

An Analysis of Status of Tourism Infrastructures in Isfahan (With Emphasis Putting on Hotels)

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Extended abstract

1- Introduction

One of the issues in the face of tourism is the lack of residential places and appropriate hotels in all seasons and for all people from various classes with different incomes. The present research aims at investigating the status of Isfahan's hotels and presenting proper solutions in order to enhance their quantitative and qualitative level.

The research method is descriptive-analytical. To analyze data, Chi Square, Gamma correlation coefficient and SWOT analytical method were used.

The most important advantage of Isfahan's hotels is their appropriate accessibility to recreational, historical, commercial and other centers. Presence of historical appeals in this city is considered as a good opportunity for hotel industry.

The most important disadvantages of Isfahan's hotels are lack of service equipment and facilities and lack of trained and skillful individuals in the realm of delivering suitable services to tourists. Also, lack of hotels and hostels for low-income groups and lack of empty rooms in some days of year are regarded as threats to this city's hotel industry.

Examining hypotheses indicate that there is a significant relationship between services delivered by Isfahan's hotels and the possibility of resettling in these hotels. Also, there is a significant relationship between Isfahan's tourism facilities and services and further trips of tourists to this city.

Statement of the Problem

Hotels are considered as one of the most important tourism infrastructures, which guarantee tourists' welfare. These two sectors are mutually related to one another and any failure or challenge in one affects directly the other. Hotel industry has a seventy-year life in Iran. However, weakness in educational, managerial and welfare matters, shortage of proper governmental facilities, lack of harmony between supply and request, few

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numbers of tourists coming to our country, domestic tourists' not preferring expensive hotels, all and all, contribute to unclear future of hotel industry in Iran. In spite of having many natural and historical appeals, Isfahan is not an exception. As all hotels are old, there are only few luxury and modern hotels in this city, and there is not possible for all people to stay in these hotels in all seasons, it is necessary that the problems of hotels be cared about in Isfahan.

Urban tourism resources comprise of three main parts: elementary factors of tourists' attraction, which exactly are the main factors of tourists' attraction, include visiting places such as historical locations, parks, cinemas, rivers, etc; secondary factors of tourists' attraction include settling facilities, shops, etc; the third part includes tourists' guidance and services. The present article makes efforts to investigate the secondary factors of urban tourism with an emphasis on hotels.

The present article aims at measuring the extent of satisfaction and analyzing strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities of hotel industry in Isfahan from the perspective of tourists and experts.

Hypotheses posed in the current study are as follows:

There is a significant relationship between services delivered by Isfahan's hotels and the possibility of resettling in these hotels.

There is a significant relationship between Isfahan's tourism facilities and services and further trips of tourists to this city.

2- Discussion

In tourism industry, urban infrastructures, especially residential facilities, play a key role. One may not depict a better future for this industry

without considering problem and issues of these infrastructures. Although Isfahan has many tourism appeals, it has relatively limited residential centers and hotels, especially luxury hotels, are few in this city. In addition, these few hotels suffer from some problems. Therefore, solving these problems may change the future of tourism industry in this city. However, some people believe that most of the tourists visit this city do not stay in hotels, that they are professional campers or stay in other places than luxury hotels, but the number of cheap hotels is not so high that may deliver services to all tourists in crowded seasons. Findings indicated that there is a direct relationship between investment in tourism facilities and tourists' attraction to Isfahan. Chi Square (158.01), Gamma Correlation (0.775) values and their significance level (0.000) show that there is a significant relationship between Isfahan's tourism facilities and services and further trips of tourists to this city. Therefore, the first hypothesis of this study is confirmed. In other words, the higher the satisfaction from hotels, the higher the possibility of resettling in the hotels.

To investigate the second hypothesis of the study, Chi Square and Gamma Correlation coefficient were employed. Considering their resulted values and significance level (0.00), it may be said that there is a significant relationship between Isfahan's tourism facilities and services and further trips of tourists to this city. Thus, the second hypothesis is also confirmed. In other words, the higher the deliverance of services to tourists, the higher the possibility of their further trips to this city. In Isfahan, as most of the hotels are old and do not have proper welfare facilities, tourists develop less motivation in staying again in these hotels. Also, among others, the issue is

that these hotels are not able to satisfy the residential needs of tourists in the specific seasons as most of these hotels do not have sufficient space for all tourists to stay and some of them are forced to stay in other places. Therefore, it is necessary to construct more new hotels with respect to the needs of all tourists.

