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Contribution of Developing the Tourism Sector to Reducing Unemployment

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Abstract: The Study addressed developing the tourism sector and its contribution to reducing unemployment. The researcher relied on description and analysis based on describing and analyzing the phenomenon to extract results.

In light of this, several hypotheses were identified as follows:

1. The contribution of millions of visits to increasing the tourism sector's need for workers
2. Developing the tourism sector leads to graduates working in it
3. The contribution of tourism institutes and colleges in graduating a tourism cadre capable of working efficiently in the tourism sector
4. The contribution of historical and religious places in Iraq that attract tourists to increasing the size of the workforce

The Study reached a set of conclusions, the most important of which was the absence of a strategic plan to advance the tourism reality in Iraq and thus increase the size of unemployment. The Study concluded with a set of necessary proposals, the most important of which are:

1. Prepare a comprehensive national plan prepared by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities by appointing several graduates in coordination with other ministries and government departments to work in those departments in their specialization.
 2. Encouraging investment in the tourism sector, especially in building large hotels and resorts, to increase the number of workers in the tourism sector.
- Keywords: Development of the tourism sector, unemployment.

Keywords: Developing, Tourism Sector, unemployment, analyzing the phenomenon.

Introduction: Tourism is a permanent resource if it is well exploited. The tourism sector is very important, which has prompted developed countries to pay great attention to tourism education for its major role in building and forming human capital that acquires basic skills, knowledge and experiences, which leads to increasing job opportunities and reducing unemployment. The unemployment problem is one of the most important and dangerous economic, social and political problems facing the economies and societies of developed and developing countries alike for many reasons, and its severity varies from one country to another and from one society to another, as those concerned with studying and analyzing it have addressed it.

The spread of unemployment, especially among young people, has become a global phenomenon and the most severe and painful form of unemployment among those with degrees. The data available now about the unemployment problem in Iraq indicate that the problem has been growing and expanding year after year, and previous policies of ignoring and overlooking have not worked.

The study attempts to shed light on the tourism sector and its benefits and effects on unemployment among graduates, as well as the most important trends that led to the reality of tourism in Iraq, solving many of the problems and obstacles facing graduates.

Study Methodology

First: Problem of the Study

The lack of interest in tourism and the increase in the number of graduates in Iraq led to a rise in the number of unemployed graduates.

Second: The importance of the Study

The importance of the research comes from the fact that the tourism sector is a tributary that contributes to the gross domestic product and the entire Iraqi economy and that unemployment among graduates is one of the biggest challenges facing the economy as it affects its stability and cohesion and its negative economic, social and political effects. Unemployment increases poverty rates and leads to crime, terrorism and other social repercussions, including helping to create an unstable and unsafe environment that limits local and foreign investment.

Third: Objective of the Study

The research attempts to shed light on the most important and dangerous issue that tourism graduates suffer from, which is unemployment, as an attempt to analyze the reality of this problem and know its causes and serious effects, considering that it has become a serious threat to Iraqi society, with the proposal of

some solutions that we see as appropriate to limit this dangerous phenomenon (unemployment) or alleviate it to some extent.

Fourth: Research Hypothesis

1. The contribution of millions of visits to increasing the tourism sector's need for workers
2. Developing the tourism sector leads to graduates working in it
3. The contribution of tourism institutes and colleges in graduating a tourism cadre with the ability to work in the tourism sector efficiently
4. The contribution of historical and religious places in Iraq that attract tourists to increase the size of the workforce

Fifth: Methodology of the Study

The researcher relied on description and analysis based on describing and analysing the phenomenon to extract results.

Theoretical aspect

First: Tourism and its types

Tourism is generally classified into three types (Jalili and Abdel Moneim, 2007: 3), which are:-

A- Local or internal tourism: It includes the activity of residents in a specific area and those who travel within that area (outside their living environment).

B- Inbound tourism: It includes the activity of people (non-residents) who travel to another area (outside their usual environment).

C- Departure tourism: It includes the activity of people (designated) in a specific area and travel (reside) in places outside that area.

