism in the broad sense and not to reduce it to environmental aspects (BRAMWELL, 2008), other authors have emphasized the need to balance commercial and environmental interests in order to better ensure the sustainability of tourism itself (Butler, 1993, p.29).

Also, the majority of studies on sustainable tourism have dealt with, examples of practice of professionals, different aspects of sustainable development to the tourist offer. The literature review gives examples of hotels, tourist routes, coastlines, islands, etc. (CHBANI, 2021).

Beyond all these concepts which consider that sustainable tourism is an opportunity that allows the support of tourism projects, the challenge of sustainable tourism for all destinations worldwide is its implementation and its implementation as part of a global strategy to achieve its goal of participation in sustainable development, and it is in this sense that the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development to make tourism a driving force for progress that contributes to the achievement of each of the 17 Development Goals. Durable.

Indeed, several authors consider that sustainable tourism must be compatible with the principles of sustainable development (STABLER & GOODALL, 1996, P.170), even if sustainable tourism strategies in practice, tend to focus almost exclusively on a localized scale and relative to small development projects, rarely going beyond the local or regional setting (SHARPLEY, 2000).

IV. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

Sustainable tourism in Morocco: A multitude of actions.

A. *Development of a greenhouse gas (GHG) balance sheet and NAMA for the tourism sector.*

According to (GIZ, 2016), a GHG assessment is an assessment of the amount of greenhouse gases emitted (or captured) into the atmosphere over a year by the activities of an organization or territory. The major challenge of international climate policy is to reduce GHG emissions well below 2°C (ideally 1.5°C) from pre-industrial levels. To achieve this objective, atmospheric GHG concentrations must remain below 450 ppm. However, the 2011 GHG concentration was estimated at 430 ppm. This

requires ambitious mitigation measures by both developed and developing countries as part of an NAMA (Appropriate Mitigation Measures at the National Level), NAMAs are supported and enabled by technology, funding and capacity building. They are aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

It is in this context that in 2017, the Moroccan Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with UNDP and UNEP, launched a study to better understand the climate impact (mainly focused on GHG mitigation) the tourism sector of the City of Marrakech and develop a NAMA. The objectives of this project were on the one hand to identify the mitigation issues of GHG emissions of the tourism sector in Marrakech and on the other hand to develop a NAMA for the tourism sector. (MTTAAES, April 2017). It should be noted that the results of this study are not yet available.

In general, the complexity of NAMA lies in its funding and its stages of development and implementation (GIZ, 2016). For example, for the tourism sector, which is a transversal sector, the actions selected in the NAMAs relating to tourism can never be exhaustive since GHG emissions in the main sectors linked to tourism are not taken into account (Crafts, tourist activities, mobility, etc.).

B. *Incentives, support and technical and financial support.*

NOVOTEL 3 Financing Facility:

The RENOVOTEL 3 Program is a financing fund and the result of a partnership between the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Central Guarantee Fund (CCG), the Hassan II Fund for Economic and Social Development, the Fédération Nationale du Tourisme, and the Fédération Nationale de l'Industrie Hôtelière. The envelope for this fund is 500 MDH (CGC, 2015). This program is dedicated to upgrading tourist accommodation establishments.

The final balance of this program is set at 16 classified accommodation units that have been invested in total of 321 MDH (CCG, 2015) and no institution has committed this program to implement an environmental approach. This record remains disappointing because it is not very attractive for hoteliers for two main reasons: the first reason is the duration of the credit which may not exceed 12 years against 20 years or more in some competing countries and the second reason is that the accommodation establishments applying for the renovation are often in difficulty for several years and therefore cannot provide their banker with a balanced balance sheet with the guarantees requested.

Moussanada Siyaha Financing Facility:

«Moussanada Siyaha» is a support mechanism for tourism SMEs that offers services and local support to improve the competitiveness of tourist accommodation establishments, travel agencies and tourist transport companies.

With a budget of DHS 420 million by 2020, the

Moussanada Siyaha support scheme aimed to support more than 600 tourism SMEs by 2020. This support is made through the grant of studies, services and consultations relating to various areas of the organization and the company, carried out by experts or design offices referred to the National Agency for the Promotion of Small and Medium Enterprises (ANPME) (DRTMA, 2019).

Support is provided within the framework of individual actions or within the framework of a progress plan comprising several accompanying actions (at least 03) planned upstream. In addition to financial and technical support, tourism SMEs benefited from the Moussanada Siyaha scheme. local assistance through the Tourism Enterprise Support service of the Ministry of Tourism and through a regional support network (regional and provincial tourism delegations, etc.) (DRTMA, 2013-2030, P81).

The results of this program are very modest, it is limited to 45 SMEs for the first year 2014 and 60 SMEs in 2015. Almost all the companies that have benefited from this program are travel agencies that have set up websites to market the activity. Unfortunately, this program was not very popular with professionals because very few companies met all the conditions set by the Ministry of Tourism. Among these criteria, registration in the Commercial Register and regularization of activity with the Directorate of Taxes and the National Social Security Fund (CNSS) (DRTMA, 2019).

C. *The integration of environmental considerations in tourism guidelines*

As part of the efforts to improve the competitiveness of tourism enterprises, and given the importance of the tourist accommodation sector, the Ministry of Tourism has undertaken to overhaul the classification system. To this end, a revision of the regulatory framework has been initiated.

Thus, the environmental dimension is taken into consideration in the new law (80,14)²¹ on the classification of accommodation establishments. In this context, and in the phase of construction of an accommodation establishment, the general regulation of construction of accommodation establishments will include dimensional and functional standards of hygiene, safety, energy efficiency and rationalization of water use, and in the phase of operation of a tourist accommodation establishment, the establishments must be equipped with water and electricity saving equipment... (MTTAAES, June 2016).

D. *International Commitment: The 10YFP Sustainable Tourism Program22*

²¹ Law n° 80-14 promulgated by dahir n° 1-15-108 of 18 chaoual 1436 (4 August 2015) relating to tourist establishments and other forms of tourist accommodation (BO n°6404-3 of 15 October 2015).

²² The 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) is a concrete and operational outcome of Rio+20. The 10YFP is a global framework for action that strengthens international cooperation to accelerate the shift to sustainable consumption and production (SCP) in developed and developing

The origins of the Sustainable Tourism Program date back to the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, at the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2002, government delegations recognized sustainable consumption and production as a fundamental objective and an essential condition for sustainable development, Chapter III of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation calls for the development of a 10-Year Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) and the Marrakech Process was launched a year later in 2003, providing a global, informal, multi-stakeholder platform for SCP. This process included an international working group on sustainable tourism development, which developed policy recommendations for tourism development. Since 2011, the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism has worked with its partners to implement the recommendations of the Task Force and completed its transition in February 2015 to form the core elements of the 10YFP Sustainable Tourism Programme (UNEP, 2003).

In terms of governance, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the leader of the 10YFP Sustainable Tourism Program, along with the governments of France, Korea and Morocco, "co-leaders" of the program. They are supported by a Multistakeholder Advisory Committee made up of representatives of international organizations.

E. *Awareness, promotion, valorisation of initiatives and communication*

The Moroccan trophies of sustainable tourism:

Since 2008, Morocco has initiated the Moroccan Sustainable Tourism Trophies which honor and reward exemplary projects in sustainable tourism. They are one of the tools that the tourism sector deploys to recognize and promote the best projects placed under the sign of sustainability. This initiative of the Ministry of Tourism is aimed at tourism professionals and also at associations and NGOs as well as any actor whose actions benefit sustainable tourism.

This competition has allowed the emergence of a network of exceptional actors competing for commitment and innovation and especially from diverse backgrounds, which reflects the commitment of the sector in terms of sustainable tourism both nationally and internationally. The annual competition is open to projects led by Moroccans or internationals. Their projects must be related to the following five themes: environment and biodiversity, culture and intangible heritage, equity and social responsibility, sustainable territory (new in 2015) and sustainable event (new in 2015).

countries. It supports capacity building and provides technical and financial assistance to developing countries, and encourages innovation and cooperation among all stakeholders to adopt SCP in this sector. The 10YFP has six initial programs. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) serves as the secretariat of the 10YFP and administers the Trust Fund for the implementation of results-oriented projects.

The ambition of the Ministry of Tourism through the Morocco Sustainable Tourism Trophies, is to promote tourism in line with the principles of sustainable tourism, in this sense, (Bouaouinate, 2016) confirmed that the trophies have rewarded stakeholders (Table 1) for projects in line with sustainability which has allowed other actors to engage in similar actions. The Trophies are a unique opportunity for parties wishing to participate in the promotion of a tourism that values the tourism product and involves each of its actors, they are also an opportunity to strengthen the visibility of the actors at national and international level.

The nominees of the 5th and 6th edition are 12:

Table.1: List of nominees in 2014 and 2016 for the Moroccan Sustainable Tourism Awards

Category	Nominees	Location
Environment and biodiversity	The Naoura Barriere Hotel	Marrakech
	STEP RADEEMA	Marrakech
	The Ecomuseum National Park of Toubkal	Marrakech
	The Oriental Raid	Taforhalt
Sustainable event	The Rallye Aicha des Gazelles	Itinerary
Sustainable Territory	The Société d'aménagement de promotion de station de Taghazout Bay	Agadir
	The Provincial Tourism Centre of Berkane	Berkane
	Majhoul road – ecotourism in Tafilalet	Tafilalet
Equity and Social Responsibility	Zolado Inn	Inzerki
	ECOLOGDE Touda:	village of Ait Bouguemaz
Culture and Intangible Heritage	The Oasis Inn	Figuig

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the nature of these projects differs with a large dominance of accommodation projects, also, the trophies are not launched annually but occasionally in celebration of national or international events and the geographical distribution of these projects is concentrated mainly in Marrakech, Agadir and in the oases and mountains which are considered as priority tourist brands of Morocco

However, since the 2016 edition, no new edition has been launched. From this observation, we can conclude that the discontinuity of the organization of the trophies depends on the awareness and motivation of the actors that greatly influence their involvement and contribution in the strategy of sustainable tourism within a territory, a destination or even a country. This has led several actors of the tourism scene to question the role of each actor in the strategy of sustainable tourism of a country. This has led several actors in the tourism field to question the role of each stakeholder in a country's sustainable tourism strategy. Indeed, the adoption of sustainable tourism stems above all from political will and from taking into account the needs of the actors concerned (Arib, 2005).

The Moroccan day of sustainable and responsible tourism

The Moroccan day of sustainable and responsible tourism aims, among other things, to bring together all the tourism actors around the sustainability approach. This day is an annual appointment for sustainable and responsible tourism, it is part of the goal to increase the sensitivity of the entire ecosystem to this objective and involve all stakeholders concerned: institutional, elected officials, investors, professionals, tourists and civil society (MTTAAES, September 2017).

The first edition of this day, which is held in January 2016, came after the adoption of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the United Nations in September 2015, it was an opportunity to strengthen public-private partnerships for sustainable tourism. It is within this framework that several conventions were signed²³.

²³ A partnership agreement for the reinforcement of the cooperation in the field of the promotion of the rights of the persons in situation of handicap between the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Solidarity, the Woman, the Family and the Social Development, the National Federation of the Hotel Industry and the National Federation of the Tourist Transport;

A partnership agreement between the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of National Education and the National Confederation of Tourism (MTTAAES1, 2016);

A partnership agreement between the Ministry of Tourism, the World Tourism Organization, UN Women and the National Confederation of Tourism which aims at promoting the socio-economic empowerment of women through tourism, raising awareness and strengthening the gender approach in the sector and increasing its impact on the improvement of women's lives;

A contract to launch the International Change Initiative (IKI) project in Morocco between the Ministry of Tourism, UNEP and UNDP. This project aims to establish a carbon assessment of the sector as well as a program of adaptation and mitigation of the sector's impact on the climate, to initiate awareness-raising actions and exemplary pilot projects in terms of reducing the impact on the climate throughout the tourism value chain in anticipation of the COP22.

ochure (MTTAAES, July 2016).

This table justify that the balance sheet is very modest,

This day (OTM, September 2016) was also an opportunity to sign the Moroccan Charter for Sustainable Tourism. This charter comes ten years after the signing of its first version, in 2006. The Moroccan Charter of Sustainable Tourism is aimed at different targets, directly or indirectly involved in tourism development. Institutions, investors, professionals, tourists and citizens have been invited to sign this charter (MTTAAES, 2016).

Mainly, the charter calls on the actors to make the tourism sector a real factor for sustainable development by ensuring a sharing and an appropriate follow-up that would allow to see in reality the different principles contained in the charter. But beyond the content of the charter, it remains a moral and voluntary non-binding commitment given that they do not have a consecrated legal status, and ideally, the adoption of a specific framework with a precise legal framework could be an unparalleled opportunity for the operationalization and implementation of sustainable tourism (SBAÏ, 2016).

F. Participation in the COP22

On the eve of the cop22 and in order to accompany its preparation and participation in this international event and in collaboration with its national and international partners, the Ministry of Tourism, participated in this global event through a series of activities (MTTAAES2, 2016) :

- The implementation of an environmental display system in 10 tourist accommodation establishments in Marrakech, the said system played the role of a monitoring system intended to measure the performance of the establishment classified by environmental field: water, energy, waste, purchasing policy, etc.
- The implementation of the "Climate Friendly Menu" initiative in the pilot city of Marrakech in a dozen restaurants. The aim is to produce and indicate on restaurant menus dishes that respect three principles that significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions: using seasonal products, favoring local products and plants.
- The signing of the African Charter for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism.

This African charter takes into account the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and international agreements and conventions on sustainable development, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism as well as the international conventions of UNESCO²⁴ and IUCN²⁵. It emanates from a vision shared by several countries on the continent that aspires to encourage tourism that "fully takes into account its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, meeting the needs of visitors, professionals, the environment and host communities" [World Tourism Organization] (MTTAAES 4, 2017). This willingness was

manifested following a proposal by the Moroccan government at the 58th session of the UNWTO Commission for Africa, held in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) on April 19, 2016, during which the principle of developing an "African Charter for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism", inspired by the Moroccan Charter for Sustainable Tourism, was unanimously approved (decision CAF/58/9).

It is true that the charter is intended to be a voluntary reference framework, framing the development of tourism in Africa and ensuring its inclusion in a sustainable and responsible dynamic, reconciling economic and social progress, preservation of the environment and respect for local specificities and cultural diversities. However, the appropriate financing, monitoring and implementation mechanisms had to be developed jointly in order to support the signatory countries in complying with the provisions of the charter. The charter has been signed by Morocco, Congo, Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Burundi and Côte d'Ivoire. The Gambia, Gabon, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Central African Republic, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Seychelles, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Tunisia and Chad have also signed this African charter, and each signatory country or group of countries could adapt it according to its national or regional specificities. (MTTAAES 4, 2017).

G. Morocco's commitment to the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development: IY2017

The United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed 2017 as the "International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development". According to Irina Bokova, the Director-General of UNESCO, this decision thus highlights "the importance of international tourism in fostering mutual understanding among peoples, raising awareness of the rich heritage of diverse civilizations, and thus contributing to the strengthening of peace in the world." (UNESCO, 2017).

To this end, Morocco has joined the efforts of UNWTO as an official sponsor of the program of activities planned during IY2017. It carried the proposal of a program of celebration at the scale of the African continent, which took the form of a caravan aiming to promote the African Charter of Sustainable Tourism and the best practices in sustainable tourism in Africa, the first caravan was organized from 14 to 15 February 2019 in the Republic of Congo which was an opportunity to continue the sensitization around the principles of the African Charter of Sustainable and Responsible Tourism, to enhance the best African initiatives and to promote the sharing of knowledge and good practices (MTTAAES3, 2019)

The Ministry of Tourism has seized this international opportunity offered by the United Nations to promote its approach to the development of sustainable and responsible tourism. Thus, the Ministry of Tourism has mobilized and strengthened its awareness-raising actions throughout the Moroccan territory, so that "sustainable tourism becomes an integrated approach and truly everyone's business" (MTTAAES, September 2017). This

²⁴ UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

²⁵ In particular the Convention on Biological Diversity of 2010.

mobilization is reflected in The organization of the 2nd edition of the Moroccan Day of Sustainable and Responsible Tourism in 2017 to federate the entire ecosystem of sustainable tourism, and deploy an awareness campaign for the general public in partnership with key actors of the ecosystem. The priority issue of this Day was to achieve an awareness broadened to the general public, and not limited to the Moroccan tourism ecosystem, "All actors for sustainable tourism." (MTTAAES, September 2017)

From the above, it is clear that the major stake for the stakeholders of the tourism value chain is to inscribe tourism in a logic of sustainability, such is the only alternative to perpetuate the positive impacts of tourism, while anticipating, reducing and compensating for its damages.

Discussion of results:

All the above actions testify to the will of all the stakeholders to become a sustainable destination, this will be limited to punctual actions linked to national and international events and which are related to the sensitization and the promotion which are inscribed in a nonbinding and voluntary framework. However, a follow-up of all these actions is highly desirable in order to measure the impact of these actions on the three pillars of sustainability (economic, environmental and social).

On the other hand, it is strongly recognized that the existence of a specific legal framework is better than its non-existence, and the adoption of the 80-14 is the only thing that can still make a difference, this law that creates the conditions for actors to take into account the issues of sustainability, but it is also preferable that this framework, adapted, can find its concretization and implementation on the ground.

Added to this, and in accordance with the concept retained in this article, it is important that the elaboration and implementation of the sustainable tourism policy in Morocco must be in line with the objectives of sustainable development. It is in this sense that we have analyzed the coherence of the actions undertaken by the Ministry of Tourism in relation to the objectives related to tourism within the framework of the SDGs (objectives 8, 12 and 14), this analysis has brought out the following state of affairs:

Firstly, the Moroccan charter of sustainable tourism gives particular importance to tourists and citizens considered as actors of consumption of tourism, it also takes into account investors and professionals as actors of sustainable production, this approach is part of a voluntary approach of all actors and does not constitute an obligation. Moreover, the adherence of stakeholders to the charter can be interpreted as a real awareness of the signatory stakeholders as it can be perceived as a real selling point especially internationally (Bouaouinate, 2016), So, the charter takes the form of an ambition and not a concrete action that can be evaluated to see its impact on sustainability and on its real contribution to the achievement of the SDGs.

ecosystems and cultural heritage, fighting poverty and

improving access to sustainable livelihoods, and adapting to the reality of climate change. No doubt that the Moroccan sustainable tourism awards constitute a real concrete action of a concrete commitment of the stakeholders, Nevertheless, analyzing the balance sheet of this action and its evolution over time leads us to say that it is still in an embryonic state. A follow-up and continuity of this action is really desirable, a real potential is displayed but an accompaniment and a networking by the State for a sharing of expertise is still desired to ensure a wide participation and a commitment of the tourism actors, such is the only way that can guarantee a real contribution to the SDGs.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

To give more coherence to these results, UNWTO with UNEP has provided a guide for government and other stakeholders to develop strategies, policies and tools to maximize the positive benefits of the sector while minimizing its negative impacts, as well as key objectives for achieving sustainable tourism and how to translate them into policy by describing the collaborative structures and strategies needed at the national and local levels (UNEP-UNWTO, 2006)

The orientations of this guide developed in partnership between UNEP and UNWTO can be real orientations for the Moroccan strategy of sustainable tourism.

The analysis of the said recommendations and all the actions that are engaged by Morocco, has allowed us to present new challenges to inscribe sustainable tourism in the principles of sustainable development, and are summarized as follows

- Synchronize the various strategies (urban planning strategy, classification of tourist establishments, tourist transport specifications, etc.) to set up regulatory instruments and authorization procedures that include mandatory provisions for investment and tourist operations.
- Establish processes for monitoring compliance with regulatory requirements.
- Measuring sustainable production in the tourism sector through monitoring indicators that are considered a central element of the planning and management process and thus allow for constant and consistent monitoring of the situation.
- Establish financial support instruments that provide specific financial assistance to influence behavior and encourage change throughout the tourism value chain.
- Sensitize tourists by highlighting the activities encouraged or discouraged, the means of transportation used, the choice of the period of the trip, the places visited.... All this information can be transmitted to tourists by sharing a message when choosing the trip, when arriving at the destination (behavior guide to be distributed by airlines) and during the trip.
- To establish a schedule of conditions in consultation with the concerned actors to define the modalities of investment and creation of tourist activities implanted on

Second the Moroccan Su

the coast, thus allowing the development of a "blue economy" which fights against poverty and creates jobs.

- Implement structures for sustainable tourism management and governance.

