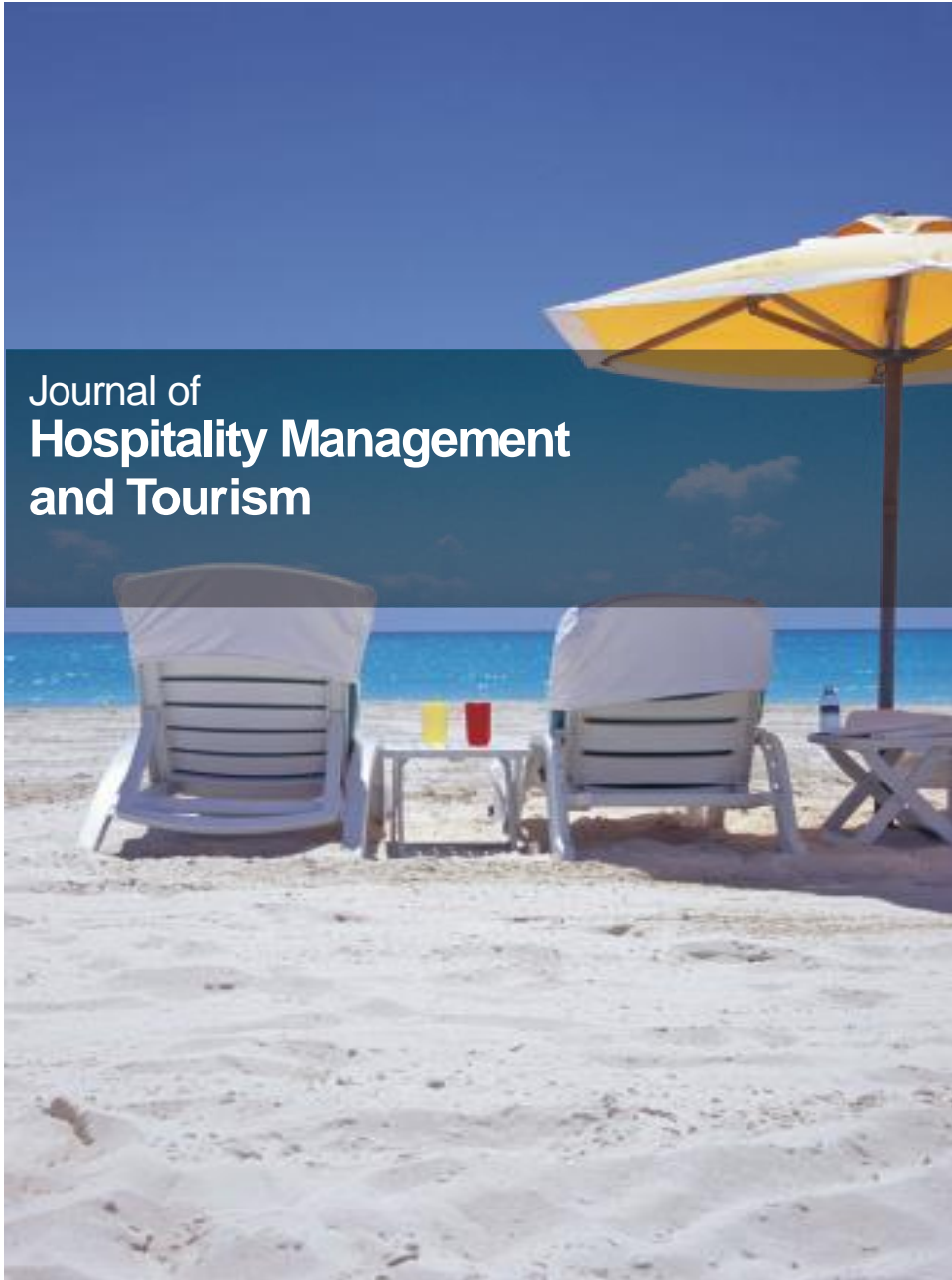


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Full Length Research Paper

Practices and challenges of visitor management implementation for sustainable tourism development in Fasil Ghebbi, Ethiopia

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Visitor management is a practical tool for promoting sustainable tourism development through regulating visitor activities to minimize negative impacts on the site. The main purpose of this study was to investigate visitor management as a tool for sustainable tourism development in Fasil Ghebbi, Ethiopia. The study employed descriptive design in line with mixed research approach. Consequently, 246 international and domestic visitors were selected using convenience sampling and 6 key informants selected using purposive sampling. Questionnaire, interview and observation were data collection instruments. Descriptive statistics was applied to analyze quantitative data using SPSS version 25 and qualitative data was analyzed thematically. Based on the findings of the study, practices of visitor management tools in Fasil Ghebbi were found poor and there were many challenges in implementing visitor management such as low level of implementation, limited stakeholder participation, lack of budget and scant attention, lack of skilled human power, very basic visitor facilities and management tools, lack of awareness and negligence of responsibility in the compound.

Key words: Fasil Ghebbi, challenges, practices, sustainable tourism, visitor management.

INTRODUCTION

International tourist arrivals grew above 6% in the first half of 2018 and are expected to be greater in 2017 (UNWTO, 2018). Africa as a continent also received about 62 million tourists in 2016 and international tourists were growing by about 8% in 2017 (Africa Development Bank, 2018). With the rapid increase of tourists globally and under-developed management, heritage sites have been using unsustainable manner (Agnew and Demas,

2013). Consequently, sustainability issue got attention due to negative impacts of mass tourism on heritages. Indeed, the use of visitor management tools helps to enhance sustainable tourism development in a given destination (Neto, 2003).

Visitor management has strategy and measure to preserve authentic nature of heritages in modifying visitor attitude, experiences and behavior to enhance the

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positive impacts while minimizing negative impacts (Kuo, 2003; Mason, 2005; Schandau, 2017). Techniques can vary in its approach, size, and application, but its ultimate goal is achieving sustainable tourism development and tourist education (Albrecht, 2017). Visitor management is all about controlling visitor numbers, understanding visitor behavior, improve visitors experience and create enjoyment at destination but modifies visitors' on-site behavior to be more sustainable (Candrea and Ispas, 2009).

Akama (1999) stated that the concept of visitor management has to be recognized in each parts of Africa since focus of tourist destination in the continent is just to maximize revenue generated from tourism without taking care of sustainability of the destinations. However, the practices of using visitor management tools to enhance sustainable tourism development in Ethiopia is enclosed with many challenges including limited visitor management tools, low level of stakeholder collaboration, lack of control and lack of enough knowledge, problem of variety and quality of visitor experience, scant attention in community based heritage interpretation with limited interpreters and lack of organized interpretation tools (Geberekiros, 2016; Asfaw and Gebreslassie, 2016; Yihalem, 2018). Firdiywok (2012) also in his study identified problems on Fasil Ghebbi world heritage sites from visitor pressure that leads to overcrowding and deterioration on the physical structure of heritages. Due to increasing number of tourists and underdeveloped management system, Fasil Ghebbi world heritage sites suffered many problems. Deterioration and destruction due to unmanaged number and behavior of visitors in special occasions like wedding ceremony and educational trips are among others. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate visitor management as a tool for sustainable tourism development in Fasil Ghebbi, Ethiopia.

Objectives

- (i) To explore practices of hard and soft visitor management tools in Fasil Ghebbi, Gondar.
- (ii) To assess the challenges of implementing visitor management tools in the compound.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Visitor management can be defined as an administrative action towards maintaining the quality of tourism resources and visitor experiences (Candrea and Ispas, 2009). Visitor management from the perspective of world heritage sites need basic facilities like litter bins, visitor centers, interpretative signage, guides, associated exhibition or museum, probably listening posts, portable tape players, audiovisual displays and written material to

aid visitor in discovering its history in the site (Shackley, 1998).

