



## Evaluating The Importance of Meditation Tourism as a Core Tourism Product in Egypt, From Meditation Tourists' Perspective.

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### Abstract

The concept of meditation tourism has become more prominent in the last few years as an increasingly popular tourism product. Meditation tourism is a form of vacation travel and leisure activity to calm one's mind and body both mentally and spiritually. Tourists now possess a significantly elevated level of openness to new experience and Egypt can be one of the world's meditation tourism spots if its travel agencies started to put it on their tourism regular programs. EGYPT has many locations that can be spiritual and are suitable for practicing meditation. This new form of tourism is becoming an important business philosophy of many hotels and resorts around the world. This study aims to highlight the significance of meditation tourism, identify the role of travel agencies in organizing meditative programs from meditative tourist' perspective, identify meditative travelers level of satisfaction and their future intention of meditative tours. This study uses a quantitative methodology and an offline /online survey to gather data from 237 participants who practice meditation. The results of this study may assist travel agencies to figure out the importance of organizing meditation tourism programs and shed the light on Egypt as a meditation tourism destination.

**Key words:** tourism meditation, meditative tourists, travel agencies, Egypt, experiences, satisfaction

### Introduction

Nowadays, meditation retreats are a significant segment of the tourism sector (Norman and Pokorny, 2017). Meditation tourism refers to the practice of travelling to specific destinations with the primary purpose of engaging in meditation and mindfulness practices. It combines the element of tourism, where individuals explore places and cultures, with the intention of deepening their meditation practice and seeking personal growth (Farkic et.al, 2021, Choe and Regan, 2020). Kroesen and DeVos (2020) showed that some people choose to use informal, unstructured modes of travel to relieve daily stress and find spiritual fulfilment. There are a number of informal travel activities that may be useful for reducing stress and enhancing physical relaxation. Improving both physical and mental health and meditation is one of them. Since the early 2000s, meditation has been highly accepted and has been given high social standing, and is now being marketed as a technique for health and wellbeing that many travelers started to look for (Norman and Pokorny, 2017). Despite the growing interest in meditation tourism, there is a relatively small body of empirical research on this topic (Awasthi, 2013). This is due to the fact that many of the existing studies are qualitative or exploratory in nature, and more rigorous quantitative research is needed to establish the effects of meditation tourism on individual. In addition, many of the existing

studies on meditation tourism focus on Western tourists visiting Asian countries, such as Thailand or India. More research is needed to understand the experiences and effects of meditation tourism for diverse groups of participants, including non-Western tourists and local community .

**Thus the current paper aims to**

- understand the concept of meditation tourism as a tourism product in Egypt
- identify the characteristics of meditative travelers
- identify the benefits of meditation tourism from meditative travelers' perspective
- clarify the role of travel agencies in Egypt in organizing meditation tourism programs
- determine the level of satisfaction of meditative travelers based on their travel experiences
- explore the future behavior intention of meditative travelers

Meditation in Egypt is still regarded as understudied. However, relevant research that take these types of tourist activities into account are virtually nonexistent as well ( Riege and Perry, 2000). Considering that responses in this market are so fundamentally important for setting up global promotion tactics (Tse and Gorn, 1993), it is surprising that there is a major lack of study referring to specific marketing techniques in international tourism (Riege and Perry, 2000). This study will provide a template for the development of more

**Literature review**

**Concept Of Mediation Tourism**

Currently, the situation of the world is changing continuously and rapidly amid high competition for various resources, and environments are constantly being destroyed. This has a profound impact on the quality of life of people who are under stress, and various illnesses, as well as the fact that it causes social problems (Sawangmek, 2015). Jiang et al. (2018) suggested that a form of experience occurs through meditation tourism. It is a secular experience that enhances the senses and generates an added appreciation of landscape, culture, and the richness of human achievement, where people start to escape from their daily routine and stress to look for a journey with the goal of preserving or promoting their well-being, staying in a location specifically created to facilitate and improve body, mind, and spirit (Smith and Puczko, 2013).

Ren et al. (2011) stated that Meditation-based tourism services are special products in the wellness sub segment of tourism. According to Chen et al. (2013), mediation tourism is a travelling process intended or aimed towards promoting body, mind and well-being. Receivers of meditation retreats may learn to be more attentive, appreciate life more, deal with stress and disease, and improve their physical and mental well-being (Blasche et al., 2021). Meditation is a way of developing and controlling the mind so that peaceful and focused state can enable individual to understand themselves better (Schedneck, 2014). According to Mars and Abbey (2010), meditation tourism had positive impacts on the brain and body and significantly improved spirituality and positive health parameters. Meditation tours are guided travel experiences designed to incorporate mediation, mindfulness, and relaxation into the itinerary. These tours often take participants to serene and peaceful destinations, such as nature retreats, spiritual centers, or tranquil locations, where they can engage in meditation practices, yoga sessions, and other mindfulness exercises. The goal of these tours is to provide individuals with an opportunity to deepen their meditation practice while enjoying a rejuvenating and immersive travel experience (Chen et. al., 2017)

### **Experiences Of Meditation Tourism Participants**

The quality of well-being has increased as a necessity in the minds of most age groups today as a result of increased health care awareness among people worldwide. Many people travel in order to engage in meditation because of its widespread appeal (Komeil, 2021). According to Lengyel (2016), meditation tourism is typically associated with peace, tranquility, and an isolated environment. The choice of the destination is influenced by the reasons for meditation. Meditative participants stated that their experience of meditation can include a desire for novel encounters, a drive to discover new ways of being or thinking, and a want to reflect on one's life in the hope of learning something new ( Schedneck, 2014). Research on meditation tourism may aid in understanding the methods people use to solve issues in their daily lives, reflective assessments, and personal world views.( Norman and Pokorny, 2017).