CONCLUSION:

This article has focused on Morocco's commitment to sustainable tourism. In this sense, we have noticed, in a concrete way, that many concrete actions have been launched by the Moroccan Ministry of Tourism with a particular emphasis on raising awareness of citizens and tourists, on sustainable production by all actors of the tourism value chain.

In this logic, and in order to inscribe Moroccan sustainable tourism in the objectives of sustainable development and to answer our problem, we have presented new challenges, constituting an answer to our problem and an added value of this article and which are based on the implementation of monitoring indicators for sustainable production, the definition of the regulatory control process, the synchronization of strategies and the implementation of financial mechanisms to encourage the desired changes.

To implement all these challenges, sustainable tourism in Morocco must be considered in a systemic approach within the framework of a global approach that includes all stakeholders to, on the one hand, take it out of its very ambitious strategic aspect to its concretization aspect which remains very modest at present, and on the other hand, to increase the chances of its contribution in the achievement of the SDGs. However, who should dictate this global approach and how ?

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A new approach to sustainable tourism: Beyond environmental protection: The case of the Souss-Massa region

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Abstract

The tourism industry is ranked among the largest industries in the world. However, the degrading effects of tourism have become a major concern and must be addressed quickly. From this negative perspective, the concept of sustainable tourism has emerged in the field of reducing the effects of tourism activities, which has become almost universally accepted as a desirable and politically appropriate approach to tourism development.

Our article presents the main ideas of sustainable tourism in the Souss Massa region. It involves economic, environmental, and socio-cultural aspects through the planning and management of tourism. In addition, we deal with the historical background of the idea of sustainability and the main international events regarding this topic while highlighting the negative effects of tourism that can be avoided by applying the principles of sustainable development.

Key words: Sustainable tourism- Management of tourism- Sustainable development.

Introduction

Sustainable tourism is defined by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) as "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, while meeting the needs of visitors, professionals, the environment and host communities". Sustainable tourism applies to all destinations as long as they maintain a balance of ecological, economic and sociocultural aspects. This ensures the viability of the environment in question.

The concept of sustainable tourism has evolved since the 1990s. The 1992 Rio Summit brought together the terms sustainable development and tourism, but it was the first time that actual tourism practices were mentioned. At the World Conference on Sustainable Tourism in Lanzarote, 1995, which defined the principles of sustainable tourism. Then, in 1999, the General Assembly of OMT adopted the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism which sets out various recommendations to guide the players in the territory. It is about promoting sustainability through environmental, economic, social, and cultural balance. (Luciani, 2016). It was not until 2002, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg,

that sustainable tourism was recognized as a management strategy for the protection of natural resources. The culmination of this recognition came 10 years later, the 2012 Rio+20

conference discussed new ways of thinking about economic sustainability generated by sustainable tourism as a regional development tool. In addition, in 2004, the principles of sustainable tourism were updated by the Sustainable Development Committee. Since COP 21 in Paris in 2015, sustainable development, and thus sustainable tourism, is no longer just a concept, it has taken on implications for implementing measures. (Ruiz, 2014).

2017 was an increasingly auspicious year for sustainable tourism as the United Nations has declared it the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Sustainable Development. The purpose of this declaration is to develop sustainable tourism at the international level, thereby promoting understanding among all peoples, acceptance of different civilizations and increasing appreciation for the inherent values of different cultures. Today allows "to increase the contribution of the tourism sector to the pillars of sustainability" and therefore to draw attention to the dimensions and repercussions of this sector, often undervalued. This promotion of sustainability in tourism follows the Rio+20 conference declaration, which states: Well-designed and organized tourism can contribute to the sustainable development aspects and the creation of employment and business opportunities.

I. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Sustainability is one of the hottest topics trying to connect social, civil engineering, and environmental sciences with future technologies. As a set of goals, sustainability describes desirable environmental conditions and the ability of people to directly and indirectly benefit from them now and in the future. As a practice and action, sustainability describes human behavior that sustains and enhances human well-being and supports the ability of human societies to interact with the environment in ways that discourage reduced benefits.

Sustainable tourism development has received considerable attention in many scientific studies, especially tourism science, and has been one of the fastest growing research areas in tourism science since the late 1980s. According to Buckley (2012), the specific term “sustainable tourism” was first used almost two decades ago. During the first decade, basic frameworks from tourism, economics and environmental management were studied. The second decade gave rise to several conceptualizations and a series of critiques, including Sharpley (2000), Gossling (2002), Liu (2003), Saarinen (2006), Lane (2009b), and Liu (2013). According to Bramwell & Lane, two of the biggest founders of these concepts in the tourism industry, sustainable tourism addresses many of tourism's problems, including environmental degradation and severe impacts on society and traditional culture. It emerged as a negative, reactive concept (Bramwell and Lane, 1993). Gradually, the development of tourism was perceived as a solution capable of creating positive changes through the ideas of sustainable tourism.

There are many definitions of sustainability and sustainable development. The best-known definition of sustainable development is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs” (WCED, 1987). This definition implies a link between economic development, environmental protection, and social justice, with each element reinforcing the other. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2001) has defined sustainable development as: “*Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities*”.

Liu (2013) emphasizes a precise definition of 'sustainability'. This implies an important role for the state in preparing for the continuous improvement of living conditions for future generations. “Sustainable development” is more process-oriented and associated with controlled change that improves the conditions of those involved in such development. “Sustainable tourism” is defined as all types of tourism compatible with or contributing to sustainable development. “Sustainable tourism” requires both sustainable growth of tourism's contribution to the economy and society, and sustainable use of resources and the environment, achieved through a thorough understanding and proper management of tourism demand. (Liu,2013). Liu (1994) defined tourism development as a dynamic process of matching tourism resources with the needs and preferences of actual or potential tourists.

II. METHODOLOGY & DATABASE:

1. Database:

The economic contribution of tourism activity in Morocco is certainly significant. Government officials increasingly see it as a strategic sector to support

economic development. But what about the environmental and social costs of sustainable development? The main purpose of this article is to examine the aspects in which tourism is a driver of sustainable development in Morocco, particularly in the Souss Massa region. The activity of sustainable tourism can be transposed to all tourist activities, it acts on the behavior of consumers and producers in the sector to ensure respect for the environment and the resources they use. The purpose of this practice is to educate population about sustainable production and consumption along the entire supply and demand chain. Thus, strategies and policies are necessary for all the actors of the territory.

Due to existing problems such as the lack of information on sustainable tourism in the Souss-Massa region, we attempted to develop our own database by combining several sources in order not to limit the sample. Our goal is to obtain as much information as possible about as many companies as possible that recognize the importance of sustainable development and incorporate it as a strategy into their activities. A sample of 25 companies, were selected. The interviews were conducted through the distribution of questionnaires, the preparation of interviews, etc. We also used computer databases of certain public institutions and annual activity reports of some companies.

2. Methodology:

Our article is based on multiple research papers by circulating paper questionnaires, online surveys, and interview settings, employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The legal form	Number of establishments	%
Businesses/Companies	10	40%
Sole proprietorships	7	28%
Non-profit organizations	5	20%
Partnerships	2	8%
Cooperatives	1	4%
Total	25	100%

s whose main activities are related to one of the following five industry groups: A sample of 25 units was processed in two phases.

2.1. Target Population
The target group consists of Souss-Massa companies

Phase 1: All companies with an email address were invited to complete the survey on March 6th and 7th, 2020.

As of March 7, 2020, all companies without email addresses are included in phone interviews.

Phase 2: Companies that did not respond to the web component have been added to the phone component as of March 15, 2020.

It was known from the beginning that the target number of interviews in the transport sector would not be achieved. It was agreed that these "missing" interviews would be distributed to other sectors.

2.2. Survey:

The original survey was provided by the client and has since been revised and translated. The telephone version of the questionnaire was tested in February 25 and 26, 2020 with four respondents. Changes made to the questionnaire after testing were approved by the client.

Interviews were conducted in French or Arabic, at the respondents' choice. They lasted an average of 20 minutes on the phone and 15 minutes online.

2.3. Collection:

Collection was performed in two ways: Phone Collection and Web Collection. As shown in the following table.

	Date of collection	Response rate
Phone	7 Mars 2020	20,3%
Web	15 Mars 2020	12%

2.4. Weighting and treatment

Data were first validated to eliminate errors, outliers, or other anomalies. Data were weighted to all eligible and ineligible respondents by simple extrapolation to a shared distribution (geographic region and industry).

III. RESULTS

The Sub-Saharan region of Souss-Massa, south of the High Atlas, offers two types of destinations: coastal tourism along the Atlantic Ocean (particularly around Agadir) and the mountain and valley countryside south of the High Atlas. Nearly every regional destination in Morocco has seen small-scale private tourism initiatives focused on sustainability (at least in a broader sense). However, the RDTR (Rural Tourism Development Network) in the Souss-Massa region seems to be the most

important private initiative in Morocco in terms of sustainable tourism.

In addition, a detailed study on sustainable tourism activities in the Souss-Massa region, conducted between 2012 and 2014, found that among the region's traditional hotel sector (mainly operated by national and international hotel chains), Club Robinson (by owned tour operator TUI) had a clear focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (El Boudribili 2014). Apart from this seaside resort, all other hotels and holiday resorts surveyed meet only the(rare) legal requirements regarding the impact of their activities on the environment, thus avoiding any additional commitment in favor of the idea of sustainability.

A second good example in the Souss-Massa area was the owner-managed lodge Ecolodge Atlas Kasbah. The place focuses on rural tourism and practices a holistic and sustainability-focused approach with a comprehensive environmental management plan covering water, energy and waste management. Apart from that, a social dimension is also included in terms of integrating local people and raising awareness among visitors who follow a broader approach of corporate social responsibility. A focus on sustainability is combined with high product quality, including a range of activities ranging from traditional excursions to traditional craft workshops (pottery, soap making, etc.).

While Club Robinson's commitment to sustainability is limited to a more isolated internal activity, the owners of Atlas Kasbah can see it as one of the rare examples of a single activity having a broader impact.

The owner of Atlas Kasbah has been a key figure since 2011 when some tourism professionals and academics founded the RDTR at the encouragement of the regional council. Its objective was to federate the small Its purpose is to bring together small tourists in the rural environment of the region to build and organize the rural tourism sector, to organize and manage all common interests and to promote rural tourism practices (promotion, communication, marketing). Promote the exchange of best practices, ensure the quality of rural tourism products, commit to sustainable and responsible rural tourism development, and build partnerships with local tourism stakeholders at national and international levels. (RDTR & Afkar 2013).

The main objective of the network is to strengthen the performance of small tourism activities by creating a network focused on capacity building and providing the service orientation necessary to participate successfully in the tourism market - which is marked by a high degree of competition. Besides developing and promoting the rural tourism product itself, orientation towards sustainability has been an integral part of RDTR's mission from the very beginning. At the same time, many marketing efforts have been launched, especially using the Internet and social media tools (RDTR & Afkar2013;), which are easily

accessible, have low entry barriers and do not incur high financial costs.

In order to strengthen the competitiveness of tourism in the region as well as the orientation towards sustainability in 2012, the RDTR began to work in cooperation with the Ibn-Zohr University in Agadir to establish a Quality and Environment Charter in Tourism (QET). The general assembly approved this charter in 2013 (El Boudribili 2014). The Charter paved the way for a classification system focused on two key aspects: Product quality and sustainability. It includes attention not only to classical aspects towards the environment, but also to human resources, local residents, visitor awareness, and other aspects related to an integrated understanding of sustainability. There are 4 levels from "Basic" to "Excellent". Two-thirds of the ranking points are related to quality aspects and one-third to sustainability (El Boudribili 2014). The classification system was previously open only to RDTR members (and thus can serve as an added value for members and increase their interest in joining the network). Of 48 of the RDTR members who own accommodations or restaurants, 44 were evaluated for ranking. Only two companies were purely and simply excluded from the ranking, this can be interpreted as a selective interest in networks of owners who have already demonstrated minimal quality and sustainability. However, if the ranking agency and the classified facility have a certain relationship, it can also be considered ambivalent. At the same time, only 14% of the theoretically possible points need to be achieved to be classified at the basic level (El Boudribili 2014). This appears to have relatively low barriers to entry and, through its initial baseline ranking, has medium quality and sustainability ambitions that hope to bring their business closer to sustainability issues in the future. It even attracts businesses. The process-oriented intention is demonstrated by the fact that only four properties (including, of course, the Ecolodge Atlas Kasbah as the highest-rated accommodation) received an "excellent" rating, suggesting, thus signaling to others that future improvements could lead to a higher ranking.

IV. CONCLUSION:

This article has provided an overview of the literature on the definition and application of sustainable tourism in the Souss-Massa region. The journal aims to provide an opportunity to support the efforts of researchers and practitioners and meet their need for easy access to sustainable tourism publications. In addition, English-language journals were also considered in this study.

This study has certain limitations. It should be noted that some of the data used in this review were collected from academic journals, and conference proceedings, master's theses, doctoral dissertations, textbooks and working papers not published in the literature on sustainable tourism. Excluded. This may mean that this review is not complete. However, it does provide a comprehensive overview as it contains the majority of

articles published by scientific journals. Therefore, this article provides academic researchers and practitioners with a framework for future research.

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Religious Jewish heritage tourism in morocco

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Abstract

Heritage tourism is a very important a niche of marketing involved with discovering and experiencing historical sites, cultures, local traditions, arts related to specific destinations and sites characterized by a past or present cultural, religious diversity. This communication tried to make vision about the concepts of 'tourism and cultural heritage' as a memory case of Jewish Heritage history in Morocco. The Moroccan Jewish Diaspora and their families came to rediscover their 'homeland' and participate in religious pilgrimages to the tombs of venerated Tsaddiks and Rabbins . Now our objective as PhD students is to focus on the origins and manifestations of the Jewish Heritage Tourism in Morocco including the physical elements composing the Jewish heritage product as a niche market.

Keywords: popular Judeo-Muslim holiness, hillula, cult of Jewish saints, religious tourism, cultural tourism

Introduction

"In the consciences of the nation, the term culture, in its comprehensive and human sense, has replaced the theological term of the Torah". Haim Nahman Bialik 1925²⁶,

This work, which deals with the study of the cult of saints, is for us a path to follow in order to trace the cultural continuity and the Moroccan identity of the literary works in question. This research is not new, some Jewish authors wrote before about this subject, they specially articulated around Jewish themes in general: their condition and the celebration of roots in a culture and heritage lost through colonisation, immigration and assimilation into the French language and culture. In a word, it is a literature of identity in order to realise the better structure our reflection, we have made sure that it is focused around the following problematic: what extent can the analysis of

the rituals of the cult of Jewish saints?

Jewish saints reveal the existence of a common imaginary culture shared with the Muslim majority and the predominance of a Jewish-Moroccan cultural entity, which is the result of the meeting of an ethic and a plural cultural context.

In order to answer this question, we will first look at on certain notions such as popular religiosity, popular culture, the Tsaddik, the Hilloula, etc..., secondly, through an anthropological overview of the cult of Judeo-Muslim saints in Morocco, as well as the analysis of some literary works, we will attempt to clarify practices, rituals and beliefs and to illustrate the dynamics in which daily life and the constant influences of community traditions and see how they are combined to make the cult of the saints as a particular aspect of a hybrid cultural identity..

In general, defining culture is a difficulty process. Writing about it, researchers have narrowed or broadened its scope to suit their own points of view, and their discussion about culture is frequently characterized by obsession - ambiguity, and elusiveness, the more specific explanation is that Jewish culture is a dynamic phenomenon - with a variety of contents, forms, and styles - which has undergone many changes, and even upheavals, from its inception. Throughout Jewish history, there have been particular Jewish cultures that were shaped, by the influence of the host cultures in the varied

geo-cultural environments in which Jews lived: In the specific contents of Jewish history in Morocco, the discussion of the culture of Jews and of Jewish cultures should deal with so many questions to which we tried to find the answers in our research specially: the Jewish culture as a minority culture existing within hegemonic non Jewish cultures, manifesting unique patterns and maintaining complex, stratified, and dynamic relations with the non-Jewish cultures (Muslims)

The Jewish population in Morocco was not only ancient and numerous but growing even further with the arrival from exile and precisely from the Christian kingdoms of medieval Iberia. This community was distributed across the whole region. The Jewish populations could be found in imperial metropolises such as Meknes, Fez and Marrakech; the dynamic port cities of the Atlantic coast, like Safi and Tangier; and in the most remote rural villages in the Atlas Mountains: "In the same mountain

²⁶ (On the Inauguration of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem), in Divri Sijrut, 2nd Ed., Haim Nahman Biatik. (Tel Aviv, 1965), 127-135 (Hebrew)

great multitudes of Jews exercising handicrafts, do inhabit”²⁷. The chroniclers of the time also mention the presence of a Karaite community in the High Atlas that ‘are considered heretics by the other Jews. Despite the fact that many of these populations disappeared with the arrival of Islam, Luis del Mármol, who was following al-Wazzan’s description of the city of Teitdeuer in the western High Atlas, noted that: ‘Some African writers say that the builders of this city were Jews from the tribe of Judah, and that they built it when the Africans had the law of Moses, and Jewish culture and history that they remained in it, until the Mohammedan Arabs came to Africa, and they made them leave it’²⁸

In the middle of the eleventh century, nomadic Saharan Berbers, the Almoravids, launched a religious and military crusade to impose a rigorous Maliki orthodoxy throughout the western Maghreb and Al-Andalus. With the Berber dynasties of the Almoravids and Almohads, and its later institutionalization by the Marinid kingdom of Fez, Malikism became the uncontested doctrine of the Muslim west. Although Muslim tolerance would explain the Jewish demographic importance in the precolonial western Maghreb observed by travellers and chroniclers from different times and places According to Lewis, the increase of Muslim intolerance towards the Christians dhimmis in North Africa was a pragmatic response to external military threats²⁹.

The Jews of Morocco were the only non-Muslim religious minority in the pre-colonial period, religious minority in the country.

They were also the first Jewish community in the Arab world, although some historians, chroniclers and journalists give a "negative" view of the Moroccan Jewish community, the Jewish community, insisting on the status of dhimmi, on the misery of the Mellahs, on a situation that they compare, explicitly or implicitly, to that of the situation of Jewish communities in the West, but rarely in relation to the history of Morocco, its socio-economic context and its evolution. Many others claim that more than 2000 years of Moroccan Jewish history has resulted in what is called "a Jewish-Muslim symbiosis".

The first segregated Jewish neighbourhood in the Muslim west was created in the imperial capital city of Fez in 1438, during the reign of the last sultan of the Marinid dynasty. Fez had received a major flow of Jews migrating from the Christian kingdoms of medieval Iberia, fleeing the persecutions and killings of 1391. That important influx modified the demographic composition of the city. The newcomers resisted assimilation into the local Jewish communities and kept their identity and Iberian customs. Some controversies arose between the locals and the newcomers over interpretations of the halakha, local customs, and ritual and liturgical practices³⁰

Popular religion and Judeo-Muslim pilgrimages, a common identity aspect

“One of the issues at the heart of the definition of folk religion is the presence of a system of beliefs and practices that, far from being marginal and irrational, would in fact make up the core of the religion of a system of beliefs and practices that, far from being marginal and irrational, are in fact part of a coherent part of a coherent worldview”³¹

“Popular religiosity” here, we mean a set of practices; rites, rituals and speeches, which without necessarily being marginal, are not often part of the so-called “orthodox” corpus.

Our approach is not to see if such a practice falls within the domain of heresy, magic or "Superstition" but rather to seek what the practice represents in a specific situation and what it is meaning in a specific socio-cultural, intercommunity context.

In the context of our research, popular culture is above all an oral culture; it is a manifestation of illiterate society, namely women, children and illiterate. It is the result of a set of oral traditions from a region, from a locality, a social class or an entire society. Beyond ethnic borders, the imaginary Moroccan universe is a world that has its own codes and its own Peculiarities. It is above all a "dualistic" world, which is divided between good and evil, Angels and demons, the right side beneficial space and the left evil side (domain of All superstitions and curses), between the world above and the world below of the Earth, between human beings and demonic beings. Man, in the imagination Moroccan, is not the only one who lives in this world in reality shared by other Beings, the angels and spirits (jnoun), demons (shaytān)

In this regard, we can only strongly confirm the words of André E. Elbaz, for whom the oral literature represents in Morocco a true symbolic language, which expressed the soul of people. Throughout the history of the Moroccan populations (all ethnicities and faiths confused), we see the birth of a vast collection of registers, codes and values which are mainly on popular cultural memory. So here, we are faced with a story that no register or manuscript has been able or able to canonize this ancient wisdom that represents the aspirations of communities, the beliefs popular, customs and mythical stories is conveyed exclusively through:

- The pilgrimage and the veneration of saints, popular religion
- Extra-religious practices: magic, consultation with clairvoyants, etc.
- Popular beliefs: evil eye and others (the casting of fate)
- Tales and legends
- The interpretation of dreams and their role in society
- Anecdotes
- Proverbs
- So-called “traditional” medicine

The universe of tales and legends is also another aspect of the common culture Judeo-Muslim, all communities combined (Arabs, Berbers, Jews and Afro Moroccan),

²⁷ Africanus, The History and Description of Africa. Vol. II, 278

²⁸ Mármol Carvajal, Descripción General Del África. Tomo III, 11.