There are three strategies in visitor management: physical management which means managing interaction between visitors and sensitive resources to minimize the impact in the form of barriers, paths, boardwalks; regulatory management that has direct controls in the form of rules, regulations, permits and charges often imposed and enforced to prohibit human behavior; and indirect mechanisms (soft) that seek to reduce inappropriate behavior on voluntary basis through education and interpretation (Orams, 1995). Thus, visitor management strategies and tools can be broadly categorized into hard and soft visitor management tools.

Hard visitor management tools

Carrying capacity: means the maximum number of tourists who may visit the destination without causing serious destruction in the physical resources, economic and socio-cultural erosion as well as without damaging tourist experience (Kuo, 2003; Weaver, 2006; Association of Ecotourism in Romania (AER), 2009; Agnew and Demas, 2013).

Zoning: means dividing the area into clearly designated zones listing the types of tourism activities and infrastructure that would be acceptable and should be developed (UNEP, 2005). It is the principal method used to arrange visitors, and important in achieving appropriate combination of concentration and dispersal. It is designed to allocate geographical areas for specific levels and intensities of human activities and conservation (Eagles et al., 2002; Association of Ecotourism in Romania (AER), 2009).

Site hardening: Involves constructing facilities and locating trails and roads to reduce impacts of visitors on sensitive soils and vegetation, fragile structure and help to meet the visitors' needs for usable access (AER, 2009).

Waste management system: Visitors will cause environmental pollution in and around heritage (Shamshiry et al., 2011). Thus, proper waste management system must be applied and awareness of visitors should be enhanced by information and interpretation tools at a destination.

Price discrimination: Involves establishing two or more prices for the same recreation opportunity (domestic and foreign visitors, peak holidays, according to location or some other methods). This can be one of the important visitor management tools to manage impacts on the site (Candrea and Ispas, 2009).

Soft visitor management tools

Interpretation: is a big concept and involves providing information other than presentation of raw data that helps visitors to understand heritage and environment so as to get appreciation of values (Eagles et al., 2002; AER, 2009). Cave and Joliffe (2012), Kuo (2003) as well as Shackley (1998) also articulated that interpretation is informal education having first hand participatory learning about heritage and will enhance knowledge of authenticity to change attitudes and behavior of the visitors and also a vital mechanism for developing tourist sites in a sustainable manner.

Marketing, visitor research and monitoring: Visitor management is not only about protection and conservation of resources through different techniques. It should also comprise the authentic visitor experiences and understanding of the site. Then, it is important to conduct marketing, visitor research and monitoring to acquire knowledge about visitors and to assess the effectiveness of management actions (Kuo, 2003; Rojas and Camarero, 2007). This is because tourism sites in different parts of the world have been degraded or damaged due to the effects of large numbers of visitors to these natural and historic sites (El-Barmelgy, 2013).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design and approach

The study used descriptive design along with mixed research approach to save from the pitfalls of using one single approach (Walliman, 2006). Descriptive design was used to explain and narrate the existing practices and challenges of visitor management tools in Fasil Ghebbi with the fact that descriptive research design is mainly characterized that the researcher has no control over the variables, he/she can only report what has happened or what is happening simply sets out to describe and to interpret what is (Kothari, 2004).

Population, sampling techniques and sample size determination

Population of this study was domestic and international visitors who visited Fasil Ghebbi during the study period and stakeholders including Fasil Ghebbi world heritage sites staffs, Gondar city administration culture tourism and sport department, local tour guides association, cameraman association in the compound and travel agents (Figure 1). It is impossible and not feasible to examine the whole population in the study except census studies (Kothari, 2004). Thus, this study employed non-probability sampling particularly convenience sampling technique to take representative sample from domestic and international visitors in cross sectional survey. While purposive sampling was used to take sample from stakeholders who are responsible, there is concern and expertise to participate in implementing visitor management in Fasil Ghebbi. This was due to the fact that purposive sampling is where the researcher selects what he/she thinks based on specialist knowledge or selection criteria (Walliman, 2006). To determine representative sample size from target population, the researcher

used Cochran (1977) formula which is suitable when the population is large and sampling frame is not well identified.

$$n_0 = \frac{z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where, n_0 = minimum sample size, z = is the selected critical value of desired confidence level, p = is the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population, $q=1-p$ and e = is the desired level of precision. Assuming the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population is 20%, then ($p=0.2$) and taking 95% confidence level with $\pm 5\%$ precision, $z=1.96$ the calculation for required sample size was as follow:

$$n_0 = \frac{(1.96)^2(0.2)(0.8)}{(0.05)^2} = 246 + (5\% \text{ contingency added to fill the probability of non-response rate})$$

$$n_0 = 258$$

On the other hand, key informants having expertise, concern, responsibility and participation in implementing visitor management in Fasil Ghebbi were selected purposefully. Overall, 6 key informants were interviewed in two groups: local government experts from Gondar city administration culture tourism and sport department (1) and Fasil Ghebbi world heritage sites management (1); and tourism and related business operators including tour guide association (1), association of cameraman in the compound (1) and travel agents found in Gondar city (2).

Data collection instruments

Questionnaire: was prepared in English and Amharic languages. The questionnaire had three parts: the first part includes demographic profiles of respondents and the second part was the main body of questionnaire that contain a five-points Likert scale close ended questions which are directly related with the practice of hard and soft visitor management tools.

In depth interview: Semi structured interview questions were prepared and interview conducted with key informants that were selected purposely. The interview questions were prepared to get clear information from the key informants that are related with the specific objectives specially the challenges for implementing visitor management tools in Fasil Ghebbi.

Observation: Field observation was the other primary data collection instrument in the study with the help of checklists that could support the availability of different information tools, current practices of visitor management tools and challenges.

Data analysis plan

The data collected through questionnaire were analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistical analysis with the help of SPSS version 25 whilst qualitative data was analyzed thematically. Each of the key informants were carefully coded and used for analysis purpose. Finally, major findings of the study were presented in the forms of descriptions, statistical descriptions, percentages, tabulations, and narration.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After data were collected through questionnaire and interview, it was cleaned, screened and entered into