With historical and cultural development, tourism has diversified from what it was in the past. Its branches have branched out, and it has become involved in most areas of life, including (the Internet, Wikipedia: 2009)

- Medical tourism means travelling for treatment and bathing in health resorts in various countries, such as Hammam Al-Alil.
- Ecotourism: It means travelling to visit natural reserves such as the forests in Mosul forests.
- Marine tourism: It is one of the widespread types in the Arab world, and it is concerned with countries whose borders overlook the seas, such as Lebanon, Egypt and Tunisia.
- Shopping tourism: It is travelling for shopping in countries characterized by an abundance of shopping communities and an appropriate level of prices, such as (Dubai), a shopping destination.
- Sports tourism: It is one of the most famous types

of tourism, attending sports games, the most important of which are the World Cup Championships and the Gulf Cup Championships...etc.

- Conference tourism is the activities accompanying attendance at international and regional conferences.
- Religious tourism: which will be discussed later

Second: The concept of unemployment

Unemployment is an economic phenomenon found in most societies. It is one of the most difficult and complex problems that have been and continue to be faced in the economies of human culture. No country has been free from this problem or phenomenon throughout the ages; the economic dimension is represented by the commitment to employ the largest number of workers to increase production. The social dimension provides the largest number of workers to maintain the stability of society and social ties, and countries always try to link these two dimensions (Al-Artoushi and Al-Brifkani, 2013: 219). Unemployment is defined as ((the state of having people who are willing and able to work and are looking for it but cannot find it)) (Al-Quraishi, 2007: 183). It was also defined as ((the situation in which individuals are unable to practice economic activity during a certain period as a result of

factors beyond their control, despite being of working age and able to do so, willing to do so and searching for it (Al-Sudani, 2010: 90).

Third: The role of the tourism sector in providing job opportunities

The tourism industry absorbs many workers because most services can only be performed through the human element. Therefore, these services suffer from a shortage of skilled workers. The impact of tourism on employment varies according to the relative importance given to tourism in the national income. It is very important that the tourism sector contributes to employing a large percentage of the workforce, and the training agencies in the country can contribute a large share in preparing several workers in the tourism field for various foreign tourism markets to work in its different fields, especially in the field of hotels. The tourism industry also eliminates the problem of unemployment among educated youth due to its ability to absorb huge numbers of them in work in the tourism sector, especially in hotels and tourist villages. (Alam, 2008: 350), According to estimates from the World Tourism Organization (WTO UN) related work, completing two beds creates one direct job opportunity and three indirect job opportunities related to other activities (Saad, 2007: 207). Table (1) Number of hotels and beds for the Iraqi governorates for the year 2022.

المحافظة	عدد الفنادق ومجمعات الايواء السياحي	النسبة %	عدد المشتغلين	النسبة %	مجموع الاجور والمزايا (مليون دينار)	النسبة %
	No. of hotels and tourist accommodation complexes	Ratoi %	No. of employees	Ratoi %	Total wages and benefits (Mill I.D)	Ratoi %
دهوك	156	6.3	476	6.2	1448	3.4
نينوى	24	1.0	62	0.8	270	0.6
السليمانية	320	13.0	1016	13.2	4797	11.3
كركوك	27	1.1	85	1.1	212	0.5
اربيل	461	18.8	2130	27.6	17762	42.0
ديالى	2	0.1	3	0.1	4	0.0
الانبار	7	0.3	56	0.7	395	0.9
بغداد	403	16.4	1320	17.1	7313	17.3
بابل	6	0.2	14	0.2	23	0.1
كربلاء	673	27.4	1602	20.8	6037	14.3
واسط	14	0.6	24	0.3	23	0.1
صلاح الدين	10	0.4	19	0.3	61	0.1
التجف	277	11.3	664	8.6	3137	7.4
القادسية	6	0.2	11	0.1	22	0.1
المتن	3	0.1	9	0.1	37	0.1
ذي قار	10	0.4	33	0.4	96	0.2
ميسان	9	0.4	18	0.2	40	0.1
البصرة	49	2.0	167	2.2	623	1.5
المجموع	2457	100	7709	100	42301	100

Source: Ministry of Planning - Central Bureau of Statistics and Information Technology, Directorate of Trade Statistics, Survey of Hotels and Tourist Accommodation Complexes for the year 2021, 2023, p. 5.