The wellness traveler has a different driving force than regular travelers in general. A greater understanding of visitor well-being features and their travel motivation is required because meditation tourism is a new type of tourism (Damijanac and Sergio, 2013). Deesilatham (2016) showed that wellness, self image congruence and positive emotions played an important role as the key determinants that influenced tourists' satisfaction during a trip, incremental quality of life and the intention to revisit meditative destinations. Meditation tourism is a fast growing global trend and many destinations try to market themselves as wellness tourism. A study conducted by Komeil (2021) emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend meditation tourism while choosing the advertising strategy for destinations that provide meditation retreats. In addition, the study also states that the essential elements of attractions of a meditation destination are price and natural beauty.

According to Jiang (2018), meditation tourism results in two basic types of experience. The first one is a secular experience that heightens the senses and leads to a greater awareness of the richness of human achievement. The second is a holy experience where one feels as though they have attained a sense of the divine and are better equipped to comprehend the meaning of life. Bartle (2022) showed that the majority of travelers are more concerned about their mental health and physical well-being than they were before the pandemic and that relaxation and meditation are considered the most important travel feature in 2021 as expressed by 36% of travelers. In addition, travelers show a strong preference for relaxation and meditation activities when travelling internationally. Blasche et. al. (2021) implies that incorporating meditation practice while on vacation may help to reduce the primary downside of vacations—the rapid waning of their positive effects. A study carried out by Sparby (2020) showed that some participants felt that meditation as a discipline has a positive relationship with joy . All these benefits of meditation tourism that the meditative participants stated should be taken into consideration as it is becoming a tourism trend that travel agencies should focus on .

### **Meditation tourism in Egypt**

Traveler interested in meditation: This person wants to get away from the continual barrage of digital information. They are attempting to reduce the intensity of their ties to the outside world (particularly if they have children). They are also looking for new and better living habits that promote ease and reduce stress. Theses travelers frequently aspire to abandon their pre-existing identity in order to reinvent oneself. For three to seven days, they can select a destination where they can practice meditation (Goldan, 2017). Egypt has all the elements of the ideal meditation destination. As it embraces the great wealth of historical attractions and landscape, modern entertainment, as well as a variety of accommodations, making it convenient for yoga tourists. In

addition, the diverse mild weather makes it perfect for meditation tourism most of the year (Komeil, 2021).

Egypt is the ideal country for anyone who enjoys meditation tourism because there are peaceful places practically everywhere in the cities from Dahab in south Sinai to the huge plateau of the Pyramids in Cairo, which is the best known location in the world for meditation practices. Egypt offers a variety of locations for meditation. You will equally enjoy the peace, beauty, and distinctive nature of the country whether you practice in the morning on the shore of the Red Sea in Dahab or in the white desert at the Bahriya Oasis (Hamdy, 2015).

Meditation tourism movements have seen a significant increase in popularity of desert spirituality, which comprises practicing meditation there. Egypt's desert landscapes, which have a history of being a well-known location for meditation for ancient monks, can easily be named among the most spiritual sites in the world for any meditation aficionado. Many tourists believe that the captivating salt lakes in Egypt's northwest Siwa Oasis provide profound therapeutic and soothing advantages. Near the oasis, there are also virgin sand dunes that are ideal for retreats and peaceful meditation (Sayed,2022). All of these destinations make Egypt qualified for becoming a hub for meditation tourism .

### **Hypothesis**

1. There is a significant difference in respondents' satisfaction toward meditative travel experience with regard to their age .
2. There is a relationship between the perceived benefits from meditation tours and satisfaction with meditation travel experiences.
3. There is a relationship between perceived benefits from meditation tours and behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences.
4. There is a relationship between satisfaction with meditation travel experiences and behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences.

### **Methodology**

#### **a) Sample and data collection**

This study used quantitative methods of enquiry. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the data from meditative tourists in Egypt. The questionnaire was distributed to the meditative travelers participants who were asked to fill it out in their free time. The data were collected from October 2022 to July 2023. An intercepting sample of 350 meditative tourists that practice meditation in Egypt were chosen to fill the questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed using two ways, hard forms submitted to meditation tourists during my participation in meditation tours in Egypt through meditation groups on social media that organize meditation tours in Egypt, and online by sending the link of the survey to participants on social networking sites such as Facebook and Instagram to meditation travelers pages in Egypt. Only 237 participants completed the survey with a valid return rate of 80%. The results obtained from the valid forms were statistically analyzed using SPSS version 22 whenever necessary. The data and information were analyzed and discussed in accordance with the stated objectives.