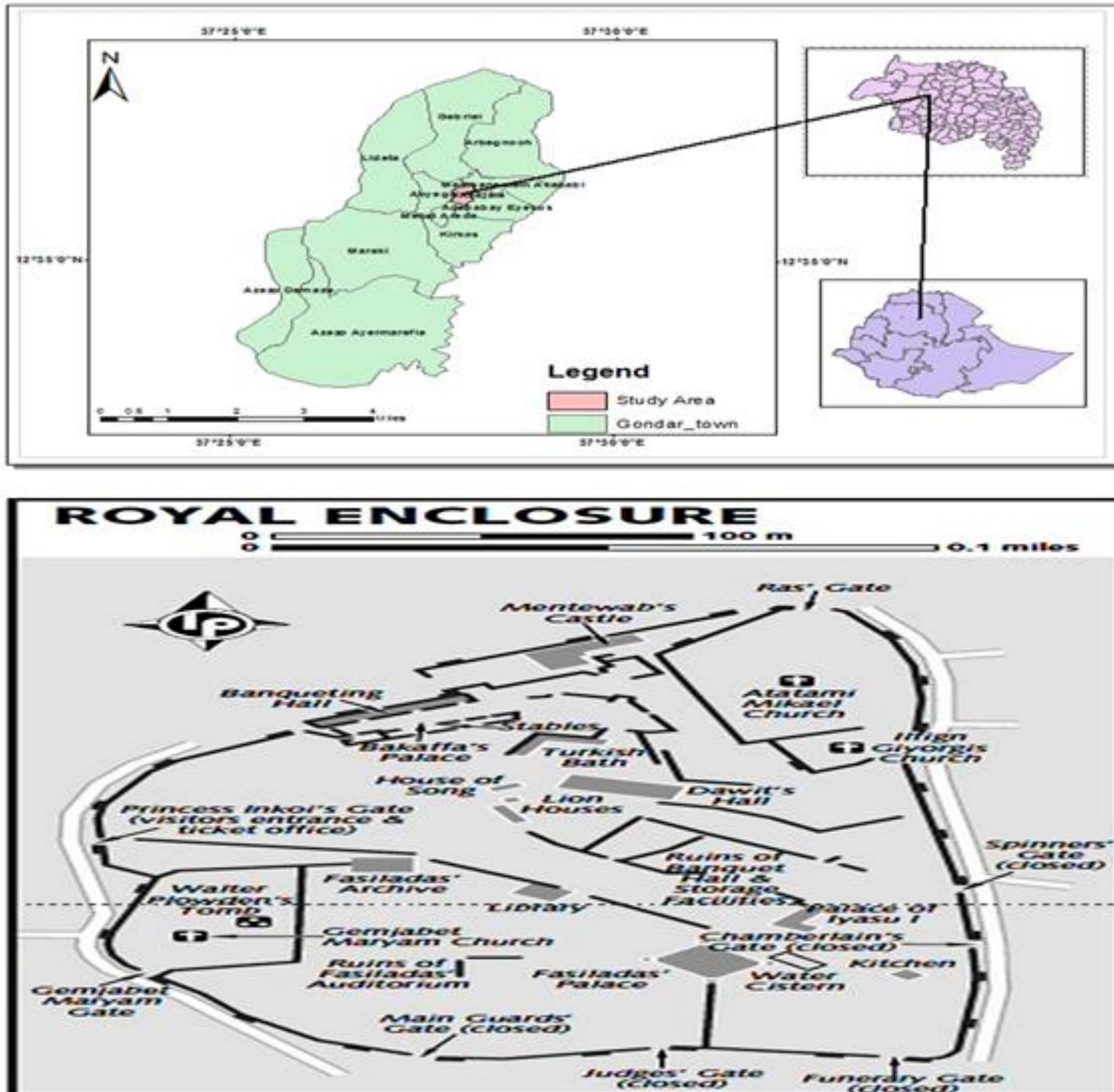


Figure 1. Map of the study area.
 Source: <https://www.google.com/search?biw=thematic+map+of+gondar+city> retrieved on 26/3/2019.

computer. Out of total 258 questionnaires distributed, 246 respondents gave appropriate answers for all questions provided in the questionnaire and used for analysis.

Practices of hard and soft visitor management in Fasil Ghebbi

The practice of carrying capacity in Fasil Ghebbi was investigated from physical carrying capacity and group size limit point of view. As shown in the first row of Table 1 from the total respondents, 26.8% strongly disagreed with the practices of physical carrying capacity (group size limit) and the other 25.2% disagreed, while 24.8% were neutrally abstained with the practices of carrying capacity in Fasil Ghebbi. Data from key informants also

shows that carrying capacity of the compound and a specific building is not studied scientifically and the tourist guides try to limit the group size in different occasions. However, still it is heavy to regulate the visitors' number during special occasions like wedding ceremony and educational trips by university students as well as know your country tourism clubs (key informants 01 and 02, April, 2019).

The researchers' observation also articulated that different groups of visitors followed the same route mostly started from Fasilades castle, Iyasu and so on. This practice creates two side negative impacts, one is the building structure face destruction with the fleet of many groups at the same time and the other challenge was inappropriate visitor experience due to overcrowding specially at Fasilades castle.

Table 1. Practices of hard and soft visitor management tools in Fasil Ghebbi.

| Items | Respondents level of agreement in percent | | | | | Mean |
|--|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Hard visitor management tools | | | | | | |
| Physical carrying capacity (group size limit) is practicing in Fasil Ghebbi | 26.8 | 25.2 | 24.8 | 15.4 | 7.7 | 2.52 |
| Zoning is practicing by separating the area into visitor service zone, recreation zone...in Fasil Ghebbi | 32.5 | 34.6 | 15 | 13.8 | 4.1 | 2.22 |
| Walkways and visitor facilities like toilet and seats are constructed in Fasil Ghebbi | 4.5 | 17.5 | 25.2 | 47.6 | 5.3 | 3.32 |
| There are adequate garbage bins and good practices of waste management in Fasil Ghebbi | 10.2 | 22.8 | 25.2 | 39 | 2.8 | 3.02 |
| There are restrictions hindering to enter in the fragile sites in the compound | 2.4 | 14.2 | 15.9 | 53.7 | 13.8 | 3.62 |
| There are fences to protect fragile structure in Fasil Ghebbi | 1.6 | 6.1 | 8.5 | 46.3 | 37.4 | 4.12 |
| Soft visitor management tools | | | | | | |
| Guides have genuine interpretation skill and provide all necessary facts and history about the site | 2.4 | 5.3 | 12.2 | 44.3 | 35.8 | 4.06 |
| Guides have good skill of foreign language | 1.2 | 6.9 | 11.4 | 41.9 | 38.6 | 4.10 |
| Awareness is created for visitors to practice in sustainable way before starting the visit | 18.7 | 36.2 | 22 | 13.4 | 9.8 | 2.59 |
| Information tools (printed materials, signage, signboard, visitor information center, museum) are available in the site | 34.1 | 50.8 | 4.1 | 8.1 | 2.8 | 1.95 |
| Services were given based on visitor demand | 36.6 | 27.2 | 23.2 | 9.8 | 3.3 | 2.16 |
| Grand mean | 3.06 | | | | | |

Similarly, respondents were asked about the practices of zoning in Fasil Ghebbi. However, the mean score (2.22) publicizes that the application of separating the area into different zones were under question. From the total respondents, 34.6% strongly disagreed and 15% disagreed that zoning was not practiced in Fasil Ghebbi which implied that the application of zoning (identifying photography spot, visitor service zone, recreation, parking zone ...) in the compound was poor.

Gondar city administration culture tourism and sport department head said that the application of zoning in cultural heritages like Fasil Ghebbi is not much similar with that of the natural sites which zoning can be practiced well. Though the core and buffer zone were identified, the application in performing what tasks to be done in each zone is still difficult. The royal enclosure is located in the core zone where visitation took place and zoning is practiced through identifying the one which is vulnerable to threat would be closed or prohibited for visitation.

The 3rd row of the table shows that 47.6% of the respondents agreed that site hardening is practicing through constructing walkways and fulfilling visitor facilities like toilet and seats made from stone in the compound. The other respondents (5.3%) strongly agreed with the idea that the practice of site hardening is applicable in Fasil Ghebbi. On the contrary, 17.5% of the

respondents disagreed which implied that site hardening is not practiced in proper way and small portion of the respondents (4.5%) strongly disagreed with this idea which means site hardening is not practiced at all. As indicated from mean (3.32), there are good practices of site hardening including constructed walkways and visitor facilities. However, more walkways and visitor facilities should be constructed including more seats as well as full purpose toilets expected from a world heritage site.

