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(Theoretical Analysis)

Factors affecting the success of tourism activities in Nineveh Governorate

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Abstract

This research aims to study the factors influencing the success of tourism activities in Nineveh Governorate by analyzing natural and human tourism resources and their role in revitalizing the tourism sector. It addresses a central question: What are the most important factors that affect the success of tourism activities in Nineveh Governorate which determine the stimulation of tourism? The study derives its importance from the significance of the tourism sector as a key economic driver of development and the need to identify factors that can contribute to the development of tourism activities. The study employs a descriptive-analytical approach by describing the current state of the tourism sector and analyzing the factors influencing its success. The research concludes that the tourism sector represents a vital pillar in stimulating economic and social activity by providing job opportunities, stimulating local investment, and promoting local development. The results show that Nineveh Governorate possesses distinctive natural, cultural, and historical tourism assets. However, their utilization remains limited due to shortcomings in some human resources, particularly those related to tourism infrastructure.

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Introduction

The tourism sector is one of the most important economic sectors with developmental dimensions, given its pivotal role in supporting the local economy, diversifying income sources, and enhancing investment opportunities. It contributes to job creation and stimulates cultural exchange between peoples. Despite the diverse tourism assets of Nineveh Governorat,the tourism sector still faces a number of challenges that limit its ability to achieve development and enhance its competitiveness. Among the most prominent of these challenges are the weakness and lack of integration of tourism infrastructure, the inconsistent quality of services provided, the inefficiency of some hotels, and the limited efficiency of the transportation system. This affects the ease of movement for tourists and their overall satisfaction with the tourism experience.

Given the importance of tourism as a cornerstone of economic and social development, advancing this sector requires adopting integrated development policies focused on infrastructure development, improving the quality of tourism services, and enhancing the efficiency of tourism

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facilities and establishments. Besides, investing in the country's natural, cultural, and heritage assets will help in developing toursim sector. These efforts will contribute to strengthening the competitiveness of the tourism sector, increasing tourist numbers, and improving the image of the tourist destination at both the regional and international levels.

Research Problem:

Despite possessing diverse tourism resources and potential that qualify Nineveh Governorate to be among the most prominent tourist destinations in Iraq, the level of utilization of these assets remains under expectations. This is attributed to the interplay of several factors that influence the success of tourism activities, without a clear understanding of the nature of these factors and their relative importance in achieving tourism success within the governorate.

The research problem in a main question, what are the most important factors that affect the success of tourism activities in Nineveh Governorate which determine the stimulation of tourism? lies in the need to identify the most influential factors success of tourism activities in Nineveh Governorate and to demonstrate how these factors can be utilized to enhance the performance of the tourism sector. This will support local development efforts and contribute to increasing the governorate's competitiveness as a tourist destination. Furthermore, the research aims to uncover the most significant obstacles and problems affect the development of tourism activities and the improvement of the tourism sector in the governorate.

The Importance of the Research

This research derives its importance from the nature of its subject matter, as it addresses the positive impact that various factors can have on revitalizing tourism in Nineveh Governorate. It explores how to value and utilize the available tourist attractions to elevate Nineveh to the ranks of renowned tourist destinations.

Furthermore, the importance of this research stems from the growing significance of the tourism sector as a cornerstone of economic and social development. Tourism plays a vital role in diversifying income sources, creating job opportunities, boosting investment, and preserving cultural and civilizational heritage. Nineveh Governorate possesses diverse tourism assets, including archaeological and historical sites, cultural diversity, and natural resources, making it a promising tourist destination both locally and internationally.

The significance of this research lies in studying and analyzing the factors influencing the success of tourism activities in Nineveh Governorate, whether related to natural or human resources.

Research Objectives

This research aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify the factors influencing the success of tourism activities in the governorate.
2. To identify the most significant obstacles, affect the development of tourism activities in Nineveh Governorate.
3. To develop mechanisms to address the obstacles to tourism activity and present them to relevant authorities for their use in promoting tourism in Nineveh Governorate.
4. To offer a set of recommendations that contribute to the development of the tourism sector and enhance its role in economic and social development.

