



Tourism Management

Elixir Tourism Mgmt. 87 (2015) 35433-35439

Elixir
ISSN: 2229-712X

Factors Affecting Tourism across Pakistan

Fauzia Khurshid^{1,*}, Maryam Gul², Hashim Zaman², Mehick Ahmed², Ahmed Bilal Gilani², Mohammad Abid Naeem² and Varda Dar²

¹NUML, Pakistan.

²NUST, Pakistan.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 15 January 2013;

Received in revised form:

21 September 2015;

Accepted: 26 September 2015;

Keywords

Tourism,
Factors,
Land,
Culture.

ABSTRACT

Present study aims to provide a thorough analysis of the various factors that are likely to affect tourism. The general perception is that terrorism is directly linked to the tourism industry and a rise in terrorism the security threat in Pakistan has resulted in the decline of the tourism industry. Therefore, it is necessary for the government to deal with the problem. The study analyzes the various factors effecting tourism and takes terrorism into focus. The concept is new and it surfaced initially during the 1970s. Through various research tools and techniques, we shall try to find the reasons behind the current state of affairs regarding the travel and tourism industry in Pakistan. The research aims to critically analyze the factors affecting the situation and to suggest a concrete solution to the problem through thorough analysis. The sample of the research consists of over 70 respondents that include the respondents from Pakistan as well as those from foreign countries. The research aims to provide a domestic as well as an international perspective on the state of tourism in Pakistan.

© 2015 Elixir All rights reserved.

Introduction

“There are no foreign lands. It is the traveler only who is foreign.” – Robert Louis Stevenson

Seeing the world, experiencing different cultures, meeting eccentric people, devouring into alien yet enchanting cuisines and above all being able to explore the wonders of world while discovering one's individuality is what travelling is all about. The idea of being able to travel is euphoric as one is able to gain so much from it. Tourism enables people to satiate their requirement of such exhilarating experience, which is why it holds such vital importance. In our report, we have highlighted and scrutinized all the factors which make tourism reign supreme. However tourism nowadays gets influenced by countless elements. To establish this opinion, we enquired a small group of people about their take on how tourism has been altered over time.

Tourism is indeed a thriving industry all over the world. Various countries which are fortunate enough to be blessed with scenic beauty and other tourist attractions try to emphasis on improving this industry, as a result tourism accounts to a large portion of their economy's GDP. As much as 9% of the entire world's GDP is based on the tourism industry alone. This definitely reflects upon how important the phenomenon of tourism is. This scenario, however, is quite different in the developing countries. Asia happens to be a recent upcoming tourist attraction. Consequently, countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan have definitely been lagging behind as compared to other countries like Malaysia or China. All the various elements that have led to this particular judgment will be considered in detail in this report.

Tourism abroad

Tourism is considered as one of the most glorified sectors abroad. Most people place a lot of importance in being able to travel freely while observing the novelty of other places. The

governments of such countries strive to facilitate their residents in all manners. Amenities such as restrooms, inns, cafes, cinemas, galleries and museums make the concept of travelling even more worthwhile. Most countries are actually reverent towards their cultural or historical sites. As they struggle to maintain these places, all the important localities become even more special. What really draws in all the tourists is how the government is able to preserve centuries old buildings. Major factor that motivates people to travel with ease abroad, are the marvelous transport facilities. Transport is not only quick and efficient but also very comfortable, which makes the travelling experience even more rewarding. The different sources of travelling cater for all sorts of passengers, thus aiding all the travelers and luring in all potential travelers.

Tourism in Pakistan

In our report, we specifically focused on Pakistan to attain a more narrowed yet specific research analysis. As we all are already aware, Pakistan used to be swarming with tourists. The weather and the vibrant culture would attract people from all over the world as the country and her residents would enthral people with the panoramic views. Tourism in Pakistan has been in a wobbly state ever since the country started facing political and other economic glitches. If the domestic state of tourism was to be compared with the international circumstances then it will indeed reflect a very negative side of Pakistan. Ever since the country's zealous participation in the war on terror, heavy losses have been suffered by the people and the state itself. The negligence towards the tourism industry was indeed inevitable after all that has taken place since the last 10 years. The current condition of Pakistani tourist sites is truly despicable as the blatant lack of meticulousness has left all important spots in an unfortunate debacle. Terrorism and inefficient services are the major cause for the decline in Pakistan's tourism. Another major factor, which hinders the complete development of our tourism

Tele:

E-mail addresses: dr_f_khurshid@yahoo.com

© 2015 Elixir All rights reserved

industry, is the fact that there is no proper way of channeling or promoting all the beautiful tourist spots. Lack of awareness is indeed a great barrier, which is why most people fail to travel even domestically. Furthermore the improper transportation methods are also increasing this lack of interest by the Pakistanis themselves. Most people fail to see the enjoyment in travelling nowadays, which must be rekindled in order to make this country regain its lost status of a tourist's paradise.