The practice of waste management system in Fasil Ghebbi was average with mean score of 3.02 which implied good availability of garbage bins and good practices of removing wastes from both visitors and the management staff. However, it is not ample and needs further reform to make the compound more litter free and attractive for visitors. As shown in Table 1 (rows 5 and 6), the practices of access control was applied as an important concept of visitor management tools in the compound.

Of the total respondents, 46.3% agreed and 37.4% strongly agreed that there were fences to protect the fragile sites of the compound with the mean score of 4.12. Likewise, 53.7 and 13.8% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that there was restriction which prohibits entering in the fragile sites respectively. Field observation also articulated that different castles including Fasilides castle ground and second floor, Yohannes castle and Mentewab castle were closed and some other parts of the ruined wesheba gimb, the up

story at Balderas gate, the tunnel to Yohannes castle and other fragile structures were protected using fences and written instructions.

Significantly, the uses of soft visitor management tools are fundamental which incorporated the application of communication/interpretation to deliver series of messages (information) to visitors. It aims to provide an enjoyable experience to visitors through educating visitors what to do and not to do in the destination (Kuo, 2013). Consequently, the practices of soft visitor management tools in Fasil Ghebbi were assessed through examining the guides personal interpretation skills and availability of interpretation tools in the compound. Though guides have genuine interpretation skill and provide all necessary facts and history about the site and have also good skill of English language with mean score of 4.06 and 4.10 respectively, they did not create awareness for visitors to practice in sustainable way before starting the visit with mean score of 2.59. From the total respondents, 18.7% strongly disagreed, 36.2% disagreed and 22% were refrained with the idea that awareness was given to the visitors prior to their visitation. This implied that guides were not responsible to brief visitors on how to behave during visitation. Of all, there are no adequate information tools in Fasil Ghebbi with mean score of 1.95. Observation of the researcher also confirmed that there are no magazines, newspaper, brochures, leaflets, guidebooks, maps, audiovisual display, museum, listening post and the like in the compound which are very basic and should be fulfilled in any of world heritage site.

Finally, visitors were asked whether the services provided in the compound were based on their demand or not. Thus, 36.6 and 27.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed with the idea whereas 23.2% were neutral. This implied that marketing and visitor research practices in Fasil Ghebbi were poor hence services were not given based on visitors demand.

Challenges of visitor management practices in Fasil Ghebbi

The study identified many challenges which might be causes of the poor practices and low implementation of visitor management tools. Thus, according to the key informants, the following challenges were identified in Fasil Ghebbi in implementing visitor management techniques:

Lack of application/implementation: the great challenge for Ethiopian tourism development was unclear tourism policies and strategies (Robinson and Jonker, 2016) and still it is a problem for most destinations. However, today's big challenge in implementing visitor management in Fasil Ghebbi is lack of implementation or application (key informant 05, May, 2019). There is a

destination management plan (UOG and ARCCH, 2016) for Fasil Ghebbi world heritage sites but a great evidence for the low application of this plan was the poor practices of visitor management tools in the compound. Robinson and Jonker (2016) also concluded that tourism development policy of Ethiopia has not been implemented to a significant degree.

Shortage of budget and scant attention: Government of Ethiopia paid scant attention for tourism sector even though the money collected from world heritage sites were collected by federal government. Fasil Ghebbi world heritage sites manager justified that Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH) is the responsible organ to set budget for management and conservation of the heritage but did not offer enough budget rather the visitor management and conservation practice is performed by the regional government and city administration. Similarly, Gondar city administration culture tourism and sport department head portrayed that ARCCH totally ignored Fasil Ghebbi world heritage sites. Conservation practices and development of visitor facilities were done by money allocated (around 7 million birr for 2011 E.C.) by the city administration even though the practices were under performed. Though budget was a challenge to implement visitor management, local tourism office including Gondar city administration culture tourism and sport department, 2018 and central Gondar zone culture and tourism office could not convince the responsible body (ARCCH) to set enough budget for management of Fasil Ghebbi world heritage sites (key informant 03, April, 2019). Scant attention of management and officials were another challenge that might be responsible for budget cut.

Lack of stakeholder involvement and collaboration: Tourism development policy of Ethiopia (2009) still stated community participation and partnership among stakeholders as one of the basic principles to guide Ethiopian tourism development. However, practical awareness, involvement, cooperation and capacity of the key stakeholders in the management of visitors and the destination are very limited. Unclear direction for different stakeholder numbers and levels of involvement, domination of tourism benefits by a few individuals and resource shortages are common challenges in stakeholder involvement and collaboration in the site (key informant 05, May, 2019).

Lack of visitor management tools and visitor facilities: There is poor availability of visitor management tools in the royal enclosure. Local tour guides association president confirmed that visitor facilities found in the royal enclosure is very limited; shortage of portable and fixed toilets, absence of security camera in the compound, absence of museum, lack of adequate signage, lack of garbage bins are among others. Moreover, observation of

the researcher also confirmed that there are no magazines, newspaper, brochures, leaflets, guidebooks, maps, audiovisual display, museum, listening post and the like in the compound.

...carrying capacity is not yet studied, zoning system is not appropriate and availability and practices of information tools was found poor apart from poor waste management system in the compound. Thus, limited number or absence of visitor management tools was the other challenge for the low practices of management tools.

Lack of skilled human power: It is obvious that lack of professionals is the bottleneck for tourism industry in Ethiopia at all and the same is true for Fasil Ghebbi. One of the representatives from travel agents replied many points and was translated in English as follows:

Lack of skilled security guards having grace and knowledge about tourism; lack of qualified and responsible tour guides who provide qualified service, information and interpretation; absence of well-educated and skilled management staff who provides direction on the application of visitor management tools and fulfillment of the techniques, cleaning staff who have knowledge of proper waste management and proper use of garbage bins and able to educate visitors, ticketing officer, information desk and lack of skilled administration are among the challenges in implementing visitor management in the compound (key informant 02, April, 2019).

Unlike the above key informant's idea, there are educated tourism professionals in the labor market rather the problem is poor attention of local government officials who failed to hire qualified employees.

Relatively, tour guides association is the only professional association who provide service for visitors even though it has its own pitfalls. Thus, what is expected from local tourism department is hiring qualified tourism professionals and or providing training (Key informant 06, May, 2019).

Lack of responsibility: This was another big challenge in practicing visitor management in Fasil Ghebbi at least from two sides: negligence from service providers on how to regulate visitors' behavior. Based on informal discussion, one of the security guard verified the following idea:

We do not care about the number and sizes of visitors come to the compound. We did not get special benefit from it and we do not want to struggle with the people we know before and the one we meet outside. Therefore, we would permit everybody to enter the compound.

However, most business-related stakeholders are not focusing on the sustainability of the heritage and they simply think about the daily benefits that can be exploited for personal use from tourism. On the other hand, from the visitor's perspective ease of responsibility during visitation like ease understanding of restrictions and climbing on the fragile sites was observed on domestic visitors.

Lack of knowledge and awareness: other problem which would not overlook easily is lack of knowledge/awareness in Ethiopian tourism. As a result, the fate of Fasil Ghebbi was not different. Lack of awareness from both service providers and visitors specifically domestic visitors were predominantly the big challenge in practicing visitor management.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Findings showed that practices of visitor management tools to enhance sustainable tourism development in Fasil Ghebbi were not adequate. Investigation in current practices of visitor management tools in Fasil Ghebbi showed that only some of the visitor management tools were proficient in a good situation while the practices of most of the tools were in infant stages. Thus, access control, interpretation skills related with guides' skill of English language and genuine interpretation practiced well, while site hardening and waste management system were found in average position. On the other hand, carrying capacity is not yet studied scientifically and not practiced; zoning was not practiced well and weak marketing and visitor research. Subsequently, Fasil Ghebbi world heritage site is vulnerable to threat due to poor practices of visitor management tools apart from other factors which is not studied in this work.