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Research Hypotheses: The success of tourism activities in Nineveh Governorate depends on the availability of a range of natural, human, and institutional factors working in an integrated manner.
Research Methodology: This study adopts a descriptive and analytical research approach to examine the factors influencing the success of tourism activities in Nineveh Governorate. The descriptive approach is used to identify and describe the current reality of the tourism sector, including its natural and human resources, strengths, challenges, and obstacles. The analytical approach is employed to analyze the relationships between these factors and their impact on the development and success of tourism activities.
The study relies on secondary data and documentary sources, including relevant books, academic research, published studies, master's theses, doctoral dissertations, official reports, and other available documents related to tourism and tourism development in Nineveh Governorate. This approach contributes to providing a comprehensive understanding of the tourism sector and identifying the main factors and challenges affecting its development.
Discussion: the finding indicate that Ninevah governorate possesses significant natural, historical and cultural tourism resources that can support tourism development, However, their effective utilization remains constrained by weaknesses in infrastructure, tourism services, transportation and investment. therefore, integrated cooperation among government institutions, the private sector and local communities is essential to overcome these challenges and strengthen tourism competitiveness

Section One

First: The Concept of Tourism

If an introduction is necessary to begin the discussion of tourism, then presenting a few lines about its concepts and definitions is essential. We will focus on some concepts that clarify the essence of tourism, as follows: (Bloufa, 2022)

- The first attempts to define the phenomenon of tourism began in the 1880s. The first definition of tourism dates back to the German scholar Jouer Freuler in 1905, who described it as a modern phenomenon arising from the increasing need for recreation, relaxation, an appreciation of natural beauty, and the experience of enjoyment and pleasure through staying in areas with natural features. (Laasami, 2022)
- Tourism is considered a modern phenomenon linked to the availability of leisure time, financial resources, and the development of transportation, communication, and hospitality facilities. It responds to the individual and collective need for rest and recreation through a change of scenery, enjoyment of natural beauty, and connection with individuals and groups from different regions and cultures, with all the resulting enjoyment, benefits, and the bridging of distances between peoples. (Sheikhi et al., 2021)

- Tourism is the voluntary movement of a citizen, at their own expense, from their permanent residence to a place other than their permanent residence for a period exceeding 24 hours

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but less than one year. This stay is not intended for work or financial gain. (Al-Samarrai, 2017) Tourism is the set of human and natural relationships that result from tourists staying in a place, provided that this stay is not permanent. (Saad, 2017)

- It can be said that tourism is the human activity related to movement and travel undertaken by individuals and groups to move from one place to another for social, recreational, vacation, or medical reasons, and not for work or permanent residence. This means that tourism is a multifaceted human activity that includes a set of reciprocal relationships between the tourist, who is temporarily present in their place of residence, and the people residing in that place (Tawfiq, 2008).

Second: Objectives of Tourism

The tourism sector, like any other sector, is based on viability and objectives that make it an effective sector achieving several goals that satisfy the demand for tourism. Among these goals are the following (Ismail et al., 2016):

1. Political Objectives: These aim to improve communication between countries to achieve a degree of internal and external stability.

- Regarding internal stability: Tourism contributes to achieving security and protection for vulnerable areas by establishing tourism and development projects and revitalizing them by providing all the necessary requirements for life.
- Regarding external stability: This is achieved by reducing tension and poor relations between countries, as tourism exchange creates empathy between peoples. This is something that conflicting governments may respect, which contributes to political stability between countries.

2. Social Objectives:

Since the tourism sector is considered the third productive sector after industry and agriculture, it achieves the following:

- Employment: This is achieved by creating formal and informal jobs, which helps eliminate many forms of deviance and crime resulting from idleness and unemployment. This demonstrates that tourism relies heavily on human capital.
- Population Redistribution: This is achieved by developing new areas through the construction of hotels and essential facilities, leading to population redistribution and potentially altering the geographical landscape.
- Contributing to Raising the Standard of Living: This is achieved by increasing national income, which the tourism sector contributes to at the national level.

3. Economic Objectives: These are represented by the following (Adnan, 2019):

- Strengthening and generating revenue for the public treasury.
- Increasing national and per capita income. Improving the balance of payments.
- Increasing employment levels and reducing unemployment.
- Expanding investment returns.
- Promoting tourism industries.

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-There are several main and subsidiary objectives for tourism, as follows: (Atoum, 2022)

A - Ensuring the quality of enjoyment of natural landscapes and their preparation by human resources:

This main objective includes the following subsidiary objectives:

- Long-term preservation of tourist areas.
- Exploitation of natural landscapes and respect for the environment.
- Ensuring the sustainable development of the tourism sector.
- Improving accommodation capacity.
- Maximizing tourism competitiveness at the international level.

B- Promoting a competitive and effective tourism economy:

This main objective includes several sub-objectives, as follows:

- Ensuring competitive pricing compared to other countries.
- Ensuring adequate tourist transportation.
- Improving tourism marketing within the country.
- Increasing the utilization of tourism production facilities.