²⁹ Mark R. Cohen, “Foreword to the Princeton Classics Edition,” in The Jews of Islam (Princeton and London: Princeton University Press, 2014), xvii.

³⁰ Jane S. Gerber, Jewish Society in Fez 1450–1700: Studies in Communal and Economic Life (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 114.

³¹ Micheline La liberté, “Popular religion and superstition in the Middle Ages”. In: Erudit [online]. 2000. <http://id.erudit.org/iderudit/005012ar>

often linked to the hagiographic phenomenon. It is essentially composed of a matrix represented, for André Chouraqui, as two Jewish and Islamic traditions Maghreb, both grafted onto the ancient Berber trunk already highly rich in Afro-Mediterranean heritage³²

The fact that the Moroccan Jew shares with his Muslim neighbour the same linguistic register and the same cultural references facilitate mutual integration and reciprocal influence.



Fig1: The RAV prays at the grave of the holy Rabbi Messod Abehassira, the father of Rabbi Israel Abehassira, nicknamed Baba Salé (the praying father) – Tafilalet city-

Moroccan, Judaism and Islam place a high value on the veneration of saints, Tsaddikim, in Hebrew; *awliyā'* (friends of God), in Arabic, also known in Morocco as marabouts in often play important political roles. They serve as mediators between warring parties, and after death their tombs are acknowledged as sanctuaries. For those seeking refuge. The Jewish saint's tombs provide therapy to their visitors and can punish the transgressors, they performing miracles when they were still alive a lot of stories and myths about them exist³³

As a rule, tales and legends can be subdivided into two categories: religious and not religious in this particular context, the local religious geography necessarily passes through the phenomenon of the veneration of common Judeo-Muslim saints. Very widespread in the 19th century Morocco century, this phenomenon was only possible thanks to this common imagination likely to legitimize worship and promote ritual. Despite an orthodox (Muslim and Jewish) rationality with a discriminatory tendency, Anxious to trace and maintain different ethnic and confessional borders, the "popular culture"³⁴

Stillman Norman has written a comparative study of Jewish tsaddikim and Muslim marabouts stressing the differences between them. One of the principle differences is that while many Moroccan marabouts are venerated while still living, most Jewish tsaddikim are

usually venerated after their death³⁵

Pilgrimages to their gravesites are famous and important practices of saint veneration in both Moroccan Islam and Judaism. (Mousseim and Hiloula) visitors come to ask favors, sacrifice animals at the site of the tomb and sharing of a communal meal near (kosher)³⁶, many Jewish families and former residents of cities or villages have connections to particular tsaddikim and visit their tombs or sanctuaries annually in Morocco and Israel, too.

Mysticism and popular Judeo-Muslim holiness

Any attempt to identify the phenomenon of Jewish mystical effervescence in

Morocco, as H. Zafrani indicates to us³⁷, requires a thorough knowledge of local socio-cultural context, but also of the historical and intellectual evolution of Muslim mystic.

The importance of the spiritual quest for Jews and Muslims alike is rooted in

The interpretation of "divine blessing" which means:

- The quest for the Baraka through the Ziyārah / Hīlūlah where it is located:

Sanctuary, person (saint), source, cave, object, etc.

- The proximity of the holy "wali Allah", friend of god
- Brotherhood life in order to access the mysteries of the divinity

The worship of saints (mystics) insists that divine experience is not whole, but unfolds during different spiritual stages (Al-maqāmāt). Indeed, if the main characteristic of the cult of saints among Muslims results in a veneration of the saint that can take place during his lifetime and subsequently from his descendants, among the Jews it is the posthumous veneration that dominates³⁸

In Jewish Morocco marabout, and the associated rituals, are late developments, probably not much earlier than the mid-nineteenth century. Later they gained much saliency, and in latter-day Israel attained major dimensions. In precolonial Morocco, although the potential was there, the phenomenon was far less important.

As Stephen Sharot argued earlier in his contribution, Jewish cultures are variously informed, sometimes molded, by the surrounding non-Jewish majority. However, beyond this general point, on which historians are generally agreed, there are open questions about the nature and details of this influence,

Tssadikin do not die, they keep on living', remarked to me an informant in Sefrou several years ago, when there was still a Jewish community left in that Moroccan town, just south of Fez" S. Deshen et al. (eds.), *Jews among Muslims*

³² Norman A. Stillman, "tsaddīq and Marabout in Morocco," in *The Sephardi and Oriental Jewish Heritage*, ed. Issachar Ben-Ami (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, the Hebrew University, 1982), 489–500

³⁶ Term used to describe food that complies with the strict dietary standards of traditional Jewish law.

For many Jews, keeping kosher is about more than just health or food safety. It is about reverence and adherence to religious tradition

³⁷ Zafrani, Haim, 1996, *Kabale, mystical life and magic*, Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, p.13

³⁸ Ben Ami, Isasher. 1990, *Cult of Judeo-Muslim Saints and Pilgrimages in Morocco*, Paris: Maisonneuve Larouse, p.23

³² Chouraqui, André, 1998, *History of the Jews in North Africa* (Tom II), Paris: Rocher, pp. 09-52

³³³³ Jeannine Drouin, « Un cycle oral hagiographique dans le moyen-atlas marocain », *paris university V René-Descartes Séries Sorbonne 2*

³⁴ Popular culture essentially refers to the culture of the illiterate and illiterate

The veneration of holy men, both living and dead, is a well-known hallmark of popular religion among Jews and Muslims in Morocco and, indeed, throughout North Africa. Most observers of the Maghrebi cultural scene have noted the phenomenon for several hundred years - at least as far back as German Mouette in the seventeenth century's there is a considerable body of ethnographic and anthropological literature on North African Muslim hagiolatry. Much of this work is descriptive and is devoted to the folklore and cultic practices associated with saints' shrines or with Muslim brotherhoods (*turuq*, *tariqit*, or *tawti'if*). There is much less scholarly literature on the Jewish veneration of holy men, although most of the ethnographic work on Moroccan Jews gives it at least a passing mention.

In most of the literature dealing with Muslim or Jewish hagiolatry, the approach to the phenomenon is strikingly similar. So too is the analysis when there is any at all. A strong distinction is usually made between official, higher, monotheistic religion and the popular, primitive, hagiolatry religion, which in its most debased form - as viewed by this kind of scholarship - becomes outright anthropopathy.

The etymology of the word "marabout" comes from the Arabic word *مرابط* *murābiṭ*, which meant to the origin "pious man who garrisoned in a border fortress" therefore "Moujāhid". The word *marabout* / *āmurābit*, resulting from this long evolution and having lost all military connotation, is used in the western Islamic world to denote a locally revered figure or a master of a mystical brotherhood.

In his book *Judeo-Muslim Pilgrimages of Morocco*, L. Voinot does not fail to make allusion to the category of anonymous saints. It thus draws up an important inventory of phenomenon of pilgrimages and offers a reading based on two types of veneration.

It therefore evokes the pilgrimages intended for historically identified saints, established through a scholarly biography and a chain, "silsila", recognized. To this first category, it contrasts the pilgrimage where the identity of the saint is unknown; this last veneration occurs generally in pre-monotheistic places of worship in Morocco³⁹ the "Ziyārah / Hilūlah" is seen as an emotional journey that is being prepared meticulously in order to sublimate the soul. It often consisted of moving physical, which is growing and becomes a danger to be franchised. In this regard, the ziyārah is built around several common rituals:

- "N-niya", good intention, is the first rule for successful ziyārah.
- Purification: physical (ritual bath) and psychological (fasting).
- Preparation for the encounter with the sacred (Baraka): a saint, a sanctuary, a tomb,
A spring, a cave...
- Offerings: animal sacrifices or natural gifts.
- A common ritual dish: "ma'arūf".

In the Moroccan context, the ritual is very often linked to the reasons that justify the invocation of the saint. The

rites of ziyārah are therefore different depending on the nature of the requests.

The hagiographic poems "piyyut" sung in the ziyārah-s are often expressed in a symbolic language common to Jews and Muslims and bearers of values, codes and religious and magical symbols

Issa char Ben Ami said that 652 figures could be counted Hagiographic, of which Moroccan Jews and Muslims commonly venerate 126.

This last category is itself organized around three sub-Categories:

- ♦ 90 Jewish saints worshiped by Muslims.
- ♦ 36 saints claimed at the same time by the two communities.
- ♦ 14 Muslim saints worshiped by Jews

This common veneration of the saints results from the notion of Baraka (divine grace). Like the Muslim Marabout, the Jewish saint, in addition to his merit of divine origin, possesses the Baraka, which makes him a source of blessings for those who meet him. The Saint can confer his Baraka on people or objects that come into contact with him, or even on his tomb, if he is with his grave, if he is dead. Curiously, the Baraka of the grave where the Saint is buried is greater than that of the living Saint himself. A part of this Baraka of the Saint is often passed on to his transmitted to the members of his immediate family, and to his descendants, who take advantage of and may even derive some benefit from it. The analysis and interpretation of the analysis and interpretation of the common veneration of saints shows that it is a religious phenomenon that draws on sources in time and is linked to ancient myths, but taking into account local specificities.

Tssadiq concept

The concept of the Tsaddiq (Holy Man) was deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition

"The presence of a saint was a basic fact in the cultural reality of the Moroccan Jew, a central idiom around which his experiences were articulated"⁴⁰

Within the various Jewish groups, Sephardic or Ashkenazi, outside North Africa, pious rabbis and charismatic sages were assigned attributes of sanctity and their pious rabbis and charismatic sages have been assigned attributes of sanctity and their tombs have become their tombs have become popular centres of pilgrimage. Accordingly, it is worth noting that the phenomenon analysed here, while intimately linked to indigenous Moroccan traditions, is also traditions, is also rooted in the Jewish religion, at least in its less formal and more popular aspects. In addition, popular aspects. The saints were charismatic individuals honoured for their learning and piety. They were believed to possess a special spiritual strength and the potential power of divine grace. This spiritual power, which does not disappear after the death of the holy man, can be after the death of the holy man, can be used for the help and benefit of his followers.

³⁹ Voinot, L. 1948, *Judeo-Muslim pilgrimages to Morocco*, Paris: Larose / IHEM, Tome IV, pp. 1-2

⁴⁰ Vincent Crapanzano, Vivian Garriso (dir.), *Case Studies in Spirit Possession*, New York, Wiley Interscience, 1977, p. 43

In terms of popularity and importance, the Jewish saints of Morocco can be classified on a continuum from the Tsaddikas to the continuum from local tzaddikim, known only to a particular congregation, to regional regional saints, to saints venerated by a very large number of worshippers throughout of the faithful throughout the country we can List of Important Jewish Saints in Morocco:

- Knar El Kbit – Rabbi Yehuda Jabari
- Ouezzane – R. Arman Bendiwane
- Fez – Lalla Solica Tasadika, Haim Cohen, Yhouda Ben Attar, Clock Tower of Maimonides
- Sefrou – R. Moshe Elbaz and the masters of the Cave, Eliahou Harraoch, David Arazil
- Rabat – Sale: R. Eliezer de Avila and Raphael Encaoua, Mohammed V, Chalom Zaoui
- Ben Ahmed – R. Yahia Elkhder

Hilloula vs Moussem: similar rites and cultural symbiosis

Beliefs and practices related to the veneration of saints have played a fundamental role in the life of many Jews in Morocco, role in the lives of many Jews in Morocco, as "Moroccan Jews felt connected to their saints felt connected to their saints and venerated them in an eminently Maghrebi way".

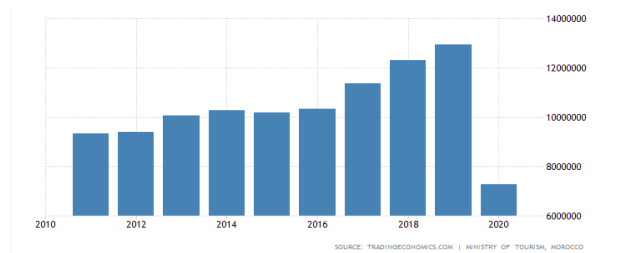
In the case of the most renowned saints, thousands of people from all over the country gathered around the tomb for several days for extraordinary festivities, during which they danced, chanted, prayed and lit candles: this is the Hilloula. Similar to the Jewish Hilloula, Muslims celebrate the Moussem, 'the great one', once or twice a year. Moussem, the "great one", once or twice a year, in spring and autumn, only in the sanctuary.

The organisation of the festivities, which continue for several days, is the responsibility of the the organisation of the festivities, which continue for several days, is the responsibility of the marabout's descendants, the muqaddam or the person who has taken over the shrine.

Symbolic signs such as the stone, the tree, and the spring, whose meaning is known, often reveal the sacred space, here the site of the saints. The time of Hilloula and Moussem is a sacred time that differs from ordinary time. Nature is therefore charged with a religious value that Jews and Muslims, from the earliest times, have respected

Saints and tourism?

"there is no tourism without tourists, and only their presence, at a specific time and with specific means, makes it possible to identify a place that is or is about to become touristy" *Philippe Duhamel*⁴¹



Related	Last	Previous	Unit	Reference
Tourist Arrivals	7250000.00	12932260.00		Dec/20

Fig2: the tourist arrivals source: Ministry Of tourism Morocco

About 80,000: Jewish tourists who visited Morocco in 2018. The average expenditure per tourist is around 11,000 DH excluding air links (mainly via Istanbul, Malta or Athens) 70% of this travel agency market (i.e. 50,000 people/year), an evolution of 32% between 2017 and 2018. About 50 tourist circuits of Moroccan Jews for the month of October.

Morocco hopes its improved ties with Israel and centuries-old Jewish history will help it offset some of the tourist trade it has lost to the global pandemic by bringing a surge of Israeli visitors once flights restart soon

In general, the basic Jewish route starts in Casablanca, Rabat via Marrakech for three days, Essaouira 3 days Safi 2 days Agadir 3 days and ends in Fez.

Here, Main jobs in Jewish Tourism in morocco:

- Tour operators: These are the T.O. (tour operators). They represent companies, which devise and develop package tours, including transport, accommodation, visits and entertainment.

- Travel agencies: They offer all services related to tourism, such as ticketing and the sale of organised (package) trips. Some agencies also develop an incoming service, including the reception of foreign tourists.

- Transporters: This category includes all the transport industries linked to tourism, i.e. airlines, shipping companies, coach operators, taxis, etc.

- Occupations related to tourist accommodation: These are people who work in tourist accommodation facilities (hotels, gites, inns, riads, campsites, etc.)

Restaurant staff: This includes all those who work in restaurants, snack bars, etc., and are involved in catering for tourists.

- Receptionists: hosts who welcome foreign tourists and provide them with all the information they need. They are supposed to provide answers to all the visitors' questions.

- The director of the tourist office: He is responsible for promoting and selling his town and region, making the best use of the resources available to the structure he manages.

- The profession of tourist development officer: He/she is responsible for promoting the tourist development policy of a given geographical area. Depending on the structure that employs him1/her, he/she is also called a local development agent, a country coordinator, a technical assistant or a local development officer.

- Product manager: This is often a specialist in a geographical area, a country that he or she knows like the back of his or her hand, or a type of travel, such as horse

⁴¹ Professor of Geography at the University of Angers

riding.

- The job of a guide-accompanier: This is sometimes called an agent-accompanier or simply a travel guide. They are the ambassadors of the TO and must ensure that the trip runs smoothly. He is the guarantor of the tourist group.

- The job of the interpreter-guide: He is responsible for accompanying groups of tourists, commenting on organised visits to cities, monuments, sites and museums. These comments must be made in the language of the group concerned and be adapted to the level of each audience.

In addition to the direct jobs in tourism, there are also indirect jobs such as sales representatives, crafts men, museum workers, service providers, etc.

Religious and cultural tourism: a diversity of practices

Today it is difficult to classify the people who go to places of pilgrimage because of the multiplicity of tourist, The fact that the authorities of the sanctuaries hesitate about the term to be used to designate those who go to the places of pilgrimage, designating them sometimes as pilgrims, sometimes as religious tourists and more generally as visitors, invites us to study very precisely the spatial practices of these visitors

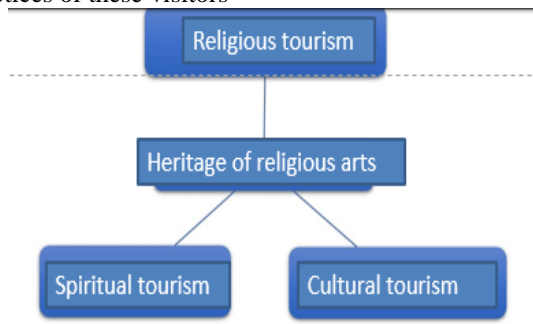


Fig3: the figure of religious tourism

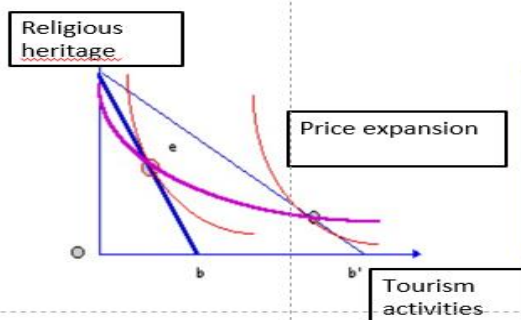


Fig4: the expansion of the tourism

Another extension of economic income that can be generated by heritage is the creation of induced services, which take advantage of the image of heritage to develop their activities, whether they are the image of heritage to develop their activities, whether religious, cultural or non-cultural. The religious arts and crafts sector are a very good example, because beyond the conservation dimensions they are also looking for creativity, of which heritage is a frequently used source. Their creations create benefit, which contributes to reinforce the image and the notoriety of heritage. Thus, heritage becomes a real lever for development and not a reflection of the past.

Conclusion

The rituals of Jewish and Muslim pilgrimages in Morocco certainly have a number of points of convergence, but they also contain divergences, because it is in the cultural practices that one can distinguish the belonging of the other and consequently base oneself to recognise the identity of the subjects that one meets in a secular society.

divergences, for it is in cultural practices that one can distinguish one's belonging from the other and consequently base oneself to recognise the identity of the subjects one meets in an indistinct secularity. As a result, cultural practices are the manifestations of belonging in manifestations of belonging in the real situations experienced by the actors of sociability

The business resulting from Jewish heritage tourism in Morocco is so important then; the development of it needs to lead many travel agencies, and other tourism businesses to become specialists in this field. There are also direct economic benefits derived from the resident Moroccan Jewish community as well as the local Moroccan economies. The restaurant sector is also involved in order offer exclusively Moroccan Jewish cuisine calling in French "Cacher".

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Rural tourism in Morocco: a missed opportunity before and after covid-19! Case study of Fez-Meknes region

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Abstract

International tourism bodies consider rural tourism as a lever for economic development that contributes to the reduction of rural poverty and the stability of this population and the revitalization of rural areas. Like tourist countries, Morocco is committed to several tourism strategies insofar as it presents resources in natural environment and biodiversity as well as cultural riches and remarkable traditions. However, the tourist offer that is concentrated on the coast is almost absent in the hinterland and rural destinations. This strategic choice has produced shortfalls and particularly in times of the covid-19 pandemic for tourism operators and for Morocco, whose Fez-Meknes Region is a good example for the consequences of the concentration of supply on seaside tourism.

Keywords— Rural tourism, Poverty, PAT, Fez-Meknes region, Covid-19.

I. Introduction

Tourism is an ancient activity, which has taken on a global dimension in the twentieth century. It has become a fundamental economic sector in many developed and developing countries alike, making it an essential factor in their development.

Certainly, in 2019, the G20 countries called on country representatives to promote tourism's contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This belief results from the sector's ability to create decent jobs, enable vulnerable and poor people to access the necessary means and participate in the preservation of the environment (ILO, 2019). Tourism is considered as a powerful driver of economic growth as it accounts for 15% of global employment, 10% of global GDP, \$1700 billion in global exports and \$61.8 billion in global FDI (UNWTO, 2019).

