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Analysis and Prioritization of Push Factors of Iranian Outbound Tourists

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Abstract: General surveys show that some strong push factors make Iranian people depart to some other tourism destinations every year. In this research, on the basis of secondary information presented in literature review and also Delphi panel push factors are recognized and selected. In the next step of the research, data collected during field research and via questionnaires are derived and then all data are analyzed by SPSS Software and application of descriptive methods. Statistical population of the research includes 1,000,000 tourists, flying during one year from TehranImam Khomeini InternationalAirportto tourism destinationsand sample size is equal to 864.Because among all 1000 distributed questionnaire, 950 questionnaires were answered and returned back and because of some incomplete questionnaires, just 900 questionnaires were analyzed. According to the acquired results, Iranian people do not travel for gaining self awareness, but escape from daily life is of considerable importance for all age groups and demographical groups. Leisure and shopping is another main motivation of Iranians to travel abroad. The factor of performing activities which are considered as illegal in the country of origin is also important for all age groups except for the elderly. According to all of the surveys, social limits, lack of leisure centers and repetitious and routine daily life causes the departure of millions of Iranians to tourism destinationsevery year.

Key Words: Iranian Outbound Tourists, Iran Tourism, Push Factors, Prioritization, Delphi Method.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays tourism or the act of traveling with the aim of recreation is one of the big industries and economic sectors in the world and one of the employment sectors in most of the countries. In addition most of the governments consider tourism as a guideline for development of the country, because of the multiplier effect of tourism income, in which foreign exchange provided by tourists will commence expending for local products and services. Tourism industry as one of the important and global pillars of the economy becomes more important day by day. So, most of the governments consider it as a suitable way to alleviate today's economic crisis.

Iran is a vast country and has a lot of cultural, natural and historical resources which has resulted in a high potential to attract tourists, for example there are 131 protected areas, including19 national parks, 91 natural reserve, 21 natural parks, 12 world heritage sites and lots of attractions with natural or historical importance (UNESCO, 2011). About 1000 spa exist in Iran (IHT, 2007). Geographical position of Iran, the history of medical sciences and low-cost and high quality health services, has led to the importance of medical tourism (Kazemi, Z., 2008). In addition it includes 12000 hospital beds and 4551 laboratories, 3042 rehabilitation center, 2293 radiology centers and 7601 pharmacies are providing health services in Iran (Sogand, T., *et al*., 2010).

However not with standing all these potentials, according to Euromonitor report (Euromonitor International, 2009) there were 5,588.800 people traveled to other countries,among which 4,633.000 people traveled for leisure and totally have spent 31,207.8 IRR billion and it is predicted that the number of outbound tourists from Iran will reach 6,167.000 in 2013 and outgoing tourism expenditure will reach 26,682.000 IRR billion. So understanding the reason of their travel to other country is of considerable importance.

In tourism research motivation has been a common area of study (Crompton, J., 1979; Awaritefe, O., 2004; Park, D.B. and Yoon, Y.S., 2009). One of the most narrowed frameworks to study tourist motivation is the "Push" and "Pull" model which postulates that tourists' choice of a destination is influenced by the above forces: push factors are those which push individuals from home while pull factors are those factors which pull the individual to a destination.As (Lam and Hsu, 2005) suggest, people travel because they are pushed by internal motives and also because they are pulled by external forces of a destination. The "push" motivations have been used to explain the desire for travel, as they are the starting point of understanding tourists' behavior (Kim, K., 2008; Lam, T. and Hsu, C.H.C., 2005; Dann, G., 1981).

The results have shown that push and pull factors influence tourists' attitude in choosing and travelling to a destination. Subjective norms as well as attitude also play an important role in people's intention to travel to a particular destination. (Joynathsing, C., 2010).

USAID from the American Peoplein analyzing out going tourism market research lists the most important factors for Iranians choosing their trips are as cost, type of service, distance, amenities and their interests of the people travelling abroad as seeing something new, shopping, having fun and good entertainment during the trip,outdoor atmosphere andgood food.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study is of applied type in terms of objective in which mixed method (survey-descriptive and analytic methods) is used. In the first phase by studying literature review and Delphi panel, push factors of Iranian tourists were recognized and selected; then research data collected during field research and via questionnaires are derived and then all data are analyzed by SPSS Software and descriptive methods. In descriptive study of the data, bearing in the mind that the questionnaires are prepared in Likert scale method, statistical indicators related to each variant are calculated. In the field research step, questionnaires are used for collecting data which are analyzed in two descriptive and inferential levels.