C- Creating the best possible social conditions for tourists and local residents:

This main objective includes several sub-objectives, as follows:

- Involving different segments of the population in tourism.
- Improving the standard of living in tourist areas.
- Creating better conditions for tourists in terms of resources and organization.
- Ensuring the tourist's broad awareness and resistance to all forms of commercial exploitation, both domestic and international.
- Encouraging tourist facilities that meet the needs and desires of tourists and enhance their experience.
- Fostering understanding between tourists and local communities, both within and outside the tourism organization.

Third: Types of Tourism

Tourism branches into numerous types according to the diverse desires and needs of individuals. This diversity has been facilitated by economic, social, and even technological development, leading to the emergence of new types of tourism, as follows: (Mawhoub, 2007)

1. Scientific Tourism: Also known as research tourism, this includes scientific studies and research, particularly those related to plant and animal life, as well as the study of bird movements and their global migration. (Bin Ghadban, 2020)

2. Religious Tourism: This type of tourism is considered one of the oldest forms of tourism and involves visiting religious sites. Among the most famous of these sites in the world are those that have witnessed unparalleled religious visits, such as Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia, as well as the Vatican City in Rome for believers of the Christian faith. (Al-Rahbi, 2014)

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3.Cultural Tourism:This type of tourism relies on holding cultural courses, seminars, special exhibitions, and cultural competitions, such as poetry, theater, essay, art, and music competitions. Fashion shows and other events can also be added. (Aboudi, 2016)

4. Medical Tourism:This type refers to traveling to regions renowned for their role in treating illnesses, such as heart disease, eye disease, or rheumatic diseases, including natural treatments. The tourist's goal is to travel for treatment of organic diseases or to undergo a specific surgical procedure in a specialized hospital or medical center. (Amer&Shawqi, 2014)

5. Economic Tourism:This refers to visits made by investors and businesspeople for the purpose of attracting investment, trade, export, and import. (Ali, 2018)

6. Sports Tourism: The motivation behind this type of tourism is the desire to practice specific sports such as water sports (boat racing, water skiing, touring races), ice skating, and hunting birds, fish, or animals. (Al-Maghribi, 2016)

7. Seasonal Tourism: This type of tourism is linked to a specific season, meaning the tourist spends time in a particular place for a specific period, ranging from one to three months. (Kafi, 2015)

8. Shopping Tourism: This is considered a modern type of tourism. Many countries with low labor costs and abundant production strive to become thriving markets, offering all kinds of goods at low prices to attract the largest number of tourists interested in purchasing goods. (Al-Qurna, 2017)

9. Hiking Tourism:This is a relatively new type of tourism that involves organized walking tours in remote areas known for their scenic beauty. Accommodation is in campsites in the wilderness, allowing visitors to experience nature firsthand. (Matar, 2014)

10. Accessible Tourism:This type of tourism is known for its high cost, with disabled tourists spending 30% to 200% more than other tourists. It has garnered significant attention from developed countries in recent years. (Al-Sayed, 2020)

Fourth: The Importance of the Tourism Sector:

Given the increasing importance of the tourism sector and the fact that its growth rates have surpassed those of agriculture and industry, making it a productive sector that plays a vital role, as follows: (Dali, 2019)

1- **The importance of tourism as an economic activity** is evident through the following: • (Balbali et al., 2018) and (Khamisi and Souad, 2015)

- Its effective contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the provision of foreign currency, increased government savings, and improved balance of payments.
- Its reduction of the unemployment rate by providing job opportunities and generating employment, both directly and indirectly.
- Tourism expands the scope of trade with other economic sectors domestically, and stimulates trade with various countries.
- Tourism significantly expands local markets, leading to the emergence of new markets that meet the needs and demands of tourists and fostering the development of local tourism-related activities and industries.

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- Tourism plays a role in the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and it is considered one of the important sectors that provides quick returns on investment with lower costs.
- Tourism plays an active role in increasing national income through its direct contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

2- **Social and Cultural Importance:**

It can be said that tourism facilitates the learning of different cultures, thereby increasing mutual understanding and respect, and fostering acceptance of values and customs from both sides. It creates a spirit of unity within the community and bridges cultural gaps. Furthermore, tourism enables the exploration of peoples' past and history, and the protection of historical and cultural heritage. This increases communication and interaction, potentially leading to the development of local tourism in many countries worldwide. Tourism also provides incentives and helps cover the costs of preserving archaeological and historical sites, which, if neglected, would be subject to destruction and the loss of the region's historical heritage. In addition, tourism contributes to the following: (Abdulrasoul, 2017)

- Preserving historical and cultural heritage and distinctive contemporary architectural styles.
- Reviving traditional arts, festivals, and crafts, which are considered aspects of local life. Tourism revenues, generated from various museums and cultural facilities such as theaters, and through the organization of festivals and cultural events, contribute to attracting both domestic and international tourism.