Since 2000, tourism has become one of the sectors that

the State has chosen, after agriculture, at the top of its economic policy priorities. This importance results

from its contribution to the creation of employment items and foreign exchange earnings. It is in this ambition that the State has implemented two major tourism strategies vision 2010 and vision 2020. Those two visions' objectives were to strengthen the natural and cultural positioning and to implement new mechanisms to support this sector. In addition, it must be noted that the vision 2020 strategy has

made it a priority to promote rural tourism, which contains great material and immaterial wealth., because this branch can play a fundamental role as an alternative activity to the overexploitation of natural resources. On the other hand, this type of tourism can be more of a catalyst for transferring money from richer to poorer regions, thus improving the quality of life of the rural population. The cornerstone of Vision 2020 has been to diversify the tourism offer by giving more attention to green and sustainable tourism and thus to rural areas that contain a great natural and cultural wealth.

II. Motivation & Methodology

A. Motivation

The covid-19 pandemic and the emergence of new variants continue to devastate the tourism sector worldwide. UNWTO statistics showed that this booming sector in 2019 accumulated a loss of \$2 trillion in 2021 due to the 98% drop in the number of international tourists (UNWTO, 2021). Like other countries, tourism in Morocco is impacted by a 79% drop in foreign tourist arrivals in 2020 and a 72% drop in overnight stays recorded in the accommodation establishments. Similarly, foreign exchange earnings marked a loss of -54% or 36.4 billion Dirhams.

On the other hand, rural tourism has revealed its importance and resilience in the face of this health crisis, which imposes new challenges and opportunities. In this context, the UNWTO Secretary-General stressed that "this crisis is an opportunity to rethink the tourism sector and the contribution it makes

to humanity and the planet and to do better by taking the shift towards more sustainable, inclusive and resilient tourism." Admittedly, the consequences of the health crisis have impacted the behavior of tourists to the extent that, after the easing of restrictions, they have expressed their growing desires to travel and go to their loved ones as well as to flee the cities and get into nature. This new Trends will allow rural tourism to be one of the first sectors to regenerate rural territories.

B. Methodology

This paper aims to highlight the difficulties that slow down the progress of rural tourism in Morocco after and before the health crisis by taking the Fez-Meknes region as a model of illustration. This region is characterized by a great natural and cultural wealth that is insufficiently exploited. To do this, the following methodology is proposed:

- Show the importance of rural tourism in contributing to economic and social development and especially its role in the phase of the health crisis.
- Raise the difficulties faced by the rural tourism offer in the Fez-Meknes region in order to participate in the fight against poverty and the preservation of the environment and make it resilient to economic and natural crises.

I- Economic development through rural tourism

I-1- Rural tourism and the economic take-off of the rural world

The tourism sector is a major economic sector in terms of foreign exchange flows, direct and indirect job creation and public and private investment.

This economic importance constantly challenges national and international leaders to give it more interest in structuring a tourism offer that could maximize its impact on the economic development of a nation. This economic impact stems from the diversification of the tourism offer which can take several forms: seaside tourism, green tourism, ecotourism, agritourism, rural tourism, etc.

On the occasion of World Tourism Day in 2020, the UN Secretary-General highlighted the importance of tourism as a driver of rural development, stressing that this economic sector supports millions of people and enables people who risk being left behind to find decent work and improve their living conditions.⁴²

In the same context, the UNWTO Secretary-General

stressed that tourism has proven to play a vital role for many rural communities. He also stated that the Tourism helps rural populations maintain their unique natural and cultural heritage through conservation projects, preservation of species at risk or forgotten traditions and flavors.⁴³

As a result, rural tourism could be a powerful vector for an economic take-off in the rural world, which generally contains a tangible and intangible heritage rich and interesting to discover. Indeed, in its statement to its General Assembly in 2020, UNWTO states that tourism could be a driver of positive change in rural areas by creating jobs and opportunities, driving economic growth and preserving culture.

As a result, rural tourism appears to be a tool par excellence to contribute to the solution of the problem of rural poverty. It serves countries to involve the poor in economic activities and to promote the conditions of economic activity and the economic growth. Similarly, tourism activities in rural areas offer greater opportunities for poverty reduction as they promote labor-intensive activities that provide employment opportunities for both women and the low-qualified people. (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2011)

The economic impacts of rural tourism on both the local population and the national economy have been conditioned by the serious commitment and indispensable support of the public authorities. Admittedly, their roles focus on the formulation of strategies and programs aiming at creating an enabling environment for private investment and on the other hand, on mobilization, as part of a participatory, local actors, such as: non-profit / Profit Organizations and the local population.

I-2- The contribution of rural tourism to poverty reduction

Rural tourism is the practice of tourism in rural areas using local natural and cultural resources as well as involving the active participation of local populations in welcoming tourists. Thus, this tourism contributes concretely to the safeguarding of the rural, natural and cultural heritage.

Henri Grolleau (1994) defined rural tourism according to five criteria such as: - tourism activity is locally initiated; - its development is controlled locally; - the

⁴² <https://news.un.org/fr/tags/tourisme-rural>

² <https://www.unwto.org/fr/news/tourisme-et-developpement-rural>

local character (nature, gastronomy, atmosphere, etc.) is valued; - rigorous local management; - Most of the economic benefits are local. It is in this way, rural tourism is an offer integrated into rural space and rural culture, inspired by authenticity, a preserved nature of local products, a spirit of discovery, a certain slowness, local control of decisions and a preponderant place of human relations within small family tourist units and village communities (Alain Laurent, 2009)

The rural world generally suffers from several difficulties that prevent the population to overcome the pitfalls of poverty and vulnerability and to participate in local development. Indeed, geographical isolation, the insufficiency or absence of a level of training or education are all factors that do not favor private initiative or the employment of rural people in tourism projects. However, rural tourism represents an opportunity for the said population by offering them the opportunities to diversify their activities related to transport, guiding, accommodation, catering and retail trade as well as to share their know-how. In addition, the promotion of tourism requires a minimum of infrastructure such as roads, electricity, drinking water, sewerage, health services...

In its annual report published in 2002, UNWTO recommended that tourism should be oriented as the primary instrument for eradicating poverty in the poorest countries, particularly the least developed countries (LDCs), by providing development and employment to people living on less than \$1 a day (p: 111). As a result, through training and mobilization of local associations within the framework of national programs and international for the promotion of rural tourism, tourism makes it possible to catch up with development (Vellas, 2013, p:19). In addition, the involvement of the poverty dimension in the programs of international organizations and local NGOs facilitates the transition from mass and luxury tourism to community-based tourism (Mourière, 2012, p:84). Moreover, in addition to the collective actions of these NGOs which participate directly or indirectly in favor of the promotion of tourism, militant tourism (Vallas, 2013) results from the responsible and direct participation of individual tourists in voluntary actions in the form of awareness and training. Their tourism spending boosts local economic activity.

Thus, rural tourism attracts the attention of international donors in order to participate in local development by providing the possibility for the local population to access sources of capital and training

cycles. Something that helps people, especially women, to earn income-generating activities directly or indirectly related to tourism. It must be noted that the contribution of rural tourism to poverty reduction can only be felt through the creation of jobs and the reduction of rural exodus, as well as through access to basic infrastructure and the reduction of illiteracy.

However, tourism in reality is a hope of poverty reduction insofar as the implementation of major projects requires enormous financial resources and a solid political will and thus, generally, States express a financial incapacity that limits the role that tourism can play in favor of the local population. Moreover, the projects undertaken, in this sense, are only pilot projects for the decoration of rural space (Vellas, 2013) and to show the commitment of the nation in the realization of the recommendations of international bodies.

I-3- Rural tourism and the covid-19 pandemic

The covid-19 pandemic has tipped the world in 2020 and particularly the tourism sector which has recorded huge losses in terms of export earnings 1300 million dollars equivalent of loss of 45 to 70% of these revenues, jobs lost about 120 million posts. (ILO, 2020)

New challenges have been imposed with the covid-19 health crisis but also new opportunities (Bentaher, 2021). Indeed, this health crisis has increased the desire to travel and see loved one's day after day and the easing of travel restrictions people are asking more for travel to other regions. This has highlighted tourism nationally and internationally.

The pandemic has accelerated travel to rural areas as the booking rate in 2015 was less than 10% in 2021 (UNWTO, 2021). Hence the importance of rural tourism worldwide.

II- Rural tourism in Morocco: ignored and almost untapped sector!

II-1- The economic weight of the rural world in Morocco

Since its independence, Morocco has made significant efforts to develop the rural world in view of its economic and social importance. Indeed, it is characterized by a rural area that extends over 90% of the country's surface and represents 40% of the Moroccan population. Similarly, the rural world contains 43% of the country's assets and its

agricultural production

meets 65% of cereal needs, 96% of milk needs and 100% of poultry needs (EESC, 2017). As a result, the agricultural sector became the spearhead of the Kingdom's economic policy choices.

However, progress in terms of investment and equipment remains insufficient, particularly in terms of water, access to basic services and infrastructure, and the economic benefits of agricultural strategies remain mixed in view of the needs of the rural population and the requirements of decent living conditions. Admittedly, the rural world in Morocco is marked by a worrying economic backwardness insofar as it registers almost 85.4% of people living in rural areas suffer from multidimensional poverty, about 54% of areas are isolated and an illiteracy rate of around 47.5% (HCP, 2014). In terms of infrastructure, rural areas have a deficit in health services 52% of rural people do not have a RAMEC card and more than 60% of them do not have medical coverage or AMO. In addition, 1.3 million people do not have electricity and 3.5 million of them do not have access to drinking water (EESC, 2017). Thus, it must be noted that these results contribute to the accentuation of the rural exodus and the phenomena of crime and slums in urban areas.

No one can ignore the nodal role that Moroccan agriculture plays in terms of production and employment through its economic weight 12% of GDP and its contribution to the national job market 38% and around 74% of the rural working population (DEFP, 2019) but the economic and social problems that arise from agricultural policy choices call for political decision-makers to look at other complementary mechanisms allowing, a secondly, to deal with the issue of the instability of the rural population and, on the other hand, to put an end to social inequalities and the concentration of wealth of a minority of this population. Therefore, it should be noted that rural tourism is considered one of the economic strategies contributing to

the development of the rural world and particularly to the promotion and diversification of economic activities of the local population (UNWTO, 2020)

This economic importance of rural tourism is well and truly recognized by Morocco in its tourism strategies insofar as the assets and tourism potential in rural areas are attractive but untapped and unorganized. The development of rural tourism will allow a rural

population based on agriculture to have additional incomes, decent jobs and a great diversification of the rural economy.

II-2- Tourism strategies: "Vision 2010" and "Vision 2020"

As part of the free trade agreement concluded between Morocco and the United States in 2002 and according to a survey funded by USAID among tourists visiting the Kingdom each year and visiting seaside resorts or imperial cities and which shows that two out of three tourists would like to spend more time in rural areas, , Morocco has signed an agreement with USAID to develop a rural tourism promotion (RTP) program to help Morocco contribute to the ambitious goal of attracting 10 million tourists by 2010. This signature expressed Morocco's serious commitment to developing tourism in rural areas. As a result, it embarked on the 2010 strategy by implementing a new approach for this tourism under the brand "Pays d'Accueil Touristique (PAT)". Its purpose was to offer equitable benefits and to conserve the natural and cultural heritage. It is a tourist product aimed at making known the natural and heritage wealth of which the Moroccan rural world contains.

a- Tourism Strategy: "Vision 2010"

The 2010 vision aimed to achieve a record of 100,000 tourists in 2010 and it aims to catch up with rural tourism because of the priority given to the basic product of the Moroccan destination namely, seaside tourism on the one hand, and formalize and supervise the spontaneous initiatives of the local population in terms of welcoming foreign tourists wishing to discover the hinterland⁴⁴ (Berriane, 2016). The flagship product of this PAT vision has been limited to enriching the seaside tourism offer by promoting tourism activities in the different regions of the country. In this sense, the supervising ministry has envisaged the achievement of three objectives, namely, to create wealth for the local population. In consultation and participation with local stakeholders, complete the seaside tourism development project and rebalance regional tourism development.

This experience, borrowed from the experience of the PATs in France in 1976, was, however, remarkably

⁴⁴ Hinterland: covers all rural areas classified as marginal and vulnerable. These are the spaces and societies that did not lend themselves well to the implementation of agricultural modernization policies, did not know or could not capitalize on the major transformations of the productivism economy and are therefore often considered backward and immobile.

lacking in political will. Indeed, out of 24 PAT only 5 PAT had the chance to see the light of the day, it is PAT of Chefchaouen, Ifran, Imouzzar des Ida Outanane, Zagora and Ouarzazate. This failure to promote rural tourism in the various target regions are mainly due to the virtual absence of the effective involvement of the local population and local actors during the development of the rural tourism development program and particularly the design of the PAT.

As a result, the mixed results of the PAT have prompted the supervising ministry to replace it with another program called "Qariaté" as part of a new tourism strategy "Vision 2020".

b- Tourism Strategy: "Vision 2020"

Strategy 2020 aimed to complete the unfinished investments of Vision 2010 and develop new products under a more integrated approach to spatial planning. The third axis of this strategy entitled: "Green-eco-sustainable development" focuses on rural tourism under a new brand "nature offer" which finds its strength in a model composed of three pillars, namely, growth supported, responsible management of the environment and respect for socio-cultural authenticity.

However, it is obvious to note the absence of a strategy dedicated to the promotion of rural tourism in the 12 regions of the Kingdom. The table below shows this observation:

Table.1: Distribution of tourist hotel establishments according to the regions of Morocco

Source: author's calculation, 2018 data

II-3- The impact of the pandemic on tourism in Morocco

This pandemic caused a halt in tourism activity in Morocco and it generated between 2020 and 2022 a loss of 138 billion dirhams. Foreign tourist arrivals fell by -79% in 2020 and overnight stays recorded at classified accommodation establishments fell by 72%. In addition, travel revenues have expected a loss of -54% or 36.5 billion dirhams (Ministry of Tourism, 2021).

III.The rural tourism offer in the Fez-Meknes region: diagnosis and prospects

III .1. Presentation of the Fes Meknes region

The Fez-Meknes region is a region made up of seven

Region / EH in rural area	In n	Ca mp site s	Host farms	Gîte	Total des E.H	% E.H en rural areas	Num ber of rural com mune s
Tanger-Tétouan-Asila	3	1	0	31	320	10.93	149
Oriental	1	0	0	6	113	6.19	147
Fès-Meknès	11	4	0	77	402	22.88	194
Rabat-salé-kenitra	0	1	0	2	96	3.125	114
Béni-Mellal Khénifra	7	0	1	76	167	50.29	164
Casablanca-Settat	2	1	1	3	214	3.27	153
Marrakech-Safi	18	6	27	46	1975	4.91	251
Drâa-Tafilalet	78	6	27	46	381	4.91	109
Souss-Massa	11	8	4	37	247	24.29	175
Guelmim-Oued Noun	5	3	0	15	65	35.38	53
Laâyoune-Sakia El Hamra	1	1	0	0	47	4.25	20
Dakhla-Oued Ed-Dahab	0	0	0	0	28	0	13

provinces (Taza, Taounate, Boulmane, Ifran, Elhajeb, Moulay Yaakoub and Sefrou) and two prefectures namely, Meknes and Fez which represents the capital

of the region. Its position in the center-north of Morocco, the region is a passage of both human and economic movements.

Fig.1: Fez-Meknes region with its seven provinces and two prefectures



Source: Morocco of the regions 2018, HCP

III-2- The Tourist Assets of the RFM

a- Road infrastructure of the RFM

The FM region has a road network classified 7620km including 202 km motorway, 74 km expressways and the railway spreads over 200 km. It contains a single civilian airport located in the city of Fes (see map n°2 below).

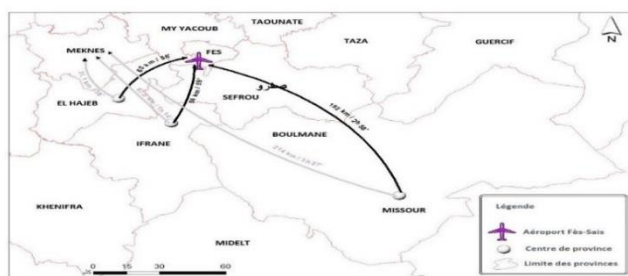
Fig.2: Presence of a single airport in the city of Fés

Source: Diagnostic-RFM Report, 2019

In addition, it is characterized by a large predominance of provincial roads which represent 55% of the roads in the region and is followed by national roads 16%. Whereas classified roads and regional roads represent successively 14% and 13% as well as 2% of these roads correspond to motorways⁴⁵.

b- The tourist characteristics of the Fez-Meknes region

Internationally, the two cities Fes and Meknes are known for cultural tourism thanks to their historical and cultural heritage. Other provinces that contain an

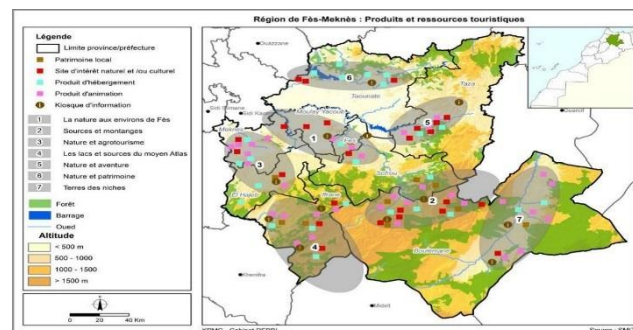


abundance of natural resources (thermal stations,

forests, waterfalls, mountains,) reason or otherwise, untapped and ignored.

It should be noted that the FM region is bounded to the north by the hills at the foot of the Rif and characterized by the Middle Atlas Mountains and the high hills of the Missouri as well as the plains of Saiss⁴⁶. The tourist map below shows the tourist wealth of the Fez-Meknes region at the level of these different territories. Certainly, it shows the tourist clear positioning and the geographical location and accessibility of the Territory. This one is characterized by a diversity and contrasts of sites and landscapes and niche areas with high added value: hydrotherapy, health and well-being, agritourism, hunting....

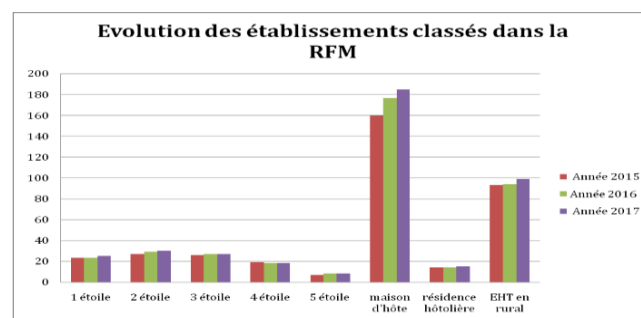
Fig.3: the tourist characteristics of the RFM



Source: Moroccan tourism company

III-3-The tourism offer in the rural world of the RFM

Fig.4: Evolution of the numbers of classified EHTs between 2015 and 2017



Source: graphic made by the author

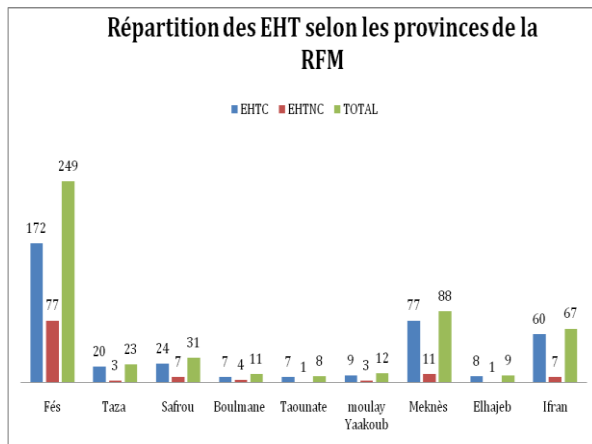
According to this graph, it appears that the number of classified EHTs increased slightly between 2015 and 2017 and it is noticeable that guest houses located in urban areas monopolize the significant share of the number of E. coli. H.T at the RFM level. Similarly, it should be noted that these EHTs are distributed, as

⁴⁵ <http://www.equipement.gov.ma>

⁴⁶ <http://www.hcp.ma/file/104402>

shown in the graph below, over three cities, namely, Fez, Meknes and Ifran.

