

THE ROLE OF HISTORIC AND HERITAGE WEALTH IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to show if there are any differences between pilgrim and resident motivations in selection of tourism destination. Data were collected from tourists using a questionnaire which included ten Likert-scale questions inquiring about motivation of tourists in the choosing intended place. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was conducted to determine which motivations of tourists (pilgrims and residents) are different. The analysis indicated that there were differences between pilgrim and resident motivation in selection of destination in two factors. Differences were identified between historic and heritage wealth and Climate comfort. The t-test analysis of the study indicates that there is no significant difference between attitudes of two cities' tourists in all factors.

Keywords: Cultural tourism, Iran, Likert-scale, religious tourism

INTRODUCTION

Domestic and international tourism continues to be among the foremost vehicles for cultural exchange, providing a personal experience, not only of that which has survived from the past, but of the contemporary life and society of others. It is increasingly appreciated as a positive force for natural and cultural conservation. Tourism can capture the economic characteristics of the heritage and harness these for conservation by generating funding, educating the community and influencing policy. It is an essential part of many national and regional economies and can be an important factor in development, when managed successfully (ICOMOS, 1999). Zeppal and Hall also emphasized motivation, and view heritage tourism, as based on nostalgia for the past and the desire to experience diverse cultural landscapes and forms (Zeppal & Hall, 1991). Poria et al (2001) argue that understanding motivations and perceptions is helpful for the management of sites with respect to such factors as pricing policy, the mission of heritage attractions, and understanding visitor profiles, as well as public funding and sustainable management (Poria, Butler, & Airey, 2001). It is evident that religion does have influence on the mode of tourism development and marketing in Muslim countries. Religion also influences tourist behavior such as the choice of destinations and tourist product preferences (Weidenfeld & Ron, 2008). These centers may be visited by religious and other tourists whose motivations, expectations and

experiences are at variance. For example, the Taj Mahal is an Islamic emblem for Indian Muslims and symbol of national heritage to all Indians while its fame has given rise to a sense of universal ownership amongst Westerners who also lay claim to it, each group possessing their own 'imagined geographies' which shape interpretation (Edensor, 1998). Therefore, there is a challenge between the historic role of sites and their religious role.

Some sites are a historic monument and on the other side have a religious foundation. The key question is how to position each of the factors in tourism development. This study focused on residents and pilgrims and found statistically significant differences between the two groups in their motivation of site selection. Factors that are effective in attracting tourists to a place are extremely variety, And these are elements permanent features in attracting tourists to a site are considered. Hence, the purpose of this study is to build on the existing body of knowledge about resident and pilgrim tourists in their motivations if differences in potential influence on selection of a religious destination.

The remainder of the paper is organized in four sections. In the first section, a brief literature review is provided to arrive at a conceptual approach for this study. The second section introduces research methodology whose with first section provide the basis for analysis of influence of motivations in selection of a religious destination.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural Tourism

Tourism is an irreversible social, human, economic and cultural fact. Its influence in the sphere of monuments and sites is particularly important and can but increase because of the known conditions of that activity's development (ICOMOS, 1976). Tourists visit cultural heritage sites for a variety of reasons (Ho & McKercher, 2004). They vary from the purposeful tourist who is seeking authentic cultural experiences to the casual tourist who may be visiting a historic site simply because it is part of their tour. The cultural significance of a site is often more important to the local community than to tourists. When an area contains a large number of cultural heritage attractions, tourists tend to visit only the most popular sites (levi & Kocher, 2009). Cultural tourism is that form of tourism whose object is, among other aims, the discovery of monuments and sites. It exerts on these last a very positive effect insofar as it contributes - to satisfy its own ends - to their maintenance and protection. This form of tourism justifies in fact the efforts which said maintenance and protection demand of the human community because of the socio-cultural and economic benefits which they bestow on all the populations concerned (ICOMOS, 1976). Therefore, tourism has continued impact in all aspects of society and local residents communicate with tourists through tourism.

Preservation of a heritage religious site and its continued use is an important component in the sustainability of cultural values (McKercher & du Cros, 2002). The local community and worshipers have a mixed relationship with the tourists who visit there (Bremer, 2004). Residents

often take pride in their culture and religion and want to share their enthusiasm with outsiders. However, tourists disrupt religious practices and increase maintenance problems (levi & Kocher, 2009). Tourists often view visits to historic religious sites as opportunities for cultural and educational experiences (Olsen, 2006). They are seeking authentic experiences that are tied to a specific historic place, rather than just leisure in a resort that could be anywhere (Macleod, 2006). Hence, cultural tourism involves visiting historical or religious sites that may include old values, and the overall purpose is to gain an appreciation of the past.