3- **Environmental and Urban Importance:**

This importance enables tourism to optimally utilize natural resources and work to preserve them, preventing their degradation and misuse. Tourism activities contribute to planning and regulating land use in a way that maximizes benefits without creating environmental problems. Furthermore, tourism activities prioritize preserving and maintaining the aesthetic appeal of both natural and man-made features. (Faqih et al., 2011)

4- **Its importance to other sectors, such as the transportation sector**:

The tourism sector contributes to activating land, air, and sea traffic. This will lead to an increase in the revenues of these sectors. Furthermore, investments should be studied to expand and improve roads and facilitate access to remote areas, which would encourage tourism in the country. (Abdul Qader, 2006)

Section Two

Factors Affecting the Success of Tourism Activities

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The more influential and attractive factors for the tourism industry are available in a region or country, the more desirable that region or country will be as a tourist destination. Undoubtedly, tourist attractions are built upon several pillars, including: (Baloufa, 2022)

1. **Geographical Location:** The importance of geographical location is evident from a tourism perspective, as it determines the relationship between areas targeted for tourism development and international tourism in other regions. It is also evident in the creation of what are called intermediate locations. A tourist area within a region cannot be considered the sole beneficiary of tourism; rather, the benefits extend to areas situated between tourist centers (Dali, 2019). Geographical location has an impact on tourism, as the closer a tourist attraction is to tourist-generating areas, allowing for quick and inexpensive access, the greater the tourist demand (Bouakrif, 2012). An example of this is the tourist area at the Mosul Dam, where It is close to the city and easily accessible, with good transportation links.

In Nineveh Governorate, we observe that most tourist areas are close to the city center, such as the forests, Mosul Dam, waterfalls, and Hammam al-Alil, allowing visitors to reach them and return in the same day. This demonstrates the geographical location of these areas in Nineveh Governorate, making them prime destinations that encourage continuous tourism at all times.

2. **Climatic Elements**: Climate is considered one of the most important and influential natural factors in the tourism industry. It is among the natural factors that most strongly control human activity, regardless of its level. This means that human control over this element is very limited, confined to minimizing its impact and attempting to adapt to it. Among the most important factors controlling the climate of any region are its geographical location relative to latitude (i.e., proximity to or distance from the equator), the nature of the local topography in terms of elevation, the distribution of land and water, the influence of surrounding ocean currents, and atmospheric pressure distribution, which results in wind patterns and storms (Girgis et al., 2021).

Only under suitable weather conditions can tourists utilize natural and artificial resources (such as mountains, lakes, seas, beaches, landscapes, forests, and archaeological, cultural, and architectural sites). Furthermore, favorable weather and climatic conditions, including sunshine, clean air, and moderate temperatures, are themselves conducive to tourism development (Dali, 2019). Nineveh Governorate is distinguished by its climate, which is conducive to tourism, earning it the nickname "Mother of Two Springs." Its climate fosters tourism, as it enjoys a spring-like atmosphere even in winter, making it a pleasant and attractive destination for tourists. God Almighty has blessed it with two springs a year; its autumn is like a second spring. Winter temperatures range from -5 to 8°C, while summer temperatures range from 40 to 50°C

3. Surface Features: Surface features refer to... The variation in landforms, elevation, and slope (both above and below sea level) is a significant natural factor influencing tourism. These landforms provide natural indicators of potential for tourism development and the availability of suitable areas for tourists (Girgis et al., 2021). Nineveh Governorate is distinguished by the presence of the Tigris River, which divides it into east and west banks, and its varied topography comprises three main sections: hard ground, hills, mountains, and plateaus.

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4. Religious Sites: This includes shrines, religious sites, tombs of saints and holy figures, and anything related to a country's religious heritage. It also includes monasteries and churches. Religious tourism is practiced as a type of tourism, characterized by its continuity and relative stability, largely unaffected by climatic conditions or the standard of living. However, demand peaks during important religious occasions, reflecting the fact that demand fluctuates throughout the year (Dali, 2019). Important religious sites in Nineveh Governorate include the Mosque of Prophet Jonah, the Mosque of Al-Khidr, the Great Mosque of Al-Nouri, the Mosque of Prophet George, the Mosque of Prophet Daniel, the Monastery of Mar Elijah, the Monastery of Mar Korkis, and the Monastery of Sheikh Mattai.