The basic tool used through-out this research document was that of primary research. Questionnaires and informal interviews were conducted to ascertain the status quo of the people about how tourism has been impacted over the years. Terrorism was the paramount element of these questionnaires as most Pakistanis could relate to that. If all the questions were briefly analyzed, they would perhaps provide the general perspective regarding the deteriorating terrorist scenario as most of these questions were based on that. To properly understand the general perception, questions emphasizing upon the monetary aspect of a vacation were also asked. This way a complete evaluation was attained. To understand the demographic trend, gender and age specific questions were also asked. The most important and deciding question was whether people would prefer traveling within the country or going abroad. This way, the group hoped to attain an understanding of how various people viewed the tourism industry in Pakistan. Hence this report is virtually going to help all the readers establish what lacks in the Pakistani tourist industry and which methods can be adapted to return it to its former glory. In order to further investigate on this topic, the following report must be pondered upon so that a complete judgment can be developed by the end of this research guide.

According to the 18th Amendment to the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan the ministry of Tourism was abolished and Tourism became a provincial subject. This meant that now all the issues relating to Tourism would be handled by each of the five provinces, each of them would now come up with their own strategies to promote tourism. This has meant a lack of uniformity in the tourist procedures.

The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation handles the infrastructure facilities provided by the tourist destinations; the principal objective of the corporation is to promote tourism within the country. With 18 offices all across the country, there is hardly substantial presence for a country as big and diverse as Pakistan. There are no arranged tours by the PTDC and any excursions to the Northern Areas are done with the help of private companies. Similarly, there aren't any planned tours for the ancient ruins of Harrapa and Mohenjo Daro nor are the architectural wonders of the Mughal Times preserved to their deserving standards.

Pakistan is a country rich in Tourist destinations, from the mountainous north to the plains of the Potwar Plateau to the Deserts of Thar and Cholistan and the azures of the large Makran coast or the Mangroves in the Arabian Sea. It's not just the natural topography of the country which make it such an amazing tourist spot but also the cultural heritage of the country. The Indus valley Civilization, Buddhist remains at Taxilla or the Sikh Temples in Hasanabdal. This country has something to offer to every potential tourist, pilgrim, historian, nature lover, cultural analyst.

What Pakistan unfortunately lacks is the Infrastructure required to access these areas. The north for example, is largely inaccessible by the main roads and very dangerous alternate

pathways have to be adopted by the tourists often resulting in mishaps. Moreover there is no 'network' of hotels by the PTDC as should be done to provide a wide ranging and unified structure. Even the online resources regarding tourism in Pakistan are very incomprehensive. The official site of the government, the PTDC site hasn't been updated in a while. The only sources of credible information are sites like tripadvisor.com and other privately maintained sites. Considering that we live in an era of great technology and the internet serves as a major source of our information, it does impact Pakistan's image with foreigners who are potential tourists to a large extent. Moreover, there is no proper promotion of the available resorts and facilities in any area. Even local tourists have a vague idea of what Pakistan as their county has to offer them. There is no advertising and virtually no budget to market the given infrastructure.

Pakistan, the land of the pure, has always been famous for breathtaking scenic beauty. From the snow peaked mountains in the north, to the majestic plains in the south, every single place of this country is special in its own specific manner. Not too long ago, tourists from all over the world would travel miles just to experience the diversity that Pakistan graciously offered. The soothing weather, delectable varieties of cuisines, rich culture, traditional values and above all, the hospitable environment was one of the paramount reasons which attracted these tourists. Regrettably, this scenario changed with the sudden surge in terrorist activities all over the country.

This persistent atmosphere of violence took a huge toll on everyone. The macabre air of negativity spread like wildfire, not only on an international level but also domestically. To curb all the terrorist elements present in the country, the government had to take certain measures right away. Unfortunately enough, these measures have failed to bring the solitude back to this country. Considering the current security situation, Pakistanis feel positively petrified to travel even within their own country. This reflects a perpetual state of imbalance which is quite disturbing. However, the diminishing trend in tourism can be blamed on several other factors too. Terrorism has greatly impacted it, but all these factors combined have fundamentally destroyed the industry of tourism in Pakistan.

