

The Role of the Tourist Attractions Factors in Improving Urban Ecotourism (Algeria & Jordan)

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Abstract:

There are various tourist attractions in cities because they contain various welfare and recreation areas for leisure that are stemming from their geographic, architectural, and humanitarian nature which enhance the urban tourism. Annaba (Algeria) and Aqaba (Jordan) provide a model of two coastal cities that witness both social and economic development which depend on manufacturing policy due to the availability of various supported features, which have a direct impact on improving urban ecotourism in addition to other factors. Annaba and Aqaba are similar in terms of geographic, social, economic, and cultural characteristics. All of which constitute tourist attraction factors. However, tourist development strategy that is applied in Aqaba more environmental practice due to its adoption of various methods for management, environmental planning, raising awareness on ecotourism, encouraging it for local community participation in providing job opportunities throughout tourism seasons, particularly after increasing ecotourism investments when compared with Annaba city, which, in turn reflects disparate attractiveness level of urban environmental tourism in each city that has been revealed by a group of tourist attraction indicators that are distributed on three sets of standards, namely: ecological, social, and economical by using "Bernoise" compass that has been adapted to serve urban environmental tourism within its primary framework that revolves around sustainable development.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the earth summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 which aimed at defining strategies to restore the ecological balance by sustainable development within "Agenda 21" followed by signing of several international agreements. A new conception of tourism as an economic activity has been formulated by tourism policies which subject to sustainable development dimensions particularly in developed countries taking advantage of its natural and

historical heritage and it works to associate local communities and urban residents with low income and the poor rural people in order to combat poverty, improve environmental management, foster consumption patterns changes [1].

The significance of coastal areas lies in its point of convergence of water with earth and air in which various landscaping appear, such as mountains, valleys, and zones. Also, it contains

various environmental regulations and habitat. In addition, it is distinguished by the privacy of lands and resources located within its borders. Furthermore, several animals and plants that are very vulnerable to deterioration. In addition, the submarine canyons, steep continental platforms edges, deep coral reefs, noting that environmental issues became a matter of international concern due to their negative effects at all levels and various aspects of life as illustrated in Copenhagen conference in 1992. Also, the international bank in its annual report in 1990 dedicated for environment has confirmed five priority environmental problems in its developmental programs for developed countries that are represented in the following: the deterioration of living creature and soil, the deterioration of freshwater quality, the depletion of natural resources while maintaining the balance of natural resources[2],[3][4].

Within this framework, Annaba (Algeria) and Aqaba (Jordan) cities highlight which have been selected as a study field in this research[5],[6]. It is worth mentioning that such cities focused on commercial, tourism, and industrial activities. All of which increased their environmental pollution aspects. Therefore, this study sheds the lights on such cities by considering them appropriate model for adopting strategy for urban environmental tourism development in accordance with their prevailing tourist attraction factors in order to define the most important environmental issues and to provide some perspectives which enhance urban environmental tourism in both cities[7],[8],[9].

Accordingly, the problem of the study is manifested in the following question:
How can the tourist attraction factors contribute in enhancing urban environmental tourism in coastal cities in Annaba (Algeria) and in Aqaba (Jordan)?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Given the importance of urban environmental tourism, Hua and Jiang (2013) indicated that majority of cities have adopted developmental strategies to develop this tourist activity in Chinese cities in general and in Wuhan city in particular which constitute major city within Daoshui valley that has been tackled by both the researcher[10] Q.Y.Hua and his co-researcher B.Jiang in their study that aimed at highlighting the strengths points acquired by the valley particularly in terms of the provided natural resources and the relations between big city and its surroundings cities in resources structure, industrial structure, agricultural and industrial products by analyzing the current situation and identifying natural resources for adopting a strategy for the project of urban environmental tourism to benefit totally from resources and local features, construct modern agriculture industry system, develops multiple functions of agriculture which combine between innovative agriculture, environmental agriculture, green agriculture, recreational agriculture, and do sightseeing for advancing sustainable development in environmental tourism towards urban cities, plays an important role in enhancing rural economic and agricultural development to the city and its territory, thus encouraging recreational and agricultural activity for do sightseeing and increase the income of farmers.