5. **Historical Attractions**: These are considered among the most important human attractions upon which many countries rely to develop their tourism sector, along with other complementary facilities. These countries utilize their historical heritage as a primary tourist attraction, striving to create sites of historical significance, such as museums. (Bouakrif, 2012)

Among the most prominent historical sites in Nineveh Governorate are Sennacherib's Palace, the Hanging Gardens, Ashurbanipal's Library, Hatra City, Bash Tabia Castle, Al-Khidr Mosque, Al-Hadba Minaret, and many other historical landmarks that reflect the rich history of this governorate.

6. **Civilization, History, and Antiquities**: The cultural advancement of some countries and the spread of commercial markets constitute a tourist attraction, as is the case in some Asian countries. Additionally, some countries were centers of ancient civilizations that left behind artifacts indicating the grandeur of these civilizations, such as the Babylonian civilization in Iraq, which points to a historical era that some tourists wish to explore. Furthermore, some countries are religious centers that attract tourists, such as the Mosque of the Prophet Jonah and the Mosque of the Prophet Seth in Nineveh. (Saleh, 2007)

7. **Cultural Components**: Tourists often visit a country to learn about the diversity of folklore, customs, traditions, and rituals prevalent among its various social groups. They also typically share aspects of their daily lives. The cultural dimension of tourism is not limited to folklore, customs, traditions, and rituals alone, but extends to a curiosity about the historical artifacts and civilizations housed in museums. (Baloufa, 2022) One of the most important museums in this province is the Mosul Museum, considered one of the most important museums in Iraq and second only to the Iraqi Museum in Baghdad in importance. It houses the cultural and civilizational heritage of this province, including Assyrian, Hatran, and Islamic antiquities.

8. Hospitality Facilities: No matter how attractive a tourist area may be, its popularity will be limited if it lacks the basic facilities required by tourists. These facilities include hospitality services, which depend on the choice of location and length of stay. Hospitality facilities include various types of hotels and motels used for transit, as well as campsites, private homes, conference centers, vacation rentals, and other accommodation and dining options. (Bouakrif, 2012). Nineveh Governorate boasts numerous hotels that welcome tourists from all Iraqi provinces and other countries. These hotels are distinguished by their comprehensive amenities and excellent service.

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They are located on both the left and right banks of the Tigris River and are modern and well-equipped to receive tourists from all over the world.

9. **Technical and Legislative Components:** These consist of preparing the necessary scientific and technical frameworks for developing the tourism sector, such as establishing tourism and hospitality colleges, opening academic programs in universities to graduate the human resources needed for tourism development, and establishing bodies concerned with supervising the tourism sector. This is achieved through enacting legislation, laws, and general organizational structures, and developing marketing plans and tourism promotion programs. (Al-Ajlouni, 2017) Examples include the Institute of Tourism and Hospitality, which has graduated specialized personnel in this field to work in tourism establishments, in addition to the establishment of the College of Tourism Sciences in 2018, which has graduated a number of students with experience in this field and the ability to enter the labor market and support and develop the tourism sector in Nineveh Governorate.

10. **Supply Facilities and Infrastructure Services**: In addition to the aforementioned preparations and arrangements, there is a wide range of supply facilities, including shops specifically catering to tourists, such as sporting goods and souvenir stores, as well as some shops offering general services like pharmacies, clothing stores, restaurants, banks, and medical centers. These also serve local residents. Furthermore, there are travel and tourism companies and agencies that enable individuals to obtain the information and advice they need and make the necessary travel arrangements. (Bouakrif, 2012) All these facilities are available to tourists in Nineveh Governorate.

11. **Transportation and Communication:** Tourism itself is a movement from one place to another, whether within or outside the borders of the country. Therefore, transportation is considered a fundamental pillar in completing the tourism movement. With the advancement of means and methods of transportation (land, air, or water), the development of tourism is closely linked to the advancement of transportation technology. Sites do not become more attractive to tourists as long as they are not accessible. The steady increase in car ownership has led to a similar increase, especially in domestic tourism, in addition to the use of buses, especially after the emergence of modern types equipped with air conditioning and good services, in addition to their economic cost. The development of air transport has also led to a boom in international tourism, which is considered the fastest and least expensive means for long distances, although it takes longer. It is worth noting that the tourist's spending on transportation constitutes an important item. (Georges et al., 2021) Nineveh Governorate boasts advanced and modern transportation options equipped with all the amenities tourists need. Furthermore, paved roads connect the city center to tourist areas, facilitating quick and easy access for visitors.

12. **Service Infrastructure**: This is a crucial factor in tourism development and a fundamental requirement for any tourism project. It encompasses tourism infrastructure such as water, electricity, and telecommunications networks, roads, airports, and air, land, and sea transportation. Transportation is essential for tourism development and service, connecting all tourist and archaeological sites and facilities with paved roads to ensure easy access for tourists. (Al-Ajlouni,

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2021) All these service infrastructure components are available in Nineveh Governorate thanks to the support provided by the governor and municipalities.