Statistical Population and Sample Size:

Statistical population of the research includes 1,000,000 tourists, flying during one year from Tehran International Imam Khomeini Airport to tourism destinations. In this research, random classified sampling method was used to select the sample. Because of the large size of the total statistical population and lack of access to it, the researcher has performed the sampling of the statistical population. Since sampling through stratified sampling method is appropriate, the numbers of samples in each stratum are calculated separately. The following formula is used to determine the sample size:

$$n = \frac{Nz^2S^2}{Nd^2 + z^2S^2}$$

Here n indicates the sample size, s refers to Standard Deviation, N refers to the number of statistical population, d is equal to 0.04 and z is equal to 0.95. By initial sampling equal to 30 among 1000000 managers and tourists, Standard Deviation of the sample was calculated as 0.60. Then by inputting it in the formula, the sample size was calculated 864 with degree of confidence equal to %95.

$$n = \frac{(1000000)\times(1/96)^2\times(0/60)^2}{1000000\times(0/04)^2 + (1/96)^2(0/60)^2} = 864$$

Finally among 1000 total questionnaires 950 questionnaires were returned and because of 50 incomplete questionnaires, just 900 questionnaires were analyzed.

Validity& Reliability of Measuring Tools:

Validity:

Provided initial questionnaire was given to university professors and experts in charge, with the aim of presenting their views on validity of questionnaire and whether questions posed at the questionnaire are appropriate or not. According to their ideas, questionnaires have high validity.

Reliability:

Cronbach's Alpha (Bland, J.M. and Altman, D.G., 1997) was used to test the reliability of the questionnaire. The more the coefficient exceeds 0.70 the more reliability of the research is assured.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.849	900

Regarding the coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha for the questionnaire (Likert Style) equal to 0.849 reliability of the research is approved.

Methodology:

In this research, first Delphi Method is used to determine the push factors of Iranian tourists. Then SPSS Software is used for rating and ranking the factors.

Delphi Method:

Delphi method starts with identification of the problem and selected experts (Delphi panel) based on their experiment related to the defined problem. A questionnaire is designed and distributed to the Delphi panel. Then

data is collected and analyzed to reach consensus in responses. If the respondents have reached consensus, a report is developed based on responses, if not a new questionnaire is developed based on the results of the previous round and again distributed to the panel. This process is repeated until consensus is reached and based on which a final report is developed (Pill, J., 1971).

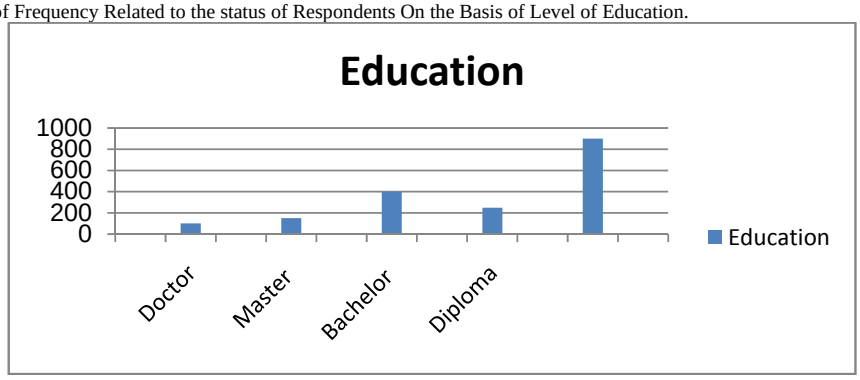
Demographical Specifications of the Sample:
Status of the Respondents On the Basis of Their Level of Education:

Table 2: Distribution of Frequency Related to Respondents on the basis of the level of Education.

Education	Frequency	Frequency Percentage
Doctorate	100	0.105
Master	150	0.157
Bachelor	400	0.42
Diploma	300	0.32
Total	900	100%

As shown in table 2, 10% of the respondents are university scholars in doctorate course, 15% have master's degree, 12% have bachelor's degree and 32% have diploma.

