

## Traveling Motive and Its Application in Tourism Market Segmentation: Evidences from Isfahan

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### Abstract

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The present study tried to identify and analyze the travel motives of the domestic tourists who had visited Isfahan. The statistical population of the study consists of the domestic tourists who visited Isfahan in the first season of 2014. A total of 1000 tourists were selected randomly as sample members. In order to collect the data, a self-administrated questionnaire with 40 items was used. Exploratory factor analysis, one sample T-test, and the test of the goodness of fit are the statistical methods used for analyzing the data and identifying the travel motives among the domestic tourists. The study identified eight motives for traveling to Isfahan. These include cultural-historical motives, visiting relatives and friends, shopping, family attendance, leisure, low-cost travel, visiting urban attraction, and security motives. Although strict scientific criteria were adhered to throughout the research, it clearly has its limitations. This study, like all empirical research work, has certain limitations which affect the evaluation and generalization of the results. As it is mentioned before the tourist motives for visiting a specific destination depends on the destination features, cultural values as perceived by the tourists which may change over the course of time. Therefore, it is advisable to replicate this research in other settings and compare the results. There are few studies that segment the service markets.

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**Keywords:** Market segmentation, Domestic tourists, Tourism typology, Traveling motives, Isfahan

### 1. Introduction

Nowadays, tourism industry is considered as one of the most important and developing sections of the global economy. It is considered as the central component in the economic development strategies (Mokry and Dufek, 2014: 445). According to the World Tourism Organization in 2014, 980 million tourists have traveled across the world in 2013. This industry creates 1032 billion dollars incomes in 2013 that experiences 3-4% growth than 2013. It also generates up to 21 million jobs around the world (WTO, 2014). On the other hand, tourism gained the fourth place with respect to the export value among the important industries (Coccosis, 2006). Tourism as an industry has an important basic characteristic that differentiates it from other industries especially in the services sector and that is points of production and consumption coincide spatially. On the other hand, tourism is a world-wide socio-economic phenomenon resulted from the human need for leisure, visiting historical places, learning, merchandising, adventure, contact with nature, and desire to visit new people, places, and cultures.

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The growth of the tourism industry depends on the improvement of the different factors such as living standards, weather conditions, transportation facilities, the income level and leisure time, "industrialization" of tourism, identifying and satisfying the tourism needs and wants, etc. But planning is crucial for satisfying the different tourist market needs and wants and for the growth of the tourism industry (Ranjbarian et al., 2011: 2). According to Getz (2002), tourism planning constitutes a process based on the study and appraisal of resources that are available in the area and the alternative solutions, in order to optimize the tourism contribution to human prosperity and environmental quality. This planning should be conducted based on the important criterion such as the tourism market segmentation and tourism typologies (Ranjbarian et al., 2011: 2). In spite of the fact that Iran is ranked at the top ten countries with respect to the ancient and historical sites, experts believe that its natural attractions have remained untapped because the tourism industry either has been ignored or given too little attention by the government (Jalilvand, 2012: 177). The typology of tourists based on the traveling motives could help the tourism planners and policy makers to identify and satisfy the need of each market segment and requirements successfully. The satisfied tourists not only will revisit the destination, but also motivate the other potential tourists to travel to the destination. Therefore, the present study aimed to identify the traveling motives of domestic tourists who visited Isfahan.

## **2. Review of literature**

### **2.1 Tourism market segmentation**

According to Liu et al. (2012), understanding and differentiating customers by their needs and wants plays a vital role in successful business management. Market segmentation is one of the valuable instruments in marketing planning (Park and Yoon, 2009: 100). Indeed, market segmentation is a technique which can be used for subdividing a heterogeneous market into homogenous subgroups (Hsu and Kang, 2007: 207), (Legoherel et al., 2015: 360). The underlying preassumption of market segmentation is that any market consists of many subgroups whose needs and wants are different than others (Mok and Iverson, 2000). The market segmentation could be conducted based on many factors and variables such as demographic, geographic, behavioral, life style, personality traits, and psychological factors (Rosta et al., 2008: 60). Finally, market segmentation increases the company income and decreases its costs (Bock and Uncles, 2002), (Baker et al., 2014: 59). Segmentation of the tourism market is an instrument which can be used for subdividing a heterogeneous market of tourists into homogenous subgroups of tourists.