#### **b) Questionnaire and measures**

In order to obtain the required data, a well-structured questionnaire was designed and answered by meditation tourists. The questionnaire was divided into 6 parts , the first part was about the characteristics of meditative travelers, the second discussed how to organize a meditation trip, the first and second parts used multiple choice which was considered with the main respondents demographic characteristics data that may affect their meditation travel preferences and their way of organizing their meditation trip , the third emphasized the Perceived Benefits from Meditation

trips , the fourth showed the Travel agencies’ role of organizing meditation tourism programs, the fifth and sixth parts clarified the Satisfaction and future intention with meditation travel experiences. The questions in these parts were designed using ranking on a 5-point Likert scale ( 1:strongly disagree to 5 : strongly agree ). The questionnaire was written in Arabic and translated into English to achieve the study's objectives as long as the target market included all the meditation travelers in Egypt.

Using questionnaires is common for researchers in the tourism and hospitality field because they facilitate the process of collecting data about participants’ preferences and measure them using statistical procedures (Veal, 2011). The 6 parts of the questionnaire were mainly inspired by the exploratory study conducted by Byrnes et. al. (2013), Erica (2022) and Deesilatham (2016).

**Results and Discussion**

**1. The statistical analysis tests**

The data were processed statistically through the "SPSS V.22" statistical program, using the following statistical tests:

- 1- Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire.
- 2- Mean, standard deviation, and percentages of frequencies were used to describe the characteristics of the sample, and to determine the extent of the sample's response to the research constructs, taking into account that the weighted mean is used to determine the response to the research constructs, as illustrated in Table No. (1).
- 3- Kruskal-Wallis test was used to find the difference among respondents based on age towards satisfaction. That test was used to find differences between the samples regarding the study variables in the case of more than two groups.
- 4- Spearman's correlation coefficient was used to illustrate the relationships between research variables and evaluate research hypotheses. It was applied to ordinal data and non-parametric testing.
- 5- A simple regression analysis was used to see how one variable affects another.

**Table (1): The weighted mean for the 5-likert scale degrees**

Levels of degree	The weighted mean
Strongly Disagree	1-1.79
Disagree	1.80-2.59
Neutral	2.60-3.39
Agree	3.40-4.19
Strongly Agree	4.20-5

**2- The study samples**

The purposive sample was used to disseminate 350 questionnaires to meditation tour travelers.

Table (2) shows that 237 of the received questionnaires were valid for statistical analysis.

**Table (2): The response rate**

No. of distributed	No. of received questionnaires	No. of excluded	No. of valid	The response rate
350	280	43	237	80%

### 3- Validity and Reliability

The findings reveal that the constructs of the study have a Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.7, as indicated in Table (3). This demonstrates the reliability and validity of the survey utilized in the study.

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, the items were presented to 5 specialists and experts in tourism studies to determine the extent of their validity in measurement. The percentage of agreement on the statements measuring the variables was high. So, the questionnaire was prepared in its final form and distributed to the study's sample of tourists.

**Table (3): Cronbach's alpha for the study variables**

Constructs of the study		No. of items	Cronbach's alpha
1	Perceived benefits from meditation tours.	11	0.991
2	Role of travel agencies in organizing meditation tourism.	8	0.973
3	Satisfaction with meditation travel experiences.	9	0.991
4	Behavioral Intentions of meditation travel experiences.	6	0.989

### 4- Characteristics of the sample

As shown in Table (4), the number of males was 40.1%, while the number of females was 59.9%. Regarding age, most respondents aged from 22-37 years (Millennial) with 40.9% and 35% between 9-21 years (Generation Z). These findings are in line with what was presented previously in Commisso (2013) that about 1-in-5 of generation Z are interested in meditation. The percentage of respondents between 38-53 years (Generation X) and (baby boomer) was 16.5%. On the other side, 7.2% of the respondents were between 54-72 years (Baby boomer) and 0.4% between 73-90 years (Silent generation). Concerning education, most of the respondents with 77.2% had universities studies, followed by postgraduates (19.4%). On the other hand, the percentage of respondents with high school was 1.3%. Regarding the marital status, the table also indicates that the respondents who are single reached 38.8%, followed by those who divorced with 24.5%. Then, 20.3% of the respondents were widowed. As for the Employment status, the majority of respondents were employed (56.6%), and 30 % were students. Additionally, 11 % of the respondents were unemployed and 2.5% were retired.

**Table (4): Characteristics of the sample respondents**

No.	Items	Freq.	%	
1	Gender	Male	95	40.1
		Female	142	59.9
2	Age	9-21(Generation Z)	83	35.0
		22-37 (Millennial)	97	40.9
		38-53 (Generation x)	39	16.5
		54-72 (Baby boomer)	17	7.2
		73-90 (Silent generation)	1	0.4
3	Education Level	Without studies	5	2.1
		High School	3	1.3
		Universities Studies	183	77.2
		Postgraduate	46	19.4
4	Marital	Single	92	38.8

	<b>Status</b>	Married	39	16.5
		Widowed	48	20.3
		Divorced	58	24.5
<b>5</b>	<b>Employment status</b>	Employed	134	56.5
		Retired	6	2.5
		Student	71	30.0
		Unemployed	26	11.0

### 5- Characteristics of the meditation trip

Table (5) shows a set of characteristics related to meditation trips. The results of the table show that most of the study sample travel alone and meet people with the same interest by 65%. On the other hand, other participants prefer to travel in small groups of friends by 13.5%, in large groups by 10.5%, or solo by 8.9% or accompanied by family by 2.1%. These results support the findings of Eltayeb (2022) that many tourists prefer to travel alone and meet people with the same interest. The results of the table also show that meditation trips range between three and four nights, and the sample agreed on that with a percentage of 51.1%, or between five or six nights with a percentage of 26.6%, while some others showed that they are within the range of two or three weeks, with a percentage of 14.8% and 7.6%.