Consequently, there were many challenges hindering the implementation of those tools in the royal enclosure. As a result, poor application or implementation of visitor management tools, shortage of budget and poor attention of local government officials to convince responsible federal government body to set budget, lack of skilled human power due to overlooked activities of the destination management to hire skilled human power, lack of stakeholder collaborations, absence and limited visitor management tools and visitor facilities, negligence of responsibilities and lack of knowledge and awareness were the challenges identified in this study and are responsible for the low practices of visitor management tools in Fasil Ghebbi. The following recommendations were drawn from the findings of this study:

- (i) ARCCH is highly responsible to provide adequate budget for conservation and management of the heritage.
- (ii) Fasil Ghebbi world heritage sites management should create favorable conditions to collaborate with all

stakeholders in the management of the destination particularly in managing visitors and ensuring sustainability.

(iii) ARCCH should pay due attention in fulfilling different visitor facilities and visitor management tools expected from a world heritage site. Well functioned toilets with appropriate number; many seats; museum; interpretation tools including guide books, map, leaflet, brochures, more signage in Amharic and English language, newspaper, more signboards and panels; appropriate zoning and limiting activities to be conducted in buffer zones; more walkways, fences, adequate dust bins etc. should be fulfilled along with conservation of sites.

(iv) University of Gondar, department of tourism management in collaboration with ARCCH should conduct research in the study area to determine the carrying capacities of the site and building structures scientifically as well as to fix number of visitors per guide to minimize overcrowding and to provide qualified service for visitors.

(v) Concise responsibilities must be given to government officials, tourism business operators and local communities to create sustainable visitor management strategies.

(vi) Tourist guides should provide orientation prior to visitation about the codes of conduct, what to do and not to do and how to behave in a sustainable manner. It is also better to have independent interpretation professionals apart from guides and written documents.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

Factors determining international tourist flow to tourism destinations: A systematic review

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International tourism has been growing worldwide at substantial and sustainable rates in terms of both tourist arrivals and tourism receipts. It demonstrated broad economic significance for tourism destinations around the world. This review is carried out to describe factors determining international tourist flow to international tourist destinations. The study gives insights to improve international tourist arrivals and tourism receipts at tourism destinations worldwide by providing a comprehensive summary of the results of various works of literature on international tourist flow to researchers, policy makers and practitioners. The systematic review is conducted to provide objective, replicable, systematic, and comprehensive coverage of determinants of international tourist flow. The review process comprised framing questions for review, identifying relevant works, assessing the quality of studies, summarizing the evidence, and interpreting the findings. Factors determining international tourist flow are found to be mainly related to demand factors in generating region and supply factors in destinations. Socio-cultural factors, geographical, international mobility, demographic, technological, health risk, psychological and lifestyle, and peace and security factors significantly affect international tourist flow.

Key words: Travel, tourist flow, international tourism, destination.

INTRODUCTION

Travel and tourism is the world's largest and most diverse service industry on which many countries rely as source of revenue, employment, private sector growth and investment. Its contribution is widespread to boost consumption, infrastructure development and gross domestic product (Boniface et al., 2016; Gee and Fayos-solá, 1997). Besides generating foreign exchange earnings and alleviating the balance of payments problems encountered in many developing countries,

international tourism generates employment, income, savings, investment, and economic growth (Lim, 1997; UNWTO, 2019; WTTC, 2018). For this reason, both the public and private sectors have channeled substantial resources into the tourism industry. The trend of tourist flow has been steadily increasing in tourism destinations because of globalization and market liberalization trends across the world (Keum, 2010). After achieving historic milestone of one billion people traveling the world in a

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single year in 2012, international tourism continued to grow with average growth rate of 4.88% in the past five years. International tourist arrivals grew by 5% in 2018 to reach 1.4 billion marks and expected to grow in 2019 with strong momentum at the rate of 4-5% (UNWTO, 2019).

A number of researchers have reported that theories in international tourist flow are largely linked to globalization, international trade, bi-lateral agreements, tourism demand and tourism supply (Mansfeld, 1990; Var, Mohammad and Icoz, 1990; Morley, 1992; Witt and Witt, 1995; Zhang and Jensen, 2005; Song and Li, 2008; Keum, 2010; Claveria and Torra, 2014; Adeola et al., 2018)

Tourist flows are not simply movements of people but they have an important economic significance for the tourism system. Quite simply, international tourism represents a flow of money that is earned in one place and spent in another (Boniface et al., 2016) (Figure 1).

In the past three decades considerable number of researches conducted on international tourist flow are mainly focused on tourism demand perspective (Lim, 1999; Cho, 2010; Song et al., 2010; Culiuc, 2014; Peng et al., 2015; Martins et al., 2017; Adeola et al., 2018). Several variables have been suggested as the determinants of international tourist flow. However, the determinants found in previous researches vary significantly across studies (Peng et al., 2015). These studies lack the ability to provide big picture of the international tourism system and factors that can affect international tourist flow. Given the magnitude of tourism flows and the importance of the tourism industry for the global economy, it is imperative to investigate the factors determining international tourist flows. This review is made with the objective to analyze previous researches and provide the wider discourse on factors affecting international tourist flow. Therefore, this study provides comprehensive conceptual view of various works of literatures on literatures in the topic to researchers, policymakers and practitioners.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this research systematic review of literature is used to provide comprehensive set of factors determining international tourist flow to tourism destinations. The systematic review provides objective, replicable, systematic, and comprehensive coverage of a defined area because its aim is a conceptual consolidation across a fragmented field (Weed, 2006). To deal with the breadth of the review topic, the review process consists of framing questions for review, identifying relevant works, assessing the quality of studies, summarizing the evidence, and interpreting the findings.

Three-stage procedure: planning, execution, and reporting are used to conduct this systematic review (Tranfield et al., 2003). Stage one involves setting the objectives of the research and identifying key data sources. The objective of the review is made broad in order to carry out a comprehensive review of on factors determining international tourist flow. Relevant sources of literature

which include journal articles, books, conference papers and working papers published between 1990 and 2019 are reviewed to address the breadth of the subject under study Stage two. Stage two, consists of identifying initial keywords keywords and search terms, search strategy, inclusion criteria, data extraction and assessed assessing study quality. The Initial search is conducted using the basic keywords: "tourism", "travel", "international", "tourist", "tourist flow", "demand", "supply", "inbound", "outbound" and "destination". Google Scholar is used to searching relevant work across the world of scholarly research and other relevant literature from academic publishers, professional societies, online repositories, universities and other web sites. Selection criteria of pertinent works of literature involves year of publication (1990 to 2019); international travel exposure of tourists; cross-boundary tourist flow; literatures written in English language; scholarly works with at least one aforementioned keywords in the title, abstract or keywords; literatures which report outcome using objective measures; studies conducted in international tourism setting; and types of publications which includes journal articles, books, conference papers, dissertations, and working papers, which resulted in seventy-five scholarly works. The publications literatures are selected based on aforementioned criteria to analyze and synthesize scattered sources of variables which are detrimental to international tourist flow. Data extraction is performed based on author, date, title, region, research design and outcomes to simplify the analysis process. Stage three, the data analysis is carried out based on the objectives of the review. This review is a comprehensive overview of factors affecting international tourist flow. Thus, this review is methodologically limited to descriptive rather than statistical methods in the analysis of the results. Data synthesis is the primary value-added product of a review as it produces new knowledge based on thorough data collection and careful analysis (Crossan and Apaydin, 2010); Law, Leung, Cheung, 2012). The results of the analysis are synthesized into the various category of factors. Its aim is a conceptual consolidation across a fragmented field. It uses systematic data collection procedures, descriptive and qualitative data analysis techniques, and theoretically grounded synthesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Factors found to be influencing international tourist flow have been explored in several studies. They vary widely in terms of dependent and independent variables, periods and levels of the data, empirical methodologies, and country of origin and destination pairs. Meta-analysis of tourism demand from 195 studies shows international tourism vary significantly across different origins, destinations, products, data frequencies, demand variable measures, modeling methods, and in terms of travel distances (Crouch and Shaw, 1992; (Peng et al., 2015). The movements of people between places are highly complex and are influenced by a wide variety of interrelated variables.

