

**SPIRITUAL TOURISM
IN TURKIYE AND
MALAYSIA:
A SEGMENTATION
APPROACH FOR
SUSTAINABILITY**

**SPIRITUAL TOURISM
IN TURKIYE AND
MALAYSIA:
A SEGMENTATION
APPROACH FOR
SUSTAINABILITY**

**MUTIA SOBIHAH ABD HALIM
SHAMSIAH BANU MOHAMAD HANEFAR
EKREM TATOGLU**

Copyright UMK PRESS, 2024

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in production transmitted in any form, whether electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without having permission from the UMK Press.

Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

A catalogue record for this book is available
from the National Library Malaysia

ISBN

Executive Producer: Azman Hashim. Copy Editor: Amirul Firdaus Zilah, Raihana Sulaiman. Acquisition Editor: Nur Fatihah Pahazri. Concept & Typesetting: Mohd Faris Fauzi. Proof Reader: Zaliha Noor. Technical Assistant: Mohd Suhairi Mohamad

Published by:

UMK Press

Universiti Malaysia Kelantan

Office of Library and Knowledge Management

16310 Bachok, Kelantan.

(Member of Malaysian Scholarly Publishing Council (MAPIM))

(Member of Malaysian Book Publishers Association (MABOPA) Membership Number :
201903)

Printed by:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures

List of Tables

Acknowledgement

Preface

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL TOURISM: A SEGMENTATION APPROACH

Background

Tourism in Turkiye

 Istanbul

 Antalya

 Edirne

 Trabzon

 Mugla

Tourism in Malaysia

 Selangor

 Kuala Lumpur

 Sarawak

 Penang

 Pahang

 Sabah

The Importance of Tourism Segmentation

 Understanding Diverse Traveller Needs

 Tailoring Marketing Strategies

 Resource Optimisation

 Product Development and Innovation

 Enhancing Visitor Satisfaction

Effective Pricing Strategies

Building Brand Loyalty

The Importance of Spiritual Tourism as a New Segmentation

CHAPTER 2:

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The Importance of Sustainable Tourism

Environmental Preservation

Economic Development and Stability

Cultural Preservation

Resilience to Crises

Competitive Advantage

Tourism in Malaysia and Turkiye and The Importance of Sustainable Tourism

CHAPTER 3:

A SEGMENTATION APPROACH FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Marketing Segmentation

Customer Understanding

Targeted Marketing Efforts

Competitive Advantage

Product Development

Marketing Segmentation and Sustainable Tourism

Key Components of Marketing Segmentation in Sustainable Tourism

Demographic Segmentation

Psychographic Segmentation

Behavioural Segmentation

Geographic Segmentation

The Role of Marketing Segmentation in Promoting Sustainable Tourism

- Customised Messaging
- Product Development
- Sustainability Education
- Community Engagement

CHAPTER 4: THE ROLES OF SPIRITUALITY IN SHAPING SEGMENTATION FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Spirituality and Spiritual Tourism

Spirituality and Shaping Segmentation

- Purpose of Life
- Self-Consciousness
- Transcendental Consciousness
- Self-Determination
- Soul Reflection

Spiritual Tourism

The Importance of Spiritual Tourism

Spiritual Tourism and Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable Tourism Development

The Impact Of Spiritual Tourism For Sustainable Tourism Development

CHAPTER 5: A SEGMENTATION APPROACH TO UNDERSTAND THE VIEW OF SPIRITUAL TOURISM IN MALAYSIA

Descriptive Analysis

- Context and Sample for The Study
- Respondents' Demographic Profile
- The Description of the Study Constructs

Level of Tourism Acceptance Based on Spiritual Tourism
Construction

- Transcendental Consciousness
- Self-Determination
- Soul Reflection
- Self-Consciousness
- Life Purpose

The Primary Constructs of Spiritual Tourism in Malaysia

Transcendental Consciousness

- Meditation Retreat
- Nature Connection
- Temple Visits
- Spiritual Conversations
- Art and Creativity
- Mindful Eating

Self-Determination

- Choosing Destinations
- Selecting Accommodation
- Culinary Adventures
- Activity Choices
- Local Interactions
- Transportation
- Flexibility

Soul Reflection

- Nature Retreat
- Spiritual Exploration
- Local Encounters
- Art and Culture
- Culinary Journey

- Yoga and Wellness
- Self-Consciousness
 - Modesty in Dress
 - Removing Shoes
 - Cultural Awareness
 - Dining Etiquette
 - Respecting Religious Practices
 - Understanding The Concept of Halal
- Life Purpose
 - Environmental Conservation
 - Cultural Exchange
 - Education and Skill Building
 - Spiritual Exploration
 - Supporting Local Communities

CHAPTER 6:

A SEGMENTATION APPROACH TO UNDERSTAND THE VIEW OF SPIRITUAL TOURISM IN TURKIYE

Descriptive Analysis

- Context and Sample for The Study
- Respondents' Demographic Profile
- The Description of the Study Constructs
- Level of Tourism Acceptance Based on Spiritual Tourism Construction
 - Life Purpose
 - Self-Consciousness
 - Transcendental Consciousness
 - Soul Reflection
 - Self-Determination

The Spiritual Tourism Construct/ Segment in Turkiye

Life Purpose

- Historical Exploration
- Cultural Immersion
- Personal Growth
- Relaxation and Nature
- Creating Memories

Self-Consciousness

- Respectful Behaviour
- Understanding Rituals and Traditions
- Interactions with Local Communities
- Expression of Personal Beliefs

Transcendental Consciousness

- Whirling Dervishes Ceremony
- Visiting Rumi's Mausoleum
- Nature and Silence

Soul Reflection

- Historical Sites
- Natural Beauty
- Cultural Festivals
- Culinary Delights
- Warm Hospitality
- Spiritual and Religious Sites
- Traditional Arts and Crafts

Self-Determination

- Tailored Experiences
- Cultural Respect
- Exploration of Diverse Practices
- Deeper Connection
- Meaningful Reflection

CHAPTER 7:

A FUTURE OF SPIRITUAL TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Implications of Spiritual Tourism On Sustainable Tourism
Development in Turkiye and Malaysia

Implications and Contributions to The Tourism Industry and
Government

Spiritual Tourism Segmentation for Future Attraction

Conclusion: A Vision for ‘Sustainable Spiritual Tourism
Development’

Bibliography

Index

Author’s Biographies

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1.1 Istanbul
- Figure 1.2 Duden Waterfalls, Antalya
- Figure 1.3 Karain Cave
- Figure 1.4 Selimiye Mosque
- Figure 1.5 Sumela Monastery
- Figure 1.6 Bodrum, Mugla
- Figure 1.7 Sekinchan
- Figure 1.8 Kuala Lumpur
- Figure 1.9 Niah National Park
- Figure 1.10 Penang Bridge
- Figure 1.11 Pulau Tioman
- Figure 1.12 Mount Kinabalu
- Figure 2.1 Tourist Arrivals and Receipts to Malaysian 2019
- Figure 2.2 Tourist Arrivals and Receipts to Malaysia 2023
- Figure 2.3 International Tourist Arrivals 2019
- Figure 2.4 International Tourist Arrivals in Turkiye (2000 – 2022)
- Figure 4.1 Sustainable Development Goals (2018)
- Figure 4.2 Sustainable Tourism
- Figure 4.3 Interrelationships between Tourism and Sustainability from Cross-disciplinary Perspectives
- Figure 4.4 The Impact of Spiritual Tourism on Sustainable Tourism Development

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1	Market Segmentation and Sustainable Tourism
Table 5.1	Percentage of Collected Questionnaires
Table 5.2	Demography profile - Malaysia
Table 5.3	Implementation Level Min Score
Table 5.4	Descriptive statistic - Malaysia
Table 6.1	Percentage of Collected Questionnaires
Table 6.2	Demography profile for Turkiye
Table 6.3	Implementation Level Min Score
Table 6.4	Turkiye Descriptive Statistics
Table 7.1	Regression Coefficient, Constructs and Probability Value (p) (Turkiye)
Table 7.2	Regression Coefficient, Constructs and Probability Value (p) (Malaysia)

PREFACE

The publication of this book, *Spiritual Tourism in Turkiye and Malaysia: A Segmentation Approach for Sustainability*, reflects the authors' aspiration to contribute to the growing field of spiritual tourism and its sustainable development. In a world where travellers increasingly seek experiences that nurture both body and soul, spiritual tourism offers an intersection between personal growth and cultural appreciation. This book highlights Turkiye and Malaysia's unique spiritual tourism landscapes, providing insight into how these destinations can further enhance sustainable tourism practices.

Spiritual tourism holds vast potential for preserving cultural heritage, promoting inner peace, and ensuring economic benefits for local communities. This manuscript explores how spiritual tourism markets can be effectively understood, segmented, and targeted for maximum benefit through a segmentation approach. The analysis presented in this book underscores the importance of sustainability, drawing from the experiences of two distinct yet culturally rich nations, Turkiye and Malaysia.

The intended readers of this book include researchers, students, tourism professionals, and policymakers interested in sustainable tourism development, particularly within the spiritual tourism sector. Additionally, this book will be valuable to those seeking to deepen their understanding of the interconnections between spirituality, tourism, and sustainability in academic and practical contexts.

In essence, this book offers a detailed segmentation analysis. It serves as a guide for promoting sustainable spiritual tourism practices, ensuring that tourists and host communities benefit in meaningful and lasting ways. The insights from Turkiye and Malaysia can serve as models for other regions aspiring to integrate spiritual tourism into their sustainable development goals.

Mutia Sobihah Abd Halim

Shamsiah Banu Mohamad Hanefar

Ekrem Tatoglu

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. All praise is due to Allah for His supreme providence, grace, and generosity. By His blessings, we were able to complete this book successfully. Special thanks to Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin and Ibnu Haldun University for their invaluable support throughout my journey to complete this book. I want to express my sincere appreciation to my co-authors, Professor Ekrem Tatoglu and Dr. Shamsiah Banu Mohamad Hanefar. Their collaboration and support were instrumental in the success of this book. Your hard work and dedication have been genuinely inspiring. I am forever indebted to my family and friends for their unwavering support. Special thanks to my mother, Fatimah @ Rohani Bt Nik, my beloved daughters, Nur Ameera Sofiea and Nur Aineen Safriena, and my husband, Najmuddin Mohamed Sarawi, for their constant encouragement in helping me face the challenges of writing this book. Your belief in me gave me the strength to persevere. Lastly, I extend my deepest thanks to those whose endless support and contributions were greatly appreciated, though not explicitly mentioned.

Mutia Sobihah Abd Halim

Alhamdulillah, all praise is due to Allah SWT for His guidance and blessings throughout the journey of writing this book. Without His mercy and grace, this work would not have been possible. First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my beloved parents, Mohamad Hanefar and Ramiza Bee. Your unwavering prayers, love, and encouragement have been my greatest source of strength. A special dedication goes to my beloved children, Syed Muhaimin and Shaarifah Nadhirah. Your love and understanding have been a constant inspiration and motivation for me to complete this book. I am truly blessed to have

both of you in my life. To the publishers, co-writers, and editors involved, I extend my heartfelt thanks for your dedication and expertise. Your tireless efforts have ensured the clarity, accuracy, and quality of the manuscript, and I am deeply appreciative of your contributions. Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues, extended family, friends and to all those who have contributed directly or indirectly to the realization of this book. May Allah SWT bless and reward each of you abundantly for your efforts and support.

Shamsiah Banu Mohamed Hanefar

I am grateful to Allah SWT for His blessings in creating this book on Spiritual Tourism in Turkiye and Malaysia. Special thanks to my co-authors, Mutia Sobihah Abd Halim and Shamsiah Banu Mohamad Hanefar, for their invaluable contributions. I appreciate the publisher, editors, reviewers, and all involved in the publication process. Lastly, thank you to the readers and researchers for engaging with this work and advancing knowledge in spiritual tourism.

Ekrem Tatoglu

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL TOURISM: A SEGMENTATION APPROACH

BACKGROUND

Scholars trace the origins of tourism back around 5,000 years, linking it to early travel for trade, military activities, and administrative or conquest missions (Goeldner et al., 2000). Initially, tourism was a pursuit of the elite, business people, and politicians (Mamat, Du & Ding, 2017). In recent decades, the tourism industry has experienced rapid growth, now ranking among the world's largest sectors and holding the title of the fastest-growing economic sector (Rasool et al., 2021). Tourism is the world's largest service industry, employing 260 million individuals and contributing 9% of the global GDP. With annual arrivals surpassing the 1 billion mark, even slight shifts in travellers' motivations and values can profoundly impact our world (Bowler, 2014).

Political and social factors influence how tourism enhances foreign exchange rates, generates employment, and creates business opportunities. Beyond its economic impact, the tourism industry has the potential to shape fundamental processes, including expression, environmental formation, and cultural dynamics. Undoubtedly, the tourism sector has evolved into a global economic force, outperforming other sectors in its influence and performance.

In the contemporary global landscape, tourism assumes a crucial role by fostering connections between individuals, cultures, and destinations worldwide. Boundless transportation facilitates this, allowing for seamless movement between destinations, irrespective of race or

religion. Advanced technological systems propel the growth of the tourism industry, contributing to an increase in various tourism activities, such as tourists selecting enticing destinations (Ferreira & Perks, 2020).

The impact of the tourism industry on the global economy is substantial. In 2017, the industry contributed USD2,570.1 billion, accounting for 3.2% of the total. In 2018, the figure increased by 4.0%, and projections indicate it will grow at an annual rate of 3.8% from 2018 to 2028, reaching USD 3,890.0 billion by 2028. Analysts expect the sector to create 140 million jobs by 2028 (WTDF, 2018). Described as ‘distinctive in nature’ (Haq, 2017; Todorović & Jovicic, 2016; Norman, 2014), tourism services range from mass tourism to specialised requirements or specific purposes of tourists.

Various concepts can entice tourists to visit specific destinations, often referred to as factors of attraction or ‘magnetism’ (WTDF, 2018). Developing a destination’s prosperity requires enhancing its residents’ well-being, implementing effective deployment mechanisms, leveraging supportive visitation factors, and establishing efficient market communication (WTDF, 2018). Planners must carefully design each tourist destination to achieve sustainable tourism development by respecting local communities, creating employment opportunities, preserving the natural environment, and providing high-quality experiences for tourists. When a destination is commercialised using the correct and optimal methods, it stimulates economic development.

To ensure the sustainable development of the tourism industry, new concepts need to be introduced, providing a range of alternatives that can attract more tourists, foster tourism development, and enhance the harmony of tourist destinations. While various alternatives and concepts exist within the tourism sector, spiritual tourism is one of the most promising and focus-worthy for sustainable tourism development.

Spirituality is as a quest for the sacred, a journey in which individuals strive to uncover, preserve, and, when necessary, transform

what holds significance in their lives (Pargament, 1997, 1999). Through spirituality, people are addressing various life challenges, including anxiety and mental health issues, stemming from the constraints of modern individualistic lifestyles (Blomfield, 2009; Brownstein, 2008; Smith & Kelly, 2006). The influence and significance of spirituality extend beyond individual realms, impacting numerous groups and industries, notably the tourism sector (Haq & Wong, 2015; Brownstein, 2008), giving rise to the phenomenon of spiritual tourism.

Smith and Kelly (2006) define spiritual tourism as recreational activities or treatments crafted to enhance the well-being of the body, mind, and soul. It attracts individuals seeking spiritual development (Haq, 2017; Norman, 2014). Lee and Bai (2016) and McKercher and Prideaux (2014) recognize special interest tourism as a form of travel that offers meaningful leisure experiences, fostering benefits such as self-actualization, self-enrichment, and self-expression.

This book focuses on Malaysia and Turkiye as designated tourist destinations to investigate and shed light on implementing spiritual tourism and sustainability practices. Turkiye is selected as an exemplary model to complement Malaysia, given its reception of 29.9 million tourists (2021), securing the sixth position among the most-visited countries globally (Presidency of The Republic of Turkiye Investment Office, n.d.). Notably, both Turkiye and Malaysia share Islamic affiliations. In the newly released 2021/2022 Human Development Report, both nations achieved a comparable very high human development index (a crucial component of spirituality) exceeding 0.8 (UNDP, 2024).

TOURISM IN TURKIYE

The origins of history and Turkish civilisation trace back to 10,000 years, positioning Turkiye among the earliest civilisations globally. The

historical journey of Turkiye's civilisation commenced in prehistoric times, progressing through the Anatolian Civilisation, the Romans, the Seljuk Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and culminating in the establishment of the Modern Republic of Turkiye (Britannica, n.d.).

Situated at a strategically significant geographical crossroads between Asia and Europe, Turkiye possesses a distinctive cultural influence that is a compelling attraction within the tourism industry. Turkiye has been a bridge and sanctuary connecting these two continents throughout history. Situated at the crossroads of the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean East, Turkiye stands as one of the largest countries in the region, both in terms of its expanse and population. Geographically, Turkiye borders the Black Sea to the north, shares boundaries with Armenia and Georgia to the east, extends to Azerbaijan and Iran in the eastern regions and encompasses Iraq and Syria in the southern part. To the west, it spans the Mediterranean Sea and the Aegean Sea, reaching parts of North-western Greece and Bulgaria (Britannica, n.d.) Turkiye presents a variety of unique attractions at each destination, providing numerous opportunities for alternative tourism activities. These encompass coastal tourism, health tourism, winter sports, mountain climbing, exploration, plateau tours, eco-tourism, yacht and cruise tours, and golf tours.

Turkiye is seventh in the list of top 10 countries foreign tourists prefer, attracting 27.0 million visitors (UNWTO, 2012). By 2018, this number surged to over 40 million (Ministry of Culture & Tourism Turkiye, 2018). In 2022, Turkiye climbed to the fourth spot among countries with the highest tourist numbers, alongside France, Spain, the US, and Italy, welcoming 51 million visitors (Ernst & Young, 2023). In the first quarter of 2023, they witnessed a substantial increase, with 8.1 million foreign tourists visiting Turkiye, marking a 27% rise compared to the same period in 2022 (Ernst & Young, 2023). Istanbul became the most favoured destination 2022, attracting 16.0187 million tourists, followed by Antalya, Edirne, Mugla, and Artvin (Statista, 2023). In 2023, Istanbul continued its dominance as the prime choice for international travellers,

with 11.5 million visitors from January to August. Antalya, situated on the Mediterranean coast, secured the second position with 10.2 million tourists (“Turkiye welcomes over 33 million foreign tourists”, 2023).