Concerning the analyses of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats resulted from SWOT model, findings are as follows:

The most important strength of Isfahan hotels is their access to commercial, recreational, historical centers and Zayandeh Rood River.

The most important external opportunities in developing hotel industry in Isfahan may be the attraction of its historical constructions and natural appeals, Isfahan's central location in Iran and the zealotness of the most of the tourists in tripping to Isfahan.

The most important weakness of Isfahan's hotels, among others, may be the lack of tourism services such as sport facilities, lack of trained personnel in hotels, problems concerning traffic in some crowded days around hotels.

Of most important elements that have threatened hotel tourism in Isfahan in the recent years are related to the lack of hotels for low-income tourists, the lack of empty rooms in some occasions and negative unjust propaganda of some countries against our country's peacefulness.

3- Conclusion

- Recommendation of Strategies Based on the Results of SWOT Model

- Competitive-Offensive Strategies (SO)

In competitive-offensive strategies, emphasis put on internal strengths and external opportunities, some of which are as follows:

Investing more in recreational-historical spaces and beautification of these spaces in order to appeal and attract more tourists.

Constructing appropriate hotels and settlements near to recreational, commercial and touristic centers in the city.

Developing the motivation of further trips to Isfahan in tourists through delivering better services, hospitality in hotels and other recreational, touristic spaces.

Developing appropriate communicative networks in all urban roads in order to have proper access from hotels to recreational and touristic spaces.

Investing and equipping hotels more with telecommunicative networks and reservation services.

Paying attention to proper design of hotels.

Making optimal use of cultural appeals of different races in Isfahan, which may be attractive and interesting for tourists.

Creating certainty in tourists that there sufficient security and safety in hotels they stay in.

Delivering proper and up-to-date health care services proportionate with different cultures.

- Diversity Strategies (ST)

Creating opportunities for the simultaneous cooperation and investment of private and public sectors in hotel industry for sustainable development in this industry (considering our country's economical system, separate actions of these sectors do not contribute to success).

Constructing hotels and restaurants in all spots of the city with respect to the number of tourists each district attracts.

Creating diversity in constructing residential centers for all people from all socio-economical classes

Adopting appropriate policies in order to offer rooms in all seasons to all tourists.

Providing different methods of reservation, personal or impersonal (by the phone or via internet).

Diversifying hotels' services in addition to their dormitory function.

- Review Strategies (WO)

Reviewing the way hotels deliver services and requiring all hotels to provide proper basic services to tourists in terms of international service standards.

Paying attention to and reviewing hotels' software sections and training employees on hospitality principles in hotels.

Reviewing and creating hotels in appropriate spots of the city in order to avoid traffic problems.

Reviewing illegal activities in providing settlements for tourists such as renting private homes in some occasions of the year.

Reviewing advertisements and presenting correct recognition of Iran's cultural, economical, social and environmental features to tourists in order to make more foreign tourists travel to Iran and Isfahan.

- Defensive Strategies (WT)

Correcting and adjusting the laws that make barriers in the way of optimal use of hotel industry in our country.

Correcting legal conditions in order to increase the number of foreign tourists and facilitate visa issuance, custom regulation, etc.

Correcting executive procedure and accelerating the execution of 44th article of Iranian Constitution concerning the privatization of hotels that has not been well implemented so far.

Creating harmony among organizations related to hotel tourism such as Organization for Cultural Heritage and Tourism, municipality and other related organizations in Isfahan City.

Shutting governmental guest houses. This may help develop productive employment in Isfahan's hotel industry.

Giving logical and low-interest facilities and loans to working agents in hotel industry. This may help country in the competition with other countries in constructing luxury and high quality hotels.

Holding national conferences. This may help good settlements in attracting tourists and bringing foreign currencies be recognized.

Key Words: Tourism, Tourist, Tourism Services, Hotel, Isfahan City, SWOT Model

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