In this respect, the tourism typology can be considered as an important method of tourism market segmentation. This typology could be used based on the many factors such as the tourist demographic variables (Ranjbarian et al., 2011), the characteristics of the tourist destination (Locker, 1992), behavioral factors (Formica et al., 1998), and traveling motives (Ranjbarian et al., 2011), (Cha, 1995). The typology of tourists based on the traveling motives could help the tourism planners and policy makers to identify and satisfy each market segment needs and wants successfully. The satisfied tourists not only will repeat their travel to the destination, but also motivate other potential tourists to travel to the destination. Therefore, identifying the tourist travel motives is very important for satisfying their needs and wants.

#### **1.1. Traveling motives**

As discussed in the consumer behavior literature, motives refer to the individual inner forces that stimulate them for doing special action (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2000). The usual questions that are asked by tourism planners, policy makers, researchers, and professionals are why people travel? Which tourist destination they choose? And finally what are their motives and reasons for choosing a destination? (Iso-Ahola, 1989: 10). This is why traveling motives have been a significant interest among leisure and tourism researchers (Kim and Lehto, 2015: 15). Identifying the tourists traveling motives provides an answer to such questions. On the other hand, studying traveling motives and reasons for the individuals travel, will lead us to recognize tourism as a psychological and social phenomenon and also offers worthwhile directions for tourism policy makers and its marketing professionals. According to Hsu and Huang (2008), motivation to travel systematically moves with the level of the tourist past travel experience and life stages. As discussed later, the concept of traveling motive refers to set of factors and needs in the areas of tourism-related activities and travel behaviors. In other words, traveling motives can be defined as psychological needs that have important role in creating a mental sensation of imbalance in people and then this imbalance can be resolved through traveling to especial tourism destination (Kim et al., 2000).

Therefore, traveling motives are set of which individuals' traits that influence tourism destination choice. These traits are intangible and lead to motivate individuals to travel with the purpose of decreasing their needs in terms of traveling activities. Tourists have many different travel motives to that can be classify in four sets as physical motives such as leisure and pastime, cultural motives such as learning about new cultures or discovered places, interpersonal motives such as friendship and socialization, and finally prestige motives such as self-confidence and self-actualization (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2003). Other authors indicate that traveling motives are as different and diversified as that include many motives such as leisure and pastime, cost-oriented travel, shopping, purchasing crafts, historical and cultural attractions, visiting new cultures and nations, attendance in scientific conferences and seminars, trade and commercials, visiting urban attraction, sport opportunities, adventuresome, and many other motives (Crompton, 1979: 408-424), (Rojpalakorn, 2006: 40), (Ranjbarian and Zahedi, 2011: 50-52). Also it should be remembered that each tourism destination has different and inclusive characteristics that attract especial tourists to themselves (Ranjbarian et al., 2011: 1405).

Therefore, it is important to identify and analyze traveling motives for each tourism destination. These motivates tourist to repeat their travel to special destination and also encourage other potential tourists to travel to this destination. Therefore, identifying and analyzing domestic tourists' traveling motives that traveled to Isfahan are important to recognize their needs and wants in order to provide them with appropriate services and satisfy these needs and wants.

### **3. Research methodology**

As indicated in the previous sections, this study seeks to identify and analyze the traveling motives of domestic tourists who visited Isfahan. The statistical population of the study consists of domestic tourists who traveled to Isfahan in the first season of 2014. A total of 1000 domestic tourists was selected as sample members. According to Coumery and Lee, 1000 is a very good sampe size for exploratory factor analysis. This is why the authors conducted a survey with 1000 tourists. After reviewing the literature, some motives were identified. Then a primary questionnaire was developed and a pilot study has been conducted with 40 domestic tourists who were asked to indicate the importance of each motive in selecting Isfahan as their tourism destination and also they had to indicate other potential traveling motives that were not included in the questionnaire. Then final version of the questionnaire was developed.

In order to examine reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient has been used and this coefficient was calculated for each traveling motives separately. According to Nunnally (1978), the values should be above the cut-off point of 0.7. In other words, acceptable level of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.7. The test results indicate that the questionnaire has favorable reliability. In order to collect the data, 1000 questionnaires were distributed among domestic tourists randomly. But only 825 questionnaires were returned for final analysis. In order to analyze the data and identify the traveling motives, exploratoryfactor analysisand test of fit goodness have been used in the SPSS so that test of fit goodness for exploratoryfactor Analysis has been used to examine that whether sample size is sufficient to exploratoryfactor analysis and whether this motives have selected correctly or not. Exploratoryfactor analysis has been used to identify traveling motives and classify them. Finally, one sample T-test has been used for examining whether the domestic tourists traveled to Isfahan with these motives or not.