Over the last few years, there have been some destructive natural disasters which have maimed the country. The devastating earthquake in 2005 virtually crumbled more than half of the once magnificent north. As these far off places were already difficult to approach, the earthquake made it further impossible to travel to these areas. The tough terrain became even more inaccessible as most of this region lost contact with the rest of the country. As a result, areas such as Kashmir, Muzaffarabad, Rawlakot, Balakot and Bagh were most affected by this calamity. Even though the rehabilitation of this region is still in progress, the once beautiful north, admired for its exalted landscape has indeed suffered immensely. Most of the already meager hotels and other roadside inns have been raised to the ground and the questionable infrastructure annihilated, which has naturally accounted to greater problems for all the residents and travelers.

Tourism in Pakistan literally hit rock bottom in 2010 as 1/5th of the entire country was underwater due to the devastating floods. The major damage was inflicted in the province of Sindh and Southern Punjab as the excess rainfall swamped the rivers and submerged this region completely. These floods wreaked havoc in the lives of residents of this region as the infrastructure

is seriously impaired. The crops grown in these areas used to account for major Pakistani exports and were the sole source of income for the civilians residing there. The Indus Valley civilization was the major attraction in Sindh, areas such as Mohenjo-Daro and Thatta tombs are now in a despicable state. These locations were so mesmerizing that people from all over the country and abroad would arrive there to bask in the ancient ambience. Sadly enough, the restoration of these sites seems like an unattainable goal considering the profuse harm perpetrated on them.

Even though Pakistan is blessed with spectacular topographies and a flamboyant mixture of culture, it has been quite unfortunate over the past few years. The constant militant attacks continue to plague the country, which not only infiltrates all the minds with a deep rooted sense of panic but also sullies the image of the country globally. Tourism happens to be a flourishing industry especially in the South Asian region but Pakistan unfortunately is unable to participate fully due to this political instability. One cannot hope for the tourism industry to thrive if even the residents of that country are afraid to leave their houses.

For domestic travelers, factors such as the basic amenities hold a lot of importance. Most people fail to roam around because they believe the inconvenience of doing so is not worth it. The unavailability of proper restrooms, inns for stop over and a safe infrastructure are some of the vital features that must be present in a country to lure in more itinerants. The Pakistani government and even the locals clearly fail to look after the major historic sites and the famous tourist destinations. Therefore they direly require maintenance. This lack of basic sustenance again acts as a repellant and people especially from Punjab, avoid visiting the northern areas on these principles.

What comes to mind when you think of Pakistan? The age old architecture of Lahore that speaks of centuries of Mughal Rule and the aroma of rich cuisine that beckons you into the busy food street that is equally famous among the locals and the tourists. Karachi - the city of lights - welcomes people from all cultural and social backgrounds into its arms. We think of Peshawar and instantly of the Qissa Khwani Bazaar, also called the Piccadilly of Central Asia. Go up to Gigit Baltistan and you would find the highest Polo ground in the world. Quetta reminds us of the cold dry winters and the majestic mountains that stand in all their glory.

A couple of years back, tourists from around the globe used to travel through Pakistan and the various tourist destinations, including Lahore, Karachi and Peshawar, apart from the northern areas were considered to be essential stops for the tourists on their route. The posters from the past that were made specifically for attracting the tourists with all that Pakistan had to offer back then portrayed a very progressive image of Pakistan. However, with the passage of time things have changed drastically. Now, when we look up Pakistan on the internet, we get images of mutilated bodies and bearded mullahs. The reports that make it to the social media and websites are of the suicide bombings and the political instability. Nothing is said of the glorious tourist destinations that the country has or the culturally rich experience that Pakistan has to offer.

Pakistan is a rapidly growing economic power with an average growth rate of 7 percent and an immense potential for progress in the future. Pakistan, which was once termed as the "next big thing" by a number of foreign magazines due to its potential for being a thriving tourist destinations for people from

all over the world is now shunned and isolated from the rest of the world due to the growing threat of terrorism that has plagued the country over the past few years. In the series of articles, Also Pakistan, Nadeem F. Paracha, a well-recognized cultural critic and columnist from Dawn, has analyzed and depicted the transition of Pakistan from a truly progressive to a military ruled state plagued by terrorism and ruled by a close minded ideology.