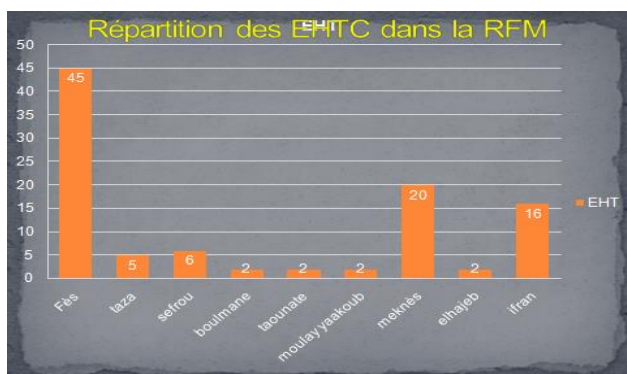
Fig. 5: Distribution of EHT by RFM provinces



Sources: graphic made by the author, 2020 data

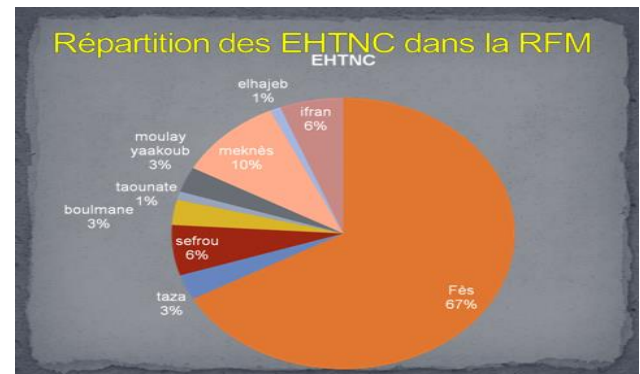
Indeed, the analysis of graph n°3 makes it possible to deduce that the two prefectures Fez and Meknes as well as the province of Ifrane are marked by a predominance of classified and unclassified EHTs. This one seems to be strengthening since the two prefectures have an international tourist vocation thanks to their cultural and historical heritage and the province of Ifrane had a particular political and economic attention because of its natural assets against the six provinces of the region that contain important natural, cultural and historical resources. This territorial distribution of EHT is indeed shown in the following two graphs:

Fig.6 : Distribution of EHT by RFM provinces



Source: graphic made by the author, 2020 data

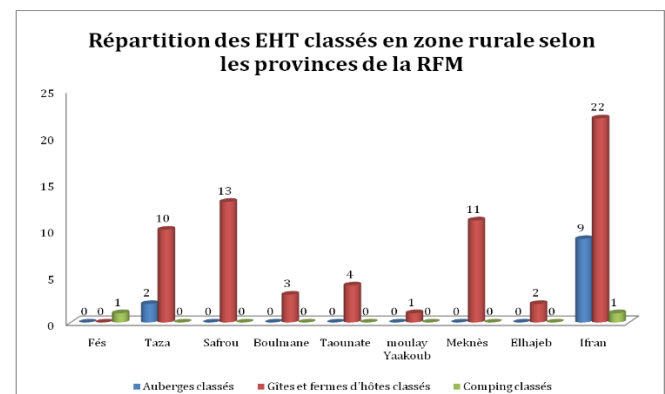
Fig7: Distribution of NHTS by RFM provinces



Sources: graphic made by the author, 2020data

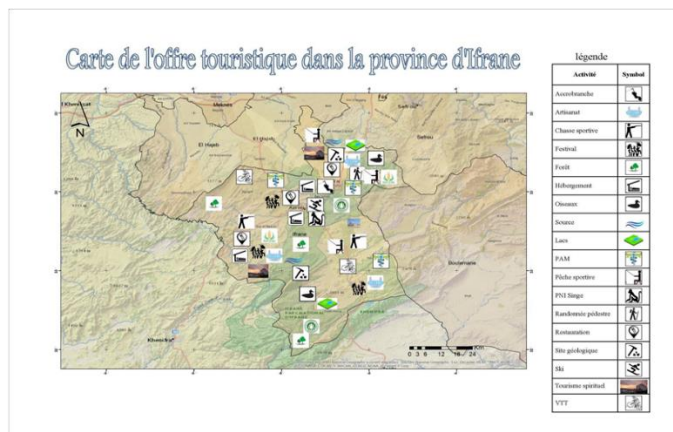
The analysis of graph n°4 shows that rural tourism in the Fez-Meknes region is almost inactive. Indeed, its activities are concentrated in the province of Ifrane, which includes the majority of EHTs located in rural areas. In addition, the number of guides to natural areas represents 31 at the level of the region, 16 of which operate at the level of the province of Ifrane, 11 at the level of Fez and 4 on the territory of Taza (DRTF, 2021)

Fig.8: Distribution of the number of EHT classified in rural areas by RFM provinces

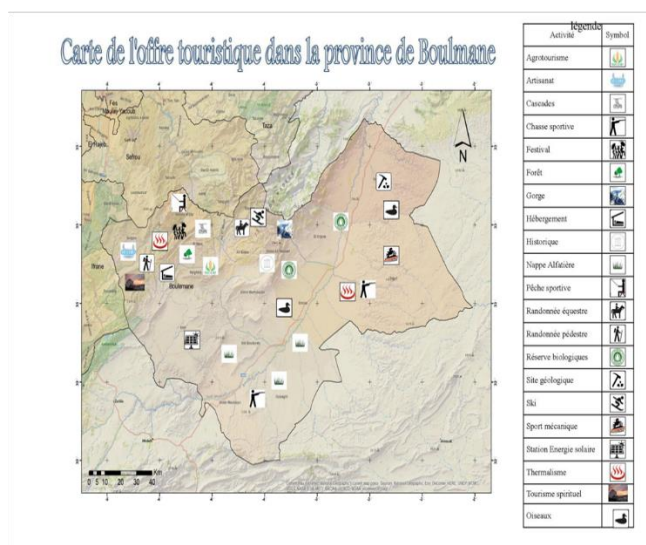


Source graphic made by the author, 2020 data

On the other hand, the three provinces: Boulemane, Ifrane and El Hajeb, for example, are rich in their natural and cultural resources and contain only three tourist facilities located in rural areas. The following tourist maps show the natural and cultural wealth:



Source: diagnostic report, RFM, 2108



Source: diagnostic report, RFM, 2108



Source: diagnostic report, RFM, 2108

III-4- The negative effects of the covid-19 health crisis on tourism activity

Before the health crisis, the tourism offer in the FM Region was marked by low competitiveness and the absence of product diversification as well as the scarcity of road signs and site interpretation. However, the crisis has ceased the activity of all accommodation establishments with the exception of hotels being made available to the medical profession and confined patients as well as foreign tourists who have not been able to reach their countries.

Between 2019 and 2020, tourist arrivals and overnight stays recorded a sharp drop successively of -72% and 71% and hotels suffered this loss of -81%. However, local tourism has been able to resist by its internal flows despite travel restrictions. Tourist arrivals at bed and breakfasts showed a decrease of 25% in contrast to guest houses (-79%) (DRTF, 2021)

However, rural tourism, during and after this pandemic, could play a resilience factor. Indeed, the psychic effects of it on people have propelled the desire to travel and the intention to go to other places in search of new experiences. The rural world allows tourists to meet their needs for outdoor escape and disconnect.

Conclusion

To conclude, rural tourism is an economic opportunity missed by Morocco which is characterized by unprecedented natural, cultural and historical assets. In these tourism strategies, it is obvious to note that it has given an important place to seaside tourism and has thus participated in the widening of territorial inequalities.

The covid-19 health crisis has confirmed the failures of its strategies that have preferred foreign tourists by ignoring domestic demand and rural destination. The RFM is a good illustration of this oversight and which spares an extraordinary wealth because of its geographical position and its cultural and historical heritage.

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APPLYING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN PROTECTED AREAS. CASE OF ZOMBITSE VOHIBASIA NATIONAL PARK – MADAGASCAR

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Abstract

In the past two decades, the profound and rapid changes that have taken place in the world have been expressed in changes in tourism. (Butler, 1999). More than anything else, the essence of tourism is the adoption of the idea of 'sustainable growth.' It has gained global popularity and widespread since the appearance of the word at the end of the 90's.

Sustainable tourism is focused on natural resource management and conservation (Liu, 2003). Based on availability, when tourism is applied on natural assets or resources may be classified into three key groups: ubiquity, which occurs everywhere; commonality: widely available in many areas; rarity: occurring in very few places (Healey & Ilbery, 1990).

To go further into the research, a semi-structured interview was sent by e-mail to the National Park Manager in order to discover the protected area and sustainable tourism in the area. The study will be carried out where the Zombitse-Vohibasia National Park is a national park located in southwest Madagascar.

Keywords: Sustainable tourism, protected areas, Madagascar, National Park, Vohibasia National Park,

Introduction

Tourist destinations across the world are facing an increasing number of challenges. Entertainment markets, tourist destinations and interests and habits are constantly developing. Tourists then are more experienced, more critical, and more conscious of quality and are seeking better experiences as well as 'good value for money'.

Therefore, the principle of sustainable tourism can most fundamentally have been seen as an application of ideas for sustained development to the tourism field (Weaver, 2006). The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987) described sustainable development as a mode of development that meets the needs of now without impacting the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'

The motivations, expectations, and perceptions of tourists impact the tourism resource itself in the sense that they evaluate what object or destination becomes a tourist attraction and its relative market value. The diverse structure and the changing value of the distinct forms of tourism products can largely be explained by the evolution of the demand towards tourism.

Sustainable tourism, afterward, has become an increasingly popular area of research since the 1980s and the 1990s.

However with false assumptions and arguments, the debate regarding sustainable tourism is now fragmented, disjointed, and often imperfect (Liu, 2003).

The concept of sustainable development has its sources in environmentalism, which gained fame in the 1970s. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN, 1980) first highlighted the concrete idea of sustainable development in its World Conservation Strategy.

As a local product, tourism requires three levels of resources: tourist attractions, including natural, cultural, and purpose-built attractions; infrastructure to support tourist activities; social and physical environments, including community hospitality.

Sustainable tourism or alternative tourism is thus, at best, a micro solution to what is ultimately a macro problem (Wheeller, 1991). It remains to be seen if the International Year of Ecotourism 2002 introduced by the WTO and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) really led to the advancement of the world tourism.

The World Tourism Organization (WTO, 2001) presented a definition of sustainable tourism as the following: "The development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, and biological diversity and life support systems".

Zombitse-Vohibasia National Park is a national park located in southwestern Madagascar, 147 km northeast of Toliara (Tuléar) in the Atsimo-Andrefana region, created in 1997. It has a surface area of 36,308 ha, divided into three plots: The forest of Zombitse (16,845 ha) ; The Isoky Vohimena sites of (3,293 ha); Vohibasia (16,170 ha).

The park is situated at an altitude between 485m and 825m, it has a dry tropical climate with an average temperature of 23° to 24°C. Rainfall from 721 to 833 mm, the dry season from April to December, and becomes rainy from January to March.

This park has a tropical dry forest. Zombitse Vohibasia National Park is famous for its richness in rare bird species, endemic to Madagascar. It also counts 8 species of lemurs, some of which are almost threatened such as the case of the *Phaner furcifer pallescens*. This Protected Area has an exceptional biodiversity, because of it; the national park becomes a great site for research area by excellence. The National Park is home for about sixty birds, 47% of which are common to Madagascar, 24% endemic to the Malagasy

region and one local vulnerable species - *Phylastrephus aperti*.

To go deeper into the research, a semi-structured interview was sent by email to the manager of the national park, in order to discover the protected area and the sustainable tourism applied in this zone.

There were 15 questions, some of them were treating the protected area presentation: name, surface area, date of creation, meeting with the IUCN definition, management category, and others questions consisted on the International convention that the protected area is enrolled in, Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species, Ramsar and Wetlands ..., action to obtain the "World heritage", the "Green list" labels, IUCN Red Listed species, and about the sustainable tourism activities, the protected area threats, that the park is dealing with.

1. Sustainable tourism

The notion of sustainable tourism may be defined as the application of sustainable development approaches to the tourist industry (Weaver, 2006). The World Environment and Development Commission (WCED, 1987) defined sustainable development as "development that meets the requirements of the present without risking future generations' power to satisfy their own needs."

According to the English Tourism Council (ETC, 2001), the application of sustainable development concepts to tourism management includes tourist experience, industry profitability, community acceptance and benefit, and environmental conservation.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) promotes sustainable tourism, which it describes as "tourism that takes full account of its present and future economic, social, and environmental implications, satisfying the requirements of tourists, professionals, the environment, and host communities" (Charter of Sustainable Tourism, UNWTO 1995).

To a considerable degree, phrases like ecotourism and green tourism are often used interchangeably with the concept of sustainability. However, there was a transition towards the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s in which the social and cultural dynamics of the destination were tightly tied to the notion. In the latter decade of the twentieth century, there was a significant movement in the explanation of the term, encompassing economic and organizational viewpoints (Mason and Duquette 2008).

Mason (2008) defined sustainable tourism as 'non-intrusive, non-depleting, and renewable, environment-specific, natural in material make-up and presentation, and well-integrated into the local physical, social, cultural, and economic context.'

In light of this, Inskeep (1991) defined sustainable tourism as the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic requirements may be addressed while preserving cultural integrity, fundamental ecological processes, biological variety, and life support systems.

This definition is shared by the majority of writers. This definition, it is reasonable to say, adopts a generalist approach; hence, it is open to numerous interpretations. Again, it is acceptable to state that sustainable tourism has been accepted as a business model rather than an ideal. The physical environment was central to early concepts of sustainable tourism (Swarbrooke, 1998).

2. Definition of sustainable tourism

Mass tourism frequently has negative implications for host communities, such as price hikes, damage of natural or cultural property, loss of value, local traditions, westernization, and so on (Lansing and De Vries, 2007). As a result, sustainable tourism is promoted as an alternative to typical mass-motivated tourism based purely on revenue, with the goal of avoiding the concerns.

Mass tourism has struggled in recent decades, and sustainable tourism might provide a micro-solution. This notion assembles the WTO's 1993 definition, which states that "sustainable tourism addresses the demands of current visitors and host places while conserving and improving opportunities for the future." World Tourism Organization (WTO), 1993.

Sustainable tourism is a kind of tourism connected with infrastructures that, both now and in the future, work within natural capacity for natural resource regeneration and productivity (Eber, 1992).

Sustainable tourism is capable of assisting local communities while also providing a variety of economic possibilities and activities. The form of tourism that can maintain local economies without harming the environment on which they rely. Countryside Commission (Countryside Commission, 1995).

In terms of parks, sustainable tourism must be understood first and foremost in terms of sustainable ecosystems. (Woodley, 1993), and to adhere to the constraints set by ecological groups (Payne, 1993).

In other words, tourism respects the ecosystem and, as a result, does not contribute to its own extinction (Bramwell et al., 1996).

3. Sustainable tourism in protected areas destinations

The Tourism Concern, in collaboration with the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), reached and created 10 principles for sustainable tourism in the early 1990s, which are as follows:

1. Using resources sustainably.
2. Reducing over-consumption and waste.
3. Maintaining biodiversity.
4. Integrating tourism into planning.
5. Supporting local economies.
6. Involving local communities.
7. Consulting stakeholders and the public.
8. Training staff.
9. Marketing tourism responsibly.
10. Undertaking research.

Tourism Concern, 1991, together with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), sets out 10 principles for sustainable tourism.

- 1) Use resources on a sustainable basis. Conserving and sustainably using nature, social and cultural resources is critical and contributes to sustainability.
- 2) Minimizing overconsumption and waste. Reducing overconsumption and waste avoids costs to restore long-term environmental damage.
- 3) Maintaining biodiversity. Maintaining natural, social and cultural range is vital for long-time period sustainable tourism and creates a resilient base for the industry.
- 4) Incorporate tourism into planning. The development of tourism that is incorporated into the national and local strategic planning frameworks and conducts environmental impact assessments has improved the long-term viability of the tourism industry.
- 5) Supporting local economies. Tourism that supports a wide range of local economic activities and which takes environmental costs and values into account, both protects these economies and avoids environmental damage.
- 6) Involving local communities. The full involvement of local communities in the tourism sector not only benefits them and the environment in general but also improves the quality of the tourism experience.
- 7) Consulting stakeholders and the public. Consulting between the tourism industry and local communities, organizations and institutions are essential if they are to work alongside each other and resolve potential conflicts of interest.
- 8) Train employees. Staff training that integrates sustainable tourism into work practices and recruitment of personnel at all levels have improved the quality of tourism products.
- 9) Marketing tourism responsibly. Marketing that provides excursionists with the full and responsible information increases respect for the social, natural and artistic surroundings of destination areas and enhances client satisfaction.
- 10) Undertaking exploration. Ongoing exploration and monitoring by the assiduity using effective data collection and analysis are essential to help break problems and to bring benefits to destinations, the assiduity, and consumers. The first set of missions is concerned with the conservation and management of natural resources that contribute to the worldwide preservation and quality of the tourist environment.

Using the same logic of picture, we may understand steps to promote biodiversity (preservation of existing species and reintroduction of species, for example) as well as the general quality of the ecosystem and the steps taken to conserve it. Protection of natural resources as a guarantee of their soundness, quality, and administration.

It is also noticeable that for these two types of measurements (landscapes and biodiversity), what is used as a demonstration is originality: authentic and harmonious places in one case, and authenticity of the habitats in the other. Finally, from the standpoint of territorial

humanization, natural resource conservation may be seen as a modern method of exploiting the environment in a respectful manner, as a continuation of historical environmental protection.

4. Methodology

Fifteen questions were presented, some of which addressed the presentation of the protected area: name, surface area, date of creation, meeting the IUCN definition, management category, and other issues consisting of the International Conventions: Ramsar, Migratory Species, etc And then actions to receive the "World Heritage" and the "Green List" labels, the IUCN Red Listed Species and the threats to the protected area addressed by the park in relation to sustainable tourism activities.

5. Zombitse Vohibasia National Park

Zombitse-Vohibasia National Park was established in 1997 in southwestern Madagascar, 147 kilometers northeast of Toliara (Tuléar) in the Atsimo-Andrefana region.

The park is located between 485 and 825 meters above sea level and has a dry tropical environment with an average temperature of 23° to 24° C. Rainfall ranges from 721 to 833 mm. The dry season lasts from April to December, and the rainy season lasts from January to March.

The Zombitse Vohibasia National Park is well-known for its abundance of unique bird species that are native to Madagascar. It also has 8 lemur species, some of which are critically endangered, such as the *Phaner furcifer pallescens*.

This Protected Location boasts outstanding biodiversity; as a result of its high biodiversity, the National Park is a premier study area. The blooms of the Zombitse Vohibasia Reserve are made up of two didieraceae species native to this location.

The Zombitse Vohibasia National Park is home to endemic fauna, including sixty bird species, 47 percent of which are indigenous to Madagascar, as well as unique lacertilians and fragile species. In the Zombitse woodland, *Ispidina madagascariensis* was discovered.

It covers 36,308 acres and is split into three plots: the Zombitse forest (16,845 ha), the Isoky Vohimena sites (3,293 ha), and Vohibasia (16,170 ha). The Mahafaly and Tandroy are the major ethnic groups in the National Park. A semi-structured email interview was addressed to the national park manager in order to go deeper into the research and learn more about the protected area and the sustainable tourism that is practiced in this region.

6. Results

Answers:

Table 1: About the Zombitse Vohibasia National Park

What is the name of your protected area?	Zombitse Vohibasia National Park
You are:	Land protected area
size of your protected area	36 308 ha (806 Km ²)

your protected area was created	1997
the protected area meets the IUCN definition	Yes
IUCN protected area management category	II: National park

Source: Author

Concerning the question about the international conventions, the answers were.

Table 2: International Conventions and Madagascar

Convention	Your country is a member country	Your country is not a member country	Registration year
Strategic Plan for Biological Diversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi targets	X		1996
The Convention on Biological Diversity	X		1996
Nagoya Protocol		X	2014
World heritage	X		1990
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species	X		1975
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species	X		2007
Ramsar and Wetlands Convention	X		1999

Source: Author

Table 3: Essential functions of the protected area

	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation and nature discovery					X
Raising public awareness of conservation issues.					X
Scientific research space for a better understanding of the animal and floral world				X	
Conservation of cultural or spiritual values				X	
Places of education			X		

Source: Author

Concerning the question about the "World Heritage" label, and the actions to undertake to obtain this label, the answer was:

- Updating of bio and ecological data.
- Pressure reduction.

In relation to the question treating ‘Green List’, and if the protected area is planning to apply for inclusion on the IUCN Green List in order to benefit from this label, and the answer was:

- “Yes, but it is a subject that requires time”.

Regarding the question treating the species in the protected area that are on the IUCN Red List, the answer was: “Yes, with more than 5”, presenting as examples: *Cryptoprocta ferox*; *Propithecus verreauxi*; *Mirza coquereli*; *Lemur catta*; *Acrantophis dumerili*; *Phelsuma standing*.

Talking about the timing that protected area benefit from ecotourism activities, the answer was:”July to December”.