Table 3: Table of Frequency Related to the status of Respondents On the Basis of Level of Education.



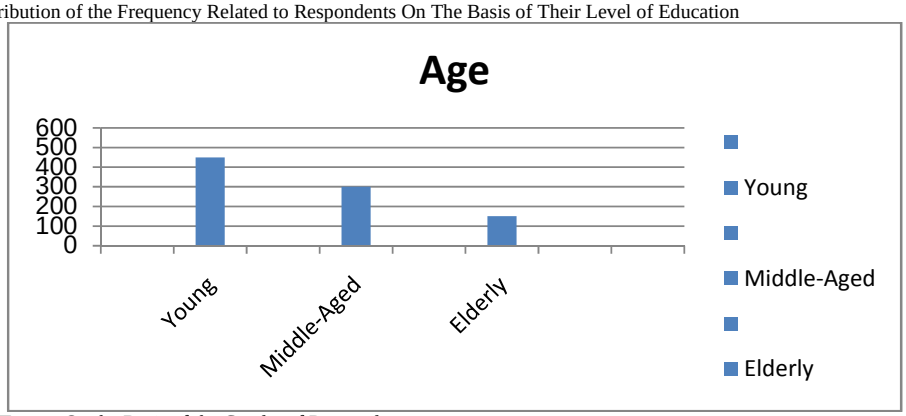
Specifications of the Respondents On the Basis of Their Education:

Table 4: Distribution of Frequency Related to Respondents On The Basis Of Their Level of Education.

Age	Frequency	Frequency Percentage
Young	450	0.50
Middle aged	300	0.33
Elderly	150	0.17

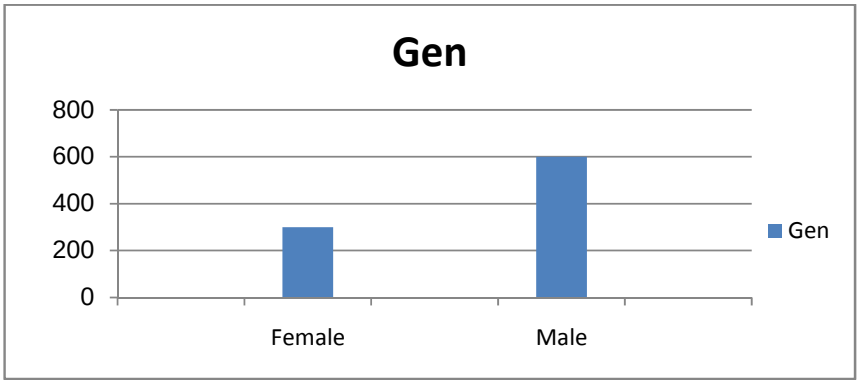
As shown in table 4, 50% of the respondents are young people, 33% of them are middle aged and 17% are elderly.

Table 5: Distribution of the Frequency Related to Respondents On The Basis of Their Level of Education



Frequency of Testees On the Basis of the Gender of Respondents
600 Male, 300Female

Table 6: Table of Frequency Related to the Status of the Respondents On the Basis of Their Gender.



Data Analysis:
The Young:
Test Statistics:

Table 7: Friedman Test.(Test Statistics)

N	900
Chi-Square	91.841
df	10
Asymp. Sig.	.002

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics of the Push Factors from Iran Regarding Age: the Young via Friedman Test.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
VAR00001	900	4.2667	.52083	3.00	5.00
VAR00002	900	4.1667	.64772	3.00	5.00
VAR00003	900	3.7000	.59596	3.00	5.00
VAR00004	900	3.6667	.71116	3.00	5.00
VAR00005	900	3.6333	.61495	3.00	5.00
VAR00006	900	3.1000	.80301	2.00	5.00
VAR00007	900	4.2333	.67891	3.00	5.00
VAR00008	900	3.4333	.67891	2.00	5.00
VAR00009	900	3.3333	.71116	2.00	5.00
VAR00010	900	3.3333	.71116	2.00	4.00
VAR00011	900	4.0000	.69481	3.00	5.00

Table 9: Prioritization of the Push Factors from Iran Regarding Age: the Young via Friedman Test.