Pakistan has had its fair share of problems but the manner in which it has been depicted in the media is disturbing indeed. The media has been portraying Pakistan as a failed state that might collapse any second. The suicide bombings and the target killings are a sad reality but the media has found a way to cash on the fears of the common people by telecasting the images and videos of mutilated bodies and bearded mullahs flogging poor women in public. The ratings of the television channels might go through the roof once such reports are aired but the everlasting damage that is inflicted on the reputation of Pakistan as a result of the airing of these reports cannot be undone. Print media is equally responsible for unethical reporting and any restriction on the media is seen as a restriction on the freedom of speech and it brings out the "revolutionaries" on the streets. Instead of calming the people and teaching them to remain peaceful in the face of a crisis, the media, being more concerned with the ratings, exploits the situation and inadvertently damages the reputation of the country. The western media relies mostly on the second hand information from the local media reports.

Tourism in Pakistan is turning into a dying business and the manner in which it has been portrayed by the media is not helping in picking the pace for the development of the travel and tourism industry in Pakistan. According to the code of ethics for the media, spreading terror among the people by airing unconfirmed news reports is an offense but even the most major media groups do not take these factors into consideration. The image of Pakistan that is portrayed to the international viewers is that of a highly intolerant culture that is oppressive and fanatical.

The local media needs to break the stereotypical image that has been formed in the minds of the people regarding the society and culture of Pakistan. Tourism can indeed flourish once again if the media is trained to portray a positive image of Pakistan. Of course, everything is not in the hands of the media and some major efforts on the part of the government are also required but a lot can be changed and improved if only the media decides to take a different perspective on the entire situation. If only media could serve as a means of educating the people and promoting all that is good, there is a definite chance that the things would certainly improve. The type of image that the media has portrayed has not only discouraged the local community from visiting the northern areas of Pakistan that hold so much fascination for the people due to their scenic beauty but the negative portrayal has

After the military operations in Swat and the attacks on the tourist destinations that resulted in the burning down of a number of buildings, the trend of tourism has seen a major decrease. Both the foreign as well as local tourists are reluctant to visit the tourist destinations. The tourist resorts that were once crowded with people who came to spend some quality time with their friends and family have now fallen into ruins. The places that welcomed the tourist with open arms now wait for the time when the tourists would again tread on the same paths and their laughter will echo through the silent surroundings.

Effective advertising can turn tables when it comes to promoting tourism and picking up the pace of the development

of the travel and tourism industry in Pakistan. There are a number of commercials that we see every day that are aired on the television and those that appear on the print media. They boast of the rich culture of the countries and speak of the scenic beauty that the places have to offer for the tourist coming in to visit these areas. The advertisements exude a sense of tranquility and tempt the tourists to experience the rich culture, cuisine and traditions of the tourist destination.

Although terrorism is a major problem in Pakistan but the fact that countries like India, Nepal and a number of other countries have a thriving tourism industry that attracts a number of tourists from across the globe every year is a proof of how effective advertising and promotion of the culture and tourist destinations can bring swarms of tourists to an area. India has a security threat and being in such close proximity with Afghanistan where a war is raging adds to the threat. Moreover, there is a lot of militancy in India and a number of extremist organizations that are functioning in a number of places. In spite of all these factors, the travel and tourism industry in India is thriving and that is the result of effective advertising.

If we take a look at the various posters, commercials and other promotional material that the other countries use to promote their tourist destinations and then contrast it with the promotional campaigns of Pakistan, we can see the stark differences. To begin with, the promotional material for tourism in Pakistan is almost non-existent and there have been no major advertising campaigns to speak of. In the past, there were a number of advertising campaigns and promotional material that was circulated among the people and it managed to attract a number of tourists to Pakistan. The promotional material was designed to portray Pakistan as a progressive nation and it managed to actually attract people. Pakistan used to be a destination or a stop for the travelers touring around the region. Lack of effective advertising and promotion has led to the downfall of travel and tourism industry in Pakistan. Advertisements psychologically affect the individuals and the people are highly influenced by promotional material that is effective and that communicates the information in the best possible manner. A well-made advertisement that hits the target can do wonders. Pakistan is culturally rich and if the various components of the culture are effectively combined to convey a positive message, it is certain that the people would highly appreciate the effort and it would attract the foreign tourist as well as the local ones.

Pakistan remains a land of high adventure, nature and a rich culture, with the mighty stretches of the Karakorum in the North to the enormous alluvial deltas of the Indus River in the South, Trekking, mountaineering, white water rafting, wild boar hunting, mountain and desert jeep safaris, camel and yak safaris, trout fishing and bird watching are some of the activities which attract the adventure and nature lovers to Pakistan. In addition, historical buildings such as the Lahore Fort and the Badshahi Mosque attract thousands of tourists every year.