The manager answered that the numbers of eco-tourists, was about “5000”.

Treating the types of activities that ecotourists practice in the protected area, the answer was:

- Bird watching.
- Wildlife viewing.

Concerning the threats of the protected area, the response was:

- Biodiversity decline
- Extraction (hunting, mining, logging, fishing)
- Climate change

On the topic of the pressures on biological diversity in the protected areas, the answer was:

- Over-exploitation and unsustainable use.
- Habitat loss and degradation.

About the actions taken for the protection of biodiversity, the answer was:

- Patrol and surveillance;
- Setting up conservation infrastructures;
- Development Project.

Conclusion and Discussion

We could finally say that, the sustainable tourism and the activities managed inside of the national park help to ensure the operative and involvement in spite of the threats and pressures that the national park is suffering from such as habitat loss and degradation, too much extraction (hunting, mining, logging, and fishing), biodiversity decline, IUCN Red Listed species, climate change...

The more specific and diverse the activities offered, the longer tourists will remain on the site and the more likely they will return (Hamilton, 2002).

To summarize, we can state that sustainable tourism is highly important and yet necessary to reduce the negative effects on nature and culture that may hurt the destination objective. There are several techniques to persuade people of the need of environmental protection, including the following, which is not a complete list:

- Inform and promote awareness among tourists about the need of conservation and environmental preservation.
- Work hard to strengthen collaboration with local governments and communities in order to satisfy requirements and provide conservation aid.
- Apply the revenue generated by tourism activities to the conservation and maintenance of protected areas.
- Etc.

Concerning the sustainable tourism, it's very essential to minimize the negative impacts on nature and culture that

can harm a destination, which can be done by these following ways:

- Educate travelers about the importance of conservation.
- Call attention to the importance of responsible business, working in cooperation with local authorities and communities to meet local needs and provide conservation assistance allocations.
- Employ income generated from tourism for the conservation and management of natural and protected areas.

Many experts feel that sustainable tourism will never be a profitable industry (Hamilton, 2002). Businesses suffer from low visitor numbers, and in order to boost the odds of a project's success, it is vital to suggest locations that provide a range of attractions such as wide trail networks, a river to explore, a walking track in the forest canopy, or a butterfly farm.

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Domestic tourism: what alternative for the resilience of the Malian tourism sector ?

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Abstract—Faced with the effects of the multidimensional crisis that Mali is going through, those in charge of tourism express at every opportunity their wish to see domestic tourism develop. Of course, leisure mobility and travel by nationals, for business purposes, visits to parents, participation in cultural and religious events, keep busy a broad mass of the population. However, little is known about these types of travel by the national tourism administration, which has traditionally been orientated towards inbound tourism. Based on the results of a study involving a sample of 233 individuals, and the configurations of tourist markets under the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, this contribution seeks to question the prospects for domestic tourism in Mali.

Keywords— *domestic tourism, crisis, resilience, Mali, culture*

Introduction

In recent decades, few concepts have taken on such importance as resilience. Originally, resilience is a term in physics that defines the resistance capacity of a body or a material to a shock or deformation. The principle of resilience designates their ability to regain their original shape after a violent shock (Tisseron, 2009). The semantic field of resilience then extended to other fields: biology, psychology, economics, sociology, ecology, etc. There is a real explosion of research on how to promote (or risk to) the resilience of various systems (Gulsun, 2020), be it a community, a landscape, a region, a city, an activity, business, etc. As such, resilience is highly constructed, nowadays, on the basis of anticipation in order to integrate as much as possible factors likely to hinder or disrupt the functioning of the system in general (Quenault, 2013). However, this conception of resilience as a capacity for anticipation seems limited in the face of a number of phenomena that suddenly arise and sometimes threaten human societies, such as climatic, environmental or health disasters.

While the tourism sector worldwide is facing the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic (Masclanis, 2020), this one is the result of a security crisis in the Sahel

region, which was not anticipated at all by tourism policies. Thus, the tourism sector is facing one of the unprecedented crises in the history of Mali. The main destinations, such as the city of Djenné, which recorded 5,782 overnight stays in 2010, recorded none in 2016 (Tessougué et al., 2017). According to statistics from the National Directorate of Tourism and Hospitality (DNTH), direct and indirect jobs in the sector, which were respectively 6,555 and 13,110 in 2008, are only 760 and 1,520 in 2017. However, areas and categories of tourism are variously affected. Business and event tourism (congresses, conferences, seminars, symposiums, fairs or other types of events) concentrated in particular in and around the district of Bamako has not really come to a halt. On the other hand, the important centers of leisure or discovery tourism embodied by certain large cities in the Center and North regions of Mali (Mopti, Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal) no longer receive international visitors. This sudden halt in tourist activities in several regions of the country incurs enormous socio-economic cost with thousands of people forced out of employment in the tourism sectors. The major hubs of pleasure or discovery tourism embodied by certain large cities in the Center and North regions of Mali (Mopti, Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal) no longer receive international visitors. This sudden stop in tourist activities in several regions of the country has an enormous socio-economic cost with the forced unemployment of people in the tourism sectors. The major hubs of pleasure or discovery tourism embodied by certain large cities in the Center and North regions of Mali (Mopti, Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal) no longer receive international visitors. This sudden stop in tourist activities in several regions of the country incurs enormous socio-economic cost with thousands of people forced out of employment in the tourism sectors (MAT, 2016).

Thus, by getting bogged down over time, this multidimensional crisis has become a serious problem threatening the ability of actors in an entire economic sector to survive. Although the return to security is a determining factor for the recovery and development in

this sector, the national tourism and crafts administrations are engaged in the search for alternatives, with regard to the themes used in various events organized to revitalize the sector.

To what extent can domestic tourism, having affinities with national, domestic or internal tourism, defined as tourism involving residents of a country traveling only in that country, be an alternative enabling this sector to partially overcome the adverse impact caused by this multidimensional crisis?

From the outset, it should be noted that the tourist sector as we have always known it is over: seeing Westerners freely visiting the Dogon Country, Timbuktu or Djenné will not become a reality anytime soon. Also, we believe that the emergence of a new type of tourism is nevertheless conditional on a good knowledge of the various leisure and travel practices of nationals. As much as it requires to make a deep break in the perceptions, the configurations of the tourism sector to leave room for the development and the implementation of a project which is spread over the long term.

Moreover, although it has been the subject of very few studies in Africa (Moouloud and Ezaidi, 2005; Bélanger et al., 2007; Berriane, 2009; Kihima, 2010, 2015; Bidet, 2015), the theme domestic tourism focuses attention today. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), international tourist arrivals worldwide fell by 83% in the first quarter of 2021 due to continued widespread travel restrictions. Unable to go abroad, tourists tend to stay at home and discover their own countries, often with the support of their governments. The UNWTO considers that this domestic or local tourism is "an important lever for the resilience of the sector in the face of limitations to international travel". In the United States, domestic tourism is breaking all records". The 150 million Chinese tourists, who had fueled the global growth of the sector before the Covid-19 crisis, are now traveling within their country, which makes the newspaper Le Monde say, in its edition of October 01, 2021, that "Chinese domestic travel leaves world tourism orphaned". In addition, during the 63rd meeting of the UNWTO members of the Regional Commission for Africa, held on June 8, 2020, it emerged that "Domestic tourism will be essential for the revival of African tourism".

This strong interest worldwide in domestic tourism contributes to changing outlook on tourist activities and the perception of the tourist himself by helping reassess approaches according to which "(tourist) otherness can be found... around the corner (Équipe MIT, 2002: 84) and that one can "travel in one's city" (Lévy et al., 2002: 7). In any case, "Tourism(s) [remains] in motion(s) between adaptation, resilience and paradigm shift" (Cholat et al., 2019: 16). In this perspective where the inhabitant becomes the new paradigm of resilient tourism (Meier, 2021), local tourism is widely considered as a solution that can alleviate the current difficulties.

Thus, from the results of a survey carried out by questionnaire on 233 individuals, we propose to

characterize the journeys of the category of workers in Malian companies and administrations, while determining the conditions and modalities of this mobility. An understanding of the opportunities for mobility in a territory can guide the national tourism administration in its promotion policy as well as the territorial actors to organize themselves better to channel them more and strengthen their impact on the territories visited. In the following lines, we will begin by outlining the details of our methodology before presenting and discussing the main results of our study.

materials and methods

In this contribution, we use data from an exploratory survey conducted by questionnaire using Google Forms online in 2015 in which 233 individuals participated. The link to the survey had been relayed on several social networks (including Facebook) and sent via the email addresses we had. By urging each study participant to share the link with their network of contacts, we were able to go from contacts to contacts until we reached this significant threshold of participants.

Table. 1: Characteristics of the sample studied

Categories	Denomination	No. Cit.	Frequency (%)
Sex	Male	144	61.8
	Women	89	38.2
Age	Under 25	28	19.1
	Between 25-45 years old	101	43.3
	Between 45-65 years old	87	30.3
	Over 65	17	7.3
Instruction (Level)	Secondary	38	16.3
	higher education	77	33.0
	Non-university higher	95	40.8
	Other	23	9.9
Function	Boss	14	6.0
	Senior	37	15.9
	Middle management	69	29.6
	Employee	55	23.6
	Liberal profession	26	11.2
	Teacher	32	13.7
Residential locations	District of Bamako	143	61.4
	Other regions of Mali	66	28.3

	Other countries	24	10.3
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Source : Personal investigation, 2015

The survey tool used is organized around three (3) parts. The first part relates to the identification of the respondent: his sex, place of residence, his sector of activity, his level of education as well as his concepts of holidays. The second part concerns his travel, his movements within Mali. Since the past, Malians have been known to be great travelers both within the country and abroad. The certificate is given by the rise of the Joulas (traders) establishing exchange relations with countries such as the current Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Forest Guinea, etc. In this study, our interest is to be able to determine their main domestic destinations, the hierarchy of the reasons for travel, the average time spent during the journeys, as well as their frequency. And as a potential tourist, the last part identifies the respondent's centers of interest, his propensity to visit the country's attractions as well as the conditions necessary to start this domestic tourism.

The sample, whose main characteristics are provided in the table above, is made up of men for more than 60%. It is also made up of executives working in the public and private sectors based mainly in Bamako but also in other localities in Mali and even in other countries.

The results were exported to Sphinx Lexica software and processed through uni, bi and multivariate analyses.

results and discussion

The main results of our study are highlighted with the literature on domestic tourism and on tourism in relation to (crises) conflicts in general.

Tourism or national mobility in the form of travel exists but is unexplored by the tourism administration

The first result that we can assess remains the frequency of travel showing that Malians travel enough in their country (see the table. 2 below).

Table. 2: Travel frequency within Mali

Inside Mali, do you travel...?	No. cit.	Freq.
Exceptionally (less than once a year)	42	18.0%
Sometimes (between 1 to 3 times a year)	76	32.6%
Often (between 3 to 5 times a year)	62	26.6%
Very often (between 2 to 3 times a quarter)	27	11.6%
All the time (once a month or more)	26	11.2%
TOTAL OBS.	233	100%

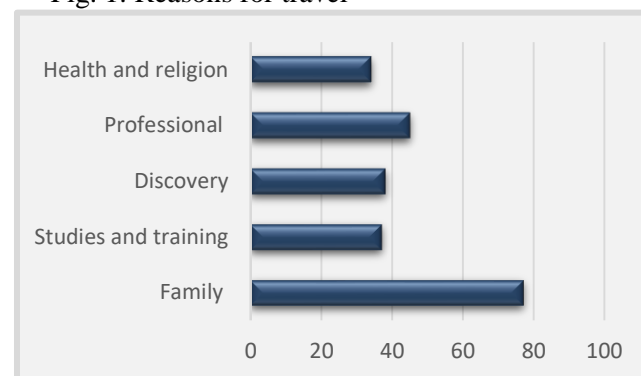
Source: Personal investigation, 2015

Thus, more than 32% of the sample travel at least once a year; 26% travel up to 3 times a year, while 11% believe they travel all the time, ie at least once a month. On their

last trip, people traveled slightly more to villages (61%) compared to other urban centers in the country.

The main reasons for these movements (as shown in the fig. 1 below) are primarily family issues: visits to parents, participation in social events such as naming ceremonies, weddings, etc.

Fig. 1: Reasons for travel



Source: Personal investigation, 2015

The other patterns tend to be equivalent. Nevertheless, it should be noted the relative importance of reasons related to discovery, that is to say visits to one's region of origin, historical places, in order to better know one's village or local realities.

Travel is mostly over relatively long distances. Only 10% of trips were made over a distance of less than 50 km, 38% took place between 100 and 200km and trips of more than 400km represent 18% of the total.

Half of the trips were made by public bus transport. Personal car was used in 18% of the trips, the plane and river transport (boats, pinnaces) respectively in less than 5% of the cases.

As for the time spent during these trips, we can note that 30% of trips lasted between 1 to 3 days, 16% lasted up to a week, while 34% exceeded a week.

Only 13% of the travelers stayed in a commercial establishment (hotel, camp or rental), otherwise the stays mainly take place with family, friends or acquaintances or other forms of community accommodation under the authority of the town hall or youth.

Over 66% of travelers remember making purchases. The minimum amount is 3000FCFA and the maximum is 50,000FCFA (approximately 76€) with an average of 14,728 FCFA.

In the absence of tourism observatories in the regions, and of studies on domestic tourism, these various stays or journeys made by Malians are only exceptionally counted in the statistics on tourist activities. Malian visitors, moreover sub-regional, counted include those who mainly seek officially recognized tourist accommodation. Official data overlook domestic tourism. But this does not mean that the practices do not exist, because 38% of our sample believe they have already done tourism inside Mali and 18% abroad.

However, this raises the question of the very definition of "tourist", globally perceived as foreigner and in this part

of the world, as Westerner (French, English, American, etc.). The global definition of tourist tends to obscure national residents. And in the permanent debate between researchers on the definition of tourism (Dewailly, 2006), even those who have opted for a simple definition of "tourist" tend either to consider it as "any person who is not 'd' here'" the Equipe MIT (2002: 80), or, as "the visitor, usually domiciled abroad [coming]... for a stay of limited duration, in "recreation" or not, and leaves his money in the country. » Jean Ginier (1969), quoted by Stock et al. (2003: 264).

This fact is reinforced by the definitions of tourism underpinned by the need to have statistics on exports and to count tourist consumption based essentially on the number of border entries. In its system of international tourism accounts, the UNWTO does not take into account statistics on domestic tourism.

Consequently, the Equipe MIT (2002: 57) observes that: "It is not a question of denying that the world of tourism is still very unequal and that the majority of tourists come from rich countries, but of inviting not to stick to an overly miserable image of national tourism in developing countries...". Likewise, "the existence of these tourist practices (national tourism) is generally ignored or underestimated, because it goes against the ideas of those who would like to reduce the countries of the South to a simple reception area for tourists from the North, as if it were shameful to recognize in poor countries the existence of an internal demand" (MIT, 2002: 58).

However, as some authors have pointed out (Liliehlm and Romney, 2000: 138), there are more and more Africans who are doing tourism within their countries. In South Africa, for example, 60% of overall visitation to national parks is by residents of the country, while 20% come from African countries. In the national parks of Mauritius and Nigeria, 40% and 80% of visitors are respectively residents of these countries.

In short, these definitions of the tourist activity and of the tourist himself tend to know many limits these days with the profusion of initiatives and practices of "Staycation". The tourist is no longer just the distant foreigner, coming from another continent or country, but above all the "inhabitant", the national of the region, and of the country...

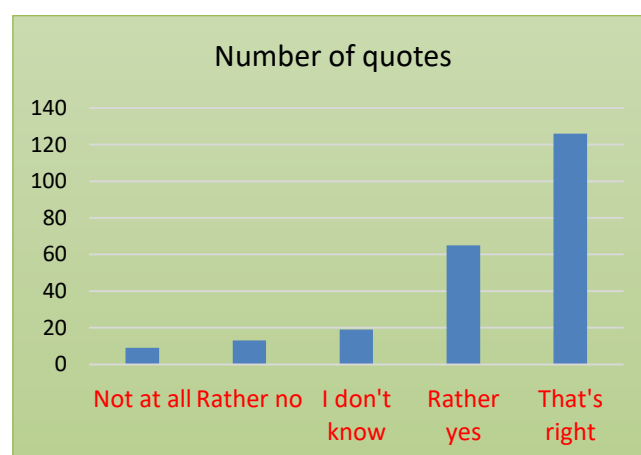
In this unique context, marked by the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Revue Espaces, which supports and advises tourism professionals and administrators, questioned the tourism of tomorrow in its July 2021 issue 361. Experts have argued in particular that the "inhabitant", the resident of the destination, is the essential link in the tourism of tomorrow. It is now integrated into tourism development policies and strategies for creating desire for territories, it is centerstage and takes on different facets by becoming both a target for professionals in the sector, an object of tourist interest, an author and accompanist of more authentic offers. Thus, it is at the center of this fundamental trend, which is part of the vision of a tourism of the future, more

social, benevolent.

The existence of a latent need to practice tourist mobility that must be identified by specifying the habits of Western visitors

Some existing practices, together with an analysis of the predisposition of Malians to travel, show that there is a significant propensity to stay for reasons of tourism within the country. The fig. 2 below presents the answers to the question: "Do you think there are attractions in Mali that would be worth a trip on your part?" "

Fig. 2: The existence of attractions worth the trip



Source: Personal investigation, 2015

Thus, to varying degree, more than 80% of our sample believe that there are attractions for the discovery of which they are prepared to consider the trip, up to 56%. The fig. 3 below shows the data on this predisposition. Note the high numbers of doubters who condition their trip to the fulfillment of other factors, which will be detailed in the following subsection (in particular in fig. 5).

Fig. 3: Predisposition to engage in tourism in Mali



Source: Personal investigation, 2015

Favorite places, worth visiting, are given in the following table with the number of occurrences for each word mentioned.

Table. 3: Places and attractions that Malians would like to visit

Attractions	Number of quotes
Timbuktu	65
Djenne	63
mosque	58
museum	42
dogon country	32
Sikasso	27
cliff	20
Askia	19
Park	16
Segou	13
Family	12
Hombori	10
Kayes	10
Bamako	9
Dam	8
Medina	8
Mande	7

Source: Personal investigation, 2015

The content of the table comes from the results of the open question "Which places in Mali would you like to visit?"

The analysis of the table shows that the historic cities of Timbuktu and Djenné are among the places Malians most want to visit. In the rest of the data from the responses, their remarkable mosques, mausoleums of saints as well as their libraries of manuscripts follow these cities. These places are

followed by the attractions of the Dogon Country with its cliffs and the town of Bandiagara as its epicenter. Visiting museums has an important role in the imagination of visitors. These institutions are somewhat scattered in the main urban centers mentioned in the table. The evocations of Sikasso are mainly associated with its tata (walls), the caves of Missirikoro, the falls of Farako, etc. Gao or the City of Askia forms a common front with the Tomb of the same name. The parks concern the zoological one and the national ones of biosphere reserves of the country. In short, it should be noted that the places that people would like to visit are as much related to nature as to culture and especially heritage.

As such, some domestic tourism attractions overlap with those of international tourism. However, there are still notable differences in the ways of practicing this tourism. This can be confirmed by the practices that people would like to carry out during their stay (cf. fig.4).

Fig. 4: Level of interest in the activities to be practiced



Source: Personal investigation, 2015

If all the proposed activities are considered very interesting, those most favored are visits to the towns and villages of national heritage, next come visits to villages in general (Peulh, Dogon, Bambara, etc.), then visits to museums, and finally the desire to attend festivals and traditional ceremonies and festivities.

In the segment of people who "plan to do tourism in Mali", their interest goes in order of importance

towards activities such as visiting villages (Peul, Dogon, Bamanan) (43/96); visiting museums (42/96); that of heritage towns or villages (36/98); and to attend festivals and ceremonies (36/88). The activities they consider “not at all interesting” are summarized as Going into the desert and taking a walk (34/68); Walk in nature to discover the fauna and flora (33/81); Nautical activities such as boat trips or pirogues (32/72).

From this perspective on domestic tourism, 19% of the sample believe they are “completely interested” in the services of a travel organization such as a travel agency. Although 14% feel that they are not at all interested, more than half of the sample remain skeptical, however, believing that “it depends” on the type of organization and therefore on the terms of access to the services provided. People prefer to travel first with friends, then with family, then with co-workers. The choices for catering first concern the close circle of family or friends, then traditional local restaurants. Note that barely 5% preferred to eat in high-end restaurants. The same is true for the mode of accommodation, the choice for top-of-the-range hotels is only 13% against around 40% for accommodation with relatives or friends and 11% of the choices relate to camps and small inns. The means of travel that will be used by national tourists primarily concern public transport for more than 28%, personal vehicles for 26% and transport by specialized tourism agencies for 19%.