A large number of researchers in 2015 adopted environmental tourism development for addressing the issue of tourist season particularly in coastal areas with the help of agricultural activity that is practiced in rural field found in natural environment. In this regard, the study touches upon tourist season issue in Littoral Croatia that provides a general model for agricultural tourism development in order to enable the agricultural tourism in Croatia to be employed methodologically as an impacting and activating tool for seasonal lowering, establishing touristic products throughout the year. This model

was created as a result telephonic surveys, field survey, and interviews with the ranchers of rural family tourist farms[11],[12].

[13]Tham (2018) pointed out that in Singapore the methods for activating the ecological tourism in this limited country was activated based on manufacturing which made a quantum leap in Singapore due to the economic gains. The idea of environmental tourism has been reflected due to stakeholders gathering in organizations according to a consultative approach for achieving acceptable results for all parties which express the opinions and resolutions publicly. The participation emerges from the feeling of both identity and conviction. The application of environmental tourism clear developments due to the adoption of decentralized approach emanating from the view of passionate individuals to provide a sustainable future for Singapore for creating the awareness and value of environmental tourism as a tool for achieving sustainability. Thus, three pilot projects faced financing, time, resources issues, and maintaining the momentum, but left important schemes in shaping the future of environmental tourism in Singapore[14].

In recent times, [15] indicated that most researchers sought to enhance the relation between maintaining methods and sustainable development dimensions to make urban environmental tourism as a common denominator between them it can guarantee educational experience which support local communities specially in heritage and natural areas such thing demonstrated by case study of biosphere reserve "Monvis" in Italy transboundary because this research aims at understanding the perspectives of local stakeholders regarding environmental tourism. For this objective, a series of interviews were used to explore the possibility of environmental tourism to become as an educational tool due to its positive role in establishing cooperative network between stakeholders,

encouraging appropriate environmental education in language domain, the employed methods in educational system, changing the course in the levels of supreme Italian government in making policies which serve the sustainable development[16].

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

In spite of the fact that urban environmental tourism is considered as an evolving concept, but its contents cannot be clearly. It has been clearly defined, after reviewing the concepts related literature with urban environmental tourism that environmental, economical, and social dimensions have been suggested to include a group of primary indicators as a framework for controlling environmental tourism[17],.

This study aims to continue the discussion of the contents of urban environmental tourism and develop a scientific approach for its indicators depending on tourist attraction factors in Annaba and Aqaba (Deryfus-Signoles, 2002). In other words, the groups of possibilities and characteristics acquired by the two cities in terms of natural and human resources, infrastructure, structures, standard of living for local inhabitants using "Bernoise" compass which is considered as a tool for measuring the extent of achieving a certain project for the objectives of sustainable development, determining the weakness and strengths points. However, such "Bernoise" compass resembles the mechanism of matrix that are designed for measuring and evaluation since the data related with the examined field are entered according to their arrangement which includes: the standard and indicators. After the data have been entered, the findings are classified by a group of numbers which indicates encouraging the sustainable tourism rather than impeding it[18],[19],[20].

Noting that numerical value concerning the indicators are restricted between two threshold values (02) and (-02) [26]. The more the numerical value is close to (02) value, the more urban

environmental tourism is promoted. On the other hand, the more the numerical value is close to (02) value, the more urban environmental tourism is impeded.

Table (01): Matrix for measuring indicators of urban environmental tourism promotion.

2+	1+	0	1-	2-
Strong encouragement for sustainable tourism, all indicators have a positive (strong) effect.	Modest encouragement for sustainable tourism, all indicators are positive (weak)	All indicators have no effect to encourage sustainable tourism	Simple obstruction for sustainable tourism, all indicators have a negative (limited) effect	Great obstruction for sustainable tourism, all indicators have a negative (strong) effect

Source: Personal treatment for researchers, 2019 + Larochelle, 2007.

For the purpose of completing the matrix, a specific value shall be added for each indicator according to its impact level. If such indicators have no impact, its value will be -0-.