In Pakistan, the poor infrastructure, lack of coordination among different government bodies, less focus laid on improving the image of the country by national campaigns are just some of the reasons for the decline of the sector in the present years. Lack of security and terrorism has also caused a severe blow to Pakistan's tourism industry and can be listed as the major reason for its poor performance. Due to the recent bomb blasts in major cities, including Lahore, a declining trend

in tourists' inflow was witnessed, while the number of tourists going abroad increased.

Pakistan is not considered a safe country by numerous other countries. In a recent list by Forbes Pakistan ranked as the fifth most dangerous country in the world. The bombing of the Marriott hotel, the attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team, the audacious raid on the General Headquarters and the latest news was about a girl flogged by a Taliban member in the country's northwestern region of Swat, where the religious Sharia law was introduced are the reasons why Pakistan ranked 5th. It is because of these reasons that Pakistan has not good reputation in the eyes of foreigners. Media can play an important role for the country. The Swat area, for example was completely destroyed by military operations but now the restoration processes have begun and media can step in and improve the image. This is just an example of one area; media can help a lot in restoring the image of whole of Pakistan.


Methodology

Research Design

A survey was carried out to determine people's travel preferences and what they think of tourism in Pakistan. The survey is distributed into 4 classifications

- Views of people related to tourism in Pakistan
- Ideal travelling experience for people
- How to improve tourism in Pakistan
- Bio data

Tourism In Pakistan



* Required

In your opinion, what prevents people from traveling in Pakistan? *

Security Threat

People are not familiar with the tourist destinations in Pakistan

Tourist Destinations are inaccessible (Transportation problems)

Tourist Destinations are not properly developed to accommodate people

Would you prefer a vacation in Pakistan or abroad? *

In Pakistan

Abroad

Do you think terrorism keeps the tourists from visiting Pakistan? *

Yes

No

Would improving the security situation of the country in general promote tourism in Pakistan? *

Yes

What other measures besides the improvement of the security situation must be taken to promote tourism in Pakistan? *

Development of Tourist Resorts

Advertising and Promoting the tourist destinations

Efforts on the part of travel and Tourism Ministry of Pakistan

Incentives for Tourists

Would you prefer to travel with your family or your friends? *

Family

Friends

What fascinates you most when you travel? *

Scenery

People and their traditional values

Historical importance

Food

What is your idea of an ideal vacation in Pakistan? *

Demographically

Mountainous Regions

Beach

Plains (Places offering historical and cultural exposure)

Above is a screen shot of the on line questionnaire.

Views of people related to tourism in Pakistan

The first part of the questionnaire deals with tourism in Pakistan. The sample of people chosen is asked what they think about the idea of tourism in Pakistan. The main goal of this section is to determine the main problem to why there is a shortage in the number of international tourists visiting Pakistan. This would help identify the root cause of the problem that Pakistan tourism industry has been suffering.

How to improve tourism in Pakistan

This section will consider the ways in which people believe that tourism can be brought back to Pakistan and it can be one of the major industrial sectors in the country. Tourism can boost a country's GDP very effectively and many low developed economies are surviving on their tourism industry to provide for jobs and the majority of exports. Hence, it is important that the problems must be identified and then cured efficiently.

Ideal travelling experience for people

The third part of the survey is about how people would prefer to travel. There are several ways in which a person can travel and people often have unique preferences. This part of the survey would help to evaluate what majority of the people appreciate.

Demographic Information

The last part of the survey is about demography of the respondents. This contain basic information about the age and gender of the person. This data is necessary to find out whether age or gender offer different perspectives on traveling. For example, the younger proportion of the sample may be more enthusiastic about traveling and may be willing to take more risks as compared to middle aged or old aged people who are either too busy with their jobs or might have medical issues due to their old age. For this survey we have divided the ages between 15-40 years into four different age groups. The division of age groups helps to determine and limit people of a certain age who are more likely to travel than others. Alongside the survey this research also consists of statistical data found in articles and journals from previous years. Thus, we can compare our current results to previous findings and identify much more accurately the real problems that Pakistan tourism is facing.

Population

The population of people chosen for this survey was the youth and the middle aged in Pakistan. This includes people between the ages of 15-40.

Sample

The sample size for this research is 71 people between the ages of 15-40 years. However no data has been collected for people over 30 years. These people are from all over Pakistan.

Research Tool

The main research tool for this research paper is the questionnaire that had to be filled by a selected sample of people. This questionnaire consisted of four sections that talked about the current travel and tourism situation in Pakistan, perspectives of people on their idealistic holiday and what can be done to enhance the number of foreigners entering into Pakistan. There are a total of ten questions that are divided between these four sections.

