Prioritization of Pull Factors of Turkey as a Destination for Iranian Tourists

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Abstract: Every year a large number of Iranian tourists choose Turkey as a travel destination. In this research using the performed researches and Delphi model, pull factors of turkey are recognized and then by the same method 5 criteria are recognized to analyze these factors and weighted by pair-wise comparison. In the last step the importance of each pull factor is ranked. Results indicate that varied attractions, low expenses in destination, performing activities which are not available in the country of origin and accessibility are of high importance for Iranian tourists. However, Iranian tourists are not much interested in main attractions of the Turkey (natural and cultural attractions). Library-based studies are used for preparing theoretical fundamentals and research background and questionnaires are used for collecting information to determine the importance and prioritization of the factors. The sample of the research include technical managers of travel agencies located in different parts of the country.

Key words: Pull Factors, Iranian Tourist, Turkey Tourism, TOPSIS, Prioritization.

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 and the most important sources of foreign exchange. On the other hand, 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.

Turkey is one of the most popular emerging tourism destinations with respect to its natural beauty and cultural heritage.The incoming tourists are generally interested in resorts and historical locations in Turkey (Icoz *et al.,* 2009).

Turkish tourism has made a remarkable progress over the last two decades and despite the ongoing downturn faced by the tourism industry around the world, tourism industry in Turkey has reported significant growth rate in recent time (Détente Consultants, 2010).

Turkey is a popular destination for the tourists from all over the world. Not only natural beauties and summer tourism, but also her cultural and historical affluence and history make Turkey visited by millions of foreign tourists each year (AKTÜRK, 2006).

The ministry's figures also show that there has been a sharp increase in the number of tourists from Iran over the last few years and although Dubai was once the number one vacation destination of many Iranians,now Iranians are choosing Turkey for their holidays, which Turkish tourism companies attribute to an upsurge in its promotional activities in Iran (http://www.tourismandaviation.com/news-11410-Turkey_receives_13_million_visitors_ in _ first_half_of_year accessed on 1 August 2011).

Tourism in Turkey is focused largely on a variety of historical sites, and on seaside resorts along its Aegean and Mediterranean Sea coasts. In the recent years, Turkey has also become a popular destination for culture, spa, and health care tourism. In 2010, Turkey attracted more than 28.6 million foreign tourists and ranked seven in the list of most visited countries. The number of tourists in the first half of the 2011 is estimated 13.02 million and had increased by 12.5% (Ministry of Culture and Tourism. (2010). Number of Arriving-Departing Foreigners and Citizens. *Tourism Statistics*. Retrieved 28 January 2011).

According to the World Tourism Organization, Turkey received $20.8 billion from international tourists in 2010 and ranked 10 on the basis of international tourism receipts.

The Culture and Tourism Ministry's provisional data for visitors to Turkey shows that the number of Iranian tourists was 1640000 persons in 2010so understanding the reason of their travel and their motivation for travel to this country is of considerable importance.

In tourism research motivation has been a common area of study. 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

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those factors which pull the individual to a destination (Crompton, 1979; Awaritefe, 2004; Park and Yoon, 2009).

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 [9]. The "push" motivations have been used to explain the desire for travel, as they are the starting point of understanding tourists' behavior (Crompton, 1979; Kim *et al.,* 2008).

United States Agency in analyzing the factors affecting the choiceof travelers states that the most important factors for Iranians choosing their trips are cost, type of service, distance and amenities. But in general interests of those traveling abroad include seeing something new, shopping, having fun and good entertainment during the trip, outdoor atmosphere and good food (Outgoing tourizm market research, 2008).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study is of descriptive research type. It is considered as applied type in terms of objective. The present study is of survey research type in terms of collection of information and data has been made through studying books and documents. For obtaining necessary information at this study, required data have been collected through library-based studies, questionnaire and obtaining data from resources and documents (for provision of study theoretical fundamentals).