After filling the matrix by entering the entire above mentioned values, the numerical and graphical value will be achieved automatically from the values that are added to the total of indicators. The findings in "Bernoise" compass illustrated as follows:

- The positive green value suggests desirable and acceptable effects in urban environmental tourism from sustainability perspective.
- The negative red value suggests undesirable and unacceptable effects in urban environmental tourism which negatively impact on its sustainability.

For the purpose of measuring tourist attraction factors in enhancing urban environmental tourism in Annaba (Algeria) and Aqaba (Jordan), the researchers conducted amendments concerning the indicators of "Bernoise" compass related with sustainable development to adapt it with the study objectives after collecting the related data and information with environmental system, urban environmental system, social culture, industry in particular, the branches of economic activities. This

study employed 30 indicator that are equally distributed between 03 dimensions to become effective indicators for measuring the extent of encouraging urban environmental tourism in both cities[21],[22].

The following approach was adopted in order to construct and develop the "Bernoise" compass which consists of three steps:

- First step included determining a group of tourist attraction indicators on three dimensions environmental, social, and economical which commensurate with the context and the concept of urban environmental tourism. After reviewing the whole literature related with this issue.
- Second step included consulting a group of experts to evaluate the validity, the content, the effectiveness of tourist attraction indicators in measuring its role in promoting urban environmental tourism whether encouraging indicators or impeding indicators. Those experts are divided into faculty members who have a research experience in the field of urban tourism, environmental tourism, heritage sites management, and public gardens.
- Third step which focus on giving values for each indicator according to its positive or negative impact

on urban environmental tourism which ranges between +2 and -2 according to the "Bernoise" compass [23]. To illustrate, each dimension contains 10 indicators while the total of indicators are 30. After that the average indicators value for each dimension has been calculated. Then the gross rate of the three dimensions, namely: environmental, social, and economical in each city was calculated which is considered as the final result which would be built on this analysis to realize the role of tourist attraction factors in promoting urban environmental tourism in both Annaba and Aqaba coastal cities.

FIELD OF STUDY

The field of the study is represented in Annaba (Algeria) and Aqaba (Jordan) coastal cities. The former located in North Africa while the later located in East Asia. To clarify, Annaba city is located in far the northeast of Algeria within 600 Kilometers from Algeria the capital which is the center of Annaba state that occupies the west side of the Coral Sea. The north and west sides of the city are surrounded by Edough Mountain, the east side is surrounded by the Mediterranean, the south side is surrounded by Annaba valley i.e. Oued Edahab and Oued Seybouse that flow into the sea in the southeastern side. It is worth mentioning that Annaba city is connected with extensive network from national roads, railways. In addition to the existence of international airport "Rabah Bitat" and the important seaport. All of which allows building relations with neighboring countries even with neighboring cities such as Tunisia and France.

Annaba city acquired a paramount importance result of a confluence of different transportation modes, such as air, land, and water which, in turn, made it as an industrial economical center at the national level particularly in manufacturing iron, steel,

phosphate and nitrate fertilizers, and other mining industries.

Also, it is considered as an area of exchanges and capital concentrations and a place for successive civilizations which have left their mark and formed a rich, diverse, and phosphate urban heritage which reflects its importance in North Africa and in the Mediterranean Basin in which various civilizations converge [24].

The city of Aqaba is located in the far south of Jordan. It is about 330 km away from the capital Amman and 80 km from Petra. It has a population of about 148,398 in 2015, making it the fifth largest city in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. As a result of this site-specificity, the city of Aqaba has gained an important place within the Jordanian tourist cities as well as its economic importance as the only maritime port linking Jordan to the world via the Red Sea. It is also a center for receiving tourists visiting the various tourist attractions in Aqaba, because of its closeness accessibility, the possibility of spending the longest time with the port and the King Hussein International Airport... [25]

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table (2) shows tourist attraction indicators for urban environmental tourism in Annaba and Aqaba cities that are determined after adapting "Bernoise" compass for measuring its rates for detecting the extent of encouraging or impeding [28] this type of tourism in both cities.

Table (02): Network for Evaluating Indicators for Promoting Urban Environmental Tourism in Annaba (Algeria) and Aqaba (Jordan).