As for the social media that was used in planning meditation trips, the results indicated that most of the respondents relied on social media by 43.5%, on Instagram, and then by 26.6%, on Facebook, in planning meditation trips. Then came the respondents' reliance on TikTok (21.5%), Pinterest (5.1%) and Twitter (3.4%). These results align with what was presented previously by Eltayeb (2021) where there was a positive relationship between Instagram usage and the decision-making to travel which means that Instagram is becoming the most used social media tools for many travelers. Concerning the sources of obtaining information about meditation trips, the table shows that the source of respondents obtaining information about meditation trips is from meditation trip groups on social media by 30.4%, from friends and relatives by 26.6% and from websites by 15.6%. Then in the next place comes the travel information received by the mail and from the travel agencies.

Regarding spending on meditation trips, the results showed that 25.3% of the sample spend between 5000 and 6999 on meditation trips, 20.7% spend more than 7000, then those who spend between 3000 - 4999, then less than 499. The results of the table also show the best tourist destinations for meditation trips in Egypt from the point of view of the respondents where 24.9% of the respondents agreed that Dahab is the best tourist destination for meditation trips, followed by Siwa (23.6%), Ras Sidr (17.7%), Aswan and Nuba (13.1%), Bahariya Oasis (11.8%), and finally, Fayoum (8.9%).

**Table (5): Characteristics of the meditation trip**

No.	Items	Freq.	%	
1	With whom preferring to travel on a meditation vacation?	Solo	21	8.9
		With a large group of friends	25	10.5
		By myself and meet up with people that have the same interest	154	65.0
		With a small group of friends	32	13.5
		With family	5	2.1
2	How many nights preferring for meditation tourism vacation?	3-4 nights	121	51.1
		5-6 nights	63	26.6
		2 weeks	35	14.8
		3 weeks	18	7.6
3	Which social media used while planning your meditation trip	Facebook	63	26.6
		Instagram	103	43.5
		twitter	8	3.4
		Tiktok	51	21.5
		Pinterest	12	5.1
4	Which information sources do you use to plan your meditation vacation trips?	Travel agencies	19	8.0
		Internet (websites)	37	15.6
		Meditation travel groups on social media	72	30.4
		Direct referral from a friend or family members	63	26.6
		Travel information you received on the mail	26	11.0
		Past experienes / been there before	20	8.4
		Friends & relatives	-	-
		Other	-	-
5	How much are you prepared to spend on a mediation tourism vacation? (Everything included from flight, accommodation and etc.)	0 to 499 L.E	44	18.6
		500 to 999 L.E	27	11.4
		1000 to 2999 L.E	12	5.1
		3000 to 4999 L.E	45	19.0
		5000 to 6999 L.E	60	25.3
		7000 to more L.E	49	20.7
6	What are the best meditation destinations in Egypt?	Elnuba and aswan	31	13.1
		Dahab	59	24.9
		Siwa	56	23.6
		Ras sedr	42	17.7
		Bahria oasis	28	11.8
		El Fayoum	21	8.9

**6- Descriptive statistics of the study variables**

**A. Perceived benefits from meditation tours**

**Table (6): Descriptive statistics for perceived benefits from meditation tours**

Items		Frequencies percentage <sup>1</sup>					Mean	SD	Rank	
		Degree levels	1	2	3	4				5
1	Meditation trips helped me to rejuvenate.	%	7.2	6.3	13.9	40.9	31.6	3.84	1.15	1
2	Meditation trips helped me to improve my mental health.	%	5.5	15.6	16.5	33.3	29.1	3.65	1.20	4
3	The experience from meditation trips made me feel good about myself.	%	7.6	15.2	16	24.1	37.1	3.68	1.31	3
4	On meditation trips, I established friendships with one or more new people	%	6.8	15.2	19	43.5	15.6	3.46	1.12	9
5	Meditation trips helped me to reduce my stress levels and let go my worries	%	4.6	16	13.9	48.5	16.9	3.57	1.08	7
6	Meditation trips helped me to get away from everything	%	5.1	16.5	18.1	49.8	10.5	3.44	1.04	10
7	Meditation trips made me experience something new and exciting	%	9.3	9.3	9.7	34.2	37.6	3.81	1.28	2
8	Meditation tourism is valuable for human life and important for wellness, quality of life, relaxation and inner peace.	%	4.6	14.8	19.4	36.7	24.5	3.62	1.14	5
9	Meditation tourism helps to improve professional performance	%	13.9	7.6	45.6	4.6	28.3	3.26	1.32	11