Research Model:
In the first phase by referring to the literature review and Delphi method, pull factors of Turkey as a destination for Iranian tourists are determined. Then by the same method five criteria are determined for analyzing these factors and by pair-wise comparison these factors are weighted.

In the next step, TOPSIS method is used for ranking the importance of 22 pull factors of Turkey.

Subject, Sample Volume and Sampling Method:
All technical managers of tourism companies are subject of the preset study. In this study sample volume is calculated by application of Morgan table and equals 1000 persons according to reports presented in Euromonitor 2009 report about real number of active traveling agencies. Sample volume of this study amounts to 278 persons. Random classified sampling method was used and one technical manager is selected from each company.

Validity and Reliability, Measuring Tools:
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. Necessary changes were made at questions on the basis of viewpoints of lecturers and officials in charge .

Cronbach's Alpha (Bland and Altman, 1997) Test was used for testing reliability of questionnaire of study. For this reason, 82 study questionnaires were distributed among subject (individuals set for this study). Then each answer was studied individually and response rate of each question was calculated. In the same direction, Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test was made through the application of SPSS software package. Generally, test reliability rate was obtained 792% at large.

Method of Analysis:
Delphi:
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, 1971).

Weighting the Criteria:
The basic procedure to carry out the pair-wise comparison consists of prioritization of criteria by pair-wise comparison (weighing). Rating the relative priority of the criteria is done by assigning a weight between 1 (equal importance) and 9 (extreme importance) to the more important criterion, whereas the value reciprocal to that is assigned to the other criterion in the pair. The weightings are then assigned a number and averaged in order to obtain an average weight for each criterion (Saaty, 1990).

Topsis:

For ranking and selecting the most appropriate suppliers TOPSIS method is more appropriate due to the following reasons:

In this technique, due to permission of desirability exchange between the attributes, it is possible to improve a supplier performance through its comparative advantage in some areas, despite its poor performance in other cases. In TOPSIS decision making technique, interaction effect of attributes is considered. This technique also considers Conflict and compatibility between attributes (Triantaphyllou, 2000; HoW and Dey, 2010; ShihH *et al.,* 2007; Iranzadeh and Chakherlouy, 2010). TOPSIS decision making technique is less sensitive compared to weighting technique. Considering the subjects covered in this study, compensating models and its constructive subgroup, TOPSIS technique, is used for evaluating and ranking the suppliers (ManikraoAthawale and Chakraborty, 2010).

Reorganization and Weighting of Evaluative Criteria:

Referring to literature review and research background, 5 criteria are recognized for analysis of pull factors of Turkey as a destination for Iranian tourists and then by administration of questionnaire, aspects and ideas of tourism and geography experts are acquired. Then weight of each criterion is calculated on the basis of pair-wise comparison.

Matrix of pair-wise comparison of decision makers is calculated by using geometric mean as follows:
In this method after completing pair-wise comparison matrix, first geometric mean of each line of matrix is calculated; in the second phase the present column is normalized by dividing each attribute to the sum of present attributes.

The new column matrix is the matrix of weight of the indexes of the considered problem. Below the mathematical form of this method is provided:

$$\begin{bmatrix} a_{11} & . & . & a_{1n} \\ . & . & . & . \\ . & . & . & . \\ a_{n1} & . & . & a_{nn} \end{bmatrix} \xrightarrow{1} \begin{bmatrix} \sqrt[n]{a_{11} \dots a_{1n}} \\ . \\ . \\ \sqrt[n]{a_{11} \dots a_{1n}} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \pi_1 \\ . \\ . \\ \pi_2 \end{bmatrix} \xrightarrow{2} \begin{bmatrix} \dfrac{\pi_1}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} \pi_i} \\ . \\ . \\ \dfrac{\pi_n}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} \pi_i} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} W_1 \\ . \\ . \\ W_n \end{bmatrix}$$

In this research 5 basic criteria are recognized to analyze the pull factors ofTurkey as a destination for Iranian tourists, which are shown in the matrix of pair-wise comparison (Table 1).