Dimensions	Indicators	Annaba city					Aqaba city				
		Obstructive		Encouraging			Obstructive		Encouraging		
		-2	-1	0	+1	+2	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Environmental	Geographical situation					x					x
	Terrain shapes					x				x	
	Diversity of natural resources					x				x	
	Climate friendly					x				x	
	Natural Reserves					x				x	
	Biodiversity				x					x	
	Presence of valleys				x				x		
	Beaches spread			x					x		
	Protection from environmental hazards			x					x		
	Environmental management and planning			x					x		
Social	Historical legacy					x				x	
	Respect for customs and traditions					x					x
	Cultural events				x					x	
	Traditional Industries			x						x	
	Community involvement			x						x	
	Demographic structure of the population				x					x	
	Environmental awareness			x					x		
	Hotels				x						x
	Culture houses			x						x	
	Theaters and museums			x				x			
Economic	Active industries		x						x		
	Practice implants			x							
	Employment opportunities for local residents				x					x	
	Intensity of tourist use				x					x	
	Configured recreation areas			x						x	
	Degree of accessibility				x					x	
	Services, technology and information			x						x	
	Infrastructure and multiple transport structures				x					x	
	Green companies			x						x	
	Seasonality and livelihoods of local people				x					x	

Source: Personal treatment for researchers, 2019, with multiple references

As shown in Table (2) the geographic location for Annaba and Aqaba cities significantly contributes to enhance urban environmental tourism. The reason behind that is largely attributed to the fact that both of them are surrounded by mountains and valleys. All of which constitute a protective situation from various ocean currents and northwest winds which

make it as an appropriate place which provides environmental tourist attraction factors that are commensurate with the distinctive climate due to its diversity in the two cities which impact on some tourist activities and limits its exercise throughout the year.

According to such characteristics, the various opinions of workers in the field of tourism in both cities which enabled evaluating tourist attraction indicators according to its impact on urban

environmental tourism in Annaba and Aqaba city. As illustrated in Table (3) below:

Table (03): Network for Evaluating Indicators for Promoting Urban Environmental Tourism in Annaba (Algeria) and Aqaba (Jordan)

Dimensions	Indicators	Annaba city					Average	Aqaba city					Average	Average
		Obstructive	-1	0	Encouraging	+2		Obstructive	-1	0	Encouraging	+2		
Environmental	Geographical situation						1.30						1.25	0.68
	Terrain shapes						1.40						0.90	
	Diversity of natural resources						1.75						1.00	
	Climate friendly						1.00						1.25	
	Natural Reserves						1.25						0.80	
	Biodiversity						0.90						0.85	
	Presence of valleys						0.50						1.25	
	Beaches spread						-0.25						0.20	
	Protection from environmental hazards						-0.30						0.10	
	Environmental management and planning						-0.25						0.23	
Social	Historical legacy						1.85						1.25	0.87
	Respect for customs and traditions						1.00						1.60	
	Cultural events						0.80						1.50	
	Traditional Industries						-0.20						1.30	
	Community involvement						-0.30						1.00	
	Demographic structure of the population						0.90						0.50	
	Environmental awareness						-0.20						0.35	
	Hotels						0.80						1.50	
	Culture houses						0.25						0.50	
	Theaters and museums						0.25						-0.80	
Economic	Active industries						-0.50						-0.20	0.67
	Practice implants						0.25						0.00	
	Employment opportunities for local residents						1.00						1.00	
	Intensity of tourist use						0.75						1.25	
	Configured recreation areas						0.30						0.80	
	Degree of accessibility						0.60						0.60	
	Services, technology and information						0.40						1.20	
	Infrastructure and multiple transport structures						1.25						0.80	
	Green companies						0.25						0.50	
	Seasonality and livelihoods of local people						0.50						0.80	
The general average							0.57						0.74	

Source: Personal treatment for researchers, 2019.

Table (3) above reveals that majority of indicators encouraging urban environmental tourism, but with diverse levels from indicator to another and between both cities as well.