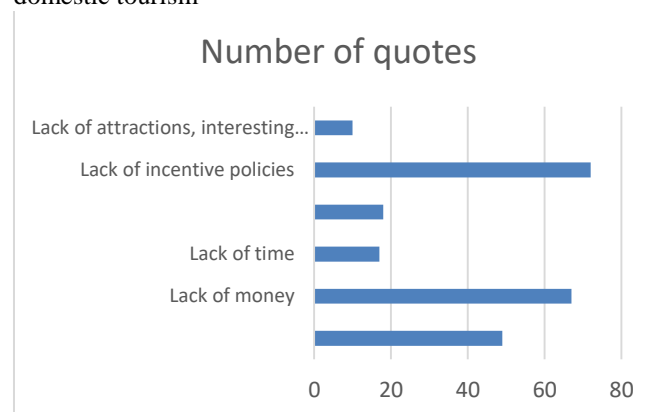
These main characteristics that we have just presented differ from those of international visitors who receive the full attention of tourism stakeholders. The profile of the tourist looked for by the stakeholders in hospitality and tourism development relates to that of inbound tourism, even if in their motivation the two categories meet marginally as regards their choice for culture and heritage. There are, however, notable differences in their way of housing. Attendance at hospitality establishments, such as hotels, is one of the sources of accounting for this tourism, while nationals have shown relatively little interest in these establishments. The same applies to the use of the services of travel agencies and the means of transport usually used by foreign tourists.

The need to deal with blocking factors and support existing initiatives while boosting the effects on the receiving territories

Three main factors have been identified as obstacles to the

development of domestic tourism in Mali (see Fig. 5). The absence of incentive policies is the first element called into question. This is primarily the responsibility of public authorities, but also of private actors. Government incentives can have a significant impact on the private sector, which can therefore provide suitable services, according to the expectations and budgets of national visitors and thus have an effect on mentality by positively affecting the cultural habits of Malians in matter of traveling and discovering.

Fig. 5: Perception of obstacles to the development of domestic tourism



Source: Personal investigation, 2015

The factors identified above have been repeatedly pointed to in other work on domestic tourism. It emerges, in fact, from the work of Mohamed Berriane (2009), Brahim Moudoud and Abdelkrim Ezaidi (2005) on the case of Morocco that the involvement of public authorities through the implementation of incentive policies is essential to the growth and promotion of national tourist mobility. Morocco is one of the first receiving countries of international tourism in Africa in terms of arrivals. However, its industry suffered from the consequences of the Gulf crisis in 1991 with cascading cancellations for hoteliers, as well as those of September 11, 2001, hampering the free movement and movement of people around the world. These various crises were an opportunity to discuss the issue of domestic tourism in this country. One of the main support measures adopted was the "Konouz Biladi" initiative intended to foster a national clientele that was still waiting for specific promotional actions (Berriane, 2009). This operation, initiated in its first edition in 2003, consisted of bringing together a large number of hotel establishments (of different categories) and travel agencies around a promotional offer aimed at national customers which is both sufficiently homogeneous and, as far as possible, adapted to its needs. During a given period, these tourism

professionals agree to reduce the price of their services and benefits by half, all this was framed by a media campaign to encourage nationals.

Brahim Moudoud and Abdelkrim Ezaidi (2005) report that these measures have had a positive effect on the figures for tourist activities. Indeed, in 2003, the arrivals of national tourism at the level of hotels, dethroned for the first time those of the French market, considered as the traditional tourist market for Morocco, by representing 33.8% of the total share of arrivals of tourist markets, against 32.6% supplied by the French market.

In Rwanda, reports Moutiou Adjibi Nourou (2020), the Rwanda Development Board (RDB) has adopted measures aimed at stimulating local people's desire for tourist visits. To this end, the authorities have reduced from \$1,500 to \$200 the cost of visiting national parks home to mountain gorillas, one of the country's main tourist attractions.

In Burkina Faso, to compensate for the drastic drop in arrivals of international visitors, the State is relying on the "Do you know your beautiful country?" program. », and the private sector on the campaign to reduce the price of services by 25% for the benefit of national tourists during the holidays. Thus, in 2018 Burkina recorded 395,898 arrivals due to domestic tourism, compared to 144,492 for foreign tourism (Ido, 2020).

In the Kenyan context, Bonface Odiara Kihima (2010) reports some examples of initiatives to foster national tourism, particularly from the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), the organization responsible for managing national parks. Among its promotional actions, there is the acquisition of shuttles intended for guided tours in the national parks of the country during all weekends, including public holidays and school vacation periods to encourage Kenyans to participate in tourism. In addition, the KWS pricing policy differentiates between the different market segments: adults, children, and students. All these segments are further divided into different categories: "Citizens of Kenya, Residents of Kenya and Non-Residents". . The entrance fee to the parks for international tourists remains higher than that of nationals. For example, for an income generated by an international tourist, in terms of entry fee only, it takes seven (sometimes 15) Kenyan tourists to make the same income.

All of these initiatives (Moroccan, Rwandan and Kenyan) are the result of a real national political will. For example in the case of Kenya, it was exerted in the Kenya Tourist Board, the Domestic Tourism Council in order to single out the issue of

domestic tourism. In the case of Mali as well, a strong involvement of the public authorities is essential to first understand and characterize the existing initiatives.

Although engaged in the search for alternatives with a view to the emergence of a new type of tourism, the national tourism administration must first and foremost undertake in-depth studies of the existing situation in order to have a good level of knowledge of the various practices of leisure and travel for nationals which have not hitherto been the subject of specific study interest. As indicated above, the current initiatives have a very strong link with culture and heritage. Indeed, in addition to visits to families, the greatest internal mobility occurs during cultural or religious events such as ziaras, festivals, religious holidays, traditional ceremonies (often to religious places to welcome "dafalen", that is to say vows with hints of conjuration like the tombs of Mari and Fadiè in Sagabala, the tomb of Babougou Tchi, the tombs of Oumou and Modibo in Dilly, etc.), the Sankémon, the Septennial Refection of the sacred hut of Kangaba, etc.). It suffices, to be convinced of this, to take an interest in the high number of coaches from the regions and countries of the sub-region for the Maouloud celebrations organized by the Ansar-din association of Ousmane Chérif Madani Haidara. A similar flow heads towards Nioro, Tamani, Hamdalahi, Timbuktu, Djenné, etc. If some of these events have actually been studied, it is not in terms of the mobility of people, in an attempt to get the most of the territories. What should be done.

In the same vein, it will then be a question of creating the conditions to promote these existing practices and popularize them. In this regard, it is necessary to foresee different strategies for the development of domestic tourism activities by considering the words of Gabriel Wackermann (2017). For whom, tourism is not an end in itself, but just a means, an instrument at the service of a territory development strategy. It promotes local resources mobilized to meet local needs. Thus, it is necessary to create a synergy between state actors, local authorities, academics, private operators and local communities. The success of projects promoting local development depends on the motivation of these actors as well as the project leaders, but also on good coordination of the public/private partnership. In the territories, projects must be designed and carried out to, with and by the local populations themselves. In addition, it is necessary to think this tourist project in a general

spirit of sustainable development of the territory. It is primarily a question of registering tourist activities in the territories, of valuing the specific resources of each territory considered (Tangara et al., 2021). It is also necessary to stimulate complementarities and federate local actors. It is therefore necessary to favor synergies between tourism and other sectors of activity, such as agriculture, crafts, fishing, forestry and other local productive sectors. Such a unifying project makes it possible to associate tourist service providers with other producers: from homestay accommodation to local catering, from meetings with producers to guided hikes. Artisanry, agriculture, processing activities are part of a logic of diversification and complementarity of the local economy. This approach makes it possible to anchor tourism revenues in the territory.

The development of domestic tourism also involves the establishment, in the medium and long term, of a culture of discovery of the country within the socio-professional world, the university and school public. It will also be necessary to promote the legislative and managerial conditions for the creation of decent jobs in the tourism sector to take advantage of the various opportunities relating to national mobility. Even if we do not have data relating to the visits of Malians to other countries, it must be recognized that more and more Malians, Malian women, and their families are going to neighboring countries (such as Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Ghana, etc.). These movements are very frequent during holiday periods. It remains to see to what extent,

Similarly, many Malians residing abroad return each year to their country of origin. It can be assumed with a negligible risk of being wrong that this category of potential clientele is wealthier than the national average. They are also more likely to be interested in recreational activities as they reside in countries where these practices are much more common. They must also feel the need and the desire to better visit their region or country of origin since they can experience nostalgia because they live abroad. So back home, they are more likely to want to explore the country.

CONCLUSION

In the history of tourism or that of destinations, several episodes of crisis have seriously and sometimes permanently hit the tourism sector throughout the world. Dewailly (2006) demonstrates that nothing is ever taken for granted in the field of

tourism. Fashion, events, natural disasters, wars, energy prices, and many other factors, come into play to weaken the geographical configurations of tourism.

If all crises have the direct effect of reducing or stopping flows and therefore tourist numbers, security crises are the most difficult to curb, they are the most incapacitating or can have much more lasting effects over time (Novelli et al., 2012; Matthews, 1974). Moreover, the crisis is often revealing of certain new dynamics of creativity, flexibility and innovation. As the saying goes “to something, misfortune is good”. Thus, many destinations have been able to cushion or recover from the crises that have deeply affected them thanks to domestic tourism, and even today, this is identified as strategically relevant for the resilience of the sector at global level.

Generally, less remunerative than international tourism, domestic tourism nevertheless provides a stable customer base for tourism professionals throughout the year. For this reason, most countries are developing strategies for strengthening it. Mali, whose sector is suffering from the consequences of a multidimensional crisis, is not to be outdone, because public authorities have been initiating limited reflections in this direction for several years. However, it became clear, throughout this work, that the resilience of the sector depends as much on better control of the security situation as on the definition and implementation of a global strategy for sustainable local development.

Several categories of Malians travel regularly for various reasons ranging from visits to families, to business trips or attendance to various events. The private and public sectors generate other types of trips. Internal pleasure travel, including the motives related to “holidays and leisure, religion and pilgrimage, culture and research”, is very limited for both economic and cultural reasons. They therefore generate few stays in hotel. The prospects for its development lie in the long term; the rise in the standards of living and the valuing of products for a Malian clientele are among the conditions to be met.

However, it is important to know that among the participants in the “ziaras” and other major cultural events, for example, a good majority would like to spend their stay in conditions (of travel, accommodation, catering, etc.) other than rustic. If their effects can be limited in time (between 3 and 8 days), it should be understood that these opportunities for mobility continue in very reduced number during the rest of the year. We can also

assume that better organization and the proposal of enticing offers will ensure that attendance could be maintained outside the periods or calendar of events. While taking into account that the needs and monetary capacities of this potential clientele and those to which tourism professionals are accustomed are very different, micro-enterprises can therefore intelligently structure themselves around these niches to meet such latent needs. Therefore, moving towards some professionalization of the methods of organization for these events is potentially important for the development of domestic tourism, which has already existing activities. Visitor flows to domestic destinations must be supported by a local organization in order to make the most of the economic opportunities offered by the presence of these different categories of visitors.

In this regard, the revival of tourism in Mali requires commitment from all stakeholders, particularly national, regional and local decision-makers, to set the framework for this strategy according to the specificities (environmental, historical, social, economic, administrative and cultural, etc.) of the territories.

In the current context of insecurity in the northern and central regions of Mali, one of the perspectives could be research-action on domestic tourism in the Mandé region, the historic heartland of the Empire of Mali, located in the close vicinity of Bamako. This region, with many natural, cultural and historical assets, experienced a late emergence (Doquet, 2007). This contrasts with the rapidly rising development of the destination through the development of new activities in Mali such as canoeing in Bankoumana region, climbing in Siby, and the proliferation of accommodation facilities and entertainment initiatives. This research-action will ultimately make it possible to find arrangements or forms of organization that are attractive to potential visitors, profitable for professionals in the sector.

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Tourism Communication Strategies in Morocco During the Covid'19 Pandemic: The Case of The Hotel Sector

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has substantially affected the tourism industry in Morocco. the government has suspended all travel activities with the intention to restrict the spread of the virus. All tourist structures were directly affected by the crisis. Once these measures were slightly lifted, this situation, as complex and difficult to manage, forced tourism institutions to develop new communication strategies in order to recover their products and services. Nevertheless, these strategies differ according to the capacity of reception and the geographical location of each entity. In this regard, the objective is to measure the impact of Covid-19 on Moroccan tourism and especially the hotel industry, and the role of communication in promoting, as quickly as possible, their business activity (turnover), requiring the intervention of all stakeholders. Indeed, in this paper, based on a qualitative study, we will highlight, firstly, the communication strategies that have been adopted by a set of tourist structures in two regions, Rabat-Salé-Kénitra/Béni Mellal-Khénifra, and subsequently, measure not only the success of the latter to decamp these entities from their economic crises, but also to ensure their future growth prospects.

Keywords

Communication, strategy, tourism, economy, pandemic.

Introduction

The tourism sector was the leading source of state revenue, taking a little lead over sectors such as the automobile and agri-food industries. It is a sector with high added value, creating a considerable number of jobs and contributing 10% of the national GDP. Before the COVID-19 health crisis, it was a strategic sector for the Moroccan economy. However, given the health crisis which has negatively impacted this sector, the State has launched an emergency plan of two billion dirhams and five new measures to support the sector. The third measure of this plan mainly concerns tourist establishments, as was explained by the Minister when she gave more details on the terms of application of her emergency plan "In this kind of situation, we are obliged

to prioritize. We felt that the hotel industry,⁴⁷.This reflects the State's desire to meet the needs of this sector, which has suffered the major effects of the pandemic. Since March 2020 and because of the decisions to close the country and general confinement taken by the Moroccan government, this sector has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. 53% of companies in Morocco operating in different sectors, particularly the tourism sector, including the hotel sector, have experienced closure. However, after the end of the confinement and under the effect of the pandemic which remains, the hotel establishments found themselves in the obligation to make additional efforts to sell their services. It is in this sense that we have chosen to formulate the following research problem in order to provide some answers towards the end of this article. What are the communication strategies developed by hotel establishments during the Covid'19 pandemic to promote the sale of their services? From this main question arises the sub-research questions which constitute the main axes of our interview guide. What communication strategies were followed before the pandemic to promote the sale of their services? What communications strategies have been followed during the pandemic to promote the sale of their services? Our case study applies to a sample of two regions, namely the regionRabat-Salé-Kénitra and the Beni Mellal-Khénifra region. The choice of these two regions comes from our desire to compare two regions with different tourist potential. The first with plain geography and coastal location and the second with mountain geography and central location in Morocco.

POTENTIAL OF MOROCCAN TOURISM

One of the capital tourist destinations of the southern contour of the Mediterranean, Morocco, bribed by its climate, its natural wonders, its imposing cities, its welcome and the generosity of its people has become one of the favorite Mediterranean destinations for foreign tourists. Indeed, tourism occupies a colossal place in the Moroccan economy. Following an analysis of the annual report of the

⁴⁷ <http://www.cnt.ma/grand-format-le360-tout-sur-le-plan-ammor-pour-le-sauvetage-du-secteur-du-tourisme/consulted25/1/2022>

Central Bank of Morocco published in 2004⁴⁸, the share of the tourism sector is three times greater than that of seafood, textiles or agriculture. As a result, it is one of the most important sectors ensuring economic growth, foreign exchange, investment and job creation.

In 2003, according to this same report, the tourist sector represented 6.9% of the gross domestic product (GDP), contributed to the creation of 600,000 direct jobs and produced 5.9 billion dirhams in flows of investment, with a capacity of 97,000 classified beds. All of this points directly to the relationship that is often predicted between tourism and development.

At the level of the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region

Rabat-Salé-Kénitra, the region that shields the capital of the country, the city of light considered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site is a tourist destination of preeminence. It also has riches in terms of its history, its landscapes and its cultural and architectural heritage.

a. Litter capacity

According to the Regional Center for Investment in the Rabat - Salé -Kénitra region, the region has succeeded in increasing its litter capacity from 6,991 beds in 2017 to nearly 8,000 beds with many projects underway with prestigious brands. Objective: reach 17,000 beds with a strengthening of the seaside potential in 2018⁴⁹.

With this in mind, and to position itself as a destination of choice dedicated to business and leisure tourism, the capital of the Kingdom has received several luxury international hotel chains, Fairmont at Marina Rabat-Salé with 200 rooms and 80 residences, Ritz Carlton with a capacity of 120 keys (en suite), Marriott located in Arribat Center with 370 beds and Kasr Al Bahr with a total capacity of 250 keys.

At the level of Kenitra, the number of hotel establishments was very limited with a capacity not exceeding 600 beds (2019), indeed the opening of the industrial platform Atlantique Free Zone intended for the automotive industry aroused the need for the creation of new hotel units to provide accommodation for managers and executives from various foreign companies. These projects were launched approximately 4 years ago and will be completed by the end of 2020, which will increase the litter capacity tenfold by approximately 6,000 beds⁵⁰.

b. Natural and climatic wonders

The region is characterized by a very varied geography, made up of a coastal zone extending over 165 km, the relief in the form of plains (Gharb, Oulmès, Zaër, etc.). This nature thus has a coast full of fish, cultivable land and significant water resources, as well as varied ecosystems.

Its proximity to the Atlantic characterized by maritime influence, becoming continental in the interior. The climate is then of the semi-arid Mediterranean type between weighted and rainy in winter, and humid and temperate in summer accompanied by Chergui days, due to its location between the ocean and the central plateau.

c. Art and culture

When we talk about culture, we think directly of Rabat, the administrative capital of the country, also called the Moroccan capital of culture which since the launch of the development project "Rabat city of light" wants to be the symbol of Moroccan culture. Indeed, this plan initiated by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, was able to implement a set of projects of great importance such as the national theater, the largest in the whole kingdom, the opening of the national library which brings together more than 350,000 books.

On the museum side, inaugurated by His Majesty in 2014, the Mohammed VI Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art is the first public institution that meets global museum standards and regularly hosts high-calibre cultural and artistic events and exhibitions.

As for festivals, between Jazz au Chellah and Visa for Music, Mawazine remains one of the largest annual events in the world, with more than two million participants and artists representing some forty countries. The festival authenticates its vocation as an expansive international event with music from all over the globe.

At the level of the Beni Mellal - Khénifra region

The Béni Mellal-Khénifra region includes the former region of Tadra-Azilal and the provinces of Khénifra and Khouribga. Administratively, this region includes five provinces and, therefore, as many economic development niches. In Béni Mellal, Fquih Ben Salah, Azilal, Khénifra and Khouribga, the potential is undeniable in sectors such as agriculture, mining, crafts, tourism, but also energy and water.

The Beni Mellal-Khenifra region, which is experiencing a real dynamic of economic and social development, is likely to improve its positioning over time and become one of the most attractive and competitive regions of the kingdom. It is characterized by its location in the heart of the kingdom and its proximity to the major national centers (Casablanca, Marrakech, Rabat, Meknes-Fez), which are located within a radius of 300 km, and concentrate half of the country's population. A position that allows its companies and products to access a potential large-scale consumer market. The region also has structuring infrastructures, called upon to increase its attractiveness, such as the Beni Mellal airport and the Beni Mellal-Casablanca highway.

SRAT⁵¹ plans to carry out 250 structuring projects and 30

⁴⁸ <https://www.erudit.org/fr/revues/teoros/2005-v24-n1-teoros05460/1071108ar.pdf>

⁴⁹ <https://www.rabatinvest.ma/articles/tourisme>, consulted on 25/1/2022

⁵⁰ Op.cit

⁵¹ Regional Scheme for Planning and Sustainable Development of the

support measures, with an overall investment amount estimated at 130.2 billion dirhams. These projects relate to the construction of municipal infrastructure and equipment, the upgrading of urban centers, the improvement of the environment, climate change and renewable energies as well as water management. This, without obscuring the field of health, tourism, culture, sport and, in general, territorial disparities and economic and human development, in its various aspects. The environment, transport and logistics infrastructure, drinking water supply, opening up of the rural world, the creation of logistics zones, culture, sport, health, tourism and the upgrading of emerging centres, are all areas that will also be impacted by this Regional Development Plan. In the Beni Mellal-Khénifra region, tourism has always been considered a marginal economic activity. However, everything predisposes this region to position itself as a world-class tourist destination given its enormous potential and its undeniable assets. It is full of breathtakingly rich and varied natural landscapes, an immense cultural and historical heritage, and enjoys an exceptional geographical location, right in the center of the country and at the confluence of several roads. Its fabulous natural environment and its dense and diversified intangible cultural capital have, in fact⁵².

a. Litter capacity

In 2018, the bedding capacity of the Beni Mellal-Khénifra region was 6,350 beds. This capacity is divided into the following categories:

- The 1st and 2nd category gîtes offer 1,650 beds;
- Only one 5-star hotel offers 120 beds;
- 7 4-star hotels offer 883 beds;
- 3 star hotels offer 384 beds;
- 15 2-star hotels offer 777 beds;
- 18 one-star hotels offer 738 beds;
- 18 1st and 2nd category guest houses offer 380 beds;
- The hostels offer 131 beds;
- The tourist residences offer 76 beds.