Istanbul

Istanbul, formerly known as Byzantium and Constantinople, is Turkiye’s most renowned city and its economic, cultural, and historical hub. Istanbul spans an extensive area, totalling 1,539 square kilometres (594 square miles), with the projected population in 2023 currently estimated to be 15,847,768 (World Population Review, n.d.). Unique in its geographical position, Istanbul is the only city in the world straddling two continents, with one arm extending to Asia and the other to Europe. The Bosphorus, coursing the waters of the Black Sea, the Sea of Marmara, and the Golden Horn, weaves through the city’s heart (Britannica, n.d.)



Figure 1.1: Istanbul (Britannica, n.d.)

Its strategically vital location and captivating natural beauty shape Istanbul’s destiny. Over 1500 years, it served as the capital of the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman empires. The city, adorned with magnificent

monuments, evolved into a metropolis where diverse cultures, nations, and religions converged, forming the mosaic of Istanbul. Its endless variety captivates visitors, with countless museums, churches, palaces, grand mosques, bazaars, and sites of natural beauty (UNESCO, n.d.).

Sultan Mehmet, the Conqueror, declared Istanbul the capital of the Ottoman Empire upon conquering the city in 1453. The Historic areas of Istanbul, inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985, encompass four main areas: the Archeological Park, the Suleymaniye Mosque and its associated Conservation Area, Zeyrek Mosque and its associated Conservation Area, and the City Walls of Istanbul. At the core of the historical peninsula, Sultanahmet Square showcases prominent examples of Byzantine and Ottoman architecture. The Hagia Sophia hailed as the 8th Wonder of the World, is a testament to the glorious architectural heritage of the Byzantine Empire, dating back more than 1500 years and built by Anthemios of Tralles and Isidoros of Millet. Simultaneously, the Suleymaniye Mosque is a masterpiece crafted by Sinan, the Great Architect, during the Ottoman era (Britannica, n.d.; UNESCO, n.d.)

Antalya

Antalya is the second most popular city after Istanbul in Turkiye. Antalya is located in the west of Turkey and has an estimated population of more than 800,000 people. The city offers beautiful views, is set on a cliff, and is surrounded by mountains, forests, and the Mediterranean Sea. In the past, Antalya was ruled by Attalus, the King of Pergamon (158–138 BC), named the city Attaleia. It was well-preserved during Roman times, but the Byzantines and Seljuks managed to conquer it before the Ottoman Empire eventually took control (Britannica, n.d.).



Figure 1.2: Duden Waterfalls, Antalya

In 2023, Antalya saw a remarkable increase in international visitors, with a 29% rise compared to the previous year, attracting around 16.5 million tourists. This placed Antalya prominently on the global tourism map, alongside Istanbul, which remains the top destination in Türkiye (“Antalya, Istanbul among most visited cities in the world”, 2024). The various tourist attractions available in Antalya consist of five-star resorts and hotels, holiday villages, beautiful mountainous areas and archaeological sites. Every corner in Antalya has the effect of restoring various civilisations that are still preserved and are major attractions to foreign tourists. Xanthos-Letoon is one of the places in Antalya declared World Heritage by UNESCO. Xanthos, situated in ancient Lycia and corresponding to present-day Kinik, was known for its rich history. Letoon, located approximately 4km south of Xanthos along the river between Kas and Fethiye, serves as an illustration of the amalgamation of Lycian traditions and ancient Greek influences, particularly evident in their funerary art (“Antalya: Capital of Turkish tourism”, 2020).

Karain Cave, another notable site in Antalya, is located 30 km northwest of the city. Positioned on the eastern slope of Mount Katran in

the western Taurus Mountains range, the cave is carved into Cratase period limestones. Its altitude stands at 430m above sea level and 150m above the travertine plain, making it a significant destination for exploration (“Antalya: Capital of Turkish tourism”, 2020).



Figure 1.3: Karain Cave (Turkish Archaeological News, 2017)

Edirne

Located in the northwest of Turkiye, in the Thrace region near the borders of Greece and Bulgaria, the city of Edirne, historically known as Adrianople, holds a significant place in Turkish history. It served as the capital of the Ottoman Empire from 1365 to 1457, preceding the shift to Constantinople as the new Ottoman capital. Edirne, situated in Turkiye, is a captivating historic city that invites visitors to indulge in authentic Ottoman cuisine, wander through covered markets, and witness the vibrant life unfolding in its town square. (Dunlop, 2023).

A highlight of Edirne is the Selimiye Mosque, often regarded as a rival to Istanbul’s Blue Mosque. Designed by the Ottoman architect Mimar Koca Sinan and built between 1569 and 1575, this mosque is considered a

masterpiece of Islamic architecture and has held UNESCO World Heritage status since 2011. It stands as a testament to the rich historical and cultural tapestry of Edirne, making it a must-visit destination (UNESCO, n.d.).

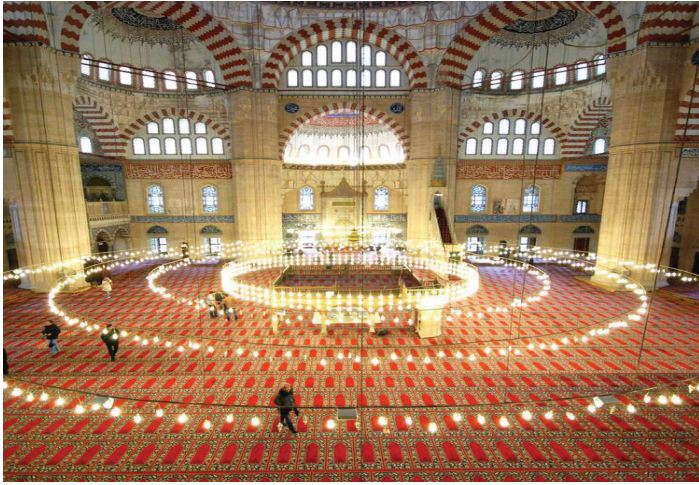


Figure 1.4: Selimiye Mosque (UNESCO, n.d.)

Trabzon

With a history that extends into antiquity, Trabzon stands as a hub of cultural and natural riches in the eastern Black Sea region. Situated along the historic Silk Road, the city has been a crossroads for religions, languages, and cultures for centuries, playing a pivotal role in history due to its harbour and strategic location on the legendary Silk Road. Its renown was such that even Marco Polo visited the city in the 14th century. Today, Trabzon remains a significant centre of commerce and culture, boasting many museums, monasteries, mosques, tombs, a covered bazaar, city walls, and a breathtaking landscape (Britannica, n.d.)



Figure 1.5: Sumela Monastery
("Turkey's iconic Sümela Monastery", 2022)

The Sumela Monastery, situated 54 km south of Trabzon in Altindere National Park, overlooks the valley of Altindere. The monastery, perched on the face of a cliff 270m above a deep gorge, appears to float between earth and sky when viewed from the valley floor ("Turkey's iconic Sümela Monastery," 2022). A symbol of Trabzon, the Uzungol Nature Park, located 95 km from the city, showcases rich flora, diverse wildlife, and stunning natural beauty. Beyond its natural wonders, Trabzon captivates visitors with a cuisine of considerable charm, offering a variety of local dishes with flavours found nowhere else in the world (Anatolia Travel Services, n.d.).

Mugla

Mugla, situated in southwestern Turkiye at the meeting point of the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean, has a rich historical tapestry. Before 1923, the Smyrna district of the city was home to 3000 Greeks. Known as Caria in ancient times, the Mugla region has been a prominent social, cultural, and historical centre for centuries. Ottoman rule was established in 1390, marking the beginning of Turkish sovereignty in Mugla, which remains

the district's focal point today (Britannica, n.d.).

Mugla, serving as the district's hub, offers an intimate atmosphere where the echoes of antiquity resonate amidst the splendid sea and sun tourism destinations. The Mugla province encompasses popular holiday cities like Bodrum, Marmaris, Datca, Koycegiz, and Fethiye. Visitors can choose from beautiful resorts, comfortable hotels, motels, and cosy guest houses and explore impressive ruins from past civilizations, all set against magnificent landscapes. Not far from the towns, crystal-clear, tide-less, warm seas beckon for swimming, while underwater enthusiasts can delve into the exploration of numerous reefs, caves, and majestic rock formations (All About Turkiye, n.d.).



Figure 1.6: Bodrum, Mugla

Turkiye's tourism industry is diverse and dynamic, showcasing the country's rich cultural heritage, historical landmarks, and natural beauty. Istanbul, the country's largest city, mesmerises visitors with its unique blend of European and Asian influences, featuring iconic sites like the Hagia Sophia and Topkapi Palace. With its stunning Mediterranean coastline and ancient ruins, Antalya stands as the second most popular

destination, offering a mix of relaxation and exploration. Edirne, with its grand Ottoman architecture, vibrant festivals, Trabzon's lush landscapes, and historical monasteries on the Black Sea coast, adds to Turkey's allure. Mugla, encompassing renowned resort towns like Bodrum and Marmaris, is celebrated for its pristine beaches and luxury resorts. Together, these cities highlight Turkiye's intricate appeal, ensuring travellers worldwide have a rich and varied experience.

TOURISM IN MALAYSIA

Situated in South Central Asia, Malaysia shares its borders with Thailand to the North, Indonesia to the West, and Brunei to the East. Additionally, Malaysia has maritime boundaries with Singapore, Vietnam, and the Philippines. After lifting domestic and international travel constraints post-COVID-19, tourism experienced a resurgence in the year 2022, maintaining its status as a cornerstone of the economy. The Gross Value Added of Tourism Industries (GVATI) in 2022 amounted to RM251.5 billion, representing approximately 14.0% of Malaysia's gross national product (GDP), marking a notable 26.7% surge from the RM198.5 billion recorded in 2021 ("Tourism rebounded in 2022", 2023). The country welcomed 20.1 million international tourists in 2023, exceeding the initial target of 16.1 million and 5.8 million tourists in the first quarter of 2024 - a growth of 32.5% compared to last year's 4.3 million (Wen, 2024).

Tourism ranks Malaysia's third-largest GDP contributor, trailing only the manufacturing and commodities sectors. In 2019, it accounted for approximately 15.9% of the total GDP. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Southeast Asian tourism sector experienced robust growth, prompting Malaysia to launch the ambitious "Visit Truly Asia Malaysia 2020" campaign. The campaign aimed to attract 30 million visitors and generate RM100 billion in tourist revenue for 2020. However, the outbreak of

COVID-19 severely impacted Malaysia's tourism industry, leading to the campaign's cancellation (MIDA, 2024).

In response, the Government unveiled the National Tourism Policy (NTP) 2020-2030 on December 23, 2020, to ensure the continuity and resilience of the country's tourism sector, positioning Malaysia as a premier global tourist destination. Key strategies outlined in the NTP include facilitating the industry's recovery within the framework of new norms, enhancing competitiveness, fostering sustainable and inclusive tourism development, and implementing adequate disaster risk management measures (MIDA, 2024).

The emergence of Malaysia as a tourist destination gained momentum as travellers from the Western world recognised the distinctive qualities, originality, beauty, and diversity that set it apart. Malaysia's allure lies in its stunning beaches, well-preserved islands, underwater treasures, waterfalls, national parks, highland landscapes, mangrove forests, and captivating lakes.

Malaysia stands among the top nine destinations in Asia and the Pacific (UNWTO, 2019). Malaysia hosted approximately 26 million international tourists pre-pandemic, contributing RM86.1 billion to the revenue. The tourism industry, constituting one of the pivotal sectors, generated an income of RM240.2 billion, representing 15.9% of the national GDP (Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia, 2020).

As per the latest statistics, Malaysia received 9.16 million tourists in the first half of 2023, showing a significant increase of 329.6% compared to the same period in 2022. This represents a remarkable recovery and growth in the tourism sector. The most substantial increases in arrivals, measured in terms of percentage, were observed from Brunei (5,899.8%), China (1,182.5%), Taiwan (1,569.3%), and Russia (1,899.5%) ("Tourist arrivals on track", 2023). There is a notable rise in foreign tourist arrivals, reaching 7,560,642 visitors from January to April this year, representing a 27.5% increase compared to last year (Mohamed et al., 2024).

In 2019, Kuala Lumpur topped the list as the most visited state by tourists with at least one night stay, followed by Selangor, Penang, Pahang, and Malacca, according to Tourism Malaysia (2019). In 2021, domestic tourists favoured Johor, Perak, Pahang, Negeri Sembilan, and Selangor, as reported by Tourism Malaysia (2021). By 2022, Pahang emerged as the most visited state by domestic tourists in Malaysia, attracting 7.8 million visitors, with Perak following closely behind at 6.9 million. The resurgence in domestic tourist numbers coincided with the government easing COVID-19 restrictions, as indicated by Statista (2023). In 2023, Selangor emerged as the most visited state, attracting 27.6 million domestic visitors. Kuala Lumpur and Sarawak followed closely, which welcomed 22.2 million and 17.9 million domestic visitors, respectively (“Domestic tourism surges”, 2024).

The Malaysian Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture (MOTAC) anticipates a gradual recovery of international tourist arrivals over the next two to three years, with a return to pre-pandemic levels. This timeline assumes continued accessibility to resources for a complete recovery. MOTAC introduced the Tourism Recovery Framework (TRF) 2.0 on June 21, 2022, to fortify and rejuvenate the tourism industry. This framework emphasizes five key strategies, including enhancing tourism and cultural offerings and promoting sustainable and inclusive tourism activities, as outlined by MIDA (2024).

Here are six states/places preferred by tourists, both foreign and domestic:

Selangor

The State of Selangor is blessed with rich cultures, traditions, languages, historical artefacts, and arts, complemented by a diverse and delightful gastronomic array. Located on the west coast of the Peninsular, Selangor shares its borders with Perak, Pahang, Negeri Sembilan, and the Straits of Malacca. Selangor is embellished with lush greens, varying with the

landscape and topography. From the coastal mangroves to the vibrant tropical rainforest and extending to the picturesque fishing villages that line the coastline, including Sekinchan, Tanjung Sepat, and Pulau Carey - Selangor offers a diverse and captivating natural setting.

The famous Titiwangsa Range stretches across Selangor, offering a range of hills and mountains to explore. Adventurous visitors inclined towards trekking will discover that each attraction possesses a distinctive nature, providing a thrilling experience. For instance, Gunung Nuang, renowned for its rugged terrain and challenging trails, is an exciting prospect for extreme climbers. For those seeking a break from the technology-driven urban lifestyle, the numerous waterfalls in Ulu Langat, Ulu Yam, Rawang, and Broga Hill offer a refreshing opportunity to connect with nature.



Figure 1.7: Sekinchan (Selangor Travel, n.d.)

Kuala Lumpur

Kuala Lumpur, officially the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, is the capital and largest city in Malaysia. The city has impressive skyscrapers, colonial architecture, vibrant local culture, and many natural attractions.

Divided into several districts, the city has its central hub known as the Golden Triangle, comprising Bukit Bintang, KLCC, and Chinatown. Kuala Lumpur is renowned for its iconic landmarks, including the Petronas Twin Towers, the ancient Batu Caves dating back over 400 million years, and the National Mosque of Malaysia, Masjid Negara. The National Mosque holds significant cultural importance as a nationwide symbol of Islam.



Figure 1.8: Kuala Lumpur (Britannica, n.d.)

Sarawak

Sarawak, the largest state in Malaysia, spans a landscape equivalent to that of Peninsular Malaysia. Renowned for its rich cultural heritage, thriving tourism, and vast natural expanses, Sarawak is a unique blend of tradition and modernity. The state boasts abundant swamps and wetlands home to numerous marine animals and extensive tropical plant diversity and greenery. Located on the northwestern part of Borneo Island, the state features magnificent tourist spots such as Gunung Mulu National Park, Niah National Park, Mount Santubong, Semenggoh Nature Reserve and many others. The state offers a variety of water sports and cruising experiences amidst its national parks, museums, nature reserves, and

rivers. The state hosts numerous festivals yearly, including the famous Rainforest World Music Festival, a major attraction. Sarawak provides a perfect blend of urban sophistication and natural beauty, making it an irresistible destination for travellers.



Figure 1.9: Niah National Park
(Pacific Asia Travel Association, n.d.)

Penang

Penang, situated on the northwest coast of Peninsular Malaysia, is one of the states in Malaysia. The Straits of Melaka geographically divide the state into Seberang Pulau and Seberang Perai. The capital city, Georgetown, gained UNESCO World Heritage status in 2008. Georgetown, once a vital regional trade route, now stands as a testament to cultural diversity, preserving Asian and Western traditions in a rich tapestry of multi-religious and cultural assimilation. The city has many historic buildings reflecting colonial, Islamic, Chinese, Anglo, and Indian influences. These heritage structures, such as the Syed Al-Atas House, Lebuh Aceh Lebuh Melayu Mosque, Khoo Kongsi Temple, and Yap Temple, serve as major tourist

attractions. Penang is renowned as a holiday destination, drawing foreign tourists searching for diverse and unique local cuisine. Additionally, the state offers a range of attractions, including resort beaches, historical sites, and various adventurous outdoor activities.



Figure 1.10: Penang Bridge (Credit: Lee Chee Keong)

Pahang

Pahang, the third largest state in Malaysia, is situated in the Pahang River basin and shares borders with Kelantan to the north, Perak, Selangor, and Negeri Sembilan to the west, Johor to the south, and Terengganu and the South China Sea to the east. Pahang boasts a climate conducive to year-round holidays, with almost daily sunshine and many natural and cultural attractions. The state focuses on eco-tourism, showcasing the strengths of nature, such as highlands, rainforests, islands, and beaches.