There are (30) tourist attraction indicator in Annaba city since (8) indicators their values range between (-0.20-0.50). Thus, it constitutes an impediment in reflecting urban environmental tourism which is represented in the lack of

protection schemes against environmental hazards. Therefore, the city became vulnerable to floods during rain periods and forests burning in Edough Mountain on the west side of downtown. Similarly, the weakness in management and planning particularly in the field of urban waste management, urban landscaping, water and sanitation management that are draining in valleys sewer and sea directly. As such, some of the beaches were vulnerable to various pollution manifestations. These indicators

are intensified in the lack of environmental awareness and the weak participation of local community in the majority of the tourism development programs in the city which, in turn, had a negative impact on promoting local traditional industries and the lack of attention to the cultural events by the city inhabitants.

However, Aqaba city have (30) tourist attraction indicators all of them have positive values except (2) indicators have a negative values. To illustrate, one of them is related to the negative role of museums and theatres (due to the high cost) in the city (-0.80), while the other is related to the impact of active industries in the economical area which hinders urban environmental tourism. With regard to farming practiced in Aqaba city has no impact on this type of tourism.

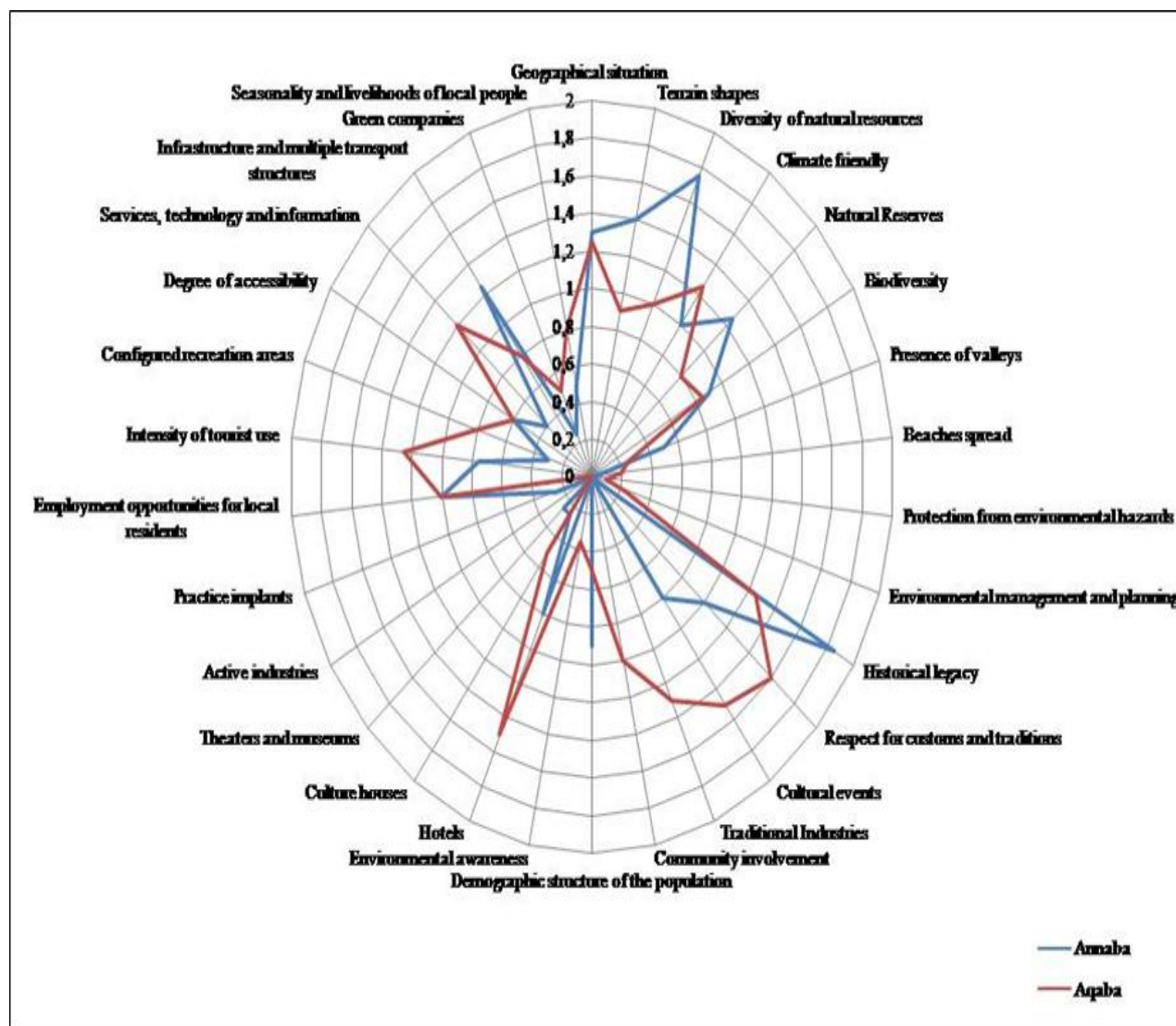
FINDINGS

As shown in Figure (01), "Bernoise" compass concerning Annaba and Aqaba cities indicates that both cities gain attractiveness for urban environmental tourism, but with different values. To clarify, this attractiveness is increased in Aqaba city (0.74) while it is decreased in Annaba city (0.57). Such variation lies in the lack of qualitative capacities characterized by Annaba city particularly in social and economic dimensions.