We note from the previous table the following:

1- The number of hotels in Iraq is 2457, where this number represents excellent, first, second, third and fourth class hotels.

2- The number of workers in hotels is 7709 workers.

Where we note that the tourism and hotel sector and providing job opportunities come first and last from developing the tourism sector in all its fields (hotels and other tourist facilities).

Fourth: The experience of the Kurdistan Region in the process of reducing the level of unemployment in the tourism sector

The availability of human resources with the

accumulation of cultural heritage and the growth of economic and cultural exchange relations contributed to enriching and accumulating services, especially in the field of dealing with others, and this gained tourism in Kurdistan and a solid foundation on which to rely.

To support this aspect, professional and scientific centers for tourism and hotel training and specialized schools were established to prepare human cadres to work in tourism investment projects.

The following table shows the total number of tourist arrivals, the number of hotels and the number of workers in the tourism sector in the Kurdistan Region for the period (2004-2011).

Table No. (2) represents the numbers of arrivals, hotels and workers in the Kurdistan Region

Year	2004	2006	2008	2010	2011
Number of arrivals	105800	1192610	312844	4149463	4460170
Number of hotels	70	140	280	384	495
Number of employees	355	654	1754	1977	2043

Table from the data of the Tourism Authority / Kurdistan Regional Government

From Table No. (2) it is clear that the increase in the number of visitors to the region from 2004 to 2011 from (105800) to (4460170) in 2011 and the increase in the number of hotels from 70 to 495 in the same previous years and also the increase in the number of workers from 355 to 2043 workers.

This indicates the increased importance of the tourism sector in reducing unemployment rates in the region and raising individual income levels and raising the level of economic development.

In addition to the degree of employment, the level of employment and efficiency in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in various fields, some of which require large numbers of unskilled and untrained workers in the fields of transportation services, while the fields of tourist guides and reception staff in excellent hotels accommodate trained and skilled workers with experience in using many languages, technique, skill, tact and the ability to speak foreign and Arabic, and employment in the tourism fields increases in the summer season, and statistics indicate that job opportunities in the year (2002) were weak and did not exceed (2000) thousand job opportunities, while employment opportunities rose to (110) thousand job opportunities in the year (2011) and these opportunities varied between workers, tourist guides, investors and employees in the public and private tourism sector, which leads to raising the purchasing power of the people of the region and raising the

average income per capita in addition to increasing the average annual income per capita for working people from citizens and non-citizens, and this means reducing unemployment rates in the region as a result of the increase in tourist arrivals in addition to the impact of tourism in increasing Job opportunities in productive and economic establishments that are located within tourist areas represented in the fields of food and clothing production and sale, in addition to consumer goods and other goods such as souvenirs and heritage that tourists seek to obtain as a memory of the areas they visited (Kafi, 2006: 7).

Practical Aspect

First: The contribution of strategies to develop the tourism sector leads to reducing the level of unemployment

The need to find strategies to advance the tourism sector is represented by the need to develop this important sector to reduce the phenomenon of unemployment for graduates from tourism institutes and colleges spread across the governorates of Iraq, which provide the tourism sector with skilled workers.

The strategy for developing the tourism sector will yield results for graduates of tourism institutes and colleges through a set of developmental and subsidiary goals and setting policies aimed at achieving those goals in order to achieve the goal of the developmental strategy for the tourism sector to reduce unemployment among tourism graduates. A number of strategic directions

have been set to develop the tourism sector in Iraq.

Through the above, we can summarize some points through which we can put some solutions to reduce the phenomenon of graduate unemployment as follows:

1- The development of the tourism sector in Iraq comes through increasing tourism revenues through good promotion of religious and archaeological sites. This is reflected positively on graduates and provides them with job opportunities in hotels and tourist facilities.