Table 1: Matrix of Pair-wise comparison of basic criteria.

Criteria	Number of Tourists	Amount of Expenditure	Length of Stay	Second Visit	Encouraging Others
Number of tourists	1	0.5	1.6	3.5	4.7
Amount of expenditure		1	2.4	2.7	2.2
Length of stay			1	3.1	1.8
Second visit				1	
Encouraging others					1

After forming the model in expert choice and importing the matrix of pair-wise comparison, the weight of criteria and sub-criteria was calculated as shown below. Table 2 shows the prioritization of the pull factors of turkey as a destination for Iranian tourists which are determined on the basis of AHP method (expert choice software). As shown in table 2 amount of expenditure is the most important criteria with relative weight equal to 0.343. So, it is the most affective factor among all important factors in strategic decision-making of Iranian tourists, and number of tourists with relative weight equal to 0.292 is in the next priority. Consistency rate of pair-wise comparison is equal to 0.06 which is acceptable, because it's lower than 0.10.

Table 2: Weighting the basic criteria.

Row	Basic Criteria	Weight	Priority
1	Number of tourists	0.292	2
2	Amount of expenditure	0.343	1
3	Length of stay	0.179	3
4	Second visit	0.076	5
5	Encouraging others	0.11	4

In table 3matrix of decision and in table 4 matrix prepared in the basis of five criteria stated above and 22 pull factors about Turkey as a destination for Iranian tourists, which are prioritized by TOPSIS (2005) software and Excel are shown.

Table 3: Decision Matrix.

Row	Pull factors	Number of tourists	Amount of expenditure	Length of stay	Second visit	Encouraging others
1	Hospitable people in destination.	22.60	27.00	24.41	40.58	13.70
2	Suitable transportation system.	15.80	34.60	33.70	28.25	43.60
3	Cheap shopping	20.60	23.50	28.40	25.93	33.50
4	Accessibility	32.60	26.00	25.70	32.93	27.40
5	Variety of attractions	32.70	13.60	45.00	16.90	46.20
6	Suitable accommodating	17.80	33.50	42.84	46.79	45.32
7	Visiting the places which are shown in the films	28.40	65.20	60.20	61.40	37.90
8	Social security	28.70	51.20	33.40	17.66	23.00
9	Religious, cultural and language similarities	13.70	23.00	32.00	44.00	25.80
10	Economic and political close relationships	12.00	44.70	26.90	62.94	22.60
11	Performing activities which are not available in the country of origin.	36.40	36.40	45.32	38.08	35.80
12	Lack of necessity for getting visa	14.50	22.50	17.78	35.61	23.00
13	Cultural attractions	27.00	37.40	12.03	43.97	14.80
14	Public health and hygiene	26.30	47.50	23.79	42.50	35.70
15	Natural attractions	19.50	43.00	35.20	38.50	44.20
16	Climate	15.60	32.00	23.52	24.80	30.60
17	Low expenses in destinations	25.90	14.80	28.26	29.21	26.90
18	Modern attractions	16.80	35.00	38.27	29.42	33.00
19	Quality of services	17.90	25.00	32.51	34.90	26.90
20	Festivals and events	19.30	35.70	7.67	31.17	33.60
21	Recreational attractions	36.80	38.00	28.92	58.20	58.30
22	A destination with high prestige.	27.40	47.50	32.00	52.34	36.20

Table 4: Table of normalized decision matrix.