Religious Tourism

Tourism is traditionally and closely linked to religion which has acted as a powerful motive for travel from the time of early pilgrimages to contemporary journeys to sacred places. Religious buildings, rituals, festivals and ceremonial events are important tourist attractions for those with a casual interest as well as more devout followers of the particular systems of belief represented (Henderson, 2003). Religious tourism is the oldest type of tourism because religion emerged when human was created in the world. Religious tourism is developed based on tourist's motivation. Religious tourism is motivated by religious reason or faith. There are other type of tourist's motivation such as holiday tourism, cultural tourism, religious tourism, social tourism, economic tourism and politics tourism.

Islamic tourism is a form of religious tourism because Moslems are motivated to visit religious ceremonies, conferences and functions at local, regional and international level at religious centers. Even though Islamic tourism is a component of these types of tourism, it is also attached to other types of tourism such as holiday tourism and social tourism. However, the combination of these types of tourism should be in the line to Islamic law. Islam is a way to a perfect and wonderful journey if he or she follows the Islamic teaching (Laderlah, Ab Rahman, Awang & Che Man, 2011).

Tourist sites are shown to have acquired a sacredness, travel to them exhibiting the qualities of pilgrimage (Cohen, 1992). Tourism at religious or sacred sites is a special type of cultural heritage tourism (Shackley, 2001). Ziyara applies to visits to shrines and Rihla to travel for other reasons such as education and commerce. The emphasis is on purposeful movement, as one component of more spiritual journeys in the service of God, which contribute to fostering unity among the larger Muslim community or Ummah (Eickleman & Piscatori, 1990). While pilgrimage is not unique to the Islamic faith, what is perhaps striking is how central religious travel is to fulfilling obligations of the Islamic faith. Instead of the hedonistic focus of a great deal of contemporary, marketized tourism, this Islamic "tourism" is geared to spiritual growth and fostering of solidarity among the community of believers within the ummah (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006).

Tourism in Iran

With a history of thousands of years, Iranian architecture has appeared as a variety from peasant huts, teahouses and garden pavilions to some of the most beautiful and majestic structures the world has ever seen. In fact, available materials dictated major forms. Since antiquity, Iranians compressed primitive pise-molded mud as solidly as possible and allowed to dry heavy plastic earth, tenacious gypsum mortar, bricks, stones, etc. They have formed large, well-defined masses whose broad plain surfaces invite ornamentation. Even after more than 3000 years, certain design elements of Iranian architecture persisted. Those elements consist of high-arched portal set within a recess, columns with bracket capitals, columned *porch* or *talar*, a dome on four arches, a vast ovoid arch in the entrance, a four-eyvan courtyard, early towers reaching up toward the sky, an interior court and pool, an angled entrance and extensive decorations (Kavousy, Royaei, & Ebrahimpour, 2009).

Iran has a great ancient tradition but it is as yet little known in the West and there is much to be learnt both from it and the building techniques which are integral with it. Rituals, festivals, ceremonial events and religious buildings are fundamental tourist attractions for devout followers of the particular systems of beliefs as well as for those with a casual interest. Iran is an interesting country with amazing historical places in different cities such as Isfahan, Shiraz, Yazd and etc. that indicate an Islamic cultural overview during Iran history (Okhovat, 2010).

In addition to the influence of climate, available material, religious purpose and peripheral cultures, patrons also played a decisive role in the development of architecture. The landscape itself, huge snow-capped mountains, valleys large as provinces and wide shining plains required constructions conceived and executed in terms of grandeur. Mountains were both physically and symbolically sources of inspirations in Iranian architecture. From Zoroastrians time, the beautiful was integrally associated with light. In Iranian art, both lightness and clarity are sought and, conversely, the obscure and confused are avoided. Beauty for ancient Iranians, like for any other ancient civilizations, was an attribute of the divine (Kavousy, Royaei, & Ebrahimpour, 2009). Religious sites may be visited by residents and pilgrims whose motivations, experiences and expectations are at variance. For example, the IMAM REZA shrine in Mashhad, Iran, is an Islamic monument for Iranian Muslims and symbol of national heritage to all Iranians.

METHODS

Sample Selection

The data used for the analysis in this study consist of 1200 respondents who completed the ten-item survey on a Likert-type scale. Two religious sites of two cities were selected as sampling for this study: Mashhad, Qum. Sampling was conducted by drawing independent samples from each of the two sites. These Sites are primarily religious, and secondly they are historic. The entire sample consisted of 1200 participants, of whom 600 had visited the Mashhad and 600 had

visited the Qum. Following this, participants were asked about type of residence indicate that is resident or pilgrim.

Among the participants, 49 % were female and 51 % were male. Their ages range from 18 to more than 75 years, with the highest percentage (48 %) between the ages of 45-60. Some participants (37.2%) reported college as their highest level of educational attainment. The majority of participants (56.27%) were currently employed while 33.73.8% was retirees.