### **4. Findings**

In this section, the descriptive findings of study are presented. These findings include demographic variables of sample members as age, gender, educational level, marital status, travel experience to Isfahan, and occupation. These findings indicated that most of studied tourists were male (58.8%), and 52.6% with 20-30 years of old, 49.5% of them were students, housewives, and retired, 51.9% were married, 65.3% have academic education, and finally 30.9% have had 4 to 7 travel to Isfahan previously. This information is presented in table 1 with its details.

**Table 2: Sample demographics**

Measure	Item	Frequency	(%)	Measure	Item	Frequency	(%)
<b>Gender</b>	male	485	58.8	<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	397	48.1
	female	340	41.2		married	428	51.9
<b>Age</b>	Less than 20	133	16.1	<b>Education level</b>	secondary	179	33.9
	20-30	434	52.6		university	546	65.3
	30-40	173	21	<b>Previous travel to Isfahan</b>	No	242	29.3
	40-50	60	7.3		2-4	87	10.5
	More than 50	25	3		4-7	255	30.9
			More than 7 times		241	29.3	
<b>Occupation</b>	employed	190	23				
	self-employment	194	23.5				
	Unemployed	33	4				
	Others	408	49.5				

In order to identify the traveling motives of the domestic tourists who visited Isfahan, the goodness of fit of the exploratory factor analysis has been used for ensuring whether we can exploit traveling motives from this data and whether this sample size is sufficient for the exploratory factor analysis. So, the Bartlett test and KMO measure of sampling adequacy was used for this purpose. As indicated in table 2, KMO measure of sampling adequacy is more than 0.6 which shows that the sample size is sufficient for exploratory factor analysis. Also the significance level of the Bartlett's test is less than 0.05 that indicate exploratory factor analysis is an appropriate approach for identifying the structure of factor model. Therefore, it is ensured based on table 2 that it is possible to create factor structure based on this data. So, exploratory factor analysis was used to identify the traveling motives. A good rule of thumb in factor analysis is that the factor loading estimates should be 0.5 or higher (Hair et al., 2010).

**Table 2: The results of KMO and Bartlett's test**

Chi-Square	KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy	df	Sig
8096.101	0.867	10	0.000

The results of the exploratory factor analysis indicate that five items of the questionnaire fall within one category which can be named as cultural-historical motive. These include visiting historical places such as the Naghshejahan Square, visiting ancient places, visiting cultural attractions, visiting tourism places, and observing different cultures. The factor loading of each of these questions were respectively 0.732, 0.609, 0.677, 0.657, and 0.581. Also the results indicate that these questions explained 0.102 of variance of new factor (cultural-historical motive). Also the results of one sample T-test indicated that the mean of which questions that refer to cultural-historical motive was 4.03 (0.05 sig) that had significant difference from average level (3). Therefore, it can be concluded that domestic tourists who visited Isfahan had cultural-historical motive. The results are indicated in the table 3.

**Table 3: the results of cultural-historical motive**

No.	Questions	Loading factor	Explained variance	Mean	$\alpha$ coefficient
Q5	To visit historical places such Naghshejahan Square	0.732	0.102	4.03	0.701
Q7	To visit ancient places	0.609			
Q14	To visit cultural attraction	0.677			
Q25	To visit tourism attraction	0.657			
Q26	To learn about different cultures	0.581			

Also the results of exploratory factor analysis indicated that 4 items of the questionnaire fall within one category which can be named as leisure motive. These items were to have a good time, escape from boring life, escape from routine work affairs, and relaxation. The factor loading of each of these items were respectively 0.632, 0.596, 0.560 and 0.550. Also the results indicate that these questions explain 0.081 of variance of new factor (leisure motive). Also the results of one sample T-test indicate that the mean of which questions referring to leisure motive was 3.1617 (0.05 sig). Therefore, it can be concluded that the domestic tourists visited Isfahan also for leisure motive in addition to other motives. The summary of results is shown in table 4.