13. **Mineral Springs:** This role extends back to ancient times, with mineral springs being used to treat various ailments. Other natural attractions include wetlands, encompassing inland and coastal lakes, rivers, and estuaries, which draw tourists. Natural vegetation also plays a significant role in attracting visitors, most notably forests of various types, semi-forest areas, grasslands, meadows, and pastures. Perhaps the most important recreational tourist areas, where vegetation is the primary draw, are the sprawling parks. Conservation of wildlife has received considerable attention, with the establishment of nature reserves to protect animals from extinction. These reserves have become tourist destinations where visitors can enjoy observing animals in their natural habitat, thus becoming an important source of tourism revenue (Bouakrif, 2012). In Nineveh Governorate, there are mineral springs in Hammam al-Alil and Ain Kibrit in the city center. These springs are used to treat skin and joint diseases, attracting tourists from both within and outside the country.

Section Three
Obstacles to Tourism

Among the most prominent obstacles and challenges facing the tourism sector are the complexity and delays in tourist crossing procedures at all Arab borders, and the lack of infrastructure between Arab countries, which affects tourist movement between these countries (technology and diverse means of transportation). Additionally, there is the difficulty in obtaining tourist visas in some Arab countries and the limited availability of transportation between them. To clarify further, we will focus on the following points: (Qadhat et al., 2022)

1. **Lack of Intrinsic Natural, Historical, and Cultural Tourism Resources**: In some countries, the lack of natural, historical, and cultural tourism resources hinders the development of the tourism sector. It should be noted that the availability of tourism resources alone is not sufficient to establish a successful tourism industry. (Dabour, 2004)

2. **The Marketing and Promotional Factor in Tourism**: This factor is considered one of the obstacles to tourism. It enhances tourism export activity by marketing and reselling tourism products multiple times without depleting tourism resources and with minimal production costs. Some countries suffer from weaknesses in tourism marketing and promotion despite possessing a large stock of tourism products, such as medical, cultural, educational, historical, and religious tourism, among others. These products suffer from weak marketing and promotion efforts (Al-Azzam, 2016). Our governorate suffers from a weakness in the marketing and media aspects of the tourism sector. Therefore, a solution must be found for this problem, and significant attention must be paid to the marketing and media aspects of promoting tourism products.

3. **Obstacles Specific to Responsible Tourism Management:** The term "responsible tourism" expresses a complex concept encompassing the tourist, the organizer, and the tourism organization. It refers to the individual's responsibility for tourism in their country in terms of preserving the

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environment and heritage, and how to contribute to the sustainability of tourism and the safety of tourism awareness. In this way, responsible tourism emerges when countries commit to making tourism an effective tool for achieving peace and solidarity among workers, especially in facing current economic challenges, by working to generate social and economic opportunities in a way that contributes to reducing the gap between the rich and the poor, in addition to respecting people, nature, and the rules and laws that regulate the work of the tourism sector (Abdulrasoul, 2017). In Nineveh Governorate, the population needs awareness and education in the field of tourism, preserving the environment and heritage, and raising tourism awareness.

4. The Social Factor:This factor is considered one of the obstacles to tourism. It plays a significant role in increasing and developing tourism in any country by raising awareness of the importance of various types of tourist sites, including therapeutic, historical, archaeological, religious, and cultural sites, among others. This leads to an increase in the number of tourists, which has a significant impact on domestic tourism and subsequently on international tourism. The social factor is considered one of the most prominent obstacles to tourism, as the absence of awareness programs about the importance of tourism to the community and the lack of programs to encourage domestic tourism negatively affect the number of tourists, especially domestic tourism (Al-Azzam, 2016). Raising awareness in the community of Nineveh Governorate about the importance of tourism and its role in supporting the country's economy and encouraging both domestic and international tourism is crucial.

5. Obstacles to Tourism Planning: These obstacles include the lack of a robust tourism information system. Statistical systems in some Arab countries are often incomplete and lack much crucial information that researchers and tourism planners should be aware of, such as: (Hadada, 2019)

- Tourist distribution based on arrival method (by land, sea, or air).
- Reasons for visiting.
- Tourist accommodation (cities, resorts, hotels, tourist villages, apartments, and furnished rooms).
- Tourist attractions.
- Tourist classification based on age, gender, and country of origin.
- Tourist feedback on tourist attractions. Furthermore, the lack of comprehensive tourist guides and maps containing existing tourist attractions, the fragmentation of responsibilities between the Ministry of Tourism and other related ministries and organizations, and the lack of necessary local and foreign capital for tourism investment are all among the most significant negative factors affecting tourism planning (Abdulrasoul, 2017). Nineveh Governorate suffers from weak planning in the tourism sector, despite possessing all the necessary elements for tourism development. This lack of planning has negatively impacted the development of the tourism sector in our beloved governorate.