This litter capacity is distributed in the Beni Mellal-Khénifra region as follows:

- The province of Azilal has the largest share with 2,468 beds;
- The province of Béni Mellal comes in second place with a capacity of 1629 beds;
- The province of Khenifra has a capacity of 580 beds;
- The province of Khouribga has a capacity of 353 beds;
- The province of Fkih Ben Saleh has a capacity of 102 beds⁵³.

b. Natural and climatic wonders

The territory of the Béni Mellal-Khénifra region is made

up of 4 large distinct geographical units which maintain relations of exchange, complementarity and forms of solidarity, particularly in the field of agriculture and extensive livestock farming. The geographical position of the Beni Mellal-Khénifra region gives it a climatic diversity that varies from a humid climate (summits of the High Atlas chain and certain peaks of the Middle Atlas) to a sub-arid climate below the mountain ranges. In terms of energy production, the region of Béni Mellal-Khénifra has a very important electrical energy supply system, consisting of 7 hydraulic plants. The agricultural sector is one of the promising sectors of the region and constitutes the bulk of the economic activity of the region⁵⁴. With a predominantly continental climate and a variable average annual temperature between cities, maximum of 40°C in the province of Beni Mellal and minimum of 2°C in the province of Azilal, tourist flows vary according to the seasons⁵⁵.

c. Arts and culture

Artistic activity is at the heart of the identity culture of the Béni Mellal-Khénifra region. Several tourist sites constitute the historical heritage in the region, especially in the mountainous areas. Several actions have emerged for the promotion of culture in the region, namely the creation of the center for the development of mining heritage and another for the interpretation of heritage in Fazaz in the province of Khenifra, a conservation of the rock engravings of Jbel Rat in the province of Azilal as well as a center for promoting the heritage of the region planned in Ain Asserdoune. Several scientific meetings have taken place on the rock engravings of the Central High Atlas aimed at the preservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage of the Beni Mellal – Khénifra region.

The House of Culture of Beni Mellal, inaugurated by HM King Mohammed VI, constitutes a new milestone in the promotion of the cultural dynamics of the city, in line with the ambitious national policy aimed at the establishment of adequate cultural infrastructure. in all regions experiencing a deficit in this area. The construction of this building materializes the ambition of promoting the artistic and cultural creation of young Moroccans, a strategic priority and an essential component of the policy of sustainable development, carried out under the leadership of HM King Mohammed VI who will doubt a tourist asset⁵⁶.

THE SITUATION OF MOROCCAN TOURISM BEFORE AND DURING THE PANDEMIC

At the level of the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region

After achieving significant growth in recent years, the Moroccan tourism sector has been brutally affected by

⁵⁴<https://knowledge-uclga.org/region-de-beni-mellal-khenifra.html>(Accessed 28/12/2021)

⁵⁵<http://www.benimellalkhenifra.ma/fr/ps/carte-didentit%C3%A9>0(Consulted on 28/12/2021)

⁵⁶https://www.libe.ma/Inauguration-de-la-Maison-de-la-culture-de-Beni-Mellal_a50394.html(Accessed 28/12/2021)

⁵² Territory.

⁵² General meeting report of the Regional Tourism Council (CRT-BK), financial year 2021

⁵³ SRAT, Op-Cit, P10

Covid-19. But the impact is not restricted only to Morocco but also everywhere in the world.

The UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, mentioned in its last issue that in 2019 the GDP of the "travel and tourism" sector indicated 10.4% of international GDP, while in 2020 this sector only gained 5.5% of GDP, something that clearly explains the situation of tourism on an international scale.

In fact, 8,000 tourism businesses operating in various activities (accommodation, catering, travel agencies, tourist transport and car rental) are on a break. Morocco has lost a hundred thousand arrivals, estimating in this sense the losses of the tourism sector between 2020 and 2022 at 138 billion DH, a loss identified only in March.

Due to the spread of Covid 19, the Moroccan government, and more particularly the Ministry of Tourism, could not wait for the end of the confinement period and the return to normal life, and therefore launched a promotional campaign, preventive aimed at publicizing certain tourist areas within the country, an intervention under the name of "Goodbye" which lasted throughout the period of quarantine.

Rabat-Salé-Kénitra, also affected by the pandemic, after an almost total stoppage since March 2020 and after the announcement of the suspension of flights, as well as maritime connections, travel agencies, more particularly, found themselves in the obligation to close.

For their part, traders, craftsmen and guides collapsed after having exhausted their savings, relying on family help to be able to survive, or even on the support of their boss, others have completely changed their activities towards the fields, olive trees or on building sites. Admittedly, the crisis is taking hold locally at the level of tourist activities inferred following the period of confinement, however the classified establishments have been able to ensure their accommodation capacity according to the (Regional Delegate for Tourism, 2020). This comes down to the large number of tourists who found themselves stranded in Morocco after the announcement of the closure of the borders, gathered in Rabat and scattered over various hotels in the capital.

At the level of the Beni Mellal-Khénifra region

When we talk about the tourist potential of the Beni Mellal-Khénifra region, we are talking about a passing tourist region given the number of nights spent by tourists in the area, we are talking about seasonal tourism given the temperature which increases during summer, we are talking about limited number of visitors consisting mainly of local or national tourists, etc. a set of characteristics making this region vulnerable to any disturbance. The Covi'19 pandemic has had a strong impact on the region's tourism sector. Hotels, lodges, guest houses, restaurants, travel agencies, etc. a set of tourist structures have experienced closure, and consequently, a staff who have found themselves facing a difficult economic situation, To promote tourism in the Beni Mellal-Khénifra region in order to help it get out of the said situation, several actions have emerged. An action plan has been launched

including institutional activities, digital communication campaigns, promotional campaigns for tourist offers and digital promotional tools, before and during the pandemic. According to the moral report of the Regional Center of Tourism of the Béni Mellal-Khénifra region (CRT-BK: 2021), a set of measures have emerged by the Regional Council of Tourism and its various institutional partners to promote the region of Beni Mellal -Khénifra as a first-class tourist destination, and to strengthen the partnership with the Regional Council of Beni Mellal-Khénifra to activate internal tourism in the region.

On the institutional side, several actions have emerged, such as the CRT team which was part of the commission in charge of scouting in the municipalities of the region to strengthen the offer of ecotourism in a qualitative and quantitative way (accommodation capacity and tourist attraction). Initiation of the regional brand project, Swiss-Moroccan program for sustainable tourism, partnership agreement linking the region to the CRT-BK, framework agreement and agreements have been signed with the Moroccan National Tourist Office (ONMT) for the financial year 2019-2020, etc.

On the side of promotional campaigns for tourist offers, and on the initiative of the Moroccan national tourist office, the Regional Council of Tourism of Béni Mellal-Khénifra, benefited from a major promotional campaign Radio / Billboards / Electronic Newspapers /Announcements, within the framework of the CO-Marketing Partnership 2020 which made it possible to reach millions of Moroccans throughout the operation. The execution of the media plan was carried out using the website created and the animation of social networks through specific actions such as "Community Management" which began with the hiring of an agency specialized in Digital Marketing.

PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH FIELD AND THE STUDY SAMPLE

As part of our research and to achieve the expected results, we planned a qualitative study, and to do this, we administered a semi-directive interview guide with marketing and communication managers or with the managers of a set of tourist entities from the two regions that made up our case study. These are 6 hotel structures of different categories, ranging from a star to a palace. The choice of these hotel entities stems from our need, on the one hand, to compare the effects of the pandemic on these structures and the resilience of each in the face of its negative impacts, and on the other hand, to compare the communication strategies in each category compared to another to increase its turnover and overcome the vagaries of this pandemic, and this through the attraction of more tourists. The following table summarizes the characteristics of the hotel structures that made up our case study.

Name of the structure	Localisation	Category	Capacity	Period of touristic flows
The View Rabat Hotel	Rabat-Sale	Palace	146 units	Winter Spring Summer Autumn
The First suites Hotel	Rabat-Sale	****	19 suites	Summer
Jnane Ain Asserdoune Hotel	Beni Mellal-Khenifra	****	120 beds	Winter Spring Summer Autumn
La Luna Hotel	Beni Mellal-Khenifra	***	68 beds	Winter Spring
Mihad Hotel	Rabat-Sale	**	35 beds	From Septembre à Mai

Table. 1. Presentation of sampling

A. Survey results: Communication strategies

The impact of the pandemic on hotel structures nationally and internationally is undeniable. Statistics from the Department of Studies and Financial Forecasts (DEPF) under the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Administrative Reform, showed that the losses in the tourism sector during the first half of 2020 were close to 18.3 billion Dirhams or 44% of revenue. According to the economic report from the same department (DEPF), the estimated impact of the COVID 19 crisis for the year 2020 is estimated at a deterioration of 69% for tourist arrivals, 60% for foreign exchange earnings. and around 50% job loss.

This unfavorable development follows the downward trend in world tourism which, according to the World Tourism Organization, has seen a decline in the flow of international arrivals, thus causing a drop in world tourist spending between 800 and 1000 billion dollars, i.e. - 60% compared to to the year 2019⁵⁷. Thus, Morocco could not be spared the consequences of this pandemic.

a. Before the pandemic

The tourism sector in Morocco benefited from the interest of the previous government, through the action plan embodied by Vision 2020, which aims to make tourism one of the engines of economic, social and cultural and displays the ambition to be one of the 20 largest destinations in the world to establish itself as a benchmark in the Mediterranean region in terms of sustainable development, thanks to a unique tourism model, which will combine sustained growth with responsible

management of the environment and respect for socio-cultural authenticity. The key words of the project are authenticity, diversity, quality and sustainability⁵⁸. The major objective of the 2020 program reiterated the objective of the 2010 vision which aimed to reach 20 million tourists. This action plan had a positive impact on tourist mobility, which positively influenced the turnover of tourist structures which, according to our interview guides, showed their satisfaction with the turnover recorded during the pre-crisis period, through the occupancy rate of the interviewed entities which reached between 80% and 100%. For tourist structures that have a professional audience, they did not have to budget more resources for advertising promotions since their occupancy rate is ensured by permanent customers who visit the city for work.

The hotel structures interviewed expressed their lack of knowledge of the State's action plan for the promotion of tourism. However, they explained that, even if they have no knowledge of the details of this action plan, its effect was indirect and visible since the filling rate of their structures was satisfactory. This effect is not different among the tourist entities interviewed in the two regions. As for their communication strategies, we noted that the more tourist structures advance in number of stars, the more their communication strategies are developed and vice versa.

b. During the pandemic

The negative impact on the tourism sector was very visible. This effect was manifested through the closure of these entities during the period of confinement, like all other economic structures on a global scale. The post-lockdown period, which is a period characterized by mobility restrictions, has not saved these structures from the negative effects of the crisis. In order to mitigate the impact of the health crisis and the harmful repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry, Morocco has undertaken a multitude of measures aimed at accelerating the recovery of this sector.

On August 03, 2020, a program contract was signed by all public and private actors operating in the tourism sector in order to regain pre-crisis performance and those in accordance with the High Royal Guidelines on the occasion of the throne speech of the July 29, 2020. This contract, covering the period from 2020 to 2022, is designed around three main axes, namely: maintaining jobs and preserving the economic fabric, stimulating demand, and structural transformation of the sector.⁵⁹

During the pandemic, tourism structures in both regions have been negatively impacted. The decline in financial resources due to the drop in turnover of hotel entities has had an impact on human resources. A wave of dismissals

⁵⁷Bouanani El Idrissi, J., Jibraili, Z., &Ladraa, S. (2021). "The tourism sector in the era of COVID 19: Impact study on the organizational performance of hotel establishments in Morocco" InInternational Journal of Accounting, Finance, Auditing, Management and Economics, 2(5), 511-524. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5528078>

⁵⁸<https://www.casainvest.ma/fr/%3Finvestis/strategies-sectorles/vision-2020-du-tourisme>. Accessed 23/1/2022.

⁵⁹Bouanani El Idrissi and all, Op.Cit

characterized this period given the lack of financial resources to cover the internal costs of the staff, despite the intervention of the State to come to the aid of these structures and to fight against the dismissals. These affected more employees not declared to the CNSS.

As for the communication strategies followed by these structures to attract more customers, we noted, according to our interview guides, that the strategies differ according to two variables; the zone of the entity and the tourist category of the establishment.

- Beni Mellal-Khénifra region

Our interview guide revealed to us that the hotel structures in this region were satisfied with the booking site and advertisements on social networks without going towards other more developed communication actions such as patronage, sponsorship or the search for agreements or partnership with potential institutions. For the communication campaigns launched by the State, the entities interviewed postulate that they are not interested in them since the State does not take great steps to help their structures and that the subsidies granted by the State are limited to staff, something that does not change the critical situation in which the Moroccan hotel sector finds itself and that these actions remain insufficient. On the other hand, despite this critical situation,

The impact of the pandemic was felt more in small two- or three-star structures, while for the others, the negative impact was less felt since these hotels were intended to accommodate people returning from abroad for the period of containment.

Communication with the State took place with the aim of benefiting from certain prerogatives recommended to alleviate the impact of the pandemic such as "Oxygen Credit", deferral of taxes, deferral of payment of certain bills related to public services, etc. The main information communicated by the hotels was the reduction in prices to sell their services and this through social networks as the main means of communication with customers and prospects. This relationship with the customer attracts more attention from hotel agents. The structures interviewed said that they give more interest to customers through the activation of the customer portfolio, customer accounts, follow-up calls to measure their satisfaction and the establishment of the complaints book.

As for the internal communication of the organization, we have noticed that these structures have changed their communication strategy with human resources since a number have been dismissed or have chosen voluntary departure due to the lack of activities in the field. In general, and for fear of losing more qualified people, managers opt for a communication strategy that takes into account the needs of employees. The managers have noticed that a lack of confidence in the tourism sector has set in with human resources and consequently a lack of stability. This is explained by the turnover rate on the dashboards of these structures.

- Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region

The results of our interview guide demonstrated a clearly perceived divergence between the different entities interviewed, so we noted that the category of the hotel and the range of its services determine the type of communication strategy followed in favor of its clientele. Indeed, the hotel structures named hotel business, declare that their customer portfolio is specifically made up of businessmen, high personalities belonging to the world of sport (federations), aviation (foreign pilots) or diplomacy (ambassadors). And add in this perspective that they were not really in need to think of a real communication strategy in order to attract a large audience.

Our interviews thus revealed that this category of hotels did not suffer an economic fall in terms of their turnover during the period of the crisis, given that a large number of foreign people were found in the obligation to confine themselves to these hotels just after the government announced the closure of air and sea borders.

Furthermore, internally, these respondents mentioned that they have opted for a new communication strategy aimed at respecting barrier gestures in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we note the renunciation of paper media, meetings and replace them with morning briefings while respecting sanitary measures.

With regard to communication with staff, we have noted that managers have been forced to change their communication strategy in the face of this lack of visibility in the sector and the psychological repercussions of the crisis on the mental health of staff. especially after deciding to agree to a 25% cut in their income instead of resorting to layoffs.

Moreover, if at the level of the hotels mentioned above the managers became aware of the importance of a real communication strategy during the crisis, the less classified hotels neglected this aspect in the face of significant economic losses, between layoffs, and salary cuts for administrators who on their part were supposed to do other tasks in order to maintain their positions. We thus noted a total absence of meetings and the decisions were taken in a categorical and impromptu way.

As far as external communication was concerned, lowering prices was the only recourse. These hotel entities (2 and 3 stars) have turned to a few platforms through the net such as Booking, Agoda, Air bnb... on which they post their services and discount offers.

V. DISCUSSION AND SYNTHESIS OF THE STUDY

In terms of the first part of the questions, which concerns the communication strategy followed before the pandemic, our 6 respondents pointed out that the communication strategy was limited to announcements on social networks and on a few tourists, promotion sites such as Booking.

We have noticed that low category hotel entities (1, 2 or 3 stars) do not have a good communication strategy. They

are content with lower prices and a few advertising publications on social networks. Indeed, the small and medium tourist structures of the two regions are invited to develop their communication strategy in order to be able to boost their turnover.

The interviews that we had with the managers of the tourist entities revealed to us a set of observations that we can classify according to the target. Thus, we can identify strategies related to marketing communication, institutional communication and internal functional communication.

The strategy linked to marketing communication

To improve their turnover, tourist entities are required to:

- *Develop more communication with the customer and ensure careful follow-up to measure the level of his satisfaction;*
- *Build more loyalty relationships with customers;*
- *Encourage loyal customers through attractive promotions and offers;*
- *Grant the mission of promoting promotional communication to a professional instead of entrusting it to an employee who is not qualified in the field of communication;*
- *Invest in media tools to encourage people to travel and to consume the hotel product, such as posters, press relations, radio, television and the Internet.*

The strategy related to institutional communication

To improve their brand image, hotel structures are invited to:

- *Use more non-media tools to develop their brand image, such as patronage, sponsorship and patronage;*
- *Organize open houses to promote their products and services to customers;*
- *Activate sponsorship which allows the win-win relationship;*
- *Collaborate with influencers to attract more Moroccan customers.*

The strategy related to internal functional communication

To improve internal communication in the organization, hotel structures are invited to:

- *Apply the labor code in hotel establishments;*
- *Transform the fear that has set in among staff of losing their jobs due to the pandemic into a sense of security;*
- *Detect the real causes of staff turnover and fight against these causes;*

- *Develop the feeling of belonging and identification with the place of work for a good profitability of the staff;*
- *Use the means of internal communication to approach the employees of the strategies and values of the tourist organisation, such as the internal newspaper, the staff magazine, information meetings and training cycles.*

We must point out that despite the communication actions that hotel structures can undertake to boost the sale of their services, certain conditions exceed them and lower tourist flows, such as the pandemic which is experiencing peak periods and mobility restrictions in the kingdom. . We can also add that when the pandemic subsides and mobility starts again, a new variant of Covid'19 is born, so either travel restrictions are imposed by the State, or people minimize their travel for fear of being infected.

On the other hand, the entities interviewed expressed certain needs that they hope will be provided by the State to help them get out of their crisis situation, such as:

- *The communication of the Moroccan tourism potential on an international scale;*
- *Help them collaborate with influencers to attract more Moroccan customers;*
- *Encourage tourism investments with concrete and interesting actions;*
- *Develop the attractiveness of small towns to move from a city of passage of two to five nights;*
- *Market the tourism potential and sustainable tourism in the Ben Mellal-Khénifra region.*

CONCLUSION

The tourism sector in Morocco is considered to be a vital sector for the growth of the Moroccan economy. Like almost the majority of businesses, tourist structures have been strongly affected by the current health crisis. The latter revealed the flaws in the communication strategies used to promote their tourism product. The latter who need more than ever to be communicated in a modern and developed way. If before the pandemic tourist establishments were in a situation of satisfaction despite the lack of strategies developed to promote their product, today the situation is different and requires more promotional actions.

Our qualitative study, which focused on six establishments belonging to two Moroccan regions, shed light on the fragility of the hotel sector in the face of a compromised recovery due to the new Omicron variant. This fragility has an impact on the financial aspect, despite the efforts made by the State.

We noted a great lack of communication know-how and insufficient marketing and institutional communication strategies followed by hotel establishments. Hotel establishments lack qualified staff in promotional communication.

We have realized that the human resources of hotel institutions play a key role in maintaining organizational performance. To do this, managerial and psychological follow-up aimed at supporting employees is a priority in order to be able to keep a skilled workforce in the field and who are trying to change jobs, which in their eyes is no longer profitable. This employee who deserves special attention, because psychological support has unfortunately been lacking during this pandemic as pointed out by our interviewees.

Finally, we can point out that our chosen methodology is faced with the possibility of generalizing our results since the pandemic has not only affected the two regions that have been the case of our study, but the entire tourism sector on the country and globally.

Indeed, this study could be extended to different hotel accommodation structures such as cottages, Riad, guest houses, etc. and to explore other geographical areas outside the Beni Mellal-Khénifra or Rabat-Salé-Kénitra axis.

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