**Table 4: the results of leisure motive**

No.	Questions	Loading factor	Explained variance	Mean	$\alpha$ coefficient
Q 1	To have good time and pastime	0.632	0.081	3.1617	0.844
Q6	To escape from the boring life	0.596			
Q8	To escape from routine work affairs	0.560			
Q24	For relaxation	0.550			

In the other section of the results, the exploratory factor analysis indicated that 2 questions of visiting relatives and friends formed another motive for which domestic tourists who visited Isfahan were looking for it. The factor loading of each of these items were respectively 0.567 and 0.999. Also the results indicated that these items explained 0.052 of variance of new factor (visiting relative and friends motive). Also the results of one sample T-test indicated that the mean of items explaining this motive was 3.15 (0.05 sig). Therefore, it can be concluded that the domestic tourists who visited Isfahan have motive of visiting relatives and friends. The summary of these findings is indicated in table 5.

**Table 5: the results of relative visiting motive**

No.	Questions	Loading factor	Explained variance	Mean	$\alpha$ coefficient
Q 3	To visit my relatives	0.567	0.052	3.15	0.723
Q34	To visit my friends	0.999			

Also the results indicated that 2 items of shopping intention and purchasing crafts fall within one category which has been named as shopping motive. The factor loading of each items were respectively 0.999 and 0.506. Also, the results indicated that these questions explained 0.049 of variance of new factor (shopping motive). Also the results of one sample T-test indicated that the mean of the items was 3.879 (with 0.05 sig). Therefore, it can be concluded that the domestic tourists who visited Isfahan had also shopping motive. The results are shown at table 6.

**Table 6: the results of shopping motive**

No	Questions	Loading factor	Explained variance	Mean	$\alpha$ coefficient
Q15	shopping.	0.999	0.049	3.879	0.773
Q22	To purchase handicrafts.				

The results of the exploratory factor analysis also indicated that 3 items, namely, providing my family with pastime, traveling because of family and friend's suggestion, and being along with family fall within one category which has been named as family attendance motive. The factor loading of each items were respectively 0.845, 0.566, and 0.541. Also the results indicated that these items explained 0.058 of variance of new factor (family attendance motive). The results of one sample T-test indicated that the mean of these items was 3.77 (with 0.05 sig). Therefore, it can be concluded that the domestic tourists who visited Isfahan have family attendance motive in addition to other motives. The results are indicated at table 7.

**Table 7: the results of family attendance motive**

No.	Questions	Loading factor	Explained variance	Mean	$\alpha$ coefficient
Q17	To provide my family with pastime	0.845	0.058	3.77	0.733
Q18	Because of my family and friend's suggestion	0.566			
Q30	Being along with family	0.541			

Cost orientation is another resulted motive which includes two items of "To have inexpensive travel" and "To benefit from inexpensive traveling facilities". The factor loading of each of these items were respectively 0.832 and 0.541 and these items explained 0.049 of variance of new factor (cost-orientation motive).

Also the results of one sample T-test indicated that the mean of these items that refer to the cost-orientation motive was 3.347 (with 0.05 sig). Therefore, it can be concluded that the domestic tourists who visited Isfahan were cost-oriented. The summary of results is indicated at table 8.

**Table 8: the results of cost-orientation motive**

No.	Questions	Loading factor	Explained variance	Mean	$\alpha$ coefficient
Q12	To have inexpensive travel	0.832	0.049	3.347	0.821
Q20	To benefit from inexpensive traveling facilities	0.541			

Visiting urban attraction is another resulted motivewhich includes three items of "To visit beautiful and exceptional scenery", "To visit urban attraction" and "To visit beauties of this city". The factor loading of each items were respectively 0.802, 0.644, and 0.556, and these items explained 0.057 of variance of new factor (Visitingurban attraction motive). The results of one sample T-test indicated that the mean of these items was 3.797 (0.05 sig). Therefore, it can be concluded that the domestic tourists who visited Isfahan have had motive of visiting urban attraction. The summary of these results is indicated at table 9.