In respect of environmental and historical heritage resources are considered one of the most attractiveness factors. Annaba city has various resources that are located between Edough Mountain and western valley and along the coast that have various beaches and seaport. Also, several forests including: Aleppo pine, cork, acacia, and oak. In addition to various wild animals and birds. All of which allowed biological diversity and the appearance of natural reserves in Edough Mountain and Lake of Fetzara area that have a lot of valleys such as Meboudja valley and Oued Edahab[27]. Not to mention, historical legacy such as ancient city, castles, fortifications, mosques, and churches.

Annaba city has infrastructure which contains of multi highways and Aerial lift, railways, multi hotels, cultural houses, but it lacks of quality which, in turn, has a limited role in increasing urban environmental tourism attractiveness which is reflected on the decreasing support of the urban economics in the city. In addition to the lack of protection programs from environmental hazards. All of which have led recreation and historical areas vulnerable to deterioration and marginalization. As such, tourists will not be interested to visit it. The necessity to activate environmental management emerges by urban planning that aims at improving and rehabilitating such tourist areas and increase their attractiveness.

Figure (1): The "Bernoise" compass for Annaba, Aqaba adaptable by the indicators of urban environmental tourism.



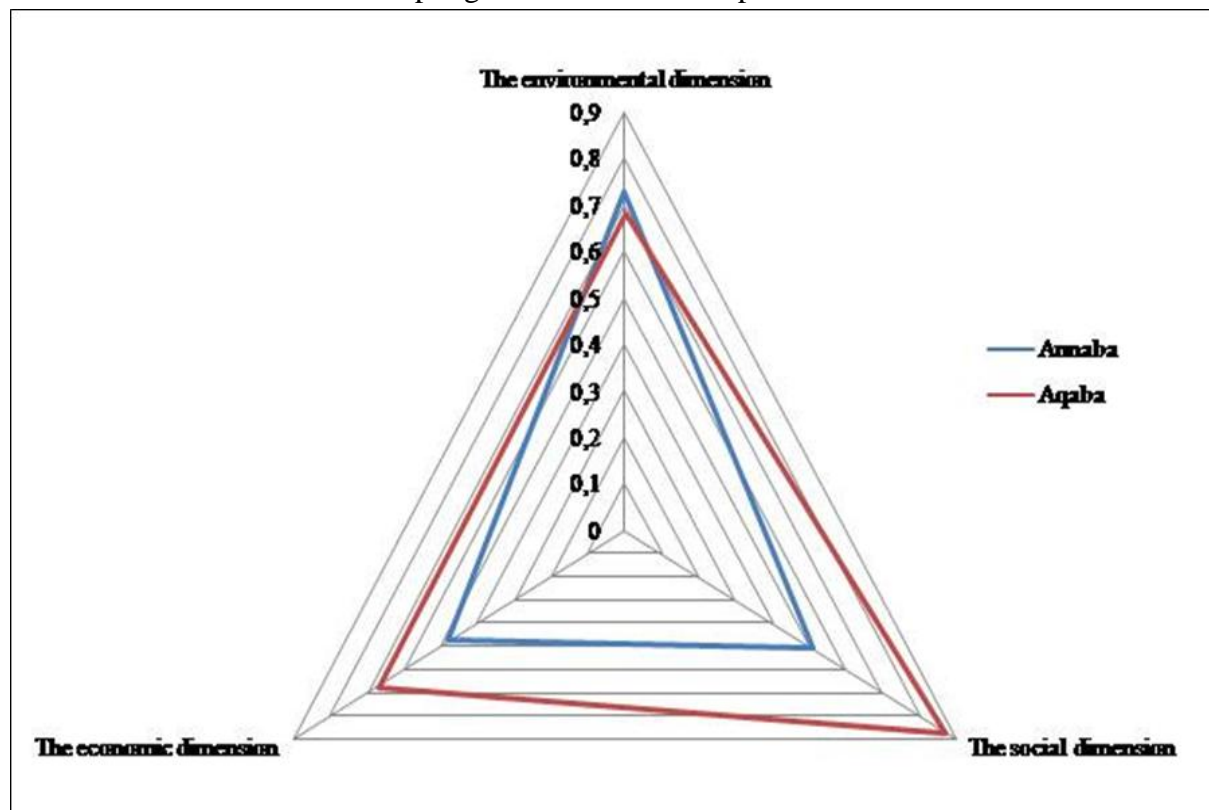
Source: Field investigation results, 2019.

