

Public Transport is Less Likely to be Successful for Tourism Mobility in Ecotourism City

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INTRODUCTION

Tourisms have continued to become affordable for most developed economies, with the number of international tourists doubling in recent decades. The growth of international tourism has resulted in great effects on transportation geography. Additionally, tourism influences local peoples' various aspects: environmental, economic, cultural, and social [1]. Agile and comfortable mobility is a primary factor that improves tourists' satisfaction. The efficiency of transport systems also facilitates better management of increased tourist inflow in the peak season. Inconveniences arising from the resident population due to congestion and pressure on transport infrastructures become easily mitigated in the peak season to facilitate tourism. Although transport services are vital in the tourism industry's growth, they form the primary sources of emissions. Fostering a sustainable form of tourism transport has increasingly become an issue of concern [2]. The essay explores tourists' perception of using various transport modes that include coaches, cars, and public transport within an ecotourism city.

Ecotourism, as a form of tourism, involves touring pristine, fragile, or undisturbed natural places. The primary purpose of ecotourism is the discovery of natural zones and local plants and animals. The uses of cars for transport provide tourists the flexibility of exploring the local environment. Individual restrictions and physical disabilities are also the main challenges influencing tourists' perception of public transport since they can be critical issues in mountainous cities with topographies that make walking challenging.

METHODOLOGY AND STUDY AREA

According to Bokhari [3], research to examine tourists' perception of traveling with buses, public transport, and cars got conducted in Al-Baha. The place is hilly with characteristics of natural trees and agricultural plateaus. Data collection got made from tourist surveys carried out in the airport, three malls, and twelve residential sites of tourists, including hotels, resorts, and apartments. A total of six hundred and three tourists participated in the study, and sixteen various locations got used during the study. Questionnaires got used to survey, collecting

tourists' perceptions of transport mode considering the social characteristic of the age, levels of education, and marital status [3]. Interviewees rated their motivational levels of traveling by car, coach, or PT on a Likert scale ranging from one to five, one representing least relevant and five representing most relevant.

FINDINGS

The study revealed that older persons above 50 years and those with mobility restrictions opted to use the car to travel over both bus and train. There was a significant correlation established between the visitors' age and preferences of cars for traveling. Additionally, marital status had an outcome on visitor's interest and attraction preferences. The families having teenagers had increased interests in touring the parks and dedicates most of the hours outdoors, while the older persons with no children preferred to spend time indoors in the malls and restaurants. Since cars provided more flexibility than public transport, the families having children opted to travel by car. The tourists who opted to use public transport were young and educated, with 73% of the visitors opting for public transport having attained a bachelor's degree and above [3]. There was a significant correlation established between visitors opting for public transport and educational attainment.

Individuals with higher education status opted for public transport, providing their awareness regarding environmental issues associated with car emissions that influence the public's health, the surroundings, and the natural resources. Public transport travelers were also concerned about the likely negative psychological outcome of driving since drivers have the probability of suffering travel stresses and anxiety associated with traffic delays and traffic congestions. A significant correlation got established between visitors' age and their travel mode preferences as young aged visitors opted to select public transport ($R=0.61$, $P<0.01$) [3]. Young generations opted for public transportation when visiting new cities due to their walking capabilities to the public transport stations and moving between various routes.

Most visitors prefer traveling by cars in low urban density places with dispersed urban structures, based on the study's findings.

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Nevertheless, considering the negative effects of car dependencies, travel coaches serve as an alternative mode of traveling in urban cities of low density since they provide increased flexibility in terms of travel for the tourists than the public transport. Travel coaches for tourists are a nature-friendly mode of travel because of less fuel consumption and causing less environmental pollution compared to cars-the research reveals tourists' willingness to use coaches to evade traffic congestions and stresses associated with driving. In particular, 90.67% of the tourists that visited the city for the first time opted to use cars or buses since they were unfamiliar with the places [3]. Although travel coaches serve as alternative methods of using cars, more than half of the tourists, 58.54%, had an ill attitude towards the tourists' coaches because of their crowdedness and little or no privacy in their use travel.

The widespread town structures seem to have a crucial role in tourists' perception regarding their movement and transport mode. With widespread urban structures, cars get highly preferred as a mode of travel. Development of public transport through the introduction of new routes or travel stations may have a little outcome on the change of travel behavior for the tourists and reduce traffic congestions due to car dependency. Travel coaches can be the right solution considering its advantages such as services, flexibility, and amenity compared to train and buses. There is a need for enhancing the tourist coaches in ecotourism cities with low urban densities. The practices should include overcoming the disadvantages of tourist coaches like poor and costly services and improving the benefits like privacy and flexibility. There is a need to improve service quality by introducing new vehicles and offering tour guides training. Considering the state of roads in the ecotourism city, accessibility to visitors' attractions requires new and improved

roads. The funding scheme's introduction should also get considered to financially support private coaches' operators [3,4]. Generally, cost-effective investment, particularly in infrastructures and travel coaches, would create tourist attractions to the ecotourism cities and maximize the tourism industry's earnings.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, research from Bokhari on tourists' perception of using various transport modes indicates tourists touring ecotourism cities prefer cars to tourism coaches and public transport. In low urban densities, the tourists' option for using cars as a transport mode stems from factors like marital status (specifically for families having dependent children), car flexibility, and movement restrictions for disabled and elderly persons. Drawbacks of public transport regarding crowdedness, fares, and personal driving preferences also shaped their use of cars. Tourism coaches minimize traffic, a factor that contributes to preference as a mode of transport among tourists.

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