The survey questionnaire consists of two Yes/No questions that lead to a direct and straightforward answer. Furthermore, there are three other questions with the choice of answering between only two options. As there is no explanation required the answers are fairly simple and so they are easier to analyze.

The remaining five are multiple choice questions. The answers to such questions are not totally bounded nor can they be answered freely. Moreover, there were no open ended questions in the survey. Answers to such questions are usually lengthy and may vary a lot so they become more difficult to analyze hence they were avoided in the questionnaire.

Limitations

The research was not broad but it was comprehensive. However, we could only approach people who used the internet frequently and the non-internet users were excluded from the research. From the literature review, the results for the larger population were deduced.

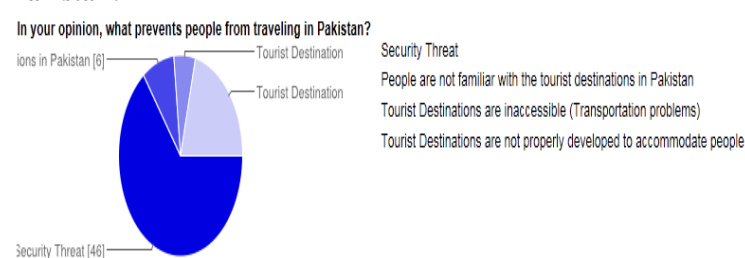
Procedure

The survey had certain objectives that it set out to achieve. It was supposed to determine people's thoughts on how tourism in Pakistan can be made better. It was also set out to find the core difficulties that this sector was facing in Pakistan. Other goals included determining the way people preferred to travel. It was done by circulating the on line questionnaire and then collecting the responses. The responses varied and they were classified accordingly into an excel sheet. The percentages of the responses were calculated through computer based software which made sure that the results that came out were accurate. The results were then portrayed in the form of pie charts in order to make it easier for the viewers to see how the responses of the respondents varied.

Analysis of Research Questions

As a part of the research methodology, we put forward some questions for the general public to answer. These questions were analyzed to deduce results.

In your opinion, what prevents people from traveling in Pakistan?



This was a direct question which asked for clear cut reasons of why people do not travel in Pakistan. 65 percent of the people who were asked said that security issues and threats is the main reason why they do not prefer to travel. The problem of underdeveloped tourist destinations came second as 21 percent people chose this option. The other two options were chosen by a very few number of people showing clearly that the other options are the main reasons of people not travelling in Pakistan.

Would you prefer a vacation in Pakistan or abroad?

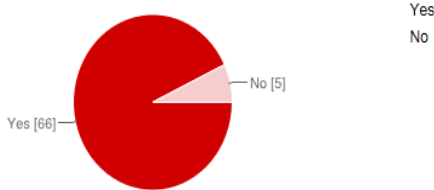


This was a simple question which depended on the personal choice and the mindset of the people who were questioned. 72

percent of the people selected the “Abroad” option and 28 percent said that they would prefer their vacations in Pakistan. Linking it to the previous question, we can get why people want to go abroad for their vacations and not stay here. Vacations are spent where the peace of mind is guaranteed and due to the security conditions of Pakistan people decide to go abroad where they can be at least sure that they will not be affected by any sort of terrorism.

Do you think terrorism keeps the tourists from visiting Pakistan?

Do you think terrorism keeps the tourists from visiting Pakistan?

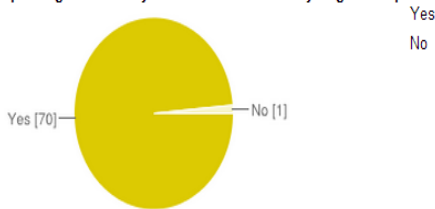


This question focused on just one reason of declining tourists in Pakistan, terrorism.

93 percent people said yes that due to the terrorist attacks and terrorism most of the international tourists decide against Pakistan. Now these questions were asked by Pakistani nationals and if they have this perception, the people living abroad will not have any different opinion. The image of Pakistan in the eyes of foreigners is poor and there is no denying it. But it can be improved and media can play a vital role in doing that.

Would improving the security situation of the country in general promote tourism in Pakistan?