Notable attractions include the Charas Cave, which features Buddhist and Hindu symbols, including a reclining Buddha statue set against a spectacular limestone outcrop. Tioman Island is another must-visit destination in Pahang, renowned as one of the world's most beautiful islands. Activities on the island include snorkelling, scuba diving, rock

climbing, waterfalls, and jungle trekking. Pahang takes pride in being home to the world's oldest Tropical rainforest, a unique feature found exclusively in Malaysia. Pahang National Park, the global sole park that maintains the original Tropical Rain Forest, has remained undisturbed since 130 million years ago.



Figure 1.11: Pulau Tioman (Pahang Tourism, n.d.)

Sabah

Sabah, Malaysia's second-largest state, is situated north of Borneo Island, the third-largest island globally. The tropical wildlife in Sabah is exceptionally diverse. Renowned for its beaches and serving as the habitat for the wild Orang Utan, Sabah provides tourists with an array of opportunities to fulfil their desires. Whether it involves trekking to the highest peak, scuba diving, or visiting hot springs, Sabah conveniently offers it all in one location.

On the northern part of Borneo Island lies the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Kinabalu Park, the oldest park in Sabah. Dominated by Mount Kinabalu, standing at an altitude of 4,095.2 meters, it is the highest

mountain in Southeast Asia. Kinabalu Park encompasses a vast ecological area characterised by habitat diversity, ranging from tropical lowlands, rainforest areas, and alpine semi-forest to high-altitude shrubs.



Figure 1.12: Mount Kinabalu (MySabah.com)

THE IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM SEGMENTATION

Tourism segmentation, the practice of dividing the diverse market of tourists into distinct segments based on shared characteristics, preferences, and behaviours, plays a pivotal role in shaping successful tourism strategies. This targeted approach allows destinations and businesses to tailor their offerings to specific groups, enhancing travel experience and optimising resource allocation. The importance of tourism segmentation can be outlined in several key aspects:

Understanding Diverse Traveller Needs

Tourism segmentation enables a detailed understanding of different traveller groups' diverse needs and desires. By identifying specific characteristics such as demographics, interests, and motivations, destinations can cater to

the unique expectations of each segment, creating more personalised and satisfying experiences.

Tailoring Marketing Strategies

Effective marketing is crucial in attracting the right audience. Tourism segmentation allows for developing targeted marketing campaigns that resonate with specific segments. Whether it is adventure seekers, cultural enthusiasts, or luxury travellers, tailored messages and promotional activities will more likely capture the intended audience's attention.

Resource Optimisation

Understanding the segments that significantly contribute to tourism revenue allows for the strategic allocation of resources to improve services, infrastructure, and experiences that are most important to these segments.

Product Development and Innovation

Tourism segmentation informs product development by identifying gaps or opportunities in the market. This insight encourages innovation in creating new, unique offerings that align with the preferences of specific segments, whether it is designing family-friendly attractions or eco-friendly accommodations; catering to segment-specific demands fosters innovation.

Enhancing Visitor Satisfaction

Tailored experiences increase visitor satisfaction. When tourists feel that their specific needs and preferences are considered, they are more likely to enjoy positive and memorable experiences.

Effective Pricing Strategies

Different segments exhibit varying price sensitivities and expectations. By utilizing tourism segmentation, businesses can implement pricing strategies

that align with the perceived value of services and experiences for specific groups. This approach ensures that pricing remains competitive and appealing to the targeted market.

Building Brand Loyalty

Catering to the unique preferences of different segments helps build brand loyalty. When tourists consistently find value and relevance in their experiences, they are more likely to return as repeat visitors and become brand advocates. Positive experiences within specific segments enhance the overall perception of the destination.

Tourism segmentation is a powerful tool that goes beyond mere marketing tactics. It is a strategic approach that guides destination management, product development, and service delivery. By recognising and responding to the diverse needs of various traveller segments, destinations can position themselves competitively, foster sustainable tourism growth, and ensure memorable experiences for all.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPIRITUAL TOURISM AS A NEW SEGMENTATION

While the connection between tourism and spirituality has been acknowledged, there needs to be more theoretical publications on spiritual tourism. Despite recognising spirituality as a factor influencing human behaviour in various social settings, there needs to be more resources that explore the relationships between spirituality, behaviour, and the choice of tourist destinations. Some sociological and business literature has identified spirituality as a crucial field for investigation in tourism (Cochrane, 2009; Haq & Wong, 2015; Terzidou et al., 2018).

The literature gap is particularly evident when considering the relationship between tourism and spirituality, especially in the formulation of spiritual indicators and their impact on the inclusive spiritual needs of tourists. Consequently, it can be asserted that spiritual tourism is one of the least explored aspects of modern tourism and represents one of the most understudied areas within the tourism literature (Hughes et al., 2013; Timothy & Iverson, 2006). While current discussions often revolve around marketing spiritual tourism, Islamic tourism, halal tourism, and the provision of sharing and complementary accommodation services, there has yet to be a concerted effort to define the term and formulate indicators for spiritual tourism.

Recognising the significance of spirituality in tourism, the authors of this book explore the characteristics, criteria, and concepts of spiritual tourism, providing insights from the perspectives of both tourism supply and the tourism market (tourists) in both Turkiye and Malaysia. These revelations have culminated in formulating a spiritual tourism framework and, ultimately, identifying spiritual tourism indicators. These indicators can be valuable tools for promoting sustainable spiritual tourism development in Turkiye and Malaysia.

Despite considering spiritual and Islamic tourism, existing studies are relatively limited and need a specific focus on the context of Turkiye and Malaysia. To address this gap, the authors of this book compare the two nations in the realm of spiritual tourism, presenting a unique perspective. This initiative is crucial because Turkiye and Malaysia are leading Muslim countries driving the global tourism industry. The insights derived from this book can guide product development and the creation of new tourist attractions, specifically within the domain of Spiritual Tourism. The implementation of spiritual tourism has the potential to significantly enhance sustainable tourism development in both Turkiye and Malaysia.

CHAPTER 2

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Sustainable tourism, often called responsible or eco-tourism, is an approach to tourism that aims to minimise the negative impact on the environment, culture, and communities while promoting positive contributions to these aspects. Sustainable tourism seeks to maintain tourism activities over the long term while ensuring that the well-being of future generations is not compromised.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Sustainable tourism is paramount in today's world as it addresses the need to balance economic growth and environmental conservation while ensuring the well-being of local communities. Sustainable tourism minimises negative impacts on natural ecosystems, preserves cultural heritage, and promotes responsible travel practices. It recognises that tourism can be a powerful tool for socio-economic development if managed responsibly. Moreover, sustainable tourism contributes to the conservation of biodiversity and the protection of fragile ecosystems, which are vital for the long-term survival of our planet. It fosters a sense of stewardship among travellers, encouraging them to respect and protect the destinations they visit. Ultimately, sustainable tourism is about safeguarding the environment and creating meaningful and authentic experiences for tourists while benefiting the host communities. Embracing sustainability in tourism is not just a choice but an ethical imperative in an era of climate change and environmental degradation (UNWTO, 2019).

Sustainable tourism has become a topic of paramount significance in recent years as the global travel and tourism industry continues to grow. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) published a report in 2020 titled “Sustainable Tourism for Development: Global Report on an Observed Increase in Volunteering and Other Forms of Giving Back by Travellers,” shedding light on the significance of sustainable tourism practices. This report highlights how sustainable tourism is a responsible choice and an essential driver of positive change, encompassing environmental, social, and economic aspects.

Sustainable tourism refers to conducting tourism that not only enhances the well-being of travellers but also respects and preserves the natural environment, supports local communities, and respects cultural heritage. This approach goes beyond mere profit-making and strives for a harmonious coexistence of tourism with the ecosystems and societies it affects. UNWTO’s report underscores several vital reasons why sustainable tourism is crucial in the contemporary world:

Environmental Preservation

One of the primary pillars of sustainable tourism is preserving the environment. The UNWTO report emphasises that by promoting sustainable tourism, we can minimise the negative impact of tourism on the environment. This includes conserving natural resources such as forests, oceans, wildlife, and ecosystems. Travellers increasingly recognise the importance of protecting the planet’s delicate balance, and sustainable tourism provides a way for them to do so.

Economic Development and Stability

Sustainable tourism catalyses economic development, especially in regions heavily reliant on the tourism industry. The UNWTO report highlights that this sector has the potential to create job opportunities, boost local

businesses, and generate income for communities. By investing in sustainable tourism practices, destinations can ensure that tourism remains a dependable and viable source of income, contributing to economic stability.

Cultural Preservation

Cultural heritage is a cornerstone of many tourism destinations. Sustainable tourism emphasises the preservation of cultural traditions, languages, and historical sites. This approach allows travellers to engage with local customs and learn about different cultures, fostering mutual respect and understanding. Preserving cultural diversity is not just a matter of pride but also an essential aspect of sustainable tourism.

Resilience to Crises

The world faced an unprecedented challenge with the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly impacted the tourism industry. As highlighted in the UNWTO report, sustainable tourism practices provide a foundation for resilience during crises. Destinations that have embraced sustainability can adapt and pivot toward responsible tourism options, ensuring their long-term survival in the face of uncertainty.

Competitive Advantage

Businesses and destinations that prioritise sustainability often gain a competitive advantage. Today's travellers are more conscious of their environmental and social footprint. Businesses can attract a growing market segment that actively seeks out responsible choices by offering sustainable options. This can lead to increased revenue and brand loyalty.

The importance of sustainable tourism, as highlighted in the UNWTO's 2020 report, cannot be overstated. It is a multi-staged approach that benefits

the environment, local communities, and travellers alike. By practising sustainable tourism, we ensure the preservation of our planet’s natural and cultural treasures and promote economic development and resilience in the face of global challenges. The responsible traveller and the sustainable destination go hand in hand, working towards a more harmonious and sustainable future for the travel and tourism industry.

TOURISM IN MALAYSIA AND TURKIYE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

As per the 2018 tourism report from the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, the recorded tourist arrivals amounted to 25.83 million, generating a total of RM 84.1 billion. This represents a RM 2 billion increase in total receipts over the previous five years. However, compared to 2017, there was a decrease of 0.4% in visitor arrivals, equating to 116,105 fewer tourists (Tourism Malaysia, 2019).

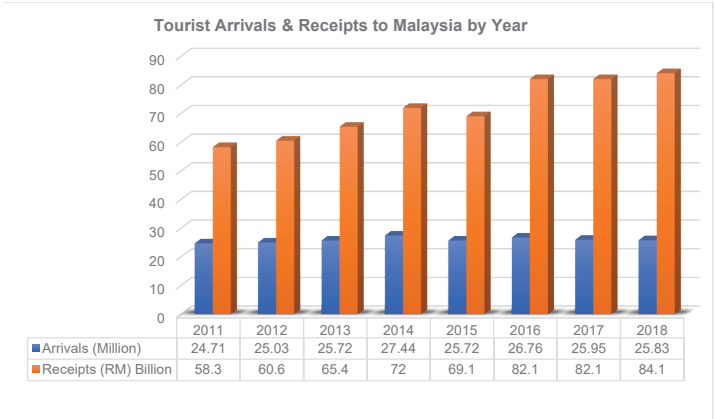


Figure 2.1: Tourist Arrivals and Receipts to Malaysia (Tourism Malaysia, 2019)

YEAR	ARRIVALS	RECEIPTS (RM)
2022	10.07 million	28.23 Billion
2021	0.13 million	0.24 Billion
2020	4.33 million	12.7 Billion
2019	26.10 million	86.1 Billion

Figure 2.2 International Tourist Arrivals and Receipts
(Tourism Malaysia, 2024).

In 2022, there were approximately ten million tourist arrivals in Malaysia. The country finally reopened its border in April 2022 after two years of travel restrictions, severely impacting the number of tourists coming to the country. In the first half of 2023, Malaysia welcomed 9.16 million international tourists, placing second after Thailand in the Southeast Asian region. From January to September, the country recorded 14 million tourist arrivals. With the upswing in arrivals, the government has revised the tourism target to 19.1 million by year-end 2023 from the initial 16.1 million (The Star, 2023).

Malaysia aims to showcase its natural and sustainable facets, providing tourists with an authentic ecotourism encounter. This commitment is exemplified by introducing the National Ecotourism Plan 2016-2025, guided by the slogan “Tourism protects, preserves, and conserves nature, culture, and heritage.” Furthermore, as stated in the Tourism Malaysia Strategic Plan (2022 – 2026), Malaysia aims to follow the post-COVID global trend to move away from mass tourism and towards more flexible, experiential and individualistic tourism and special interest holidays.

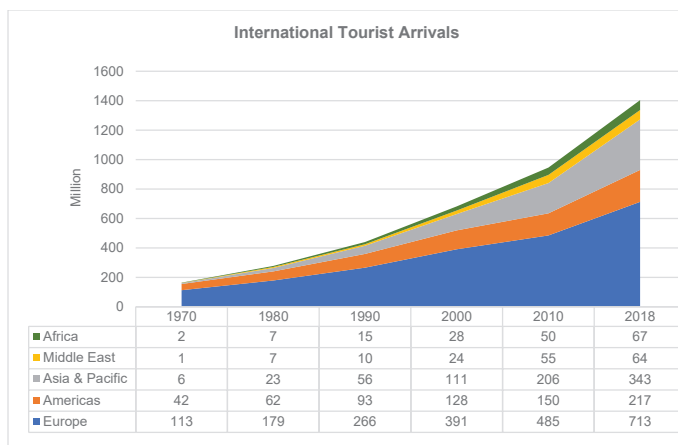


Figure 2.3: International Tourist Arrivals (UNWTO, 2019)

The global leisure tourism industry has been experiencing steady growth, with international tourist arrivals continuously increasing over the past six decades. The figures have risen from 165.8 million in 1970 to 278.1 million in 1980, reaching 439.4 million in 1990, escalating further to 682.1 million in 2000, and culminating in 950.8 million in 2010. By 2018, international tourist arrivals had surged to 1.4 billion (UNWTO, 2019). This data unmistakably indicates a consistent year-over-year growth in tourism. It underscores the UNWTO’s commitment to promoting and fostering sustainable tourism to contribute to economic development, international understanding, peace, prosperity, and universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

The latest data from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2023) indicates that international tourism is poised to reclaim nearly 90% of pre-pandemic levels by the year’s end. Between January and September 2023, an estimated 975 million tourists ventured internationally, reflecting a notable 38% increase compared to the corresponding months in 2022.

In the third quarter, international tourist arrivals surged to 91% of pre-pandemic levels, with July marking the highest monthly achievement since the onset of the pandemic. Throughout January to September 2023, the tourism industry rebounded to 87% of pre-pandemic levels, signalling a trajectory toward almost 90% recovery by year-end.

Meanwhile, from 2000 to 2005, Türkiye witnessed a significant surge in foreign tourist arrivals, escalating from 8 million to 21.2 million. This catapulted Türkiye into the top 10 global destinations for foreign visitors. In 2005, the revenues reached US\$17.5 billion, solidifying Türkiye's position as one of the top 10 highest revenue-generating countries worldwide (UNWTO, 2012). By 2011, Türkiye claimed sixth place among the world's most popular tourist destinations and secured fourth place in Europe, as reported by UNWTO (2012). In 2014, Türkiye continued to attract attention, hosting approximately 42 million foreign tourists and maintaining its sixth place globally (Turkish Travel Agencies {TÜRSAB}, 2015).

However, the scenario took a downturn in 2015, marking a steep decline in tourism to Türkiye. 2016 saw a drastic reduction, with only around 25 million visitors. Described as a “year of devastating losses,” it represented the second consecutive year of significant visitor numbers and income setbacks. Turkish tourism businesses lamented that they could not recall a more challenging time in the sector (Letsch, 2016). The trend began to reverse in 2017, with foreign visitors rebounding to 32.4 million. Robust security campaigns and promotional efforts contributed in part to this recovery.

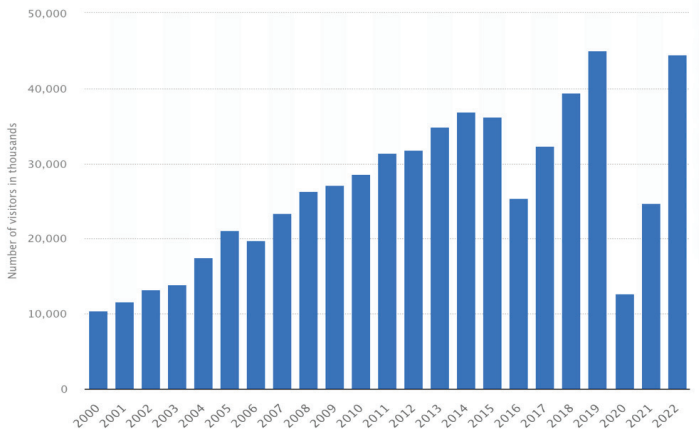


Figure 2.4: International Tourist Arrival in Turkiye (2000-2022), (Statista, 2023)

In an attempt to revive the struggling tourism sector, the Turkish government, in early 2017, encouraged Turkish citizens residing abroad to choose Turkiye as their vacation destination. Simultaneously, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism Turkiye introduced the Tourism Strategy of Turkiye – 2023. This initiative aimed to extend the management and implementation of strategic planning efforts, fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors in tourism with a governance-oriented approach (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2007).

The influx of international visitors to Turkiye experienced a significant surge in 2022 compared to the previous year, rebounding from a substantial decline in 2020 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of international tourists reached almost 44.6 million in 2022, nearly doubling the figures in 2021 but remaining just below the peak of 45 million inbound visitors recorded in 2019. While not yet fully recovering to pre-pandemic levels, there was a notable increase in arrivals across all major inbound travel markets in Turkiye during 2021 and 2022. Throughout these years, visitors from Germany and Russia constituted the

highest proportion of inbound arrivals (Statista, 2023).