10	Meditation trip helped me to think better and make the right decisions.	%	7.6	5.1	30.4	46	11	3.48	1.01	8
11	The overall experience of meditation trips was enriching	%	5.1	14.3	14.8	48.1	17.7	3.59	1.09	6
1 (1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree). 2 SD = Standard deviation.								3.58	1.12	

**The results of perceived benefits from meditation tours as presented in table (6) show that**  
**The Research Samples**

- agreed that meditation trips helped them renew their activity, as the mean for this element 3.84 and the standard deviation reached 1.15.
- confirmed that meditation trips have helped them improve their mental health with the mean 3.65 and standard deviation 1.20.
- agreed that the experience of meditation trips made them feel satisfied with themselves, as the mean for this element was 3.68 and the standard deviation reached 1.31.
- stated that they made friends with one or more new individuals during the meditation trips and the mean of this phrase was 3.46 and the standard deviation reached 1.12.
- agreed that meditation trips help reduce stress levels and get rid of fears, as the mean for this element was 3.57 and the standard deviation reached 1.08.
- stated that the meditation trips helped them get away from everything, and this result confirms that the mean for this phrase reached 3.44 and the standard deviation 1.04.
- said that the meditation trips made them experience something new and exciting, as the mean for this phrase was 3.81 and the standard deviation reached 1.28.
- unanimously agreed that meditation tourism is value to human life and important to their health, quality of life, relaxation and inner peace, as the mean for this element was 3.62 and the standard deviation reached 1.14.
- did not agree decisively that meditation tourism helps to improve professional performance, and their answers were more neutral, as the mean was 3.26 and standard deviation reached 1.32.
- agreed that the meditation trips helped them to think better and make better decisions, as the average for that statement was 3.48 and the standard deviation reached 1.01.
- stated that the overall experience of meditation trips is rich, as the mean of this phrase was 3.59 and the standard deviation 1.09. This result aligns with Deesilatham (2016) that overall experience of meditation trips was enriching with 6.14 mean and the standard deviation 0.93.

**In summary**, the research sample agreed on perceived benefits from meditation tours mentioned above, as the general mean for perceived benefits from meditation tours was 3.58 at the agreement level, with a standard deviation of 1.12.

**B. The role of travel agencies in organizing meditation tourism programs**

**Table (7): Descriptive statistics for the role of travel agencies in organizing meditation tourism programs**

Items	Frequencies percentage <sup>1</sup>					Mean	SD <sup>2</sup>	Rank		
	Degree level	1	2	3	4				5	
1	Special offers in travel agencies regarding meditation tourism programs influence my reservation.	%	35	45.1	12.7	3.8	3.4	1.95	0.96	6
2	Travel agencies organize regular meditation programs	%	47.7	36.7	3.8	4.2	7.6	1.87	1.16	8
3	Travel Agencies can offer valuable advice and guidance regarding meditation compared to meditation travel online groups	%	35.4	49.8	7.6	3.8	3.4	1.90	.938	7
4	Booking travel meditation online is generally cheaper than booking with a travel agency	%	8	7.2	28.3	19	37.6	3.71	1.26	1
5	Internet meditation travel offers more flexibility and choice than a travel agency can offer	%	6.3	8	21.5	49.8	14.3	3.58	1.03	2
6	I consider travel agencies' special offers regarding meditation trips on their official websites or social media better than the ones on social media meditation travel groups.	%	33.3	43.9	15.6	0.8	6.3	2.03	1.04	5
7	Special offers of meditation shown at travel agencies are fictitious	%	5.5	27	36.7	23.6	7.2	3.00	1.00	4
8	Booking meditation trips independently without the need of a	%	9.7	8.4	19	48.5	14.3	3.49	1.13	3

travel agent can be satisfactory										
1 (1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree). 2 SD = Standard deviation.								2.69	0.98	

**The results of the role of travel agencies in organizing meditation tourism programs as presented in table (7) show that the research sample ...**

- disagreed that special offers in travel agencies regarding meditation tourism programs influence their reservation, as the mean for this item 1.95 and the standard deviation reached 0.96.
- disagreed that travel agencies organize regular meditation programs with the mean 1.87 and standard deviation 1.16.
- disagreed that travel agencies offer valuable advice and guidance regarding meditation compared to meditation travel online groups, as the mean for this element was 1.90 and the standard deviation reached 0.93.
- agreed that booking travel meditation online is generally cheaper than booking with a travel agency, as the mean of this phrase was 3.71 and the standard deviation reached 1.26.
- agreed that internet meditation travel offers more flexibility and choice than a travel agency can offer, as the mean for this element was 3.58 and the standard deviation reached 1.03.
- disagreed that those travel agencies' special offers regarding meditation trips on their official websites or social media are better than the ones on social media meditation travel groups, and this result confirms that the mean for this item reached 2.03 and the standard deviation 1.04.
- were neutral about the special offers of meditation shown at travel agencies and if they were fictitious, as the mean for this phrase was 3.00 and the standard deviation reached 1.00.
- agreed that booking meditation trips independently without the need of a travel agent can be satisfactory, as the mean for this element was 3.49 and the standard deviation reached 1.13.

