

Motivations of individuals that attend the annual pilgrimage of Hajj

Mohammed Jabar Yaqub
Sheffield Hallam University

M.J.Yaqub@shu.ac.uk

Background - The following abstract is a working progress of an MSc Thesis which is currently being developed as a possible Doctoral study.

The purpose of this project was to research the motivations of individuals attending the annual pilgrimage of Hajj, which is one of the main pillars of faith in Islam. The scope of the project is to highlight whether the motivations of the attendees are changing from pilgrim to tourist.

Recent trends have highlighted the development of the country in the commercial aspect as well as the use of modern technology to communicate and educate the pilgrim, for example, Dr. Abdul-Aziz bin Abdullah Al-Khudairi, deputy governor of Makkah states ' Pilgrims are using social networking sites in large numbers to help them perform Hajj with ease'. Those seeking to perform Hajj used our social networking pages to learn about Hajj, conduct and rituals.

Further developments are planned for the holy cities, Taylor (2011) recently reported in an article titled 'Makkah for the rich: Islam's holiest site 'turning into Vegas' in the Independent newspaper that over the last ten years the holiest place in the Muslim world has undergone a huge transformation, on the other hand Fears are arising in the loss of great historical sites, this has caused prominent Saudi archaeologists and historians to take action.

The research methods used to obtain a sample were questionnaires and semi-structured interviews which contained questions regarding the pilgrim, behaviour and motivations.

The results indicated that the main motivations to attend the annual pilgrimage of Hajj were to fulfil the religious obligation, spiritual enhancement and to follow teachings of the Quran and Prophet Muhammad. Some recommendations for further research have been made which include the host country, perceptions and attitude and commercialisation vs. religion.

Key Words: Pilgrimage, Motivations, Hajj, Religious-Tourism

Selected Readings

- Collins-Kreiner, N. (2011) Geographers and Pilgrimages: Changing Concepts in Pilgrimage Tourism Research: Department of Geography and Environmental Studies 101 (4) pg. 437-448
- Spiegelman, M.J. (2006) Divine Among in Islam: The Hajj or Pilgrimage Today, Psychological Perspectives 48 (1) pg. 136-142
- Timothy, D and Oslen, D. (2006) Tourism, Religion and Spiritual Journeys. Routledge
- Raj, R & Griffin, K.. (2015) Religious Tourism & Pilgrimage Management. CABI Publishin, Wallingford.