Demand for international tourism

International tourism demand is the core area of researches undertaken in the theme of factors affecting international tourism in general and international tourist

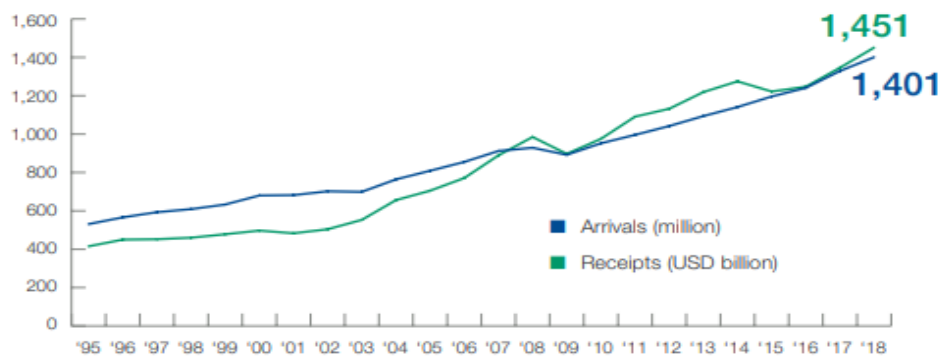


Figure 1. International tourist arrivals (million) and tourism receipts (USD billion).

Source: World tourism organization (UNWTO), July 2019.

flow in particular. International tourism demand is affected by a wide range of factors, such as economic, attitudinal and political factors, but the majority of the studies tend to examine the demand for international tourism by focusing predominantly on economic factors (Table 1) (Song et al., 2010).

Supply of tourism products at tourism destinations

The supply at the destination is the key element in the tourism system which provides the basic elements that together form the overall visitor experience. The general attractiveness of a destination significantly affects tourist flow (Sebastian et al., 2009). Accessibility, attractions and amenities of the destination area are the pull factors for international tourism (Boniface et al., 2016). A Positive relationship is observed between the number of hotel rooms in the destination country and tourism inflows (Culiuc, 2014). Availability of alternative or complimentary destinations, service quality, brand image, the price competitiveness of tourism products and tourist price substitute are supply side supply factors that affect international flow to destinations (Habibi, 2017). Countries with an abundance of a certain tourism resource benefit from a comparative advantage of factor endowment. However, it should be noted that these factor endowments only have an impact on tourism flows if they are developed and made accessible to tourists (Vellas and Becherel, 1995).

McKercher (1998) noted the effect of market access on international tourism. The effectiveness of marketing and promotion by the destination has its own impact in driving tourists to the destinations (Boniface et al., 2016). Marketing expenditure of destination is an important factor that affects the tourism demand at originating region (Song and Witt, 2000). Promotion is generally recognized as an important strategy to enhance the awareness of a destination and to highlight its attractiveness so as to increase the number of tourists

and tourism receipts (Song et al., 2010). Comparative advantage and comparative costs also play significant role in attracting international tourists. A destinations' comparative advantage stems from the quality of its infrastructure, superstructure and tourism know-how, level of technology and its favorable environment (Vellas and Becherel, 1995). Comparative costs are concerned with qualitative factors, especially the price-quality ratio, which plays an essential role in the comparison and the choice of tourism supply offered by competing countries or destinations. This shows that service quality is the best way to compete and to have the best comparative advantage.

Absolute advantage plays a crucial role in international tourism. Certain countries have unique tourism resources which can be exceptional natural, cultural, historical or man-made resources known all over the world. Their importance in terms of international tourism factors is determined by their uniqueness which gives a country a monopoly or a near-monopoly (Vellas and Becherel, 1995). But, in the case of natural disaster and crisis the destinations may experience decline of tourist arrivals in an affected area and create a negative image for the visitor (Habibi, 2017).

Socio-cultural factors determining international tourist flow

Culture is one of the issues that has been identified by numerous researchers as determinant factor for international tourist flow (Master and Prideaux, 2000; Reisinger and Turner, 1997, 2002; Sussmann and Rashcovsky, 1997). Cultural factors can both cause and obstruct international tourist flow. A great difference in cultural environment between two countries is a motivating factor but can also limit international tourism and prevent mass tourism. Bypassing this obstacle depends on the services and equipment available to tourists who speak a different language than that of the

Table 1. Demand factors influencing international tourist flow.

| Author/s | Factors affecting demand for international tourism |
|---|--|
| Lim (1999), Song and Witt (2000) | Income, transportation costs, relative tourism prices, promotion expenditure of tourism destination, and availability of special events |
| Seyidov and Adomaitienė (2016) Narayan (2004) | Availability of money and leisure time |
| Eryiğit et al. (2010) | GDP per capita and bi-lateral trade volume between countries |
| Prideaux (2005) | Price, personal financial capacity to travel and budget, destination image and destination competitiveness |
| Var et al. (1990) | Available of substitute destinations, the per capita income of generating country and relative exchange rate |
| Crouch (1994) Dritsakis (2004); Garin-Munoz (2007) | Income in the tourist originating country; cost of living; transportation cost between countries; currency exchange rate between the pairs of destination and originating countries; and other price factors like inflation |
| Li et al. (2005), Law (2000) | Accommodation costs, travel cost, substitute price, marketing expenditures |
| Divisekera (2010) Garin-Munoz (2006) | Relative prices and real income, international connectivity, stage of economic development in the generating area and levels of affluence and the relative cost of the visit |
| Mansfeld (1990) | Availability of free time; availability of disposable money; availability of paid holidays; and the per capita income of tourists |
| Crouch (1994a, b), Lim (1997, 1999), Song and Li (2008) | Income, prices, exchange rate, cost of transportation, and marketing effectiveness, cost of tourist service, inflation, distance, time, tourist appeal, publicity, information, weather and language |
| Martins et al. (2017) | Depreciation of the national currency of destination country, and a decline of relative domestic prices in originating country |
| Vellas and Becherel (1995) | Inflation, exchange rates, prices, the availability of leisure time and relative household incomes |
| Hiemstra and Wong (2002) | Personal disposable income; the cost of living for tourists in the destination country; tourists' living costs in substitute destinations; transport cost between the origin and destination; transport costs to substitute destinations; and the volume of trade exports and imports between origin and destination countries |
| Turner et al. (1998) | |
| Culiuc (2014) | Strong trade ties, real exchange rate, an appreciation of the origin's currency, depreciation of destination's currency, economic relations between two countries |

population at the destination (Vellas and Becherel, 1995). International tourists tend to be more heterogenous and individualistic in their demands and expectations; more culturally diverse in terms of ethnic origin as well as their range of lifestyle choice (Chowdhary, 2013).