Instrument

A ten-item survey questionnaire with likert-type scale was utilized in the current study. Typically, the statements form sets of questions, with respondents asked to represent their strength of feeling on a common categorical scale. Such response scales - often with five ordered categories labeled 1 to 5 - are typically defined by endpoints such as "not at all serious" to "very serious", "very unimportant" to "very important", or "strongly dislike" to "strongly like". The Likert-scale is an essential tool in psychology and in social surveys, and is a ubiquitous method of collecting attitudinal data. Responses to items are treated as belonging on a numerical scale, and are either summed over the items, or a factor or latent variable analysis is carried out, and a weighted or unweighted score is produced, which is taken to measure a common characteristic of the item set for a respondent. The questionnaires have two parts. Part 1 of the questionnaire included the question asked tourists to identify whether pilgrim or local resident. Part 2 includes five 5-point Likert scales. For each scale tourist respondents were asked to rate the level of importance of ten items. Questionnaire included statements which were composed of ten factors obtained using previous research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Preparation for testing ten hypotheses of scale conducted with SPSS software. Cronbach's alpha to assess the validity of the items in each scale factor was used. If the coefficient alpha for the factor was less than 0.60, the hypothesis test was dropped. The survey is a valid and reliable measure of the construct because its validity and reliability coefficient confirmed by Cronbach alpha(0.6) and a pilot study with 200 respondents was undertaken to assess the validity and reliability of a questionnaire. Factor analysis of each scale was developed and Sample items for each factor in two cities are showed that ten factors (see Table1).

ANOVA tests were conducted to see if there were differences in the mean perceived pilgrim and resident motivation in selection of shrines. The results of the ANOVA test indicated that there were statistically significant differences between tourists (pilgrims and residents) for two of the five statements: (1) historic and heritage wealth has effect on selection of this site; (2) Climate comfort has effect on selection of this site; (3) Welfare facilities has effect on selection of this site; (4) Safety and Security has effect on selection of this site; and (5) Natural beauty has effect on selection of this site (see Table 2). Based on the findings of this study there is support for the idea that differences in pilgrims and residents motivation depend on tourism type.

Table1: list of factors with potential influence on selection of a religious destination.

Name of the factors	Factor loading
A place with historic and heritage wealth	0.64
A place with a climate comfort	0.61
It has good signposting and information facilities which mean that you enjoy yourself more and have a more complete stay	0.86
A place with a beautiful nature	0.74
To purchase religious items	0.56
To purchase local products	0.49
For a religious festival	0.44
Sharing experience with believers	0.58
To accompany friends or families	0.55
Seeking Safety and Security	0.68
Cronbach's alpha .60	

Table 2: Test of significance between pilgrims and residents

Variable	Mean Pilgrims (n=600)	Mean Residents (n=600)	F-value
Historic and heritage wealth	3.58	1.32	6.02*
Climate comfort	1.55	3.42	5.93*
Welfare facilities	2.16	2.25	1.06
Safety and Security	1.64	2.48	3.73
Natural beauty	2.88	2.20	2.55

*Note: p<.05

The results of the study show that there are differences in the motivation of site selection between tourists. The differing interests of the pilgrims and residents must be understood for tourism development to have the greatest chance of success. Factors that were more different from other factors were historic and heritage wealth, Climate comfort. Historic and heritage wealth was different between pilgrims and residents and premier in their motivation of tourism selection on two sites. Residents also differed from pilgrims on two other items. Residents

indicated a higher level of motivation than pilgrims on two items; Climate comfort increases motivation, and tourism increases safety and security in sites. In regards to the third item, welfare facilities item is equivalent in selection for pilgrims and residents.

To determine the locations' influence on pilgrims and residents motivation, t-tests were ran for each domain. The statistical difference between the tourists in two cities showed in Table 3.

Table 3: Test of significance between two sites

Variable	Mean MASHHAD (n=600)	Mean QOM (n=600)	t
Historic and heritage wealth	2.305	2.25	1.90
Climate comfort	2.685	2.27	1.86
Welfare facilities	2.185	2.125	1.77
Safety and Security	2.27	1.925	1.81
Natural beauty	1.755	2.26	1.94

Further, differences in the mean perceived motivation were also tested between tourists (pilgrim and resident) in two cities. Table 3 displays means and t-values for each of the five factors in the study. Analysis of the variables was conducted by using SPSS software. If the direction of the response categories does not make a difference, then the means for the five groups should all be statistically equivalent. Differences were considered significant at $P < 0.05$, indicating that the vectors of means for the two groups were equivalent.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the perspectives of residents and pilgrims towards their motivations in selection of destination in order to gain a better understanding of their support for sustainable tourism development. The results showed that Historic and heritage wealth doesn't have equivalent value among residents and pilgrims. Therefore, probably ultimate goal of all tourists is not cultural. Also, the study recognized meaningful differences between perspectives of residents and pilgrims in climate comfort factor. With consideration of all of these results, it can be concluded that perspectives of residents and pilgrims about historic and heritage wealth and climate comfort is different. The study indicated that religious sites are of great interest to pilgrims for their Historic and heritage wealth, and attract residents for their Climate comfort. Results from the t-test reveal that there is no significant difference between attitudes of two cities' tourists in all factors. Based on the findings of this study there is support for the idea that differences in potential influence on selection of a religious destination depend on tourism type.

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