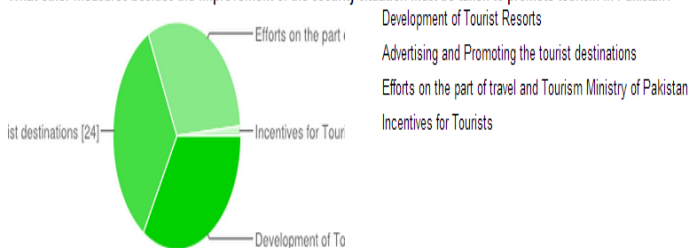
Would improving the security situation of the country in general promote tourism in Pakistan?



The question demanded a solution for the effect of terrorism on tourism. 99 percent people chose yes and therefore according to the majority the people, improving the security situation in the country would be the revival of the tourism industry in Pakistan. There are other reasons of the decline in tourism and according to one person those should be taken care of as well. Overall in order to bring effectiveness and efficiency in the tourism industry all the factors must be taken care of.

What other measures besides the improvement of the security situation must be taken to promote tourism in Pakistan?

What other measures besides the improvement of the security situation must be taken to promote tourism in Pakistan?

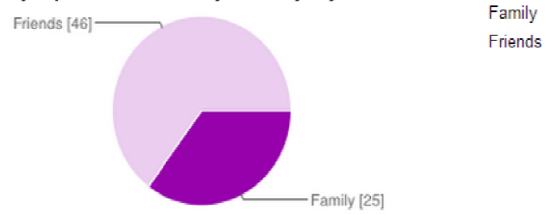


This question was a bit general and asked for other reasons to improve the tourism industry other than terrorism. The options ‘Development of tourist resorts’ and ‘advertising the tourist destinations’ were selected by 34 percent of the people.

After that 31 percent of the people said that the efforts should be put in by the Tourism Ministry of Pakistan in order to promote the industry.

Would you prefer to travel with your family or your friends?

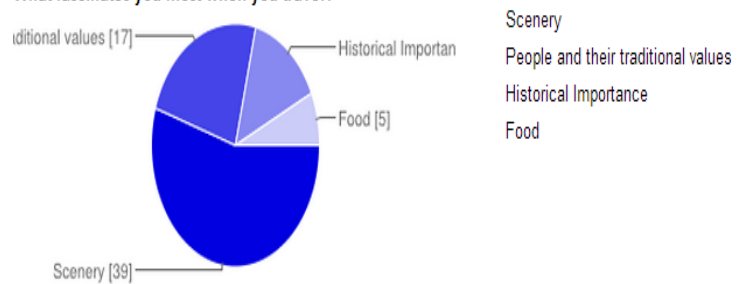
Would you prefer to travel with your family or your friends?



This question asked about the preference of the people who like to travel. 65 percent of the people chose to travel with their friends and the remaining said that they prefer traveling with their family. This is the question which asks that how many people would like to travel with their friends/family and not who travel with their friends and family. Therefore those people who want to travel with their friends will have parents who would make sure the safety of their children and would not allow them to travel in to a place where there are security risks.

What fascinates you most when you travel?

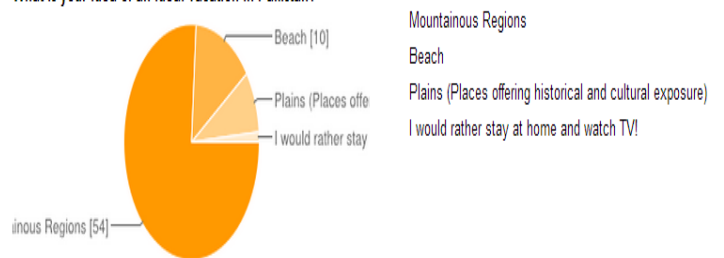
What fascinates you most when you travel?



This question asked the people what is the most important thing they look for when they travel. Majority of the people said that they go to tourist resorts for the scenic beauty. This is very important as Pakistan has a lot to offer in this department. From snow covered mountains to lush green plains, Pakistan is rich in scenic beauty. Seeing this, the tourism industry can promote those areas and provide more for the tourists so that they can visit and enjoy the most.

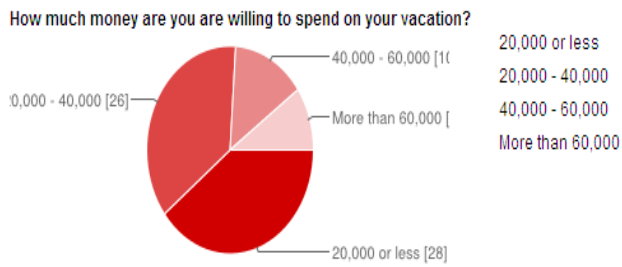
What is your idea of an ideal vacation in Pakistan?

What is your idea of an ideal vacation in Pakistan?