Cultural distance among countries negatively affects tourist flow to exotic destinations (Lew and McKercher, 2006). Common language plays positive role in determining tourism flows (Eilat and Einav, 2004). International connectivity in terms of cultural ties between countries as significantly affect international tourist flow. Tourism also responds stronger to linguistic ties (Culiuc, 2014). Hospitality culture of destination is an important issue in attracting tourism. Regarding the cultural and natural heritages, UNESCO designated world heritage sites are significant pull factors (Cho, 2010). Increased

number of women in work force, rise in number of two-income households, improvement in quality of life, international mobility, greater complexity of life, and increased competition in life is positively related to international tourist flow (Chowdhary, 2013).

Geographical factors affecting international flow of tourists

A number of attempts have been made to explain the factors that affect tourist flows in geographic terms. Distances between countries found to be determinant factor in international tourist flow the greater the distance, the smaller the volume of flow. The friction of distance which refers to the cost in time and money of longer

journeys restrain flows between the country of origin and more distant destinations (Boniface et al., 2016).

McKercher (1998) stated that more proximate destinations exhibited a competitive advantage over destinations that offered similar products but were less proximate. Distance and tourism climate index are the main variables influencing the volume of flows (Pearce, 1995; Eryiğit et al., 2010). Location and dependencies between destinations of either a competitive or complementary nature have implications in tourists preference of tourism destinations and flow (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999). Common border and distance are important in determining tourism flows, especially for less developed countries (Eilat and Einav, 2004). Countries with similar demand conditions tend to be geographically close, often bordering each other. This factor increases the use of the more economical means of transport. Proximity of countries to each other is also a significant geographic factor in determining international tourist flow (Vellas and Becherel, 1995). Distance between the two countries has a negative impact on tourism. Contiguity is beneficial for tourism as a common border leads to larger number of tourists between two countries (Culiuc, 2014). Most tourists prefer to visit proximal countries with good accessibility. The accessibility of countries is the main concern to most international tourists. Most travelers visit the major cities of a country which are usually well connected by air (Cho, 2010). Diverse climatic conditions and scenic attractions of destinations also attract large number of international tourists (Chowdhary, 2013).

An unfavorable climate provide a strong impetus to travel (Boniface et al., 2016). Tourists like to visit those destinations with mild variations of temperature or seasonal changes. Large temperature variation or distinctive seasons in a country have a negative impact on the total tourist arrivals in a year. Usually people like to visit a place during its best season in terms of its climate and natural beauty. Concerning the environmental condition, CO₂ emission is a positive and significant factor for tourists in selecting a country to visit. Certainly, a person may not like to visit a country that is heavily polluted (Cho, 2010). Climatic change, the source of critical changes in scenery and nature is a particular driver of unexpected extreme natural events and weather conditions. The rising trend in the storms, floods, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions can deter the flow of international tourists to places of natural calamity (Petermann et al., 2005). Distance, tourism climate index, and population number are identifies as the main variables in influencing the volume of flows of international tourists (Pearce, 1995; Eryiğit et al., 2010).

International mobility of tourists

Transportation is the means to reach the destination and

also the means of movement at the destination. It is acknowledged as one of the most significant factors to have contributed to the international development of tourism. International travel has become much more accessible, faster, and affordable to more people in recent decades and international mobility is dominated by air transport (Frändberg and Vilhelmson, 2003). Major steps in the development of international tourism have been linked with advancements in transport. Technological, infrastructural, and organizational developments of air transport gradually increased the accessibility in terms of time and cost of faraway places (Graham, 2000). Push factors for international travel are mainly concerned with mobility (Boniface et al., 2016). Analysis of cross-border tourism by Timothy (1995a, b, 1998) found that physical barriers such as fortifications and demarcation markers and the severity of crossing formalities such as visas, customs procedures, and quarantine measures have impact on international travel. Transportation accessibility, distance, time, and destination knowledge are major determinants in choosing and traveling to international destinations (Lew and McKercher, 2006). Availability and quality of road, rail, water and air transportation service and infrastructural development to support international mobility are among the major determinants of international tourism. The presence of a direct flight is positively associated with tourism flows (Culiuc, 2014). Entry formalities in the form of official documents and endorsements which need to be procured well in advance are significant especially for countries with strict entry formality. Agreed measures for easing the movement of people travelling across border with lax controls improves number of flow but inadequate facilitation measures can hinder the conditions of demand between countries geographically close to each other (Vellas and Becherel, 1995). In addition, provision of electronic visa and visa on arrival increases tourist flow to a country.

Demographic variables of international tourists

One of the most important explanatory variables of tourism flow is population in country of origin (Crouch, 1994; Lim, 1997; Turner et al., 1998). The larger the population masses of country, the greater the flow between them (Boniface et al., 2016). Demography determines trends in international tourism supply and demand. International tourists tend to be better educated and more interested in continuing education (Chowdhary, 2013). Population volume, the percentage of active population, its geographical distribution, availability of skilled labor and the apportionment by age band has effect on both the demand and supply of international tourism (Vellas and Becherel, 1995). Rise in small household size, late marriage, affluent old age people,

life expectancy, and level of education in developed countries specially in generating region are related to more amount of international travel for tourism (Chowdhary, 2013).

Psychological and lifestyle of international tourists

From consumer behavior perspective tourist needs and habit of traveling are the significant factors for international travel (Djeri and Plavša, 2007). Desire to social-interaction, escape, rest and relaxation, destination image, and quality are most important factors for international tourists (Hsu et al., 2009). Research into international flows has generally focused on international competitiveness and destination choice (Chon and Mayer, 1995; Pearce, 1997). But, competitiveness is both relative and multidimensional (Prideaux, 2005). Analysis of cross-border tourism by Timothy (1995a, 1995b, 1998) found that psychological barriers that include cultural differences, and perceptions of safety and economic factors, all influence cross boundary flows. Fashions for international travel has also important role in determining international tourist flow (Eilat and Einav, 2004). Personality, motivation, and emotional values affect travelers choice of international destination and tourist flow (Lew and McKercher, 2006). Family obligations; obligations to one's workplace; and values and norms of tourism behavior prevailing among one's reference group are also significant factors that affect flow of international tourists (Mansfeld, 1990).

The pressures of city life provides the urge to travel away from the usual environment (Boniface et al., 2016). International tourism demand has lagged dependent variable such as habit persistence, word-of-mouth and changing travel tastes (Crouch, 1994a, b; Lim, 1997, 1999; Song and Li, 2008). Personal factors of individual tastes and preferences influence tourism demand. Consequently, tourism destinations must research the tastes and preferences of the generating market, notably by conducting market surveys (Vellas and Becherel, 1995). Demand for international relies on consumer tastes, personal preferences, consumer expectations, habit persistence, the 'word-of-mouth' effect and time trend or fashion are all important factors for tourism demand (Song and Witt, 2000; Prideaux, 2005). International tourists tend to be more healthy and interested in more active pursuit; more leisured in terms of hours of work and holiday entitlements; more traveled for work or business as well as leisure and holidays with frequent international travel experience (Chowdhary, 2013).

Influence of technology on international tourism

Technical innovation in the tourism sector mainly involves

super-structures, information and promotion, product development and marketing. Lack of information is the main variables influencing the volume of flows (Pearce, 1995). Destinations usually involve innovation and technological progress in order to maintain and increase their comparative advantage. Tourism superstructures increasingly use new technology, particularly in the accommodation, catering and reservations sectors. Innovation can bring down costs like new materials, energy savings, electronic data transmission, newmanagement, reservations and payment techniques but also create new tourism products like leisure centers and holiday centers.