Index	Rank Mean	Mean	Priority
Escape from daily Life	7.15	4	4
An opportunity to enhance the knowledge about other countries	4.67	3.3333	9
Relax and recreation	5.7	3.6667	6
Shopping	7.88	4.1667	3
Performing activities which are considered as illegal in the country of origin	8.25	4.2667	1
Business and Commerce	5.52	3.6333	7
Education	8.13	4.2333	2
Self awareness and self actualization	3.68	3.1	11
Having the experience of being beside the family	4.48	3.3333	10
Adventuring	5.87	3.7	5
Knowing new places and people	4.67	3.4333	8

Table 10: Friedman Test (Age: Middle-aged).

N	900
Chi-Square	76.924
df	10
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics of the Push Factors from Iran Regarding Age: Middle-aged.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
VAR00012	900	3.0333	.71840	2.00	5.00
VAR00013	900	2.8333	.59209	1.00	4.00
VAR00014	900	3.5333	.57135	2.00	4.00
VAR00015	900	3.9667	.66868	3.00	5.00
VAR00016	900	3.7333	.69149	2.00	5.00
VAR00017	900	3.6333	.71840	2.00	5.00
VAR00018	900	3.9333	.58329	3.00	5.00
VAR00019	900	3.5667	.62606	2.00	5.00
VAR00020	900	3.6333	.71840	2.00	5.00
VAR00021	900	3.7667	.72793	2.00	5.00
VAR00022	900	3.8333	.69893	2.00	5.00

Table 12: Prioritization of the Push Factors from Iran Regarding Age: Middle-aged via Friedman Test.

Index	Rank Mean	Mean	Priority
Escape from daily Life	6.98	3.8333	3
An opportunity to enhance the knowledge about other countries	5.9	3.5667	8
Relax and recreation	7.52	3.9333	1
Shopping	6.17	3.6333	6
Performing activities which are considered as illegal in the country of origin	6.68	3.7333	5
Business and Commerce	7.5	3.9667	2
Education	3.67	3.0333	10
Self awareness and self actualization	2.95	2.8333	11
Having the experience of being beside the family	6.83	3.7667	4
Adventuring	5.68	3.5333	9
Knowing new places and people	6.12	3.6333	7

Elderly:

Test Statistics:

Table 13: Friedman Test.

N	900
Chi-Square	50.250
df	10
Asymp. Sig.	.016

Table 14: Descriptive Statistics of Push Factors from Iran Regarding the Age:Elderly.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
VAR00023	900	3.4667	.68145	2.00	4.00
VAR00024	900	3.5333	.93710	2.00	5.00
VAR00025	900	4.5333	.57135	3.00	5.00
VAR00026	900	4.2333	.50401	3.00	5.00
VAR00027	900	4.1333	.68145	3.00	5.00
VAR00028	900	3.6667	.80230	2.00	5.00
VAR00029	900	3.5333	.89955	2.00	5.00
VAR00030	900	3.5667	.81720	2.00	5.00
VAR00031	900	3.9333	.82768	2.00	5.00
VAR00032	900	3.7333	.94443	2.00	5.00
VAR00033	900	3.9000	1.09387	1.00	5.00

Table 15: Prioritization of the Push Factors from Iran Regarding Age: Elderly via Friedman Test.

Index	Rank Mean	Mean	Priority
Escape from daily Life	7.48	4.2333	2
An opportunity to enhance the knowledge about other countries	7.03	4.1333	3
Relax and recreation	6.08	3.9333	5

Shopping	5.63	3.7333	6
Performing activities which are considered as illegal in the country of origin	4.88	3.5333	10
Business and Commerce	4.9	3.4667	8
Education	4.9	3.5667	9
Self awareness and self actualization	5.3	3.6667	7
Having the experience of being beside the family	6.47	3.9	4
Adventuring	4.83	3.5333	11
Knowing new places and people	8.48	4.5333	1

Gender: Male

Table 16 Test Statistics[a]

N	900
Chi-Square	16.501
df	10
Asymp. Sig.	.046

Table 17: Descriptive Statistics.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
VAR00034	900	3.7000	.83666	2.00	5.00
VAR00035	900	3.8667	.62881	3.00	5.00
VAR00036	900	3.8333	.74664	2.00	5.00
VAR00037	900	3.4667	.81931	2.00	5.00
VAR00038	900	3.6333	.80872	2.00	5.00
VAR00039	900	3.9667	.66868	3.00	5.00
VAR00040	900	3.6333	.55605	3.00	5.00
VAR00041	900	3.7000	.74971	2.00	5.00
VAR00042	900	4.0000	.69481	3.00	5.00
VAR00043	900	3.7333	.58329	3.00	5.00
VAR00044	900	3.5667	.72793	2.00	4.00

Table 18: Prioritization of the Push Factors from Iran Regarding Gender: Male viaFriedman Test.