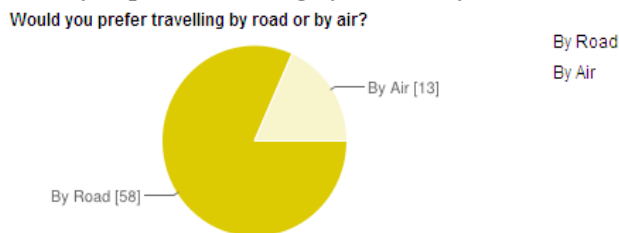
This question again asks about the interests of the people and according to the majority of the people (76 percent) mountainous areas are more preferred. The rest of the people chose between beach and plains. And there was one sad person who actually said that he would rather stay at home and watch TV. For the people who enjoy traveling, Pakistan has a lot of mountainous regions for them to visit.

How much money are you willing to spend on your vacation?



This question just asked the spending power of the people and the most favored range was between 0 to 40,000 rupees. Under that amount there are a lot of places that can be visited in Pakistan. However there are places which are not worth the money spent on hotels and tourist resorts. The tourism industry should look into this issue and make better facilities available for the domestic and international tourists in order to promote tourism in Pakistan.

Would you prefer traveling by road or by air?



People were asked what mode of transportation they preferred and the popular option was by road. When I answered this question I also selected by road and the reason why I chose this was because I wanted to view the landscape and basically enjoy every moment of the trip. There is a reason why people prefer air travel less because the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has been ranked 5th most dangerous flight in the world due to its 5 fatal accidents. PIA needs to improve its standards which can further improve the tourist industry.

Discussion

From the analysis of the research questions, it is obvious that the main reason why people tend to refrain from visiting the tourist destinations in Pakistan is the security threat. If the security situation improves, it is highly likely that a lot more people would be willing to come to Pakistan for visiting the various tourist destinations. Most people would much rather go abroad for vacation rather than stay in Pakistan. Terrorism also keeps the foreign tourists from coming to Pakistan so there is no option other than improving the security situation of the country in order to improve the current state of affairs.

The respondents though that advertising and developing the tourist destinations was equally important in order to attract the tourists. However, these factors were secondary to the security situation. Most people preferred traveling with friends over traveling with family. As for the main attractions, the scenery seemed to be the prime object of fascination for most of the respondents. Majority of the respondents preferred to head to

mountainous regions for vacations and they wanted to spend the least possible amount of money. Moreover, the respondents were in favor of travelling by road and preferred it over traveling by air.

Conclusion

From the analysis of the research, we reach the conclusion that improving the security situation of the country would result in the rise of the trend of tourism. People are reluctant to visit Pakistan due to the adverse security situation of the country. It is one of the prime reasons and all other reasons are secondary. People traveling with families and with their children would always prefer to go to a place that is safe rather than the one that is unstable and where there is a constant threat to their lives. The governmental agencies must play their part in improving the security situation and in coping up with the violence that has erupted in various regions of Pakistan that were previously known for their natural beauty.

Recommendations

As security is identified as the prime problem and the situation is the main problem that has resulted in the current state of affairs, therefore, improving the security situation is very important. The governmental agencies must act effectively in order to ensure that no unforeseen event takes place to disrupt the peace.

Development of the infrastructure is also very important as a number of people think that after the security threat, the lack of development is another factor that effects the promotion of tourism.

Apart from development, it is also important to promote and advertise the tourist destinations in the right manner. Promotional campaigns must aim to promote the tourist destinations to both local and foreign tourists. They must be effective enough to attract people and increase the revenues that are earned from tourism.

The role of media is highly important and the media must be monitored. The reports that are aired must be credible and unnecessary hype regarding the security situation must not be created.

Security and development along with the right promotion and advertising can possibly do wonders for the state of tourism in Pakistan.

References

1. Nadeem F. Paracha, Also Pakistan, Dawn.com Blog [Accessed on December 31ST, 2012] <http://dawn.com/2012/02/09/also-pakistan/>
2. Nadeem F. Paracha, Also Pakistan II, Dawn.com Blog [Accessed on December 31ST, 2012] <http://dawn.com/2012/05/24/also-pakistan-ii/>
3. Nadeem F. Paracha, Also Pakistan III, Dawn.com Blog [Accessed on December 31ST, 2012] <http://dawn.com/2012/07/26/also-pakistan-iii/>
4. Nadeem F. Paracha, Also Pakistan IV, Dawn.com Blog [Accessed on December 31ST, 2012] <http://dawn.com/2012/08/09/also-pakistan-iv/>