6**. Lack of tourism diversity**: For many years, global tourism has been characterized by a focus on coastal areas and resorts, especially during the summer months, for rest, relaxation, and

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entertainment. However, modern tourism is moving towards diversification and change. Therefore, it is difficult for many countries, including those with a relatively advanced tourism sector, to keep pace with the rapid and complex changes in tourists' demands. Undoubtedly, in light of the fierce competition in the global tourism market and the emergence of new tourist centers, creating the conditions for a modern tourism sector is not an easy task. (Dabour, 2004)Nineveh Governorate suffers from a lack of diverse tourism offerings, with most tourists focusing on ecotourism and recreation, despite the fact that the governorate offers almost all types of tourism.

7. The Services Factor: Inadequate servicesare a significant obstacle to tourism at both the local and international levels. Poor infrastructure at tourist sites hinders tourism operations, which in turn reduces the number of tourists visiting such locations and consequently lowers the average length of stay, ultimately leading to decreased tourism revenue. (Al-Azzam, 2016) While Nineveh Governorate possesses some infrastructure services, they require attention, development, and maintenance.

8. **Political Stability and Social Security:** A number of countries around the world still suffer from a lack of political and security stability due to weak law enforcement, economic decline, widespread unemployment, crime, corruption, and terrorism. The events of the Arab Spring are a prime example of this (Hadada, 2012). Political and security instability, such as wars, coups, power struggles, or sectarian conflicts that lead to extremism, violence, and insecurity, deter tourists from visiting these volatile areas. It also makes it difficult for tourism organizations to intervene or implement their tourism development programs in these regions (Al-Hassan&Kamal, 2022). Nineveh Governorate suffered from security instability in previous years, but it now enjoys complete security and stability. Tourists can visit this governorate, where they are provided with protection and sufficient care to feel completely safe.

9. Tourist Safety: Tourist safety is a cornerstone of any successful tourism industry. Therefore, safety should be a primary objective that tourism plans and laws strive to achieve. Problems related to tourist safety, whether real or anticipated, negatively impact the reputation of the host country. In this context, concerns also negatively affect tourism prospects in several countries, including our beloved province. Furthermore, factors such as rumors can damage many tourist seasons in that country. (Dabour, 2004)

10. **Obstacles related to the ineffectiveness of tourism marketing**: Tourism marketing plays a vital role in selling tourism products through advertising and promotion. This is essential for a product that relies on the satisfaction and enjoyment tourists expect from their purchase. Effective tourism marketing stimulates consumer desire and fosters the conviction that the advertised tourism product is the best available in the global tourism market and meets their needs. A country may possess numerous tourism resources but suffer from a problem in marketing its resources and assets both domestically and internationally. In other words, the minimum marketing efforts and activities necessary to stimulate tourism are not yet in place, leading to a negative impact on the sector. (Abdulrasoul, 2017)

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We observe that tourism marketing in Nineveh Governorate is very weak. If attention were given to this aspect, our governorate could become the leading destination in terms of tourist numbers, given its abundance of tourism resources, diverse tourism offerings, and its beautiful natural landscape and climate.

11.Low Level of Tourism Support Services: Despite some relative improvements in infrastructure, such as transportation routes and internal and external telecommunications, in some Arab countries, including Iraq and Nineveh Governorate, the majority of these countries still suffer from weak communication services, as well as problems related to sanitation projects, clean drinking water networks, electricity, lighting, and transportation routes connecting various tourist sites and locations. (Hadada, 2012) In Nineveh Governorate, very few investors are drawn to it. Therefore, it needs to attract investors from other countries to establish tourism projects, as it suffers from a lack of investment despite the availability of suitable areas for such investments.

12. Lack of Tourism Investment: Investment in services is a well-established economic activity in many developed countries, but it remains underdeveloped in developing countries. Investing in service projects, especially tourism, in developing countries is often viewed as a high-risk activity. Therefore, despite the availability of natural tourism resources, it is extremely difficult for poor and least developed countries to obtain the necessary funding for their tourism projects, even if they succeed in addressing the challenges of planning such projects. (Dabour, 2004)

13. **There are also other problems common to most tourist destinations, including Nineveh Governorate, the most important of which are:** (Abdulrasoul, 2017), (Al-Salmi&Al-Deeb, 2023), and (Al-Hassan&Kamal, 2022)

