

# THE IMPACT OF HANDICRAFTS ON IMPROVING THE TOURIST EXPERIENCE, CASE STUDY: UAE HANDICRAFTS INDUSTRY

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**Abstract-** Handicrafts formulate an essential segment of tourist experience; they symbolize native customs and local people, as well as a valued souvenir. Handiworks are exclusive vocabularies of a specific nation or society made by native workmanship and ingredients. Handcraft is an invention that if a tourist enjoys it, he is ready to pay any price. Handicrafts is a homemade business that needs low overheads and arrangement to launch. Hence, it can be jobs creator at a marginal budget. Old-style services in handicrafts production are the origin for further earnings creating events that are an ordinary ways to community economic independence.

The study explores the objectives, and factors affecting the progress of handicrafts in Egypt and the improvements made in UAE.

The research then investigates potentialities of developing Handicrafts in Egypt and its effects on improving the tourist experience in Egypt and increasing the tourist flow into Egypt. Results indicated that handicrafts are facing several obstacles in practical performance, but it could be very helpful in supporting the tourist experience in Egypt especially at the time of deterioration. However, handicrafts can also offer incentives to the tourism employees who have almost lost their jobs and may change their

career. Benefits are not only confined to this, but also extended to cover enhancing existing tourism types and introducing new ones as well as enhancing the tourist numbers and their average expenditure.

The Research provides recommendations for actions that could encourage more tourists to enjoy their visit to Egypt through handicrafts.

**Key words:** Handicrafts, Souvenir, Handworks, Homemade

## I. Introduction

The handcraft sector can have a major impact on national economies through foreign exchange earnings, employment creation and sustained economic growth. Money spent on crafts spread instantly and undiluted into the local community. The tourism industry is increasingly becoming a provider of employment opportunities and a contributor to the growth of countries' revenue through various segments, including the sales of handicrafts to tourists.

High employment potentiality, low cost investment and high benefit, contribution of ladies, nature friendliness and the possibility to motivate innovative abilities sort that field as one of the preferred areas in the economic growth. Handicrafts can be an essential share of exports.

A top quality handicraft from a pleasant trip has a remaining influence to arouse delightful memoirs, and to evoke the curiosity of other tourists who appreciate it and to inspire them to visit that destination. Nevertheless, the association between tourism and handicrafts has not yet been completely developed, apprehended or established. It is required to support and develop tourism corresponding with handcrafting in developing countries as they make a reasonable and influential mixture to attain progress objectives.

UNWTO held an International Conference on Tourism and Handicrafts, in Tehran 2006 as the first international conference ever held with explicit emphasis on the relation between tourism and handicrafts. UNESCO supported this conference to promote the cultural and socio-economic role of handcraft and to recognize the benefit of handicrafts in tourism growth.

## **II. Handicrafts in Egypt**

In the Pharaonic eras, temples, cemeteries, and palaces contained workspaces where expert artisans were producing furniture, jewels, crystal, brass, and other products. They are displayed in various museums around the world.

Egyptians have a made-for-tourists handicrafts industry. Attractive copies are created and favorable pieces are produced. You will only watch genuine antiquities in museums. Egyptians were clever in carving all types of metals with decorated forms and ornamenting them with semiprecious stones and tinted crystal. They were also talented in woodworking, producing diverse types of furniture that were regularly gold-plated and ornamented with precious stones for the noble palaces.

Khan Elkhilili is a main souk in Cairo, Egypt for handicrafts. While the bazaar's design has been significantly improved, it remains to be the

city's main center of craft and a famous attraction for tourists and locals in quest for handicrafts.

The Bedouins of South Sinai depends on earnings over tourism, although it does not offer a stable revenue. In Upper Egypt, they have grown in weaving baskets, spinning wool, making ropes from palm fiber or interlacing palm leaves into carpets and bags.

Egyptian handicrafts suffers from government abandonment. The most vital action to stimulate the Egyptian handicrafts is the contribution in exhibitions but there are administrative difficulties that make the course of manufacture and promotion very sluggish.

Lack of cooperation among ministries and organizations, the rules and law interrelated to handicrafts, and the lack of mutual prospective of the economic growth of the sector, delays any sustainable progress of the handicrafts and weaken its significance to tourism. Some of the obstacles are:

1. Hard competition from countries such as China, Korea, Taiwan and Malaysia as their products are cheaper.
2. Restricted products variety owing to absence of creativity.
3. Low product quality because of shortage in skillful craftsmen or lack of awareness of tourist needs;
4. Absence of appropriate bazaars that can attract tourists;

## **III. Handicrafts in UAE**

In UAE, tourism depends on the tranquil, blue sandy beaches of the Arabian Gulf that is edged by magnificent desert. The UAE provides all year long sunshine and Seven-star luxury. The UAE has received seafarers and merchants to its coasts

for ages. Nowadays, this custom of hospitality and continues. The UAE has many attractions for all holidaymakers. It is promptly developing as an international conference, incentive and exhibition destination. It has outstanding shopping, sports, and entertainment and dining services. The UAE's culture includes several types of art and craft that are evidence of ancient Islamic and Arab culture. The United Nations identifies the old-style method of weaving, famous as Sadu, as an Intangible Cultural Heritage.