Tourism marketing is probably the area which has benefited the most from advances in technology with the development of real-time management software for information, availability, reservations, invoicing and payment using smart cards. Information and communication technology increased promotion and distribution of products on the internet. Multimedia information provision in customers' homes enhanced promotional possibilities such as direct marketing, reducing the traditional role of travel intermediaries, customer database development and its role in marketing information systems. It gives way to develop customized products for consumers, relationship marketing with repeat buyers and other targeted customers and stakeholders. It also stimulates creation of virtual enterprises networks of micro-businesses and creates major opportunities for access to international markets at low costs (Chowdhary, 2013).

The tourism industry has become one of the largest users of modern information technology. Global distribution system (GDS), a computerized network system that enables transactions between travel industry service providers, mainly airlines, hotels, car rental companies, and travel agencies, makes tourism products available to various groups of customers in a simple and efficient way. The development and implementation of modern information technology products in tourism sector represent a response to constant and rapid changes that characterize the tourist market and the chance to gain competitiveness and foster further development of tourism at the global level (Radulovic, 2013). This allows international tourists to get information about various tourism destinations and their products. In return ease of access for these information increases the tendency of potential travelers to take a trip to international destinations. International tourists tend to be more exposed to media and information; more computer literate with ownership of personal computers, tabs or smartphones and access to the internet (Chowdhary, 2013).

Peace and security at tourism destinations

A number of researchers have postulated that increasing

flows between countries involved national politics, international relations, and world peace (D'amore, 1998; Hobson and Ko, 1994; Var et al., 1997). Regulatory framework of government on safety, have their implication on number of arrivals (Chowdhary, 2013). Determinants of destination competitiveness include safety and security (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999). Destination risk is shown to be quite important for destination choice of international tourists (Eilat and Einav, 2004). Non-economic factors such as political stability, terrorist attacks and crime influence international tourism demand (Naude and Saayman, 2005; Athanasopoulos and Hyndman, 2008; Habibi, 2017; Chu, 2011; Habibi, 2017). Political stability and personal safety of tourists positively contributes to international tourism demand (Naude and Saayman, 2005). Political instability and upheaval are strong dissuading factors (Vellas and Becherel, 1995). Questions of security and tourist risks are accordingly becoming increasingly important for the future of travel. Today, a great need for security is apparent in all tourist target groups, where security covers a wide range (Petermann et al., 2005). Political instability has a significant impact on tourism demand in both developed and developing countries (Eilat and Einav, 2004).

Tourists avoid countries with ongoing armed conflicts and terrorism (Culiuc, 2014). Terrorism has negative impacts on international tourist flow to tourism destinations (Drakos and Kutan, 2003; Enders and Sandler, 1991; Wahab, 1996; Goldman and Neubauer-Shani, 2017). Terrorist attacks aimed at major cities, tourist centers and infrastructure and directly at tourists resulted in tourists avoid these destinations. The greatest impact on tourist demand comes from terrorist attacks where tourists and locals are the direct target or victims of the attack. The new security risks and crises takes growing shift in wars from the state level to ethnic and religious armed conflict. Tourists' perception of risks and security significantly affects the image of a destination, overall satisfaction and international tourist flow to such destinations (Petermann et al., 2005). Demand for international tourism relies on the interaction of a large range of factors that include government regulations, international political/military tensions, concerns for personal safety, fear of crime, wars, terrorism, and the state of international relations (Prideaux, 2005).

Health risks at tourism destinations

As a result of the growth of long-distance travel to countries with different climatic and hygienic conditions, travelers are at risk from a very wide range of infectious diseases. Health risk factors of travelers are related with transportation means, nutritional and living conditions, climatic conditions, natural or human-related disasters and individual habits of travelers (Roupa et al., 2012).

The greater people's mobility, for example as a result of tourist activities, the faster the consequences can spread. SARS-CoV, ebola, malaria, cholera, dengue, yellow fever and HIV are some of health risks that face international travelers. New and old infectious diseases appear everywhere and more frequently and spread faster (Petermann et al., 2005). Demand for international tourism relies on the health epidemics and concerns for personal safety in tourist destinations (Prideaux, 2005). Malaria, dengue, yellow fever and ebola are significant determinants of international tourism flows (Rosselló et al., 2017). Tourists are reluctant to travel to countries with different infectious diseases (Page, 2009). Trips to less developed countries with a prevalence of these diseases are still growing (Leder et al. 2013). Malaria and yellow fever to be the diseases that play the most decisive role in explaining tourist destination choices and eradication of this disease is associated with increase in tourist arrivals and receipt by a destination (Rosselló et al., 2017). Increasing number of epidemics and plagues; natural disasters and extreme weather conditions become increasingly frequent feature worldwide, with a growing scale of damage have resulted in decline of international tourist flow to the affected areas (Petermann et al., 2005).

Policy implications of international tourist flow

The future of tourism will continue to be impacted by a range of current and emerging economic, social, political, environmental and technological changes, bringing new and often unseen challenges, threats and opportunities. Countries should closely track changes in trends of those variables and plan ahead to manage their tourism sector. Demographic and social trends, consumer trends, technological developments, safety and security and climate change needs policy attention. Government policy directions can affect international tourist flow through providing supporting infrastructure; regulating markets and access; ensuring the sustainable development of natural and cultural resources; stimulating inclusive and sustainable tourism growth; setting standards (for example safety and security, quality, training, environmental); and responding to crises and disasters affecting the industry. Policy should also address issues related to strategic and thematic approaches to product development; effective promotion and marketing programs; digitalization of tourism; supporting a competitive and sustainable tourism industry; offering seamless transport, travel facilitation and reduce barriers to travel, encouraging small and medium enterprise financing, innovation and entrepreneurship; improving service quality; simplifying regulations and adjusting to growth of the shared economy; fostering long-term investment; stimulating domestic tourism; addressing labor supply challenges

and improving sector skills; and strengthening the long-term sustainability of destinations.

Conclusion

International tourist flow is mainly determined by demand factors at originating countries and supply factors at destination countries. Income, leisure time, cost of travel, relative price of destinations, relative exchange rate and marketing are significant factors in demand for international tourism. Supply factors include accessibility of the destination, attraction, tourism infrastructure and amenities, accommodation, service quality, price competitiveness, general attractiveness and destination image, special events, and disaster and crises in tourism destinations are determinant factors that affect international tourist flow. Socio-cultural factors which include cultural distance, common language, cultural ties, linguistic ties and hospitality culture of the destination have significant effect on international tourist flow. Distance between generating countries and destination country, tourism climate index, location of destination, common borders and favorable climatic conditions are geographic factors affecting international tourism. Fortification and demarcation markers, severity of crossing formalities like visa and custom procedures, availability of transportation infrastructure and service between countries or across region affects international mobility of tourists. Psychological and lifestyle factors affecting international tourist flow include desire for recreation, perception of safety of destination, time trend or fashion, personality, motivation, emotional value, pressure of city life at originating country, habit persistence, consumer tests and preference, consumer expectation and frequent international travel experience. Access to the internet, reservation system, online marketing, and ownership of personal computer, tabs and smartphones are technological factors which determine the demand for international travel. Peace and security also play crucial role in determining international tourism. National politics and international relations, safety and security of tourists, political instability, terrorist attacks, crime, armed conflict and war in destination areas affects international tourist flow. In addition, health risk factors which include spread of infectious disease and health standards of destinations affect tourist flow. Therefore, policy makers and practitioners should pay great attention to the aforementioned factors in order to boost international arrival and improve tourism receipt at tourism destinations.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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