As shown in Figure (02) the final Bernoise for evaluating the indicators for encouraging urban environmental tourism in Annaba and Aqaba cities which are distributed in three dimensions, namely: environmental, social, and economical. The gross rate of tourist attraction dimensions are estimated at 0.57 and 0.74 respectively. All of which made Aqaba city more fortune in encouraging urban environmental tourism [29] than Annaba city due to the positive impact to the most of tourist attraction indicators. However, the negative impact for a number of such indicators are very limited. This might be explained by the existence of various

cornerstones which encourage urban environmental tourism [30], particularly concerning the following dimensions: social (0.87) and economical (0.67). In contrast, there are a negative impact for some indicators in Annaba city which have been recorded considerable potentials particularly in environmental dimension (0.73) because of various impediments that are represented in manufacturing policy that is adopted in the city and its negative impacts that could be addressed by adopting prevention treatment to maintain the environmental balance. In addition, the absence of environmental awareness the avoidance of community participation in tourism

projects. Also, the limited role for those encouraging urban environmental tourism in the city.

Figure (02): Dimensions of Urban Environmental Tourism in Annaba and Aqaba, after adapting the "Bernoise" compass.



Source: Field investigation results, 2019.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed the most important tourist attraction indicators for promoting urban environmental tourism in coastal cities that are increasingly strained, owing to the concentration of various economic activities. For instance, Annaba and Aqaba cities are in contrast regarding the impact of various tourist attraction indicators that are distributed on three primary dimensions after adapting the "Bernoise" compass that was used to evaluate the promoting of urban environmental tourism. As a result, Aqaba city recorded high values due to the positive impact for most indicators. Social and economic dimensions have contributed in the components of urban environmental tourism in this city by local communities' participation and the role

of different actors under the voluntarily management for both environmental planning and hazards protection, diversifying job opportunities, extending the tourism use in the city by respecting traditions, customs, natural and human environment within the framework of environmental awareness.

Furthermore, the study demonstrated the shortcomings of Annaba city in promoting urban environmental tourism although it has registered an acceptable values which, in turn, reduced its attractiveness under the problems and shortcomings of management system and tourism planning at the local level which requires the necessity of rational use for human and natural resources by the participation of local community and various actors in several tourism projects for achieving balance in

the existing ecosystems, protecting them from deterioration by taking the necessary preventive measures particularly with regard to industrial vehicles with particular attention to the quality of tourism services that are embodied in recreation areas, infrastructure projects that might enhance the values of tourist attraction indicators

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