Row	Pull factors	Number of tourists	Amount of expenditure	Length of stay	Second visit	Encouraging others
1	Hospitable people in destination.	0.0445	0.0357	0.0360	0.0485	0.0191
2	Suitable transportation system	0.0311	0.0457	0.0497	0.0338	0.0607
3	Cheap shopping	0.0405	0.0310	0.0419	0.0310	0.0467
4	Accessibility	0.0641	0.0343	0.0379	0.0394	0.0382
5	Variety of attractions	0.0643	0.0180	0.0664	0.0202	0.0643
6	Suitable accommodating	0.0350	0.0442	0.0632	0.0560	0.0631
7	Visiting the places which are shown in the films	0.0559	0.0861	0.0888	0.0734	0.0528
8	Social security	0.0565	0.0676	0.0493	0.0211	0.0320
9	Religious, cultural and language similarities	0.0270	0.0304	0.0472	0.0526	0.0359
10	Economic and political close relationships	0.0236	0.0590	0.0397	0.0753	0.0315
11	Performing activities which are not available in origin country	0.0716	0.0481	0.0669	0.0455	0.0499
12	Lack of necessity for getting visa	0.0285	0.0297	0.0262	0.0426	0.0320
13	Cultural attractions	0.0531	0.0494	0.0177	0.0526	0.0206
14	Public health and hygiene	0.0517	0.0627	0.0351	0.0508	0.0497
15	Natural attractions	0.0384	0.0568	0.0519	0.0460	0.0616
16	Climate	0.0307	0.0423	0.0347	0.0297	0.0426
17	Low expenses in destinations	0.0510	0.0195	0.0417	0.0349	0.0375
18	Modern attractions	0.0331	0.0462	0.0565	0.0352	0.0460
19	Quality of services	0.0352	0.0330	0.0480	0.0417	0.0375
20	Festivals and events	0.0380	0.0472	0.0113	0.0373	0.0468
21	Recreational attractions	0.0724	0.0502	0.0427	0.0696	0.0812
22	A destination with high prestige	0.0539	0.0627	0.0472	0.0626	0.0504

Table 5: Weighted normalized decision matrix.

Row	Pull factors	Number of tourists	Amount of expenditure	Length of stay	Second visit	Encouraging others
1	Hospitable people in destination	0.0130	0.0122	0.0064	0.0037	0.0021
2	Suitable transportation system	0.0091	0.0157	0.0089	0.0026	0.0067
3	Cheap shopping	0.0118	0.0106	0.0075	0.0024	0.0051
4	Accessibility	0.0187	0.0118	0.0068	0.0030	0.0042
5	Variety of attractions	0.0188	0.0062	0.0119	0.0015	0.0071
6	Suitable accommodating	0.0102	0.0152	0.0113	0.0043	0.0069
7	Visiting the places which are shown in the films	0.0163	0.0295	0.0159	0.0056	0.0058

8	Social security	0.0165	0.0232	0.0088	0.0016	0.0035
9	Religious, cultural and language similarities	0.0079	0.0104	0.0085	0.0040	0.0040
10	Economic and political close relationships	0.0069	0.0203	0.0071	0.0057	0.0035
11	Performing activities which are not available in origin country	0.0209	0.0165	0.0120	0.0035	0.0055
12	Lack of necessity for getting visa.	0.0083	0.0102	0.0047	0.0032	0.0035
13	Cultural attractions	0.0155	0.0169	0.0032	0.0040	0.0023
14	Public health and hygiene	0.0151	0.0215	0.0063	0.0039	0.0055
15	Natural attractions	0.0112	0.0195	0.0093	0.0035	0.0068
16	Climate	0.0090	0.0145	0.0062	0.0023	0.0047
17	Low expenses in destinations	0.0149	0.0067	0.0075	0.0027	0.0041
18	Modern attractions	0.0097	0.0159	0.0101	0.0027	0.0051
19	Quality of services	0.0103	0.0113	0.0086	0.0032	0.0041
20	Festivals and events	0.0111	0.0162	0.0020	0.0028	0.0051
21	Recreational attractions	0.0211	0.0172	0.0076	0.0053	0.0089
22	A destination with high prestige	0.0157	0.0215	0.0085	0.0048	0.0055

Table 6: Prioritization of the pull factors by TOPSIS method.