There are many efforts completed in UAE so as to defend their culture and tradition specially conserving the handicrafts, Abu Dhabi is honored of its women's custom of producing a diversity of handicrafts and has established the Women's Craft Centre to display the significant role women play in the economy. Fascinated tourists can see the handicrafts worker at work, creating perfumed oils, customary clothing, baskets and pottery. Several products can be bought at fixed prices and tourists can take a rest in the on-site restaurant, which features true Gulf meals and heavy Arabic coffee.

A traditional oasis village has been renovated at Abu Dhabi Heritage Village, providing a distinctive occasion to step back in time and enjoy the UAE capital's history. It embraces an open museum with models of desert campfires, sea houses made from palm tree leaves, antiquated tents made from goat hair, old-style water wells, and the 'falaj' irrigation system. Displays are often arranged at the village too, with skillful artisans working on metal and pottery work, while women practice their weaving and netting talents to make woven socks, trays and carpets. Moreover, there are prospects to shop around for handmade dried herbs and soap at the village shop, and if you're lucky, falconry shows could occur throughout your stopover.

The Liwa Date Festival is an annual custom occasion held in Liwa city in Al Gharbia (The

Western Region) in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Organized by the Cultural Programs and Heritage Festivals Committee – Abu Dhabi, with an aptitude to host about 70,000 guest, containing both citizens and residents

Al Reef Handicrafts Training Centre Abu Dhabi is an excellent place for tourists who adore learning customary Emirati handicrafts. It is an instructive center where both visitors and residents can recognize the rich culture and heritage of the United Arab Emirates over the training courses steered by experienced and specialized personnel.

The annual Traditional Handicrafts Festival held in Al Ain's Souq Al Qattara and organized by the Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority (TCA) as a part of an inventiveness to highpoint Emirati heritage, and reinforce national identity.

This is all under a strategic vision approved by the federal government that targets to encourage and preserve national identity and inaugurates creativities that found identity and its ethics and improve the society accordingly.

#### IV. Findings

1. Handicrafts are an effective tool in the economy as they provide a big number of locals with job opportunities and income, and so alleviating poverty among indigenous populations.
2. In the 21st century, tourism is becoming a flourishing industry and handicraft is one of the fastest growing activities, together they make a logical and powerful combination.
3. The international organizations like UNESCO and UNWTO are interested in the traditional handicraft industry, as it is one of the most important components of tourist product.

4. Egypt is a unique and fantastic gallery of handicrafts as it has a unique range of special handicraft products and designs that make the visit to Egypt more enjoyable and memorable.
  5. The handicrafts in Egypt are facing several challenges such as stiff competition from semi-handcrafted and machine made duplicates, limited access to markets and inadequate infrastructure and technology.
  6. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is one of the world's growing tourist destinations as it attracts millions to major exhibitions at its many world-class exhibition centers, and huge investment that has taken place in tourism infrastructure.
  7. Although Emirati society is an open society to other cultures, but Emiratis are very concerned about their national identity as the number of foreigners is rising rapidly and nationals are now a minority in their own country.
  8. The efforts of UAE to promote its traditional handicrafts focus mainly on organizing festivals and exhibitions to shed light on the importance of traditional handicrafts to Emirati heritage and strengthen national identity through local crafts efforts to revive, preserve and teach these crafts to future generations.
- about the historical and aesthetic values of handmade crafts.
  3. We should also depend on social media and web sites to enhance the awareness of the importance of traditional handicrafts.
  4. The protection of traditional crafts from piracy and unauthorized duplication, through applying the Intellectual Property Rights for Crafts Sector.
  5. The Egyptian Tourism Ministry have to consider the handicraft sector as an integral part of tourism and a continuing source of funding for the tourism sector in Egypt, as mostly dependent on tourists consumers.
  6. There are many important areas of government activities, which support the tourism and crafts such as Organizing festivals, events and markets.
  7. Successful establishment of a presence in overseas markets requires knowledge in advance about display techniques and product selection by craft exhibition/marketing experts of relevant countries. In addition, a marketing strategy should be set in advance to clearly define the craft market positioning: selecting products suited to the characteristics of each market, developing, and marketing strategic products that are likely to sell well.
  8. In order for both countries and craftspeople to benefit from the market potential offered by tourism, a coherent policy for the promotion of creativity and innovation is required. This policy implies a broad approach integrating the training components, promotional activities and the adaptation of crafts products to the ever-changing needs of consumers.

## **V. Recommendations**

1. The cultural cooperation between Egypt and UAE should focus also on how to promote the handicrafts sector to benefit from the UAE experience in that field.
2. The handicraft industry in Egypt needs support from the mass media to enhance people's awareness inside and outside Egypt

9. There should be a system to collect data and statistics related to Egyptian traditional handicrafts that can serve as a decision-making tool for crafts organizers.
10. The Egyptian universities and research institutes should adopt a new attitude towards the traditional handicrafts through encouraging the researchers to prepare researches and studies about “the characteristics of Egyptian traditional handicrafts”, how to promote them, the obstacles and challenges and how to overcome these obstacles.

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