2- Tourism development must have a solid base of important data for the number of hotels and tourist facilities, and there must be a real vision for the number of those accepted into tourism institutes so that there is no army of unemployed graduates.

3- The private sector has an important role in creating job opportunities for graduates through investing in the tourism sector.

4- The public sector must have the largest role in creating job opportunities for graduates through.

A- There must be a market for tourism labor in the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and an agreement

with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to find job opportunities for them within the framework of their specialization.

B- Opening development courses for graduates not only in their field of specialization but also in the field of tourist guidance, tourist data analysis and tourist spatial analysis to inform tourists about the tourism sector in Iraq.

Second: Hypotheses

1- The contribution of millions of visits to increasing the tourism sector's need for manpower

The human element in hotels is one of the elements that help sustain hotel activity and its presence is from the presence of the hotel organization (Al-Saeedi, 2008: 115). Therefore, the need for manpower in tourist hotels has increased as a result of the demand from tourists or visitors to hotels, which puts great pressure on hotel owners to request manpower to meet the hotel's need for workers. The need for tourist owners to manage these hotel projects increases, which leads to the creation of great job opportunities for them, especially tourism graduates. This demand occurs during specific seasons and not permanently.

Table No. (3): Number of tourists arriving in the holy city of Karbala during the Arbaeen pilgrimage of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him

Number of tourists during the Arbaeen pilgrimage	Year
15385000	2017
14553308	2020
22019146	2023
21480525	2024

Source: Prepared by the researcher

The table shows the number of tourists arriving in the city of Karbala during the Arbaeen pilgrimage of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, according to the chronological order. In 2017, it was 15,385,000 million, and in 2024 the number reached 21,480,525 million, and in 2023 the number was higher, reaching 22,019,146 million tourists.

The lack of development of the tourism sector leads to a failure to reduce the level of unemployment in tourism institutions during the million visits, which made some graduates work in other sectors or travel outside Iraq to get suitable work. When the deduction and employment of workers in the tourism sector is non-existent, there is an increase in the level of unemployment, which makes us accept the study hypothesis that states:

There is a contribution of million visits to increasing the need of the tourism sector for workers. We reject the

null hypothesis, which states: There is no contribution of million visits to increasing the need of the tourism sector for workers.

1- Developing the tourism sector leads to graduates working in it

The most important threats facing graduates is the lack of job opportunities after graduation, which pushes them to work in places other than their place of work. Not all of these graduates work in the tourism sector, but a small percentage work in this sector.

From this, we conclude that the lack of development in the tourism sector and the state's lack of interest in this important sector pushed many graduates to work outside the scope of tourism work, as graduates of tourism institutes hold a certificate equivalent to vocational secondary schools, which prompted many to join the ranks of the army or police because there are great job opportunities in these two sectors. Or to

complete their studies in institutes and colleges.

The lack of development of the tourism sector leads to a failure to reduce the level of unemployment in tourism institutions, which made some graduates work in other sectors or travel outside Iraq to get suitable work. When the deduction and employment of workers in the tourism sector is non-existent, there is an increase in the level of unemployment, which makes us accept the study hypothesis that states:

There is a contribution to developing the tourism sector in increasing the work of graduates in the tourism sector. We reject the null hypothesis, which states: There is no contribution to the development of the tourism sector in increasing the work of graduates in the tourism sector.

2- The contribution of tourism institutes and colleges in graduating a tourism cadre capable of working in the tourism sector efficiently

The tourism sector is a service and industrial sector at the same time, i.e. it is an industry without smoke, and students in tourism institutes and colleges studied and trained to work in the tourism sector, not to sit behind desks and work as administrative employees. Rather, to work, each according to his practical specialization in which he studied for three years, as the number of graduates has increased in recent years due to the increase in the number of applicants to tourism institutes and colleges.