Row	Pull factors					priority
1	Hospitable people in destination	0.018994	0.015607	0.034601	0.548944	9
2	Suitable transportation system	0.016297	0.017318	0.033615	0.484813	13
3	Cheap shopping	0.020493	0.014197	0.03469	0.590747	6
4	Accessibility	0.021988	0.012216	0.034204	0.642849	4
5	Variety of attractions	0.028433	0.006492	0.034925	0.814116	1
6	Suitable accommodation	0.018275	0.015027	0.033302	0.548766	10
7	Visiting the places which are shown in the films	0.1767	0.024024	0.041694	0.423802	18
8	Social security	0.013425	0.020148	0.033573	0.399875	20
9	Religious, cultural and language similarities	0.020403	0.016604	0.037007	0.551328	8
10	Economic and political close relationships	0.011457	0.022499	0.033956	0.337407	22
11	Performing activities which are not available in origin country	0.021914	0.01175	0.033664	0.650962	3
12	Lack of necessity for getting visa	0.019675	0.018427	0.038102	0.516377	11
13	Cultural attractions	0.015474	0.018854	0.034328	0.450769	15
14	Public health and hygiene	0.012897	0.019449	0.032346	0.39872	21
15	Natural attractions	0.014069	0.018092	0.032161	0.437455	17
16	Climate	0.015947	0.018431	0.034378	0.463872	14
17	Low expenses in destinations	0.02487	0.011927	0.036797	0.67587	2
18	Modern attractions	0.016418	0.016787	0.033205	0.494444	12
19	Quality of services	0.019798	0.015034	0.034832	0.568385	7
20	Festivals and events	0.014359	0.020361	0.03472	0.413566	19
21	Recreational attractions	0.02113	0.013777	0.034907	0.605323	5
22	A destination with high prestige	0.014351	0.018194	0.032545	0.440959	16

According to 5 indexes and results of TOPSIS method, variety of attractions, low expenses in destination and performing activities, which are not available in the country of origin with the most importance are located in the first, second and third ranks as shown in table 6.

Interpretation of the Table:

Surveying the results obtained from TOPSIS shows that besides variety of attractions (0.814116), low expenditures in destination (0.494444), performing activities which are not available in the country of origin (0.650962), accessibility (0.642849) and recreational attractions (0.605323) are the most important factors, because they have gained the most weight. On the other hand economic and political factors (0.337407) and public health and hygiene (0.39872) and social security (0.399875) are of the least importance for Iranian tourists who want to visit Turkey, because they have gained the least weight.

Conclusion:

Turkey containing lots of varied tourism attractions is a suitable destination for Iranian tourists with varied wishes and tastes, so this factor (variety of attractions) has gained the most weight in prioritization of pull factors. In addition, this country has acted very successfully in decreasing and keeping down the expenses, owing to its relative advantage in the tourism industry and correct policy making to make use of these

advantages. Providing cheap and varied tour packages are among the strategies and instruments of the Turkey to attract ever increasing number of Iranian tourists.

Existence of open social environment, holding music concerts and beach tourism are suitable motivations for Iranian tourists and attracts a large number of Iranian tourists to different parts of Turkey in warm seasons of the year.

Geographical position of Turkey and closeness to Iran, easy and cheap access by road, rail and air are other factors which result in the selection of the country for travel.
Existence of recreational attractions and providing cheap and fashionable textile products are of high importance for tourists visiting Turkey.

The quality of the services provided, religious, cultural and language similarities, beside relatively suitable accommodation and hospitality infrastructuresare other pull factors of Turkey as a tourism destination.

Also the results of this research explicitly indicatethat although natural and cultural attractions of Turkey are of high importance for international tourists, there are of little importance for Iranian tourists. In addition economic and political relations between these two countries has not been much affective in attracting tourists to Turkey, although removing the necessity of getting visa has provided the basis for attracting an increasing number of Iranian tourists to this country.

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