Turkiye is actively enhancing its national sustainable tourism standards through collaboration with domestic and international partners, aiming to harness tourism supply resources that encompass natural, cultural, and social elements. The objective is to balance protection and utilisation while globally promoting these aspects without compromising. The Turkiye Sustainable Tourism Industry Criteria (TR-I) has been established to facilitate the sustainable growth of the Turkish tourism sector and foster a shared understanding among all stakeholders. TR-I is designed for implementation by accommodation facilities and tour operators, featuring criteria aligned with Turkey's social and cultural context and globally recognised sustainable tourism standards. Structured under four main themes—sustainable management, socio-economic impacts, cultural impacts, and environmental impacts - TR-I includes mandatory principles and practices outlined by the Republic of Turkiye's Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Turkiye Tourism Promotion and Development Agency, n.d.).

Tourism stands out as one of the swiftest expanding sectors in the global economy. The income generated from tourists' consumption of goods and services, the taxes imposed on businesses within the tourism industry, and the employment opportunities created in service sectors linked to tourism underscore its significance. Recognised as a potent instrument for a country's economic development, tourism directly and indirectly affects society, including Malaysia and Turkiye. Tourism has multi-dimensional societal impacts as a major player in the world economy's service sector. It operates as a substantial global system, influencing the environment and, in turn, being influenced by it. Consequently, addressing environmental conservation challenges in all facets of the system becomes imperative for tourism. This necessitates an approach that spans the entire system, recognising the intricacies of the tourism system and the interconnected nature of its components (Sarfaraz et al., 2015).

Sustainable tourism is an increasingly critical aspect of the global travel industry. It involves responsible travel practices that prioritise the environment's and local communities' well-being. Rocio et al. (2023) highlighted the vital role of sustainable tourism in balancing the economic, environmental, and social dimensions of travel.

First and foremost, sustainable tourism aids in the preservation of the environment. Reducing the negative impact on natural resources, such as forests, oceans, and wildlife, ensures that these resources are available for future generations (GSTC,2022). Travellers are increasingly conscious of their environmental footprint, making sustainable tourism a responsible choice. Economically, sustainable tourism is a driver of development. It creates job opportunities, supports local businesses, and generates income for communities (Manzoor et al., 2019). This economic stability is essential in regions heavily reliant on tourism. Culturally, sustainable tourism safeguards traditions and historical sites, fostering mutual respect and understanding between travellers and local communities. Preserving cultural heritage is an essential aspect of sustainable tourism (Wang et al., 2023). The COVID-19 pandemic showcased the resilience of sustainable tourism. Destinations that had embraced sustainability were better equipped to adapt and pivot toward responsible tourism options in times of crisis.

In conclusion, this chapter has explored the pivotal importance of sustainable tourism, emphasising its role in preserving the environment, safeguarding cultural heritage, and fostering positive contributions to local communities. Exploring tourist arrivals data further underscores the increasing global recognition of the significance of sustainable travel practices. As we navigate the intricate landscape of tourism, it becomes clear that fostering sustainability is not just a choice but a collective responsibility. By embracing sustainable tourism principles, we pave the way for a future where travel enriches both the travellers and the destinations, ensuring a harmonious coexistence between tourism, the

environment, and local communities. This chapter serves as a call to action, encouraging stakeholders across the tourism spectrum to unite to shape a more sustainable and resilient future for the industry.

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ أَنْظِرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ

“Travel through the land; then observe how was the end of
the deniers.”

(Al-An'aam: 11)

CHAPTER 3

A SEGMENTATION APPROACH FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

In the dynamic realm of tourism, a clear understanding of traveller diversity is essential for crafting strategies that align with sustainability principles. This chapter embarks on a journey into “A Segmentation Approach for Sustainable Tourism,” exploring how the identification and categorisation of distinct travel segments contribute to promoting and realising sustainable practices within the industry. By exploring the different dimensions of tourism segmentation, we aim to unravel the intricacies of tailoring experiences that meet the diverse needs and desires of travellers and foster a harmonious coexistence with the environment, cultures, and communities. As we navigate the intersections of segmentation and sustainability, we seek to unravel insights illuminating a path towards a more responsible and resilient future for the tourism landscape.

MARKETING SEGMENTATION

Marketing segmentation holds significant importance in the field of marketing for several reasons:

Customer Understanding

Segmentation helps businesses gain a deeper understanding of their customers. It recognises that consumers within a more significant market have diverse needs, motivations, and preferences. Segmenting the market allows companies to discern and address these differences more efficiently (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

Targeted Marketing Efforts

Once the market is segmented, businesses can customise their marketing efforts for each segment. This includes tailoring advertising messages, product features, and pricing strategies to resonate with each group's specific needs and desires, leading to more efficient resource allocation (Wedel & Kamakura, 2012).

Competitive Advantage

Effective segmentation can provide a competitive advantage. Companies that can identify and serve niche segments often face less direct competition as they address unique customer needs. This can lead to stronger brand loyalty and market positioning (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

Product Development

Segmentation guides product development efforts. Companies can create products and services that are better aligned with the preferences and requirements of their target segments, increasing the likelihood of success in the marketplace (Wedel & Kamakura, 2012).

MARKETING SEGMENTATION AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Marketing segmentation in sustainable tourism is crucial as it allows destination managers and tourism businesses to tailor their strategies to different segments of travellers. By understanding segments' unique needs, preferences, and motivations, sustainable tourism providers can offer more personalised and impactful experiences (Font & McCabe, 2017).

Marketing segmentation in sustainable tourism involves dividing the market into distinct groups based on specific characteristics, needs, or behaviours and tailoring marketing strategies to address the unique

requirements of each segment. Sustainable tourism aims to minimise the negative impact on the environment, promote cultural awareness, and contribute to the well-being of local communities (Cheng, 2023). The table below illustrates various segments in sustainable tourism, outlining their characteristics and corresponding marketing strategies:

Table 3.1 Market Segmentation and Sustainable Tourism

Segments	Characteristics	Marketing Strategy
Eco-Conscious Travellers	Prioritise destinations with environmentally solid policies, seek eco-certified accommodations and prefer low-impact transportation.	Emphasise eco-friendly practices, highlight certifications and showcase sustainable initiatives in marketing materials.
Cultural Enthusiasts	Interested in authentic cultural experiences, support local artisans and traditional practices, and enjoy immersive activities.	Showcase unique cultural experiences, promote local craftsmanship, and highlight community engagement initiatives.
Adventure Seekers	Prefer outdoor activities and adventure tourism, seek destinations with diverse ecosystems, and are interested in responsible adventure experiences.	Highlight sustainable adventure options, promote responsible wildlife viewing, and emphasize eco-friendly gear.

Wellness Travellers	Prioritise destinations focusing on well-being, seek eco-friendly wellness retreats, and value activities promoting mental and physical health.	Emphasise wellness offerings, highlight eco-friendly practices and showcase the destination's natural beauty.
Family-Oriented Travellers	Travel with families, prioritise destinations with family-friendly activities, and value educational and sustainable experiences for children.	Promote family-friendly sustainable activities, highlight educational opportunities, and emphasise the destination's safety.
Responsible Luxury Travellers	Seek luxury experiences focusing on sustainability, prioritise eco-friendly accommodations, and value responsible luxury amenities.	Promote family-friendly sustainable activities, highlight educational opportunities, and emphasise the destination's safety.

The success of sustainable tourism initiatives often relies on effective market segmentation. Segmentation enables tourism providers to customise sustainable experiences for different segments. For instance, adventure-seeking tourists may be attracted to eco-trekking in pristine natural reserves, while culturally inclined travellers may prefer community-based tourism initiatives (Schänzel & Yeoman, 2015). Segmentation also allows for more effective communication with tourists interested in sustainable practices. By targeting messages specifically at eco-conscious travellers, destinations and businesses can raise awareness and educate tourists about responsible behaviours (Shen et al., 2020).

Besides, sustainable tourism often involves significant investments in eco-friendly infrastructure and practices. Segmentation helps allocate resources efficiently by targeting segments more likely to appreciate and support these initiatives (Koc & Altinay, 2007). Many sustainable tourism initiatives rely on close collaboration with local communities. Segmentation helps identify segments of tourists who are more likely to engage in community-based activities, which can benefit local economies and preserve cultural heritage (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018).

KEY COMPONENTS OF MARKETING SEGMENTATION IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Effective segmentation strategies enhance the promotion and implementation of sustainable practices in the tourism industry, demonstrating a symbiotic relationship between segmentation and sustainable tourism. Demographic, psychographic, behavioural, and geographic segmentation approaches help identify travellers and tailor experiences and messages to meet their preferences and values. By doing so, segmentation enhances the attractiveness of sustainable tourism and contributes to the protection of natural environments, the well-being of local communities, and the preservation of cultural heritage. Various segmentation approaches exist, with some of the commonly employed approaches including:

Demographic Segmentation

Demographic factors such as age, income, and education level can influence a traveller's interest in sustainable tourism (Font & McCabe, 2017). For example, younger travellers may be more receptive to eco-friendly practices and experiences, while higher-income individuals might seek luxury sustainable accommodations.

Psychographic Segmentation

Psychographic factors, including values, beliefs, and lifestyle choices, play a significant role in sustainable tourism segmentation (Stylidis et al., 2018). Some travellers seek to connect with nature and cultural heritage, while others feel a sense of responsibility toward the environment and local communities.

Behavioural Segmentation

Behavioural segmentation considers past travel behaviours and patterns. It identifies travellers with a history of choosing eco-friendly options and can help businesses tailor their marketing efforts accordingly (Gupta & Chopra, 2014).

Geographic Segmentation

Geographic factors can also influence sustainable tourism preferences. For instance, travellers from regions with strong environmental awareness may have different expectations and interests than those with less exposure to sustainability issues (Font & McCabe, 2017).

THE ROLE OF MARKETING SEGMENTATION IN PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Marketing segmentation is a vital strategy in promoting sustainable tourism. It enables businesses and destinations to understand and cater to travellers' diverse needs and motivations, aligning their offerings with sustainability principles. By employing demographic, psychographic, behavioural, and geographic segmentation, sustainable tourism providers can create customised experiences and messages that resonate with different traveller segments. In doing so, they contribute to the growth of

responsible and environmentally friendly travel, benefiting not only the industry but also the planet and local communities:

Customised Messaging

Segmentation enables marketers to create targeted messages and campaigns that resonate with specific eco-conscious traveller segments (Ahmad et al., 2020). For instance, a message highlighting a destination's efforts to minimise carbon footprint might appeal more to environmentally conscious travellers. At the same time, another emphasis on cultural immersion may attract those interested in local experiences.

Product Development

Understanding the unique preferences of different segments allows sustainable tourism providers to develop tailored products and services. This could include eco-friendly accommodations, sustainable transportation options, or community-based tourism initiatives (Pan et al., 2018).

Sustainability Education

Segmentation can educate travellers about sustainable practices and their importance. Sustainable tourism providers can use targeted communication to inform and engage travellers in responsible behaviours during their trips (Budeanu, 2007).

Community Engagement

Sustainable tourism often involves close collaboration with local communities. Segmentation helps identify segments of travellers who are more likely to engage in community-based activities, supporting the economic and cultural sustainability of the destination (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018).

The segmentation approach in sustainable tourism serves as a crucial tool for aligning tourism practices with the broader environmental, cultural, and community sustainability goals. Tourism providers can create tailored experiences that foster responsible behaviour and promote sustainable values by identifying and catering to the distinct needs of various traveller segments. This strategic segmentation enhances the effectiveness of marketing efforts and plays a significant role in minimising negative impacts on destinations, preserving cultural heritage, and supporting local communities. As the tourism landscape evolves, integrating segmentation strategies will be essential for driving the industry towards a more sustainable and resilient future. Through targeted messaging, tailored product development, and community engagement, the segmentation approach paves the way for a tourism model that respects and nurtures the very environments, cultures, and people that make travel possible.

CHAPTER 4

THE ROLES OF SPIRITUALITY IN SHAPING SEGMENTATION FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

In the complex realm of sustainable tourism, spirituality emerges as a profound and varied force shaping the segmentation landscape. This chapter explores spirituality's crucial role in influencing the segmentation strategies within sustainable tourism. As travellers seek more meaningful and authentic experiences, understanding the interplay between spirituality and segmentation becomes imperative for stakeholders in the tourism industry. This introduction sets the stage for exploring how spiritual dimensions contribute to the evolving dynamics of sustainable tourism segmentation, paving the way for a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness between human spirituality and the sustainable tourism paradigm.

SPIRITUALITY AND SPIRITUAL TOURISM

The term “spiritual” holds distinct meanings for different individuals. For some, it involves engaging in organised religious activities such as attending a church, synagogue, or mosque. Meanwhile, others perceive spirituality as a non-religious encounter that varies individually, with some finding their spiritual connection through personal prayer, yoga, meditation, moments of quiet reflection, a belief in the supernatural, or long walks.

“Spiritual” is a term that has gained widespread acceptance and is associated with various facets of life. It is often used interchangeably with religion. The practice of religion, in essence, involves a connection to a supernatural power, with many religions attributing this ultimate

power to God Almighty. Adherents or believers typically perform rituals to acknowledge and revere this power (Marshall, 2002). Spirituality's connection to religion is subjective and contingent on an individual's perspective on this term.

Hanefar, Sa'ari, and Siraj (2016) explored the concept of spirituality through the lens of intelligence that incorporates both Western and Islamic perspectives. Their research conceptualises spirituality as a form of intelligence that encompasses inherent potentials within individuals, which can be actualised for practical benefits. They have identified seven themes of spiritual intelligence based on the original study by Hanefar (2015): Meaning/ purpose of life, consciousness, transcendence, spiritual resources, self-determination, reflection-soul purification, and spiritual coping with obstacles. The following discussion highlighted the synthesis of these spiritual intelligence themes in the context of tourism, also known as spiritual tourism.

Spiritual tourism entails a quest to discover the meaning of life, representing a journey of exploration that transcends individual identity. It fosters a harmonious balance among the body, mind, and soul, and this connection may or may not be intertwined with religion (Smith et al., 2010). Until now, many researchers have frequently used the terms 'spiritual tourism' and 'religious tourism' interchangeably, leading to a lack of clarity regarding the conceptual distinctions between the two concepts. Although some researchers have shed light on the "spirituality puzzle," a comprehensive understanding has often been lacking. Through an examination of various sources addressing religion and spirituality and adapting from the study done by Hanefar et al. (2016), Abd Halim et al. (2021) developed a conceptual framework for spiritual tourism to establish a foundation for future scholarly investigations into the phenomenon of spiritual tourism. The framework consists of five main themes: purpose of life, self-consciousness, transcendence, self-determination and soul-reflection.

SPIRITUALITY AND SHAPING SEGMENTATION

Spirituality can significantly shape market segmentation, particularly in industries catering to individuals' spiritual and wellness needs. Understanding the spiritual aspects of consumers allows businesses to create targeted marketing strategies that resonate with their values and preferences. It involves recognising the role of spirituality in shaping lifestyle choices and preferences and tailoring offerings accordingly. Based on the spiritual tourism framework developed by Abd Halim et al. (2021), here are some ways in which spirituality influences market segmentation in the tourism industry:

Purpose of Life

Living without a purpose is akin to traversing a directionless journey. A life imbued with meaning leads one towards heightened spirituality. Individuals with elevated spiritual intelligence can contemplate their purpose and recognise their connectivity to the Divine. Quoting from the Qur'an, "And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me (God Almighty)" (Chapter al-Dharyat, 51: verse 56), it emphasises that the primary purpose of creation is to worship God.

Acknowledging oneself as a servant of God and engaging in worship demonstrates gratitude from humankind to God Almighty. Beyond worship, the *raison d'être* for human creation is to be the vicegerent of God, as stated in the Qur'an, "And (mention, O Muhammad), when your Lord said to the Angels, Indeed I will make upon the earth a successive authority" (Chapter al-Baqarah, 2: verse 30). This successive authority refers to humanity as the vicegerent of God, bestowed with the responsibility towards God and other creations. Humans are chosen as the vicegerent of God due to the unique attribute of the human soul, possessing the knowledge of truth that other creations do not possess. Understanding the purpose and meaning of creation empowers individuals

to act responsibly, fostering a tendency to engage in virtuous deeds and avoid transgressions.

Travelling can be instrumental in achieving life goals. Spiritual tourism, a journey to uncover one's life path and identity, holds the potential to invigorate the travel industry. Brämer (2009) defines spirituality as the pursuit of life balance through physical activity and mobility in nature, uniting the mind, body, and soul. Similarly, Abd Halim et al. (2021) assert that tourism functions and symbolises similar to other establishments that people utilise to embellish and provide significance to their lives. This subtly implies that spiritual tourism aids in pursuing life's purpose, including wellness tourism as a subset (Steiner & Reisinger, 2006). Travellers seeking enhanced well-being on their journeys cultivate a purposeful and meaningful existence. Spirituality involves seeking meaning and purpose in life, understanding the depth of existence, and appreciating the forces of nature that permeate the cosmos (Lepherd, 2015). A spiritually growing individual can observe and appreciate the landscape while travelling, contributing to the discovery of meaning and purpose in life.

As a hobby, travelling can impact one's spirituality profoundly if it imparts a profound sense of purpose and meaning in life. Wilson, McIntosh, and Zahra (2013) found in their phenomenological exploration that visitors immerse themselves in experiences stemming from their quest for meaning and purpose, often derived from religious and other activities. Undoubtedly, travel experiences, whether religious or not, are invariably connected to the meaning and purpose of life. Spirituality encompasses every endeavour undertaken by a human being - the quest for purpose, as Miller-Williams (2006) and Tanyi (2002) asserted.

Self-Consciousness

Individuals with a solid spiritual inclination possess self-awareness and lead purposeful lives with a clear mind and heightened consciousness. In

his work “Ihya’ ‘Ulum al-Din” (Karim, 1991), Al-Ghazali emphasises that understanding the soul is fundamental to comprehending God, fostering consciousness of the divine. He delineates four essential aspects of the soul: the heart (qalb), spirit (ruh), soul (nafs), and intellect (‘aql). The term qalb has two definitions: a physical piece of blood in the left breast, known as the heart, and an immaterial or formless element connected to the heart (Karim, 1991).