- Lack of attention to the cleanliness of tourist sites, especially archaeological and religious sites.
- Absence of tourist police in some tourist areas.
- Delays in banking services for tourists, particularly in hotels.
- There is sometimes inappropriate treatment at the offices of tourism and airline companies, both domestically and internationally.
- Taxi drivers often exploit foreign tourists.
- There is a lack of attention to the general appearance and uniform of tourism sector employees, in addition to the requirements of the job.
- There is a low level of cultural awareness among some residents in tourist areas.
- The level of training of local workers in tourist areas is generally inadequate.
- There is a lack of sufficient information about archaeological sites to aid in tourism planning and development.
- There is weak or nonexistent coordination between domestic and international tourism agencies.
- Diseases and epidemics affecting some countries, as well as disasters such as earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, extreme heat waves, and severe cold, create conditions that deter tourism to such countries.

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- Isolation and the imposition of strict internal laws that hinder tourism services and limit tourist attractions, such as imposing difficult-to-obtain visas for tourists or the lack of facilities for the movement of hard currencies within the host country.

Section Four

Conclusions:

1. The tourism sector is a vital economic and social sector, contributing to the revitalization of various economic activities and playing a significant role in reducing unemployment rates by providing permanent and temporary job opportunities. It also promotes local development and improves income levels.

2. Many countries possess diverse tourism assets, including natural resources such as geographical location and favorable climate, which attract tourists. These assets are complemented by historical, cultural, and civilizational resources that allow visitors to learn about a country's history, heritage, and cultural identity, thus enhancing its appeal as a tourist destination

3. A lack of attention to tourist, archaeological, and cultural sites by both tourists and citizens leads to numerous negative consequences, most notably the pollution of these sites, environmental degradation, and damage to their heritage components. This necessitates raising tourism awareness and implementing effective measures to preserve and maintain these sites for future generations.

4. Nineveh Governorate possesses diverse natural tourism assets that qualify it to develop the tourism sector and enhance its contribution to economic development. However, it still suffers from a lack of human resources and tourism infrastructure, particularly regarding the facilities, amenities, and services necessary to stimulate tourism and attract visitors.

5. The improved security situation and the restoration of political stability in Nineveh Governorate have contributed to creating a suitable environment for revitalizing the tourism sector. This has prompted relevant authorities to adopt strategies and plans aimed at developing this sector. However, achieving the objectives of these strategies requires increased financial, institutional, and investment support.

6. Nineveh Governorate continues to face challenges in utilizing modern advancements in information and communication technology to serve the tourism sector. This has led to delays in adopting digital applications, e-marketing, and smart tourism services, thus limiting its ability to enhance the competitiveness of its tourist destination and attract more tourists.

Recommendations:

1. Enhance public awareness of the importance of preserving tourism assets by implementing awareness programs that encourage citizens to maintain tourist and archaeological sites, keep them clean, and protect them from pollution or vandalism, thus ensuring their sustainability for future generations.

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2. Provide the necessary support to tourism establishments by developing infrastructure, improving service levels, and offering financial and administrative facilities that contribute to raising their performance efficiency and enhancing their ability to provide distinguished tourism services.
3. Focus on training and developing human resources working in the tourism sector by attracting qualified personnel with scientific and professional expertise, and developing their skills in foreign languages, communication, and customer service, which will positively impact the quality of services provided to tourists.
4. Establish a community culture that supports tourism based on promoting the values of hospitality and raising awareness of the importance of tourism and its economic, social, and cultural benefits. This awareness should not be limited to those working and researching in the tourism sector, but should extend to all members of society.
5. Enhancing security and stability in tourist areas to provide a safe environment that encourages citizens and tourists to move freely, while taking measures to protect them from all forms of exploitation or abuse that may affect their tourist experience.
6. Intensifying the organization of familiarization and exploratory trips for national and international media outlets, with the aim of showcasing the tourist attractions of Nineveh Governorate and highlighting its investment opportunities and future prospects in the tourism sector.
7. Activating the media's role in supporting the tourism sector by preparing and implementing media and promotional campaigns that contribute to highlighting the tourist attractions of Nineveh Governorate and enhancing its image as a promising tourist destination at both the local and international levels.
8. Giving tourism planning strategic importance by preparing comprehensive scientific plans based on accurate studies of available resources and capabilities, thereby contributing to achieving sustainable tourism development and raising the efficiency of the tourism sector.
9. Giving priority in appointment and employment to personnel specializing in tourism and hotel sciences, especially graduates of tourism science colleges and tourism and hotel institutes, due to their academic and professional qualifications in the fields of tourism management, etiquette, and dealing with tourists, which contributes to raising the level and quality of tourism services.

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