**In a brief**, the research sample were generally confused about the role of travel agencies in organizing meditation tourism programs mentioned above, as the general mean for perceived benefits from meditation tours was 2.69 at the agreement level, with a standard deviation of 0.98. These results are in keeping with the results from the study of Zaki (2016) which showed that travel agencies play a limited role by making travelers not depending on it which showed that 63.8 % of travelers prefer to plan their trip through internet and only 28.8% through travel agencies .

**C. Satisfaction with meditation travel experiences**

**Table (8): Descriptive statistics for satisfaction with meditation travel experiences**

Items		Frequencies percentage <sup>1</sup>					Mean	SD <sup>2</sup>	Rank	
		Degree level	1	2	3	4				5
1	I am happy about my decision to choose meditation trips	%	5.5	11.8	19.4	43.9	19.4	3.60	1.09	3
2	I believe I did the right thing when I chose meditation trips.	%	3.4	4.2	6.3	44.7	41.4	4.16	0.96	1
3	I always enjoyed myself on meditation trips.	%	9.7	10.1	19.4	40.9	19.8	3.51	1.19	4
4	I feel much better about things and myself after meditation trips.	%	4.2	11	16	49.4	19.4	3.69	1.03	2
5	On meditation trips, I felt more satisfied with life.	%	7.6	4.6	30.8	45.1	11.8	3.49	1.01	5
6	On meditation trips, I felt free from the pressures of life.	%	5.1	15.2	24.9	36.7	18.1	3.48	1.10	6
7	The cost of meditation trips are reasonable and well worth it.	%	7.6	16.5	19.8	44.3	11.8	3.36	1.12	9
8	Overall, my experiences of meditation exceeded expectations	%	5.9	14.8	17.7	48.5	13.1	3.48	1.08	7
9	Overall, I am satisfied with my experience of meditation trips.	%	7.2	13.9	17.3	48.9	12.7	3.46	1.10	8
1 (1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree).								3.58	1.04	
2 SD = Standard deviation.										

The results of satisfaction with meditation travel experiences as presented in table (7) show that the research sample

- agreed that they happy about their decision to choose meditation trips, as the mean for this item 3.60 and the standard deviation reached 1.09.
- agreed that the right thing when they choose meditation trips with the mean 4.16 and standard deviation 0.96.
- agreed that they always enjoyed themselves on meditation trips, as the mean for this element was 3.51 and the standard deviation reached 1.19.

- showed an agreement between the respondents that they feel much better about things and themselves after meditation trips, as the mean of this phrase was 3.69 and the standard deviation reached 1.03.
- agreed that they felt more satisfied with life in meditation trips, as the mean for this element was 3.49 and the standard deviation reached 1.01.
- agreed that they felt free from the pressures of life in meditation trips, and this result confirms that the mean for this phrase reached 3.48 and the standard deviation 1.10.
- were neutral about the cost of meditation trips and whether they were reasonable and well worth it, as the mean for this phrase was 3.36 and the standard deviation reached 1.12.
- agree that their experiences of meditation exceeded expectations, as the mean for this element was 3.48 and the standard deviation reached 1.08.
- agreed that they were satisfied with their experience of meditation trips, and this result confirms that the mean for this phrase reached 3.46 and the standard deviation 1.10.

**Based on the above,** the study sample agreed on satisfaction with meditation travel experiences mentioned above, where the general mean was 3.58 at the strong agreement level, with a standard deviation of 1.04.

**D. Behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences**

**Table (9): Descriptive statistics for behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences**

Items		Frequencies percentage <sup>1</sup>					Mean	SD <sup>2</sup>	Rank	
		Degree level	1	2	3	4				5
1	I have an intention to repeat the meditation trips	%	7.6	10.5	13.5	49.4	19	3.62	1.13	2
2	I will recommend meditation trips to other people (e.g. friends and relatives).	%	7.2	11.4	16	45.6	19.8	3.59	1.14	3
3	If I had to decide again, I will choose meditation tours again.	%	7.2	13.5	14.8	45.6	19	3.56	1.15	4
4	If I have the opportunity to attend a similar meditation tours , I will repeat the experience	%	13.9	20.3	31.2	15.2	19.4	3.06	1.30	7
5	I will revisit one of the meditation destinations in the near future.	%	5.1	14.3	18.6	48.5	13.5	3.51	1.05	5
6	I am willing to spend time and money to repeat the meditation tours.	%	9.3	6.3	15.2	45.1	24.1	3.68	1.17	1
7	I will be posting photos of the attendance on social networks regarding	%	9.3	14.3	19	40.9	16.5	3.41	1.19	6

	meditation travel destination in Egypt so people could join the meditation tours									
<p>1 (1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree).                  2 SD = Standard deviation.</p>								3.49	1.13	

The results of satisfaction with meditation travel experiences as presented in table (9) show that the research sample

- agreed that they have an intention to repeat the mediation trips, as the mean for this item 3.62 and the standard deviation reached 1.13.
- agreed that they will recommend meditation trips to other people (e.g. friends and relatives) with the mean 3.59 and standard deviation 1.14.
- agreed that they will choose meditation tours again, as the mean for this item was 3.56 and the standard deviation reached 1.15.
- showed confusion between the respondents that if they have the opportunity to attend a similar meditation tour, they will repeat the experience, as the mean of this phrase was 3.06 and the standard deviation reached 1.31.
- agreed that they will revisit one of the meditation destinations in the near future, as the mean for this element was 3.51 and the standard deviation reached 1.05.
- agreed that they are willing to spend time and money to repeat the meditation tours, and this result confirms that the mean for this phrase reached 3.68 and the standard deviation 1.17.
- were neutral about the cost of meditation trips if it were reasonable and well worth it, as the mean for this phrase was 3.36 and the standard deviation reached 1.12.
- The research samples agree that they will be posting photos of the attendance on social networks regarding meditation travel destination in Egypt so people could join the meditation tours, as the mean for this element was 3.41 and the standard deviation reached 1.19.