Al-Ghazali’s third term, nafs, refers to the lower self or passion, encompassing attributes like greed and anger. He identifies three types of nafs: al-Nafs al-Ammarah (the soul urging evil), al-Nafs al-Lawammah (the soul blaming, acting as the conscience), and al-Nafs al-Mutma’innah (the soul at peace, free from evil attributes), often associated with the inner heart (qalb). Higher consciousness enables better control of the nafs, guiding individuals toward al-Nafs al-Mutma’innah.

The fourth term linked to the soul is ‘aql, defined by al-Ghazali (Karim, 1991) as the intellect or the power to understand the secrets of different learning, commonly referred to as knowledge. ‘Aql is mentioned around fifty times in the Qur’an, often in the context of the physical universe, indicating God’s knowledge, will, wisdom, and compassion. Those with elevated spirituality possess a heightened consciousness of their creation, understanding the heart and soul, leading to the knowledge of God and His attributes.

Heintzman’s (2002) leisure and spiritual well-being model suggests that engaging in recreational activities can heighten spiritual awareness. Visiting locations, whether religious or not, prompts reflection on one’s creation and close relationship with the Creator and the natural world. Research by Steiner and Reisinger (2006) and Little and Schmidt (2006) supports the idea that travel can enhance self-consciousness, God-awareness, and other-awareness, fostering a deeper understanding of one’s connection with something beyond oneself. Travellers often experience heightened emotions during spiritual leisure vacations.

Several scholars have proposed that travel and tourism activities serve as pathways to attain spiritual experiences, engagement, healing, a sense of togetherness, compassion, and meaningful encounters (Cheera et al., 2017; Coghlan, 2015; Jarrat & Sharpley, 2017; Smith & Diekmann, 2017). These elements collectively contribute to heightened awareness and spiritual development. This consciousness, encompassing an individual's thoughts, emotions, and overall self, forms the foundation of their connection with the Earth (Abd Halim et al., 2021).

Transcendental Consciousness

The term "Transcendent" traces its roots to the Latin verb 'transcendere,' meaning to climb over. Vocabulary.com (n.d.) defines it as beyond or above the range of standard or physical human experience. "Spiritual," on the other hand, signifies a process that orients an individual's awareness and experience toward the transcendent realm and the spiritual aspect of the self (Vaughan, 2002). In the context of this discussion, as expounded by al-Ghazali and Hasan Langgulung, transcendence involves recognising God's existence, attributes, and actions, as well as understanding the interconnectedness with man's attributes and potentials (Hanefar et al., 2016).

According to al-Ghazali, for a soul (humankind) to attain more excellent Divine knowledge, it must free itself from things other than God, such as worldly matters (Karim, 1991). Further elucidates Divine knowledge in his work, "The Alchemy of Happiness" (Field, 1910 in Hanefar et al., 2016).), Al-Ghazali states that man's attributes reflect God's attributes. The Qur'an emphasises this connection, stating, "And when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My (created) soul..." (Chapter al-Hijr, 15: verse 29). As per this verse, human creation originates from the essence of God, and man is endowed with potential and abilities by God's nature, not just for personal use but also for the benefit of others (Langgulung, 1986). The trust and responsibility associated with God's

nature given to humankind underscore the need for all human actions to be related to God, as expressed in the Qur'an: "Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my life and my death are all for Allah, Lord of the worlds" (Chapter al-An'am, 6: verse 162).

For instance, in an Islamic perspective, human attributes or potentials align with the nature of God, known as the 99 names of God or *al-Asma' al-Husna*. Developing God's attributes within oneself, such as *Ar-Rahman* (The Most Compassionate) and *Ar-Raheem* (The Most Merciful), leads to heightened spirituality. Muslims are encouraged to commence actions by saying, "In the name of God, The Most Compassionate and The Most Merciful," surrendering to God and seeking His blessings. These attributes also guide Muslims to be merciful and compassionate toward fellow beings and creations, fostering a harmonious life filled with love and trust (Hanefar et al., 2016).

A few researchers consider transcendence a fundamental aspect of spirituality, involving the transformation from a discrete individualist self to a cohesive wholeness (Amram & Dryer, 2008). King and DeCicco (2009) define transcendence as a capability existing beyond ordinary awareness, encompassing sanctity, interconnectedness, and non-materialism, aligning with Amram and Dryer's definition.

In the realm of spirituality and tourism, transcendence is recognised as a crucial experience during travel or tourist activities, directly or indirectly (Cheera et al., 2017; Heintzman, 2002; Heintzman, 2013; Little and Schmidt, 2006; Morgan, 2010; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006). For instance, Heintzman (2013) found that transcendence is a primary motivator for engagement in wellness tourism, and wellness travellers highly value it. Wilson, McIntosh, and Zahra (2013) also noted that transcendental experiences during a trip lead to increased creativity and vigour. These instances illustrate that transcendental experiences extend beyond religious contexts and significantly contribute to the pursuit of self-fulfillment.

Self-Determination

In the Islamic viewpoint, an individual's ultimate concern, as a servant and vicegerent of God, is to attain the highest standing in the eyes of God, not merely on a physical level but, more importantly, through spirituality. This requires robust determination and the incorporation of cognitive and personality abilities, with individuals motivated to acquire divine knowledge (Hanefar, 2015).

According to Al-Ghazali, the will is a crucial element in one's journey towards success. He viewed self-determination as a form of will, asserting that individuals with a strong will should be capable of attaining knowledge of God and His attributes, earning honour from God the Almighty. Moreover, they should exercise control over themselves, demonstrating high willpower to manage emotions like passion, anger, and pride (Karim, 1991) while maintaining a solid determination to acquire Divine knowledge, considered the ultimate knowledge. Individuals with high spiritual inclinations can make life choices that benefit themselves and others (Langgulung, 1986 in Hanefar et al., 2016). As the Qur'an states: "And say, the truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills, let him believe, and whoever wills, let him disbelieve..." (Chapter Al-Kahf, 18: verse 29).

Spirituality significantly impacts human life and is a personal choice. Human beings are free to make choices, including their behaviour and the choice to believe. The earlier mentioned Qur'anic verse underscores that wrong choices will lead to punishment, while good choices will receive rewards in both the worldly and afterlife realms. This emphasises that spirituality transcends one's awareness of the surroundings and explores the realm of an individual's vision and higher perspective (Bolghan-Abadi et al., 2014). Worshipping God, considered the highest level of fitrah (human nature) development, is a form of self-actualisation achievable by individuals with high self-determination.

Motivation is pivotal in people's participation in travel-related activities and experiences (Heitmann, 2011). Self-determination is a critical component of motivation for spiritual growth and psychological well-being (Hanefar, 2015). Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory (SDT) highlights the importance of intrinsic motivation in shaping an individual's personality and motivation. In spiritual tourism, self-determination is an intrinsic drive felt before, during, and after a travel activity or experience. Travellers are internally motivated to be self-aware and act in specific ways (Little & Schmidt, 2006). This internal drive fosters personal and spiritual growth and change (Ponder & Holladay, 2013; Heintzman, 2013; Morgan, 2010; Cheer et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the pursuit of identity, self-realisation, and inner psychological development are integral aspects of the tourist and travel experience (Morgan, 2010; Selstad, 2007). These experiences may occur at the destination, before the trip, or after its conclusion, all necessitating a high degree of self-determination. Individuals lacking a strong sense of self-determination may struggle to integrate their travel experiences, especially in spirituality (Cutler, 2010). Carmichael and Smith emphasise that motivation and fulfilment are essential to spiritual tourism. Tourists with strong self-determination can meet their needs and achieve self-actualisation, the highest level of motivation according to Maslow's Five Needs Theory (Abd Halim et al., 2021). Consequently, such visitors can have a meaningful and worthwhile travel experience, inspiring personal growth and spiritual development.

Soul Reflection

According to Zohar and Marshall (2000), individuals striving for a heightened spiritual level should engage in self-reflection and be motivated to seek meaning in life. In the Islamic context, reflection involves deep, detailed, and systematic thinking, known as *tafakkurin* Arabic. This introspection illuminates the heart and soul, enabling believers to discern

between positivity and negativity, good and evil, and benefit and harm. It serves as the golden key to reaching God. From the Islamic viewpoint, the process of reflecting on oneself and attaining God Almighty necessitates purifying one's soul. As the Qur'an mentions, 'Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest' (Chapter Al-Ra'd, 13: verse 28). Ibn Kathir (Abdullah, 2012) describes this rest as a good and pure heart, relying on God and finding tranquillity through acceptance of God Almighty as the Protector. Believers with hearts at rest in God can discern between good and evil, make positive decisions, and lead successful lives (Hanefar et al., 2016).

According to al-Ghazali (Karim, 1991), a firm believer in religion, pure in faith, and kind to other creations of God possesses a pure soul that dwells in the remembrance of God. In Islam, individuals manifest the purification of the soul through the remembrance of God (*dhikr* [remembering]), *fikr* [contemplating], and pious actions. By remembering God, believers can pacify their inner temptations and fight against worldly passions (Karim, 1991). Engaging in the remembrance of God through *dhikr*, *fikr*, and pious actions leads the heart and soul to firmness and tranquillity. Once the heart attains tranquillity, impurities of the heart and soul can be removed (Hanefar, 2015). Remembrance of God sustains the soul, driving away negative thoughts and actions and bringing success in life (Chapter Al-A'la, 87: verse 14).

The widely accepted notion is that religious activities facilitate self-contemplation and spiritual cleansing. However, scholars have demonstrated that introspection and soul-purification can also occur indirectly through secular pursuits like travel (Cheera et al., 2017; Coghlan, 2015; Cutler & Carmichael, 2010; Heintzman, 2013; Little and Schmidt, 2006; Morgan, 2010; Ponde & Holladay, 2013; Smith & Diekmann, 2017). These ideas connect to eudaimonic experience, positive human transformation, self-awareness, motivation, fulfilment, inner psychological growth, spiritual experience, restorative environments, and spiritual well-being.

Numerous tourist experiences and activities, including yoga, meditation, health and healing, pilgrimages, and others, incorporate aspects of reflection and soul-purification (Bowers & Cheer, 2017; Kelly, 2012; Ponder & Holladay, 2013; Smith & Kelly, 2006). For instance, a visit to a wellness facility considered a restorative setting, can lead to self-awareness, serenity, and heightened consciousness through meditation. This process fosters altruistic character, motivation, and fulfilment, supporting positive human development. Similarly, Reisinger (2013) argues that alternative tourism, such as religious or spiritual tourism, can provide significant educational value and enhance a person's drive for self-improvement, self-realisation, and discovery. Collectively, these experiences offer visitors/ travellers profound spiritual encounters.

SPIRITUAL TOURISM

The realm of spiritual tourism is gaining recognition as a burgeoning sector within the tourism industry, a phenomenon with deep historical roots (Haq & Wong, 2011). Over time, oral, archaeological, and written records have chronicled people's engagement with spiritual experiences and their journeys for spiritual pursuits (Sharpley & Sundaram, 2005). Spiritual tourism is an individual visiting a specific place outside their usual environment to seek spiritual meaning or growth, devoid of explicit religious compulsion. This pursuit may encompass religious, non-religious, sacred, or experiential aspects, all within a divine context, regardless of the primary reason for travel (Haq & Jackson, 2009). Although "spiritual tourism" has recently gained an academic standpoint, spiritually motivated tourists constitute an emerging niche (Aulet et al., 2017).

Spiritual tourism, a relatively recent form of tourism, is subject to diverse marketing strategies, particularly in branding (Haq & Wong, 2013). Numerous tourism marketers leverage religious affiliations to promote spiritual tourism, linking destinations such as the Vatican to Catholicism, the Ganges and Indian Temples to Hinduism, and Mecca and Sufi Shrines to Islam (Timothy & Iverson, 2006; Sharpley & Sundaram, 2005). According to Jackowski (2000), around 240 million people embark on pilgrimages each year, predominantly Christians, Hindus, and Muslims. Spiritual travel now occupies a significant segment of international tourism and has experienced steady growth (Bywater, 1994), contributing to the overall expansion of tourism in the modern era.

Despite this growth, more studies are needed on spiritual tourism (Vukonic, 1998). Addressing this gap, Haq and Wong (2011) explore a new dimension of Islamic marketing by exploring spiritual tourism as a strategy for marketing Islam as a religion. Specific religious organisations employ religious gatherings and festivals as spiritual tourism products to promote their faith. These organisations attract Muslim and non-Muslim

spiritual tourists to Islamic places, gatherings, occasions, and festivals by positioning them as spiritual tourism products.

Embarking on a journey with a spiritual mindset can cultivate humility and provide a much-needed spiritual renewal, as highlighted by (Khanam, 2017). Often, amidst the demands of work, duty, and survival, we can lose sight of the Divine beauty and disconnect from the awareness of His creation. Each mountain, forest, desert, and sea serves as an emblem of God’s vastness, offering a humbling reminder of how little space humans occupy compared to the world’s natural wonders.

In Islam, numerous verses in the Holy Quran emphasise the significance of spiritual travel worldwide and the collection of information about various places and people. Utilising the term “visiting” in various contexts, the Holy Quran underscores the importance of touring the world and gaining insights into different locations and cultures. Allah says in the Quran:

لَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِهَا وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

It is He who made the earth tame for you - so walk among its slopes and eat of His provision - and to Him is the resurrection.

(Al-Mulk: 15)

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنشِئُ النَّسْأَةَ الْآخِرَةَ إِنَّ

اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۚ

Say, [O Muhammad], “Travel through the land and observe how He began creation. Then Allah will produce the final creation. Indeed Allah, over all things, is competent.”

(Al-Ankabut: 20)

These explain that travel serves as a reminder of our purpose on this earth and the ultimate destination we are striving towards. Travelling through the world symbolises our journey through life - an ongoing process that never truly reaches a final destination. Our existence represents a continual pursuit of *mizan* (balance) and harmony (Khanam, 2017). Therefore, as we embark on an inward journey for spiritual growth, it is equally crucial to engage in outward travel for the same purpose: Allah says in the Quran:

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَكُونَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَا أَوْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا
فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ

So, have they not travelled through the earth and have hearts by which to reason and ears by which to hear? For indeed, it is not eyes that are blinded but blinded are the hearts which are within the breasts.

(Al-Hajj: 22)

The UNWTO identified spiritual tourism as one of the fastest-growing travel segments 2007. However, categorising this segment is challenging due to its diverse motivations, ranging from traditional religious tourism to alternative medicine and nature-centric activities (Greg, 2011). The UNWTO estimated that approximately 330 million tourists visit the main religious sites yearly, with spiritual motivation being a significant factor (Lanquar, 2007). Bywater (1994) also noted that spiritual travel holds a substantial share in international tourism and has been steadily growing.

Faruk Perkin (2013) argues that spiritual tourism is set to emerge as a significant tourist phenomenon of the 21st century, transcending religious boundaries. Tourists in spiritual tourism seek healing activities, meditation, enlightenment of the mind, body, and soul, and participation in multi-faith cultural activities. Spiritual pursuits are not confined to the

followers of a specific religion but can involve visitors or tourists from various beliefs.

The tourism industry is recognised as a significant contributor to achieving national goals, providing employment opportunities, stimulating small businesses, and reducing poverty (Conrad & Barreto, 2005). The growing interest in spirituality has become a crucial aspect of literature (Lunn, 2009) and has also impacted the tourism industry (Timothy & Iverson, 2006), among other sectors. Haq et al. (2008) researched to develop strategies for effectively marketing spiritual tourism. They observed that focusing on market penetration and product development strategies could further influence high-involvement spiritual tourists. Tourist operators can effectively engage medium to low-intensity tourists by implementing market development and product development strategies. They can also attract even the least interested customers through highly targeted diversification strategies.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPIRITUAL TOURISM

The surge in spiritually motivated travel has coincided with the growth of tourism in the modern era (Lloyd, 1998). Despite the tourism industry's widespread influence on religious life globally, religious tourism remains one of the least explored areas in tourism literature (Brenner, 2005). In the contemporary business environment, tourism is acknowledged as a rapidly expanding industry (Rosentraub & Joo, 2009; Vu & Turner, 2009). The tourism sector has also recognised the business significance of spirituality (Andriotis, 2009; Finney et al., 2009; Cohen, 1992). Finney et al. (2009) argues that pilgrimage and religious tourism essentially fall under the umbrella of spiritual tourism. Therefore, comprehending modern travel patterns and activities requires considering the role of religion. Meanwhile, specific literature indicates that individuals engaging in spiritual tourism

characterise themselves through diverse terms, including travellers, seekers, devotees, pilgrims, and participants in conferences, events, and festivals (Haq & Wong, 2011). Beyond religious boundaries, they also attended festivals and seminars on multi-faith, non-religious spirituality, Sufism, peace, and new-age spirituality (Haq & Wong, 2015).

Cultural and heritage tourism has emerged mainly due to the economic potential of religious tourists. Tourism professionals now view venerated places as resources that can be commodified for travellers interested in cultural and historic sites. Mosques, churches, cathedrals, pilgrimage paths, sacred architecture, and the allure of the metaphysical are prominently featured in tourism promotional literature, as seen in recent marketing efforts around the year 2000 with its millennial religious connotations (Olsen & Timothy, 2002). Consequently, due to marketing and growing interest in cultural tourism, religious sites are increasingly visited by curious tourists rather than solely by spiritual pilgrims, leading to their commercialisation and packaging for a tourism audience (Vukonić, 1996).

The importance of spiritual tourism lies in its ability to cater to a growing segment of travellers seeking more profound and meaningful experiences. As individuals increasingly prioritise personal growth, self-discovery, and a connection to something greater than themselves, spiritual tourism provides a pathway for fulfilling these desires. This form of travel often involves visits to sacred sites, participation in spiritual practices, and engagement with local cultures deeply rooted in spiritual traditions.

Spiritual tourism contributes to the economic development of destinations by attracting visitors interested in unique and authentic experiences. It fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures, promoting cross-cultural dialogue and mutual respect. Additionally, the positive impacts extend to preserving heritage sites and supporting local communities, as spiritual tourism encourages sustainable practices. On a personal level, engaging in spiritual tourism can lead to

enhanced well-being, a sense of purpose, and a broader perspective on life. The experiences gained during such journeys often have a transformative effect, encouraging self-reflection and personal growth.