Index	Rank Mean	Mean	Priority
Escape from daily Life	6.97	3.9667	2
An opportunity to enhance the knowledge about other countries	6.4	3.8333	4
Relax and recreation	6.58	3.8667	3
Shopping	5.45	3.5667	9
Performing activities which are considered as illegal in the country of origin	5.97	3.7333	5
Business and Commerce	7.1	4	1
Education	5.85	3.7	6
Self awareness and self actualization	5.05	3.4667	11
Having the experience of being besidethe family	5.4	3.6333	10
Adventuring	5.45	3.6333	8
Knowing new places and people	5.78	3.7	7

Gender: Female

Table 19: Test Statistics[a] Friedman Test.

N	900
Chi-Square	36.968
df	10
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Table 20: Descriptive Statistics.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
VAR00045	900	3.7000	1.11880	2.00	5.00
VAR00046	900	4.3667	.76489	2.00	5.00
VAR00047	900	4.0667	.63968	3.00	5.00
VAR00048	900	3.9667	.80872	2.00	5.00
VAR00049	900	4.1333	.77608	2.00	5.00
VAR00050	900	3.8333	.74664	2.00	5.00
VAR00051	900	3.4667	.81931	2.00	5.00
VAR00052	900	3.6333	.80872	2.00	5.00
VAR00053	900	3.9667	.66868	3.00	5.00
VAR00054	900	3.6333	.55605	3.00	5.00
VAR00055	900	3.6000	.77013	2.00	5.00

Table 21: Prioritization of Push Factors from Iran Regarding Gender: Female via Friedman Test.

Index	Rank Mean	Mean	Priority
Escape from daily Life	6.92	4.0667	3
An opportunity to enhance the knowledge about other countries	4.97	3.6333	9
Relax and recreation	7.87	4.3667	1
Shopping	7.17	4.1333	2
Performing activities which are considered as illegal in the country of origin	6.38	3.9667	4
Business and Commerce	4.85	3.6333	10
Education	5.98	3.8333	6
Self awareness and self actualization	4.67	3.4667	11
Having the experience of being beside the family	6.32	3.9667	5
Adventuring	5.18	3.6	8
Knowing new places and people	5.7	3.7	7

Conclusion:

Results acquired from push factors of Iran indicate that the main push factors for the young is performing activities which are considered as illegal in the country of origin. In addition, factors of education, escape from daily life and adventuring are of considerable importance for this age group. Factors of self awareness, self and having the experience of being beside the family members have little impact on Iranian young's departure.
For middle aged Iranians, factors of relaxation and recreation and business and commerce are strong motivations for travelling abroad; in addition the factor of escape from daily life, having the experience of being beside the family and performing activities which are considered as illegal in the country of origin are also of considerable importance. Education and self- awareness are the factors which have created a little motivation for this age-group to travel abroad.

Iranian elderly pay the most attention to knowing new people and places and escape from daily life. Factors such as an opportunity to enhance the knowledge about other countries, the experience of being beside the family and relaxation and recreation are other priorities. An opportunity to enhance the knowledge about other countries can be considered as important for men. But for Iranian women, the next priority is escape from daily life and performing activities which are considered as illegal in the country of origin.

Results indicate that Iranian people do not travel to gain self-awareness and self actualization or do not consider the travel as a tool to achieve self-awareness. In addition escape from daily life is very important for all age and gender groups.

Recreation and shopping are among Iranian people's basic motivation to travel abroad, too. In addition performing activities which are considered as illegal in the country of origin is very important for all respondents, except for the elderly.

On the basis of all of the surveys, social limits, lack of recreation centers and routine daily life makes millions of Iranians to depart to tourist countries every year.

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