**Based on the above,** the study sample agreed on the behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences mentioned above, where the general mean was 3.49 at the strong agreement level, with a standard deviation of 1.13.

**7- Correlation analysis among research constructs and hypotheses tests**

**A. There is a significant difference in respondents’ satisfaction toward meditative travel experience with regard to their age .**

As shown in Table (10), the satisfaction toward meditative travel experience was significantly affected by age, where the p value = 0.000. In other words, the age of the respondents make a difference to satisfaction toward meditative travel experience. This means that there is a significant correlation between meditation travelers’ age and their satisfaction toward meditative travel experience. The results were in favor of the elderly from 54-72 (baby boomer) and 73-90 (silent generation). Hence, H1 was supported.

**Table (10): Kruskal-Wallis test for the difference among respondents based on age towards satisfaction**

Variables	Age	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	Sig.
<b>Satisfaction toward meditative travel experience</b>	9-21(Generation Z)	83	42.22	204.109	0.000
	22-37 (Millennial)	97	133.93		
	38-53 (Generation x)	39	197.05		
	54-72 (Baby boomer)	17	223.50		
	73-90 (Silent generation)	1	223.50		

**B. The relationship between perceived benefits from meditation tours and satisfaction with meditation travel experiences**

**Table (11): The relationship between perceived benefits from meditation tours and satisfaction with meditation travel experiences**

			Perceived benefits from meditation tours	Satisfaction with meditation travel experiences
<b>Spearman's rho</b>	<b>Perceived benefits from meditation tours</b>	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.988**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.000
		N	237	237
	<b>Satisfaction with meditation travel experiences</b>	Correlation Coefficient	0.988**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	.
		N	237	237

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results indicated in table (11) confirmed that there is a strong direct positive relationship between perceived benefits from meditation tours and satisfaction with meditation travel experiences (Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05). This indicates that the greater perceived benefits from meditation tours, the greater the satisfaction with meditation travel experiences.

Consequently, the H2 was supported. Simple regression was used to calculate the effect as follows:

**Table (12): Effect of the perceived benefits from meditation tours on satisfaction with meditation travel experiences**

Model	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Adjusted R square	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	0.283	0.034	0.978	8.405	0.000
	Perceived benefits from meditation tours	0.921	0.009		0.989	102.788

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction with meditation travel experiences

The results in table (12) indicate that the independent variable (Perceived benefits from meditation tours) affected the dependent variable (Satisfaction with meditation travel experiences). Therefore, the perceived benefits from meditation tours explain 97.8% of the variation in satisfaction with meditation travel experiences.

**C. The relationship between perceived benefits from meditation tours and behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences**

**Table (13): The relationship between the perceived benefits from meditation tours and behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences**

			Perceived benefits from meditation tours	Behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences
Spearman's rho	Perceived benefits from meditation tours	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.995**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.000
		N	237	237
	Behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences	Correlation Coefficient	0.995**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	.
		N	237	237
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

The results in table (13) assured that there is a strong positive relationship between the perceived benefits from meditation tours and the behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences (Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05). This means that the greater the perceived benefits from meditation tours, the greater behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences.

Accordingly, the H3 was supported. Simple regression was used to calculate the effect as follows

**Table (14): Effect of the perceived benefits from meditation tours on behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences**

Model	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Adjusted R square	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	-0.095	0.0360	0.989	0.979	-2.621	0.009
	Perceived benefits from meditation tours	1.001	0.010			104.066	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: **Behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences**

The results in table (14) indicate that the independent variable (Perceived benefits from meditation tours) affected the dependent variable (Behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences). Hence, the Perceived benefits from meditation tours explain 97.9 % of the variation in Behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences.

**D. The relationship between satisfaction with meditation travel experiences and behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences**

**Table (15): The relationship between the satisfaction with meditation travel experiences and behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences**

			Satisfaction with meditation travel experiences	Behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences
Spearman's rho	Satisfaction with meditation travel experiences	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.985**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.000
		N	237	237
	Behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences	Correlation Coefficient	0.985**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	.
		N	237	237

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results in table (15) indicate that there is a strong positive relationship between the satisfaction with meditation travel experiences and behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences (Sig. = 0.000 > 0.05). In other words, the greater the satisfaction with meditation travel experiences, the greater behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences. Hence, the H4 was proved.