SPIRITUAL TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Sustainable development is commonly defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, a definition provided by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (McChesney, 1991). This definition remains widely referenced and has been adopted by the ISO 26000 standard (Seifi & Crowther, 2011).

Sustainable development extends beyond environmental protection and encompasses aspects such as quality of life, resource distribution, interactions between the environment and development, and provisions for the future. Bebbington (2001) emphasises that the interpretation of sustainable development varies in different contexts. From a business perspective, sustainable development involves businesses collaborating with other sectors of society to identify and progress towards a “sustainable future” (Byrch et al., 2009).

While numerous definitions exist, the one proposed by the Brundtland Commission is commonly used and adopted (Byrch et al., 2009). This broad definition does not limit the scope of sustainability but emphasises the importance of intergenerational equity. Conserving resources for future generations distinguishes sustainable development policy from traditional environmental policy, which also seeks to address the externalities of environmental degradation. The overarching goal of sustainable development is the long-term stability of the economy and environment, achievable only through integrating economic, environmental, and social considerations throughout the decision-making process.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global objectives established by the United Nations to address a wide range of social, economic, and environmental challenges. Adopted in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the SDGs aim to guide international efforts toward creating a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable world by 2030. The goals cover various critical areas, including poverty, hunger, health, education, gender equality, clean water, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry innovation, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption, climate action, life below water, life on land, peace, justice, and strong institutions, and partnerships for the goals. The SDGs emphasise the interconnectedness of global issues and encourage collaborative action among governments, businesses, communities, and individuals to achieve a better future for all (United Nations, 2015).

Spiritual tourism aligns with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly cultural preservation, economic growth, environmental conservation, and social well-being. Spiritual tourism can positively impact individuals' personalities and spiritual development, aligning with the global initiative of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2018). Figure 4.1 illustrates the SDGs, which are highly possible to be aligned with the spiritual tourism dimensions/ segmentations leading to sustainable spiritual tourism. The United Nations' SDG Media Compact, launched in September 2018, seeks to raise awareness about these goals, emphasising the interconnectedness of eradicating poverty, promoting economic growth, addressing social needs, and tackling environmental issues (Sustainable Development Goals, 2018).

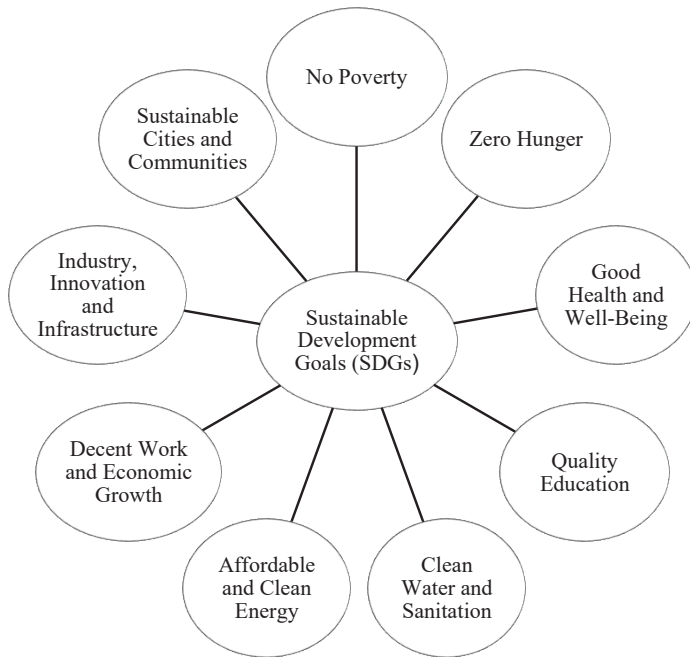


Figure 4.1: Sustainable Development Goals (Sustainable Development Goals, 2018)

The term “sustainable tourism” gained popularity in the late 1980s, initially called “green tourism.” Environmental issues such as over-pollution and global warming were not as apparent during that time. Since the early 1990s, “sustainable tourism” has become the more commonly used term, encompassing an approach that recognises the significance of the host community, the treatment of staff, and the goal of maximising economic benefits for the host community (Swarbrooke, 1999).

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development in tourism encompasses diverse applications, including cost reduction, increased environmental, economic, and social benefits, local community involvement, and satisfaction of tourists (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Cottrell et al., 2013). As the tourism industry expands, these sustainable development applications become increasingly crucial for all stakeholders, including operators, tourists, and host communities (Brida et al., 2010). While numerous studies have examined the satisfaction of tourism operators and customers, more research is needed on the satisfaction of local communities and residents affected by sustainable tourism developments (Cottrell et al., 2013). Scholars have emphasised the significance of local community satisfaction when assessing sustainable tourism development (Cottrell & Raadik, 2008; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004).

Richards (2002) underscores the importance of sustainability for communities to rely on available resources. Sustainable tourism development aims to ensure renewable economic, social, and cultural benefits to the community and its environment. A holistic approach to sustainability recognises the integral connection between human communities' improved social, cultural, and economic well-being and environmental renewal. This principle applies to sustainable tourism, emphasizing that developers cannot expect sustainability without ensuring community sustainability.

Successful sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders and robust political leadership to ensure broad participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is an ongoing process, requiring continuous monitoring of impacts and implementing preventive and corrective measures as needed. Sustainable tourism should prioritise maintaining high tourist satisfaction levels, providing meaningful experiences, raising awareness about sustainability issues, and promoting sustainable tourism practices among tourists (Niedziolka, 2012). Critical aspects of sustainable tourism include

competitive and socially responsible tourism businesses, inclusive tourism opportunities for all citizens, employment opportunities in the sector, and benefits for the local community. This requires preserving cultural integrity and integrating environmental protection and cultural heritage resources into tourism programs. Efforts to implement sustainable tourism principles occur at regional and enterprise levels.

Based on Niedziolka’s (2012) work on sustainable tourism development, researchers successfully created a model that depicts the relationship between tourism and local policy, taking into account economic, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects. Three main aspects—transportation, accommodation services, and the purpose of travel—comprise the tourism industry and impact sustainable tourism development. While these aspects individually affect destination places, a holistic view of the model emphasises the importance of responsibly managing tourist traffic (Figure 4.2).

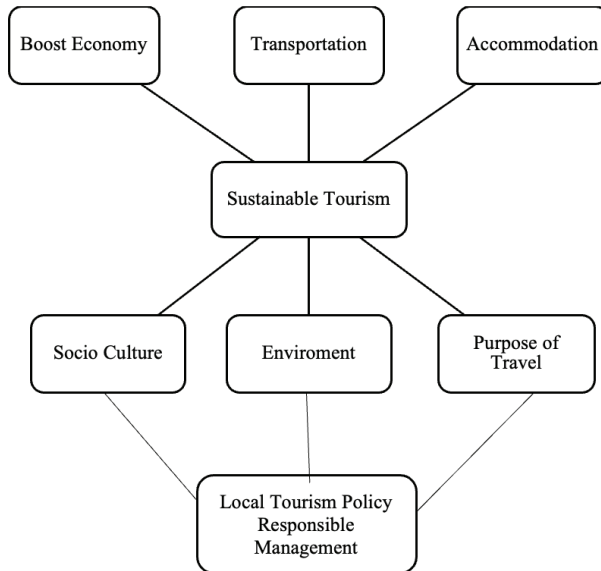


Figure 4.2 Sustainable Tourism (Niedziolka, 2012)

The relationship between tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is multidimensional. Tourism has the potential to positively impact economic growth, poverty alleviation, and sustainable urban development. However, challenges arise, including unequal distribution of benefits, environmental degradation, and cultural commercialisation (UNWTO, 2017). Sustainable tourism practices, such as responsible consumption, climate-friendly initiatives, and biodiversity conservation, can contribute to achieving specific SDGs. However, careful management and collaboration among governments, businesses, communities, and tourists are essential to address challenges and ensure tourism's positive contribution to the broader goals of sustainable development (Hall, 2019).

The current challenges and barriers to tourism sustainability were highlighted by Pan et al. (2018), such as high energy use, extensive water consumption and habitat destruction. They also examined the critical cross-disciplinary elements in sustainable tourism, including green energy, transportation, buildings, infrastructure, agriculture, and intelligent technologies. To overcome the challenges and barriers, this paper proposes a few implementation strategies for achieving sustainable tourism that focus on policy/regulation, institutions, finance, technology, and culture, along with a framework and details of a critical performance indicator system. Finally, the prospect of the potential for tourism to contribute to transformative changes, such as a green economy system, is illustrated. This description is summarised in Figure 4.3.

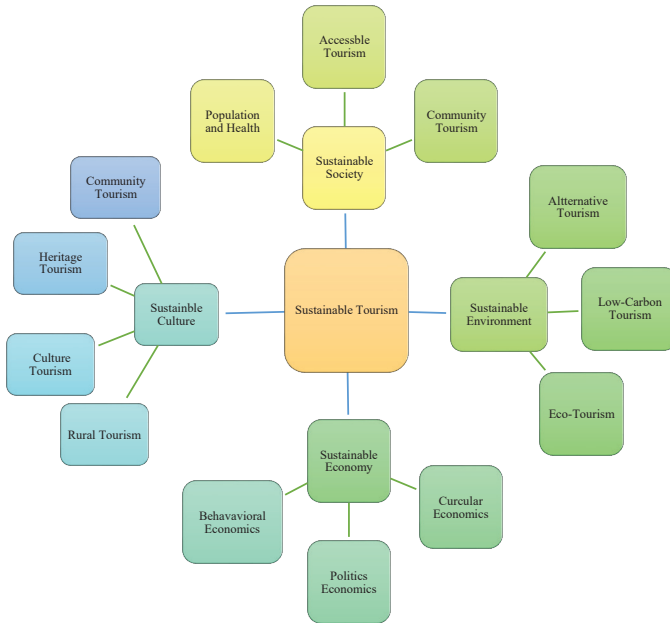


Figure 4.3: Interrelationships between Tourism and Sustainability from a Cross-Disciplinary Perspective (Pan et al., 2018).

The achievement of sustainable tourism relies on the collective efforts of various stakeholders. Governments set policies and invest in infrastructure, local communities preserve culture and benefit economically, the tourism industry adopts responsible practices, NGOs advocate and collaborate with communities, academic institutions research and educate, tourists make responsible choices, international organisations provide guidelines, and media outlets promote sustainable practices. The collaboration among these stakeholders is crucial for balancing economic, social, and environmental considerations and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the tourism industry. A comprehensive framework is needed to ensure the involvement of different stakeholders to face the related challenges and achieve the effectiveness of tourism sustainability development.

Some scholars have addressed this concern and provided guidelines or frameworks for stakeholders' involvement in sustainable tourism development (Byrd, 2007; Graci, 2016; Wondirad et al., 2020).

THE IMPACT OF SPIRITUAL TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The impacts of spiritual tourism on sustainable tourism development are multidimensional and can contribute to various aspects of sustainability. Spiritual tourism often involves visits to culturally significant sites, contributing to preserving and promoting cultural heritage (Aulet & Duda, 2020). Communities with spiritual significance may receive economic support, encouraging the preservation of their traditions and practices. One good example is World Heritage Sites by Unesco. World Heritage Sites are designated as cultural and natural locations with 'Outstanding Universal Value' and are included in the World Heritage List by the World Heritage Committee. These sites or structures hold exceptional significance for humanity (Brittanica, n.d.), for instance, religious buildings, historical sites, cultural landscapes, national parks, lakes, tombs, gardens and others. In Malaysia, notable sites include Kinabalu Park, Gunung Mulu National Park, the historical cities of Melaka (Malacca) and George Town. Meanwhile, numerous noteworthy sites in Turkiye include Goreme National Park in Cappadocia, Selimiye Mosque, historic areas in Istanbul, and Gordion (UNESCO, n.d.).

Spiritual tourism can stimulate the local economy by generating income through accommodation, transportation, and the sale of goods and services. Job creation within the tourism sector can enhance the economic well-being of local communities (Budovich, 2023). In 2022, the tourism sector in Malaysia directly contributed nearly 48 billion Malaysian ringgit to its gross domestic product (GDP), a significant increase compared to

the previous year In 2020 and 2021(Statista, 2023). Similarly, travel and tourism in Turkiye generated, directly and indirectly, 525 billion Turkish liras in 2021. In 2022, the industry recovered, going above pre-pandemic levels, with a total contribution of nearly 1.7 trillion Turkish lira (Statista, 2023).

Engaging in spiritual tourism, particularly in serene and natural settings, holds the potential to cultivate environmental awareness and contribute to conservation endeavours (Kiper, 2013). For instance, individuals seeking spiritual experiences amidst Malaysia's breathtaking landscapes, such as the tranquil Kinabalu Park (Sabah Tourism, 2023) or the pristine Gunung Mulu National Park (Mulupark.com, n.d.), may develop a profound connection with nature. This heightened connection can inspire a sense of responsibility towards environmental preservation. Similarly, in Turkiye, spiritual tourism can intertwine with environmental consciousness. Visitors exploring the serene Goreme National Park in Cappadocia (UNESCO, n.d.) or contemplating the historical significance of places like Gordion (UNESCO, n.d.) may find themselves immersed in these sites' natural beauty. This immersion can trigger a heightened appreciation for the environment, encouraging a more sustainable and eco-friendly approach to travel. Responsible spiritual tourism practices play a pivotal role in fostering sustainable behaviours. Visitors to spiritual sites can actively support local conservation initiatives and environmentally friendly projects. By doing so, they contribute not only to the preservation of these sacred and natural spaces but also to the overall well-being of the planet.

The involvement of local communities in spiritual tourism activities can empower them socially and economically. Community-based tourism initiatives may lead to a more equitable distribution of benefits among community members (Prakoso et al., 2020). For instance, in Malaysia, Kampungstay, Selangor (MOTAC, n.d.) offers visitors a chance to experience traditional village life. Travellers can stay in local

homes, participate in cultural activities, and contribute to the community's economic well-being. This type of community-based tourism promotes authentic cultural exchanges. Another well-known example is the annual Rainforest World Music Festival in Sarawak (Rainforest World Music Festival, n.d.), which showcases the diverse indigenous music and culture of Borneo. This event attracts international visitors and involves local communities, providing them with opportunities to showcase their traditional arts, crafts, and culinary heritage.

Similarly, in Cappadocia, Turkiye, the community actively engages in the region's tourism industry. Local guides, artisans, and hosts in Göreme offer experiences like cave-dwelling stays, traditional Turkish cooking classes, and guided tours, providing tourists an authentic glimpse into Cappadocian life (National Geographic, 2018). As outlined in the 2007 Tourism Strategy of Turkey 2023 crafted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Turkish government's commitment to fostering sustainable tourism development encompasses community-based tourism initiatives. One such endeavour is the Tourism Development in Eastern Anatolia Project, a collaborative, sustainable tourism venture involving the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, UNDP, and Anadolu Efes. The project's overarching objective was to elevate the quality of life for local residents by amplifying tourist engagement in the Coruh Valley in the northeastern region of Turkey (UNDP, n.d.).

Spiritual tourism often involves interactions among people of different faiths, fostering tolerance, understanding, and peaceful coexistence. Increased interfaith dialogue can contribute to social harmony and conflict resolution (Academy for Cultural Diplomacy, n.d.). While the majority of both Turks and Malaysians adhere to Islam, the practice of other religions is not restricted. Moreover, a positive and harmonious relationship exists among individuals of different faiths. For instance, Malacca, Malaysia, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its rich historical and religious diversity (UNESCO, n.d.). Visitors exploring the

city encounter mosques, churches, and temples coexisting harmoniously. The Malacca Straits Mosque, St. Paul's Church, and Cheng Hoon Teng Temple are religious sites where tourists and locals explore interfaith. Another example is The Islamic Arts Museum in Kuala Lumpur, a cultural institution showcasing Islamic art from around the world. Visitors, irrespective of their faith, can appreciate the beauty and diversity of Islamic artistic traditions, promoting cultural exchange and understanding.

Likewise, Sufi music and dance performances draw diverse audiences in Turkiye, particularly in cities like Istanbul and Konya. These events serve as a platform for people of different faiths to appreciate and experience the mysticism of Sufi traditions, promoting interfaith understanding through artistic expression ("Rumi's legacy draws visitors", 2022). Besides, Istanbul's iconic landmarks, the Blue Mosque and Hagia Sophia, symbolise Turkiye's historical and cultural richness. Tourists from diverse backgrounds visit these sites, appreciating the coexistence of Islamic and Christian architectural influences, reflecting Turkiye's historical tolerance.

Spiritual tourists may advocate for sustainable practices, encouraging tourism operators to adopt eco-friendly measures. Increased awareness of sustainability issues can influence tourists and businesses to make responsible choices (Baloch et al., (2023). Taman Negara, one of the world's oldest rainforests in Malaysia, is a popular destination for spiritual tourism due to its serene and natural setting. Spiritual tourists visiting this pristine environment often become advocates for sustainability. They may encourage ecotourism initiatives, promoting responsible practices that prioritise the preservation of the rainforest and its biodiversity. Similarly, Cappadocia's unique landscape (i.e. Fairy Chimney), hot air balloon rides, and more than 100 other programmes/activities draw tourists (Aktas & Yilmaz, 2019), including spiritual tourists seeking a transcendental experience.

Advocacy for sustainability can emerge from these experiences, prompting tourists to support balloon operators prioritising eco-friendly practices. This may include using low-impact technologies and adhering to responsible flight patterns to minimise environmental impact. Spiritual tourists, by nature, seek meaningful and mindful experiences. This inclination towards conscious living often extends to their travel choices. Advocacy for sustainability may involve promoting responsible choices, such as supporting accommodations with eco-certifications, participating in low-impact activities, and respecting the natural and cultural heritage of the visited destinations.