**Table 9: the results of visiting urban attraction motive**

No.	Questions	Loading factor	Explained variance	Mean	$\alpha$ coefficient
Q9	To visit beautiful and exceptional scenery	0.802	0.057	3.789	0.814
Q11	To visit urban attraction	0.646			
Q23	To visit beauties of this city	0.556			

The results of exploratoryfactor analysis indicated that four items of "For sports", "Because of its high levels of security", "Because of its suitable urban transportation facilities" and "Because of its hygiene and cleanness standards" fall within one category which is named as security motive. The factor loading of each of these items were respectively 0.518, 0.688, 0.585 and 0.714, and these items explained 0.042 of variance of new factor (security motive). The results of one sample T-test indicated that the mean of these items was 3.648 (0.05 sig). Therefore, it can be concluded that the domestic tourists who visited Isfahan have had security motive. The summary of results is shown at table 10.

**Table 10: the results of security motive**

No.	Questions	Loading factor	Explained variance	Mean	$\alpha$ coefficient
Q2	For sports	0.518	0.042	3.648	0.839
Q13	Because of its high levels of security	0.688			
Q26	Because of its suitable urban transportation facilities	0.585			
Q32	Because of its hygiene and cleanness standards	0.714			

The results of exploratoryfactor analysis indicated that two items of the research questionnaire fell within one category which is named as business motive. These items were for some medical treatments" and "for business purpose". The factor loading of each of these items were respectively 0.998 and 0.541 and these items explained 0.051of variance of new factor (business motive). Also the results of one sample T-test show that the mean of the items was 1.645 (0.05 sig). Therefore, it can be concluded that domestic tourists who visited Isfahan did not have any business motive. The summary of the result is presented at table 11.

**Table 11: the results of business motive**

No.	Questions	Loading factor	Explained variance	Mean	$\alpha$ coefficient
Q31	For some medical treatments	0.998	0.051	1.645	0.70
Q33	For business purpose	0.541			

## 5. Conclusion, emperical suggestions, and limitations

The purpose of this study was to identify and analyze the traveling motives of domestic tourists who visited Isfahan. The statistical population of the study includes the domestic tourists who visited Isfahan during the first season of 2014. A total of 1000 tourists were included in the survey as the sample members who had been selected through random sampling method. A questionnaire with 40 items was used as data gathering instrument. The results of analysis identified eight motives for domestic tourists who choose Isfahan as their travel destination. These motives include cultural-historical, leisure, family attendance, security, shopping, cost-orientation, visiting urban attraction, and visiting relatives and friends. Also the results indicated that the domestic tourists who visit Isfahan do not have any business motive. Of course, it is needed to be mentioned that it is the destination resources and potential, and of course the cultural value of the visitors which determine their motive to visit the destination. In this study eight different motive were identified for those domestic tourists who visiting Isfahan. Having different tourists with variety of motives who select Isfahan as a destination which can satisfy their needs, it means that Isfahan has many different potential to attract tourist with different needs and wants.

But the most important thing is how tourism planners and officials manage the service offering or since one of the most prevalent motive among tourists who are visiting Isfahan is cultural-historical motive and considering Isfahan as a tourism destination with so many interesting historical attractions, the only action needed to satisfy the tourists with such motives is just giving them proper information which guide them to their interest attractions. It can be accomplished by appointing leaders and advisors in traffic places to guide tourists and also providing them with tourism maps and handbooks. Although Isfahan is famous for its historical sites, it also has so many man-made attractions such as theme parks like birds garden, flower garden and so on. Also, Zayandehrod River with the beautiful scenery which it has created can be considered as a proper place for those who want to enjoy the nature and also urban attractions. "Tourists can cite this city along the lush plain of the river of Zayandehrod" Even though Isfahan has the potential to attract tourists who are looking for a destination for relaxation and peace and pastime, but if they perceive the destination is overcrowded, they may look for other competing destination to spend their vacations. Therefore, the destination planners and policy-makers should take measure to control the caring capacity of the destination. One of the identified traveling motives was security motive. This motive includes suitable transportation facilities, and hygienical and cleanness standards. Finally, it is should be remembered that these eight motives are not independent from each other. For example, those who visited Isfahan for its urban attraction, they maybe also have shopping and leisure motives.

Therefore, tourism planners and policy-makers should have this in mind. Like the other research, the present study is not free of limitations. The first limitation of this study is that the data were collected during a short-time period. The second limitation of our study is the use of questionnaire as data-collection instrument. The third limitation of the present study is that a cross-sectional survey is used. However, using a longitudinal survey may disclose changes in the trend of tourism motivations.

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