We have recently noticed an increase in the number of graduates due to the improvement of the security situation, especially in the southern governorates, and the great development in the field of urban development witnessed by the Iraqi governorates and the extent of great interest in tourism aspects and the preparation of young and young cadres to work in the hotels spread across those governorates.

The failure to attract graduates from institutes and colleges to work in the tourism sector leads to a failure to reduce the unemployment rate in tourism institutions, which has led some graduates to work in other sectors or to travel outside Iraq to get suitable work. When the deduction and employment of workers in the tourism sector is non-existent, there is an increase in the unemployment rate, which makes us accept the study hypothesis that states:

There is a contribution from tourism institutes and colleges in graduating a tourism cadre capable of working in the tourism sector efficiently. We reject the null hypothesis, which states: There is no contribution from tourism institutes and colleges in graduating a tourism cadre capable of working in the tourism sector efficiently.

3- The contribution of historical and religious places in Iraq that attract tourists to increase the size of the workforce

Millions of tourists from all countries of the world arrive in Iraq, especially religious tourism, and the number reaches millions of tourists during the visiting season, and this number needs great services and needs (Al-Ansari: 2008: 14).

Iraq suffers from a severe shortage in infrastructure and superstructure, not only in the field of tourism but in all fields. Providing and building large hotels and tourist restaurants to provide them with food, drink and a place to stay will contribute greatly to providing job opportunities for many graduates from tourism institutes and colleges.

Also, the presence of historical places helps to increase the number of large tourists, which leads to an increase in the provision of wide job opportunities. Let's not forget that these desert places encourage hunting tourism, which generates many job opportunities there.

The failure to attract graduates from institutes and colleges to work in various tourist, archaeological and religious destinations in Iraq leads to a failure to reduce the level of unemployment in tourism institutions, which made some graduates work in other sectors or travel outside Iraq to get suitable work. When the deduction and employment of workers in the tourism sector is non-existent, there is an increase in the level of unemployment, which makes us accept the study hypothesis that states:

There is a contribution of historical and religious places in Iraq that attract tourists to increase the size of the workforce. We reject the null hypothesis, which states: There is no contribution of historical and religious places in Iraq that attract tourists to increase the size of the workforce.

CONCLUSIONS

1- The absence of a strategic plan to advance the tourism reality in Iraq.

2- Lack of coordination between government institutions and the tourism sector, which affected the tourism reality in Iraq.

3- Lack of coordination between the public and private sectors, which affected the weakness of the public sector in leading tourism activity.

4- Accept all hypotheses. They are:

1) The contribution of millions of visits to increasing the tourism sector's need for workers

2) Developing the tourism sector leads to graduates working in it

3) The contribution of tourism institutes and colleges in

graduating a tourism cadre capable of working in the tourism sector efficiently

4) The contribution of historical and religious places in Iraq that attract tourists to increase the size of the workforce

RECOMMENDATIONS

1- Preparing a comprehensive national plan prepared by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, by appointing a number of graduates in coordination with other ministries and government departments to work in those departments in their field of specialization.

2- Encouraging investment in the tourism sector, especially in building major hotels and tourist resorts to increase the number of workers in the tourism sector.

3- Legislating laws to limit unskilled foreign labor coming to Iraq who work in hotels and tourism establishments in the private sector.

4- Focus on training workers in the tourism and hotel sector theoretically and practically locally and abroad to keep up with the latest developments in the field of hotels, travel companies and tourist guidance.

5- Focus on educating tourism police officers in terms of knowledge of foreign languages, good appearance and morals, and providing them with the opportunity to meet in training courses in the form of seminars or working groups with tourism police officers in different foreign countries to exchange experiences.

6- Selecting people to work in the tourism and hotel sector with qualities and characteristics such as having the qualities of patience and sympathy with others and the ability to deal with the situation and for the individual to be self-confident and able to adapt to face the difficulties of work.

7- Focus on on-the-job training, which is achieved by participation in management between locals (private sector and public sector) on the one hand and benefiting from foreign experience on the other hand and by cohesion between senior management and middle management (supervisory) in hotel establishments and tourism and hotel companies.

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