Spiritual tourism can bring attention to sacred natural sites, fostering efforts to conserve and protect these areas. Authorities implement conservation initiatives to ensure the longevity of spiritually significant landscapes. For instance, Kinabalu Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Malaysia, stands as a spiritually significant natural site for many. Spiritual tourists drawn to the park's majestic Mount Kinabalu may become advocates for its conservation. Increased attention from these visitors can contribute to initiatives to preserve the park's unique biodiversity and ensure sustainable practices, such as responsible trekking and waste management. Likewise, Mount Ararat and its surrounding region have spiritual significance in Turkish mythology and religious traditions (Britannica,n.d.). Spiritual tourists visiting this area may advocate for conservation measures to protect the natural beauty and cultural heritage. Conservation initiatives might include sustainable trekking practices and preservation of the flora and fauna in the region.

The connection between spiritual tourism and conservation efforts in Malaysia and Turkiye reflects a holistic approach to preserving sacred landscapes' intertwined cultural and natural heritage. This alliance can lead to initiatives that protect the spiritual significance of these sites and contribute to the overall sustainability and well-being of the regions (Figure 4.4).



Figure 4.4: The Impact of Spiritual Tourism on Sustainable Tourism Development

The exploration of the roles of spirituality in shaping segmentation for sustainable tourism reveals a captivating intersection of diverse dimensions. The intricate interplay between spirituality and tourism segmentation highlights the evolving preferences of modern travellers and underscores the profound impact of spiritual experiences on the sustainable tourism landscape. As we reflect on the various facets uncovered in this chapter, it becomes evident that a deeper understanding of spiritual tourism segmentation is essential for stakeholders in the tourism industry. Embracing and integrating these insights can pave the way for more inclusive, culturally enriching, and sustainable tourism practices. In navigating the complex terrain of spiritual tourism, acknowledging the diverse roles of spirituality is not only a strategic imperative but a key to unlocking the full potential of meaningful and sustainable tourism.

CHAPTER 5

A SEGMENTATION APPROACH TO UNDERSTAND THE VIEW OF SPIRITUAL TOURISM IN MALAYSIA

This comprehensive research initiative is dedicated to identifying, formulating, and validating the constructs integral to Spiritual Tourism, with a parallel focus on understanding tourists' acceptance of these constructs. Additionally, it examines the intricate relationship between Spiritual Tourism and the development of Sustainable Tourism. The carefully developed constructs are treated as distinct segmentations within the domain of spiritual tourism, offering a specialised perspective to comprehend the unique outlook of spiritual tourism in Malaysia. By exploring these exclusive segments, the study aims to unravel the subtle layers of spiritual tourism, providing valuable insights into how these constructs shape the perceptions and experiences of tourists in the Malaysian context. This inquiry contributes to the broader conversation surrounding spiritual tourism and its interconnectedness with sustainable tourism development.

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This study's conceptual framework builds on the concepts of Spirituality (Hanefar et al., 2016) and Sustainable Tourism Development. Qualitative data were obtained through interviews with three expert references in the field. The experts identified and validated five themes under the construct of Spiritual Tourism: Transcendental Consciousness, Soul Reflection, Self-Determination, Self-Consciousness, and Life Purpose. A survey method was utilised to collect feedback for quantitative data, targeting foreign tourists in five selected states: Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Pahang,

Johor, and Sabah. These states were chosen based on Malaysia's tourism statistics, representing among the top 5 states visited by foreign tourists. A purposive sampling method was employed to select 400 tourists visiting the chosen states.

Quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire containing 30 items for the five Spiritual Tourism constructs and five related to Sustainable Tourism Development. The survey instrument was divided into three main sections. Part I included background-related items such as gender, age, country of origin, education level, occupation, and income level. Part II comprised questionnaire items based on the Spiritual Tourism framework, while Part III comprised questionnaire items related to Sustainable Tourism Development.

Understanding the views and preferences of spiritual tourists in Malaysia involves employing a segmentation approach that identifies distinct groups within this niche market. By adopting this segmentation approach, tourism stakeholders in Malaysia can gain a detailed understanding of the diverse needs and preferences of spiritual tourists, leading to more effective marketing and the development of tailored experiences that resonate with this unique market segment.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Descriptive analysis offers a comprehensive dataset overview, aiming to unveil critical characteristics and patterns within the information. This analytical approach involves calculating and presenting various statistical measures to describe the data's central tendencies, dispersion, and distribution. The measures commonly employed include the average or mean, total amount, percentage, standard deviation, variance, range, maximum value, minimum value, and other relevant indicators.

In the context of this study, the focus of the descriptive analysis primarily rested on two key metrics: the mean and percentage values. The mean provides an arithmetic average, representing a central point around which the data points cluster. It is calculated by summing all values and dividing by the total observations. On the other hand, percentage values offer a relative perspective, expressing the proportion of a specific category or response within the total dataset. These descriptive statistics offer a succinct yet informative portrayal of the analysed data, enabling readers to grasp essential trends and characteristics within the studied context.

Context and Sample for The Study

This study focuses on five prominent states in Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Pahang, Johor, and Sabah. The selection of these states is grounded in the substantial influx of foreign tourists, as indicated by data from the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia in 2019. To capture a representative sample and ensure a robust analysis, 400 questionnaires were distributed among foreign tourists visiting the states, with 80 questionnaires allocated to each state. The sampling approach employed was purposive quota sampling, facilitating the recruitment of respondents and enabling the researchers to concentrate on a specific subset of tourists that aligned with the research goals and criteria, leading to a more targeted and relevant study. The distribution of respondents across the states is presented in Table 5.1, outlining the specific number of participants in each location. This strategic selection of states and sampling methodology aims to provide insights into the perceptions and experiences of foreign tourists in diverse regions of Malaysia, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of spiritual tourism dynamics.

Table 5.1: Sample for the Five Selected States in Malaysia

State	Analysis Unit	Number of distributed questionnaire	Number of collected questionnaire	Percentage of collected questionnaire
Kuala Lumpur	78	80	80	100%
Penang	76	80	78	98%
Pahang	76	80	76	95%
Johor	79	80	80	100%
Sabah	75	80	76	95%
Total	384	400	390	97.6% (Average)

Respondents' Demographic Profile

The demographic profile of the respondents is summarised in Table 5.2. The final sample comprises 384 respondents who visited the five states. It includes 191 male and 193 female tourists. The respondents' ages varied, with 147 falling between 19 and 24, 107 between 25 and 34, 74 between 35 and 44, 51 between 45 and 54, 9 between 55 and 64, and 3 over 65. Geographically, respondents originated from North America (18 respondents), Europe (62 respondents), Asia (253 respondents), Africa (28 respondents), Oceania (9 respondents), and South America (14 respondents).

Table 5.2 illustrates the educational background of the respondents, categorized into five levels: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) (16 respondents), Master's degree (51 respondents), Bachelor's degree (194 respondents), high school (98 respondents), and secondary school (25 respondents). Regarding employment, respondents included 37 working in government, 112 in private companies, 68 in business, and 167 students. Income distribution among respondents was as follows: less than USD1000 (201), USD1000 to USD4000 (104), USD5000 to USD9000 (57), USD10,000 to USD14,000 (11), USD15,000 to USD19,000 (7), and income exceeding USD20,000 (4).

Table 5.2: Demography Profile - Malaysia

	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	191	50
	Female	193	50
Age	19 – 24	147	38
	25 – 34	107	28
	35 – 44	74	19
	45 – 54	44	11
	55 – 64	9	3
	> 65	3	1
Origin	North America	18	5
	Europe	62	16
	Asia	253	67
	Africa	28	7
	Oceania	9	2
	South America	14	3
Education Level	PhD	16	4
	Master Degree	51	13
	Bachelor Degree	194	51
	High School	98	26
	Secondary School	25	6
Occupation	Government	37	10
	Private	112	29
	Business	68	18
	Student	167	43
Income Level (Per Month)	< USD1000	201	52
	USD1000 – 4000	104	27
	USD5000 – 9000	57	15

USD10000 – 14000	11	3
USD15000 – 19000	7	2
> USD20000	4	1

The Description of the Study Constructs

The study incorporated two constructs, namely Spiritual Tourism (representing exogenous factors) and Sustainable Tourism Development (representing endogenous factors). To assess each construct’s specific levels, the researchers devised a mean score guideline. This guideline is developed based on the mean score framework outlined by Yan (2020), which determines the implementation level based on the composition of the research sample, as illustrated in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Value of Min Score and Implementation Level

No.	Value of min score	Implementation level
1	1.00 to 4.00	Low
2	4.01 to 7.00	Medium
3	7.01 to 10.00	High

Source: Adapted from Yan (2020)

Level of Tourism Acceptance Based on Spiritual Tourism Construction

Based on the sample population of 384, Table 5.4 presents the average value (Mean score), standard deviation, and results of the analysis of Spiritual Tourism levels as perceived by tourists in the tourism industry. The mean score value is 5.58, and the standard deviation is 0.88. The mean scores for the five Spiritual Tourism constructs were as follows: Transcendental Consciousness at 5.66, Self-Determination at 5.58, Soul Reflection at 5.57, Self-Consciousness at 5.53, and Life Purpose at 5.61.

Transcendental Consciousness

Hypothetically, Transcendental Consciousness has the highest mean (5.66), which suggests that, on average, the individuals in the dataset or study scored the highest in this dimension. In other words, they tend to have a higher level of Transcendental Consciousness than the other dimensions.

Self-Determination

Self-determination has the second-highest mean (5.58), which implies that, on average, individuals exhibit a relatively high level of self-determination. They tend to make decisions and choices aligning with their values and goals.

Soul Reflection

A moderate mean (5.57) for Soul Reflection indicates that, on average, individuals engage in soul reflection, though less powerfully than Transcendental Consciousness and Self-Determination. They likely spend time introspecting and contemplating their inner selves and spiritual aspects.

Self-Consciousness

A slightly lower mean (5.53) for Self-Consciousness suggests that, on average, individuals have a moderate level of self-awareness. They are aware of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours but are less highly attuned than those in the higher-ranked dimensions.

Life Purpose

If Life Purpose has the lowest mean (5.47), it implies that, on average, individuals in the dataset have a relatively lower sense of life purpose than other dimensions/ constructs. They may need help defining clear goals and meaning in their lives.

Table 5.4: Descriptive Statistic - Malaysia

Constructs	Mean score	Standard Deviation	Implementation level
Spiritual Tourism	5.58	0.88	Medium
- Transcendental Consciousness	5.66	0.93	Medium
- Soul Reflection	5.57	0.93	Medium
- Self-Determination	5.58	0.91	Medium
- Self-Consciousness	5.53	0.93	Medium
- Life Purpose	5.47	0.93	Medium
Sustainable Tourism Development	5.76	0.98	Medium

THE PRIMARY CONSTRUCTS OF SPIRITUAL TOURISM IN MALAYSIA

Transcendental Consciousness

Tourist transcendental consciousness refers to a deep, spiritual, or meditative state that some travellers seek to attain while exploring new destinations. It involves connecting with the essence of a place on a profound level, often through meditation, mindfulness, or other spiritual practices. Here are some examples of tourists experiencing transcendental consciousness while visiting Malaysia. For instance, travellers who practice meditation and mindfulness as part of their spiritual journey choose Malaysia as their destination to immerse themselves in its rich spiritual and natural landscapes. Their journey involves:

Meditation Retreat

Travellers start their trip with a meditation retreat in a serene location, such as a monastery in the Cameron Highlands or a yoga and meditation centre in Penang. They spend several days in silence, practising mindfulness and deepening their meditation to connect with the present moment and their inner selves.

Nature Connection

Malaysia offers diverse natural settings for transcendental experiences. Travellers embark on hikes through pristine rainforests in locations like Taman Negara or Borneo. Along the way, they meditate, contemplating the interconnectedness of nature and human existence.

Temple Visits

Malaysia is home to numerous temples and spiritual sites. Travellers visit places like Kek Lok Si Temple in Penang or Thean Hou Temple in Kuala Lumpur. They meditate within these sacred spaces, absorbing the energy and spirituality they exude.

Spiritual Conversations

Travellers engage in meaningful conversations with local spiritual leaders and monks. They seek to understand their wisdom, spiritual practices, and beliefs, allowing them to gain insight into different spiritual paths and approaches.

Art and Creativity

Travellers explore the art and creativity of Malaysia, attending traditional art and music performances. They believe art can be a gateway to transcendental experiences and that creativity can connect individuals to the divine.

Mindful Eating

Malaysia's diverse and delicious cuisine becomes a part of travellers' transcendental journey. They practice mindful eating, savouring every bite and reflecting on the connection between food and spirituality.

By integrating these encounters into their journey, they explore beyond the surface aspect of tourism and seek to attain a transcendent consciousness. Utilising Malaysia's natural splendour, spiritual locations, and cultural encounters as avenues, they connect with an elevated awareness and consciousness. This type of tourism enables them to experience a profound sense of spiritual fulfilment and transcendence while immersing themselves in the country's exploration.

Self-Determination

Tourist self-determination, in the context of travel and tourism, refers to the ability of tourists to make their own choices and decisions during their travels, allowing them to have more control over their experiences. This concept emphasises tourists' freedom to choose their destinations, activities, and interactions while minimising external influences. For example in Malaysia: Imagine a group of tourists visiting Malaysia and practising self-determination throughout their journey:

Choosing Destinations

Tourists arrive in Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia, with a list of potential destinations they want to explore, such as the iconic Petronas Twin Towers, Batu Caves, or the historical Malacca city. They have the autonomy to decide their itinerary based on their interests and internal motivation.

Selecting Accommodation

In Kuala Lumpur, they have the option to stay in a variety of accommodations, from luxury hotels to budget hostels or even Airbnb rentals. Tourists exercise self-determination by selecting a lodging option that aligns with their budget, motivation and preferences.

Culinary Adventures

Malaysia is known for its diverse and delicious cuisine. Tourists can choose to eat at upscale restaurants, street food stalls, or explore local markets to try various dishes like Nasi lemak, Char Kway Teow, or Roti Canai based on their culinary preferences, motivation and budgets.

Activity Choices

Whether it's visiting cultural sites, enjoying water sports in Langkawi, or exploring the rainforests of Taman Negara, tourists can decide which activities they want to participate in, taking into account their interests, motivation and physical abilities.

Local Interactions

Tourists can interact with locals, learn about Malaysian culture, and participate in traditional activities like batik painting or cooking classes. These interactions are based on their interest in cultural experiences and their willingness to engage with the local community.

Transportation

Tourists can choose between various modes of transportation, such as taxis, public buses, or even renting a car to move around the country. They have the freedom to determine their travel method based on their convenience, motivation and budget.

Flexibility

Tourists have the option to change their plans on the go. If they discover a new attraction or activity they want to explore, they can make impromptu decisions without being tied to a rigid itinerary.

By exercising tourist self-determination in Malaysia, these tourists have the autonomy to personalise their trip according to their preferences,

interests, motivation and budget, making their experience more fulfilling and memorable. This concept empowers tourists to be active participants in their journeys and create a travel experience that suits them best.

Soul Reflection

Soul reflection in tourism is utilising travel as a platform for self-discovery, introspection, and personal growth. It entails travellers actively seeking moments of solitude and introspection as they immerse themselves in a new destination. Here are instances of tourists embracing soul reflection during their trip to Malaysia. For instance, travellers in Malaysia may aim to forge a deeper connection with their surroundings as part of their journey.

Nature Retreat

Travellers start their trip in the Malaysian rainforests, spending time in locations like Taman Negara or the Cameron Highlands. Surrounded by lush greenery and the soothing sounds of nature, they find moments of solitude for reflection, meditation, and journaling. This connection with nature becomes a source of inner peace and inspiration.

Spiritual Exploration

Malaysia is known for its religious diversity; travellers take the opportunity to visit spiritual and sacred sites like the Batu Caves or mosques in Kuala Lumpur. These visits provide them with quiet contemplation, learning about different faiths, and exploring their spiritual beliefs.

Local Encounters

Travellers engage in conversations with local people, exploring discussions about their lives, challenges, and dreams. These meaningful interactions serve as a profound catalyst for the travellers, fostering a deeper

understanding of human experiences and the rich composition of world diversity. As a result, this journey of connection and dialogue becomes a transformative force, propelling personal growth and encouraging introspection among the travellers.

Art and Culture

Travellers immerse themselves in Malaysia's vibrant arts scene, exploring galleries and attending traditional performances. As a mirror of society, art becomes a medium for contemplation, allowing them to explore the cultural and social distinctions of the places they visit.

Culinary Journey

Travellers take culinary adventures, trying a wide range of Malaysian dishes. Through food, they connect with the culture, history, and stories of the people. This culinary exploration allows them to reflect on the interconnectedness of food and culture.

Yoga and Wellness

Travellers participate in yoga and wellness retreats in serene locations, focusing on mindfulness and self-care. These activities enable them to find inner peace and connect with their soul, body and mind.

By incorporating these experiences into their journey in Malaysia, they use travel for self-reflection and personal growth. Travellers seek moments of solitude, meaningful encounters, and cultural immersion to understand themselves and the world around them better. This form of tourism allows them to connect with their inner self and make the travel experiences more meaningful and introspective.

Self-Consciousness

Tourist self-consciousness refers to tourists' awareness of their behaviour, appearance, and actions while visiting a foreign country. It often stems from a desire to respect the local culture, customs, and traditions and avoid behaviours that may be considered disrespectful or offensive. Tourists may exhibit self-consciousness by modifying their behaviour and appearance to align with the cultural norms of the destination. Here are some instances of tourist self-consciousness in Malaysia: Imagine a group of Western tourists visiting Malaysia, a country with a predominantly Muslim population and a rich cultural heritage. These tourists may exhibit self-consciousness in various ways:

Modesty in Dress

Tourists recognise and respect local norms, often covering certain body parts as a sign of modesty. Tourists may adapt clothing styles that align with cultural expectations, such as long sleeves, loose-fitting garments, and longer skirts or trousers. This thoughtful consideration for the cultural and religious values of the destination reflects a conscious effort by tourists to integrate into the local environment and demonstrate respect for the host community's traditions.

Removing Shoes

In many Malaysian households and religious places, it is customary to remove shoes before entering. Tourists might be self-conscious about this and remove their shoes when visiting someone's home or entering a religious place.