Simple regression was used to calculate the effect as follows

**Table (16): Effect of satisfaction with meditation travel experiences on behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences**

Model	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Adjusted R square	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	-0.360	.0380	0.990	0.979	-9.437	0.000
	<b>Satisfaction with meditation travel experiences</b>	1.075	.0100			105.122	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: **Behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences.**

The results in table (16) indicate that the independent variable (Satisfaction with meditation travel experiences) affected the dependent variable (Behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences). Therefore, the satisfaction with meditation travel experiences explains 97.9% of the variation in behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences.

**Table (17) provides a summary of the hypotheses based on the preceding findings as follows:**

**Table No. (17): Summary of the research hypotheses results**

No.	Hypotheses	Results
<b>H1</b>	There is a significant difference in respondents’ satisfaction toward meditative travel experience with regard to their age .	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H2</b>	There is a relationship between the perceived benefits from meditation tours and satisfaction with meditation travel experiences.	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H3</b>	There is a relationship between perceived benefits from meditation tours and behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences.	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H4</b>	There is a relationship between satisfaction with meditation travel experiences and behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences.	<b>Supported</b>

**Conclusion**

Meditation travel is becoming more and more popular. Travelers are looking more and more for locations and activities that encourage unwinding, mindfulness, and wellbeing. Meditation sessions, yoga retreats, spa treatments, and immersion in natural settings are frequently included in these experiences as people place a higher priority on their physical and mental wellbeing. Egypt can be considered a travel locations for people interested in meditation, as it provides places for meditation and relaxation that are tranquil and have spiritual significance. Although Meditation tourism is indeed a growing trend in travel industry travel agencies in Egypt, most travel agencies in Egypt don’t take this tourist activity into account ( Riege and Perry, 2000). The aim of the study was to identify the characteristics of meditative travelers , clarify the role of travel agencies in Egypt in organizing meditation tourism programs , identify the benefits of meditation tourism from meditative travelers perspective , determine the level of satisfaction of meditative travelers based on their travel experiences, and explore the future behavior intention of meditative travelers. The actual number of completed questionnaires by meditative travelers was 237. Regarding the study findings, there was a significant correlation between meditative travelers’ age and their satisfaction toward meditative travel experience. There is a relationship between the perceived benefits from

meditation tours and satisfaction with meditation travel experiences. There is a relationship between perceived benefits from meditation tours and behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences, and there is a relationship between satisfaction with meditation travel experiences and behavioral intentions of meditation travel experiences.

### **Recommendations**

Travel agents ought to focus on tourists seeking a genuine meditation experience and design a unique program for them. Egyptian tourism authorities should give more care and attention to meditation tourism by creating videos about the most appropriate meditation destinations in Egypt that meditative travelers were satisfied with. An awareness campaign should be launched in the local community to educate Egyptians about the advantages of meditation travel and how it would affect their quality of life. Hotels should be encouraged to promote a lodging package at a discounted rate for meditation travel groups in order to enhance occupancy rates and highlight meditation tourism. This also allows travel agencies to diversify offerings beyond traditional vacation packages, drawing in new clients who are interested in wellness and mindfulness. In order to develop specific packages, travel agencies should work with wellness facilities, yoga instructors, and meditation specialists, and should develop relationships within the wellness sector. Furthermore, travel agencies may maintain their competitiveness and meet the changing expectations of modern visitors by including meditation tourism into their offers.

### **Future research direction**

Future research could depend on female meditative tourists and concentrate on a particular meditation destination. Furthermore, it should study more diverse meditation practitioners from different cultures and ethnicities.

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### تقييم أهمية سياحة التأمل كمنتج سياحي أساسي في مصر من وجهة نظر سائحي التأمل المستخلص

أصبح مفهوم سياحة التأمل أكثر بروزًا في السنوات القليلة الماضية كمنتج سياحي يحظى بشعبية متزايدة. سياحة التأمل هي شكل من أشكال السفر لقضاء العطلات والأنشطة الترفيهية لتهدئة العقل والجسد عقليًا وروحياً. ويشكل السائحون الآن مستوى مرتفعًا بشكل ملحوظ من الانفتاح على التجارب الجديدة، ويمكن أن تصبح مصر إحدى مناطق سياحة التأمل في العالم إذا بدأت وكالات السفر التابعة لها في وضعها ضمن برامجها السياحية المنتظمة. يوجد في مصر العديد من المواقع التي يمكن أن تكون روحانية ومناسبة لممارسة التأمل. أصبح هذا الشكل الجديد من السياحة فلسفة عمل مهمة للعديد من الفنادق والمنتجعات حول العالم. تهدف الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على أهمية سياحة التأمل، والتعرف على دور وكالات السفر في تنظيم البرامج التأملية من وجهة نظر السائح التأملي، وتحديد مستوى رضا المسافرين التأملين ونيتهم المستقبلية في الجولات التأملية. تستخدم هذه الدراسة منهجية كمية واستطلاعًا عبر الإنترنت لجمع البيانات من 237 شخصًا يمارسون التأمل. وقد تساعد نتائج هذه الدراسة وكالات السفر في معرفة أهمية تنظيم برامج سياحة التأمل وإلقاء الضوء على مصر كوجهة لسياحة التأمل.

**الكلمات الدالة:** سياحة التأمل، السائحون المتأملون، وكالات السفر، مصر، التجارب، الرضا.