Cultural Awareness

Tourists may learn about Malaysian culture, traditions, and etiquette. They might familiarise themselves with standard greetings and customs, such as the Malay greeting *salam* and using the right hand to give or receive items.

Dining Etiquette

In Malaysia, eating with the right hand is customary, as the left hand is considered unclean. Tourists might practice this dining etiquette to avoid unintentional disrespect.

Respecting Religious Practices

When visiting mosques, tourists may be self-conscious about following the rules and etiquette, such as covering their heads, dressing modestly, and not interrupting prayers.

Understanding The Concept of Halal

Foreign tourists express a heightened self-consciousness to comprehend *halal* by actively engaging in educational pursuits, demonstrating cultural sensitivity, interacting with local communities, and observing *halal* practices. This multidimensional approach reflects their respect for Islamic traditions and a genuine effort to integrate into the local culture.

Tourist self-consciousness is a positive behaviour demonstrating cultural sensitivity and respect for the local community. It helps to create a positive and respectful interaction between tourists and the host country's residents, contributing to a more enjoyable and enriching travel experience for both parties.

Life Purpose

Tourist life purpose pertains to travellers seeking more than just leisure and relaxation; it encompasses personal growth, learning, and fulfilling a higher purpose during their journeys. It involves finding meaning and significance in travel experiences. Here are some examples of tourists seeking life purpose during their visit to Malaysia: striving to discover a more profound sense of purpose throughout their trip, wherein travel experiences involve:

Environmental Conservation

They are passionate about environmental conservation and eager to contribute to preserving Malaysia's natural beauty, so they join a volunteer program in Malaysia. Here, they actively participate in reforestation efforts and contribute to protecting endangered species like orang utans. This trip evolves into a mission with a life purpose centred around promoting environmental sustainability.

Cultural Exchange

Tourists engage in cultural exchange programs, living with local tribes in rural Malaysia to learn about their traditions, languages, and ways of life. These interactions foster greater understanding and tolerance between different cultures, promoting peace and unity, which can be seen as purpose.

Education and Skill Building

Attends workshops and courses, such as traditional Malaysian art, cooking, or even learning a new language. Travellers can acquire new skills and knowledge, enhancing their personal growth and self-discovery, aligning with the broader life purpose of continuous self-improvement.

Spiritual Exploration

Malaysia is known for its religious diversity, and travellers can take this opportunity to explore different spiritual practices and beliefs. Travellers can visit temples, mosques, and churches, engaging in conversations with spiritual leaders and seeking to deepen their spiritual connection.

Supporting Local Communities

Travellers make a conscious effort to support local communities by purchasing products from local artisans, dining at family-run restaurants, and staying at homestays. Travellers believe in responsible and ethical tourism, which they view as a way to contribute to the economic well-

being of local communities and promote sustainable tourism as a life purpose.

By pursuing these activities and experiences in Malaysia, travellers enrich their travel experiences by aligning them with their life purposes, which involve environmental conservation, cultural exchange, personal growth, spiritual exploration, and supporting local communities. This approach to tourism allows them to find greater meaning and fulfilment in their journey while positively impacting the places they visit.

In conclusion, the diverse experiences of tourists engaging in spiritual exploration in Malaysia underscore the profound impact of spiritual tourism constructs. From self-reflection and soul purification to a heightened awareness of local customs, tourists demonstrate a diverse understanding and appreciation for their destinations' cultural, religious, and environmental facets. Integrating mindfulness, cultural immersion, and environmental conservation into their journeys reflects a holistic approach to spiritual tourism. Tourists enrich their journeys and the broader composition of spiritual tourism by actively participating in activities that foster personal growth, connection with nature, and respect for cultural traditions. These collective efforts illuminate the transformative power of spiritual tourism constructs in shaping not only the travel experiences of individuals but also fostering a more interconnected and sustainable global tourism landscape.

CHAPTER 6

A SEGMENTATION APPROACH TO UNDERSTAND THE VIEW OF SPIRITUAL TOURISM IN TURKIYE

The study undertook an extensive investigation to identify, develop, and validate the constructs that constitute Spiritual Tourism. This involved a meticulous process to define and establish the key aspects that contribute to the overall experience of Spiritual Tourism. Furthermore, the study investigates how tourists perceive and accept these constructs, shedding light on the factors influencing their engagement with spiritual tourism activities.

A significant aspect of the research was to examine the interconnection between Spiritual Tourism and Sustainable Tourism Development. This analysis aimed to uncover the potential impact and relationship between these two constructs and whether spiritual tourism practices contribute to or align with sustainable tourism principles. This study provides insights into how spiritual tourism could foster sustainable practices within the broader tourism industry. The constructs were treated as exclusive segmentations within the context of spiritual tourism. These distinct segments allowed the researchers to categorise and understand the components contributing to the overall spiritual tourism experience.

Additionally, the study aimed to offer a comparative perspective by investigating the views and perceptions of spiritual tourism in Turkiye and Malaysia. By doing so, the authors intended to highlight cultural or contextual variations in the understanding and acceptance of spiritual tourism between these two countries.

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The conceptual framework of this study is grounded in the concepts of Spirituality (Hanefar et al., 2016) and Sustainable Tourism Development.

Qualitative data were collected through interviews with three expert references in the field. Five themes were identified and validated under Spiritual Tourism: Transcendental Consciousness, Soul Reflection, Self-Determination, Self-Consciousness, and Life Purpose.

The researchers utilized a survey method to collect feedback for quantitative data. The study population included foreign tourists who visited five selected regions in Türkiye: Istanbul, Antalya, Trabzon, Muğla, and Edirne. These regions were selected based on Türkiye's tourism statistics, representing the top five destinations most visited by foreign tourists. A purposive sampling method selected 400 tourists visiting the chosen regions.

Quantitative data were gathered through a questionnaire containing 30 items for the five Spiritual Tourism constructs/segments and five items related to Sustainable Tourism Development. The survey instrument was divided into three main sections. Part I included background-related items such as gender, age, country of origin, education level, occupation, and income level. Part II comprised questionnaire items based on the Spiritual tourism framework, and Part III comprised questionnaire items related to Sustainable Tourism Development.

Employing a comprehensive segmentation strategy within the Turkish tourism industry allows for a detailed exploration of spiritual tourists' varied requirements and preferences. This method supports the formulation of specific marketing plans and the crafting of personalised experiences that align with the distinctive attributes of each segment within Türkiye's spiritual tourism market.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

In the context of this study, the descriptive analysis is tailored to provide insights into the analysed data using mean and percentage values. The mean, or average, measures central tendency by determining the arithmetic

average of the data points. At the same time, percentages convey the proportion of a particular value about the whole dataset. By concentrating on mean and percentage values, the study opts for a simplified yet practical approach to communicating the essential characteristics of the data, emphasising a clear and accessible presentation for its audience. This choice of statistical tools allows for a straightforward interpretation of the information, catering to a broad readership with varying levels of statistical familiarity.

Context and Sample for The Study

The Turkish segment of the study encompasses five regions: Istanbul, Antalya, Trabzon, Mugla, and Edirne. These regions were chosen based on the significant influx of foreign tourists, as the Turkish Ministry of Tourism indicated. Four hundred questionnaires were distributed to foreign tourists visiting these regions, with 80 questionnaires allocated to each region using quota sampling. Respondents were purposively selected as they were tourists exploring the designated tourist destinations. The distribution of respondents according to the states is detailed in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Sample for the Five Selected Regions in Turkiye

Region	Analysis Unit	Number of questionnaire distributed	Number of questionnaire collected	Percentage of questionnaire collected
Istanbul	79	80	80	100%
Antalya	77	80	80	100%
Trabzon	76	80	76	95%
Mugla	76	80	76	95%
Edirne	76	80	78	97%
TOTAL (Average)	384	400	390	97.5%

Three hundred ninety questionnaires were collected, constituting 97.5% of the distributed questionnaires. Six sets of questionnaires needed to be completed and, as a result, excluded from the analysis. Consequently, the usable dataset comprises 384 questionnaires, representing 96% of the initially distributed and completed questionnaires for data analysis.

Respondents' Demographic Profile

A summary of the demographic profile of the respondents is presented in Table 6.2. The study sample comprised 384 individuals who visited five states in Turkiye, with 188 male and 196 female tourists. The age distribution of respondents is as follows: 100 respondents aged 19 to 24, 102 respondents aged 25 to 34, 76 respondents in the 35 to 44 age group, 51 respondents aged 45 to 54, 44 respondents in the 55 to 64 age group, and 20 respondents over the age of 65. Geographically, respondents originated from North America (14 respondents), Europe (130 respondents), Asia (228 respondents), Africa (4 respondents), Oceania (2 respondents), and South America (6 respondents).

According to Table 6.2, the respondents' education levels were classified into five groups: 19 individuals attained a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), 60 held a Master's degree, 194 had a Bachelor's degree, 106 had a High School diploma, and five completed Secondary School education. Regarding employment, the respondents comprised 72 individuals who had worked in government, 128 in private companies, 81 who were self-employed, and 103 who were students. Income levels were also assessed, revealing that 131 individuals had earned less than USD 1000, 163 had earned USD 1000 to USD 4000, 68 had earned USD 5000 to USD 9000, 13 had earned USD 10,000 to USD 14,000, 5 had earned USD 15,000 to USD 19,000, and 4 had reported an income exceeding USD 20,000.

Table 6.2: Demographic profile for Turkiye

	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	188	49
	Female	196	51
Age	19 – 24	100	26
	25 – 34	102	27
	35 – 44	67	17
	45 – 54	51	13
	55 – 64	44	12
	> 65	20	5
Origin	North America	14	4
	Europe	130	34
	Asia	228	59
	Africa	4	1
	Oceania	2	0.5
	South America	6	2
Education Level	PhD	19	5
	Master Degree	60	15
	Bachelor Degree	194	51
	High School	106	28
	Secondary School	5	1
Occupation	Government	72	20
	Private	128	30

	Business	81	20
	Student	103	30
Income Level	< USD1000	131	34
(Per Month)	USD1000 – 4000	163	42
	USD5000 – 9000	68	18
	USD10000 – 14000	13	4
	USD15000 – 19000	5	1
	> USD20000	4	1

The Description of the Study Constructs

This study examined two primary constructs: Spiritual Tourism, which represents the exogenous factor, and sustainable tourism development, which represents the endogenous factor. The authors utilised a mean score guideline to establish specific levels for each construct. This guideline, adapted from Yan’s (2020) original framework, was applied to assess the construct levels based on the sample data collected in the study, as outlined in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Value of Min Score and Implementation Level

No.	Value of min score	Implementation level
1	1.00 to 4.00	Low
2	4.01 to 7.00	Medium
3	7.01 to 10.00	High

Source: Adapted from Yan (2020)

Level of Tourism Acceptance Based on Spiritual Tourism Construction

Derived from the sample population of 384, Table 6.4 presents the average value (Mean score), standard deviation, and the analysis outcomes about the level of Spiritual Tourism as perceived by tourists in the tourism

industry. The mean score value is 5.57, with a standard deviation of 0.97. Among the five constructs of Spiritual Tourism, Life Purpose scored the highest at 5.61, followed by Self-Consciousness at 5.60, Transcendental Consciousness at 5.57, Soul Reflection at 5.56, and Self-Determination at 5.53.

Table 6.4: Descriptive Statistics - Turkiye

Constructs	Mean score	Standard deviation	Implementation Level
Spiritual Tourism	5.57	0.97	Medium
- Transcendental Consciousness	5.57	1.00	Medium
- Soul Reflection	5.56	1.00	Medium
- Self-Determination	5.53	1.00	Medium
- Self-Consciousness	5.60	1.00	Medium
- Life Purpose	5.61	1.00	Medium
Sustainable Tourism Development	5.80	0.85	Medium

Life Purpose

Life Purpose attains the highest mean (5.61), suggesting that, on average, individuals engaging in Spiritual Tourism place a significant emphasis on comprehending and pursuing their life's purpose. They are inclined to seek experiences and destinations that facilitate a connection with their more profound sense of meaning and direction in life.

Self-Consciousness

Self-Consciousness comes second with a mean score of 5.60. This implies that individuals engaging in Spiritual Tourism demonstrate a high level of self-awareness. They are attuned to their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, contributing to a more profound and reflective travel experience.

Transcendental Consciousness

Transcendental Consciousness has the third-highest mean (5.57). Respondents engaging in Spiritual Tourism tend to exhibit a strong inclination towards attaining a state of heightened awareness or altered consciousness during their journeys. They actively seek experiences that promote self-transcendence and inner peace.

Soul Reflection

Soul Reflection closely follows Transcendental Consciousness with a mean of 5.56. This implies that individuals participating in Spiritual Tourism are inclined to introspection and contemplate their inner selves during their travels. It is an essential aspect of their spiritual or personal development.

Self-Determination

Self-determination has the lowest mean (5.53) among the five constructs. Although still relatively high, this suggests that individuals who engage in Spiritual Tourism may prioritise self-determination less than the other dimensions. They might be more inclined to seek experiences and destinations that promote meaning, self-awareness, and transcendence over complete autonomy.

THE SPIRITUAL TOURISM CONSTRUCT/ SEGMENT IN TURKIYE

Life Purpose

A tourist's life purpose typically revolves around the desire for exploration, relaxation, cultural enrichment, and personal growth. In Turkiye, tourists often seek to fulfil these purposes through various activities and experiences. Here are some examples of how tourists' life purpose might manifest during a visit to Turkiye. For instance, travellers have always been fascinated by history and cultural diversity. Their life purpose for visiting

Turkey is to gain a deeper understanding of its rich history, experience its diverse culture, and create lasting memories.

Historical Exploration

The connection between the tourists' life purpose and their engagement in historical exploration is evident in how their intrinsic motivations drive them to explore ancient sites such as Ephesus, Hierapolis, and Troy. Pursuing a meaningful life purpose encourages these visitors to dedicate considerable time to immerse themselves in the historical significance of these locations. As they wander through the ruins, their reflective engagement is not merely a superficial visit but a genuine attempt to connect with the past and understand the lives of those who lived in these ancient civilisations. The tourists, driven by purpose, seek to go beyond the surface and envision the historical context, fostering a deeper appreciation for the rich heritage of these archaeological sites. In this way, the visitors' life purpose becomes a driving force that shapes their travel experiences, influencing their choices and activities during historical exploration.

Cultural Immersion

Driven by a desire for meaningful experiences, these travellers actively engage with local communities, exploring their traditions and participating in cultural activities. This involvement goes beyond a superficial exploration, as the tourists aim to comprehend and appreciate the richness of the culture they encounter. These visitors may become active participants in traditional activities, savour local cuisines to taste the region's culinary identity, and explore local markets to witness the vibrant aspects of everyday life. These activities are not merely tourist attractions but represent a deliberate effort to forge connections with the local community.

Personal Growth

While experiencing a different way of life, these visitors take the opportunity to contemplate their own lives and values. The exploration catalyses deep contemplation on various aspects, including the significance of history, cultural preservation, and the value embedded in cross-cultural connections. The historical context and cultural exposure act as a mirror, allowing them to ponder the broader implications of their experiences on their growth journey. Questions surrounding the lessons derived from history, the role of cultural preservation in shaping identities, and the impact of cross-cultural connections on personal development become integral aspects of this reflective process.

Relaxation and Nature

In pursuit of their life purpose, tourists prioritise relaxation and rejuvenation. Amid cultural exploration, they unwind on the stunning beaches of Antalya or Fethiye, embracing the tranquillity of their surroundings. Engaging in yoga and meditation, they seek moments of serenity and balance. The captivating landscapes of Cappadocia provide a serene surrounding, offering a respite from the vibrant cultural experiences. This intentional balance between cultural immersion and personal well-being enhances their overall travel experience, allowing them to fulfil their life purpose and recharge and find solace in the idyllic settings of these picturesque destinations.

Creating Memories

The tourist captures moments and experiences through photography, journaling, and conversations with fellow travellers. These captured memories hold a profound place in their life purpose, serving as a means to revisit their adventures and share their stories with others. Through these mediums, the tourist documents their journey and creates a lasting narrative that contributes to an integral part of their life purpose, fostering connections and leaving a meaningful legacy in shared human experiences.

The life purpose of tourists in Turkey extends beyond mere sightseeing; it involves deeper connections with history, culture, and personal growth. The objective is to witness and deeply engage, fostering a return from the journey with an enhanced appreciation for global diversity and a more profound sense of purpose in their own lives. These examples illustrate the diverse motivations guiding tourists, as each individual's life purpose is unique and shaped by personal interests and motivations.

Self-Consciousness

Tourist self-consciousness involves being mindful and reflective of one's identity, culture, and behaviour while travelling abroad. When tourists explore Turkiye, they frequently encounter instances of self-consciousness. Here are some examples:

Respectful Behaviour

When visiting sacred sites or historical monuments, i.e. Hagia Sophia and Blue Mosque, tourists may be conscious of their behaviour, ensuring it aligns with the reverence and respect expected in spiritual contexts.

Understanding Rituals and Traditions

Witnessing and participating in spiritual rituals or local traditions prompt tourists to reflect on their understanding and interpretation of these practices, leading to a heightened sense of self-awareness.

Interactions with Local Communities

Engaging with local communities for spiritual insights may evoke self-consciousness as tourists navigate cultural differences and attempt to convey respect for spiritual beliefs, i.e. communicate with locals to understand the practice and action during Sufi whirling.

Expression of Personal Beliefs

Tourists may become self-conscious when discussing their spiritual or religious beliefs, significantly if they differ from the predominant spiritual practices in the region.

Self-consciousness stems from a heightened awareness and understanding of local customs and cultural norms. Tourists consistently emphasise adapting to the country's customs, demonstrating respect for the local culture and avoiding unintentional offence. This self-awareness and proactive engagement with local customs are vital for cultivating a more positive and respectful travel experience in Turkiye or any foreign country.

Transcendental Consciousness

Transcendental consciousness is a state of awareness that goes beyond everyday consciousness. It often involves a sense of unity with the universe or a higher state of being. While tourists typically seek enjoyment and relaxation, some may experience moments of transcendental consciousness during their travels, including in Turkiye.

Example: Travellers visit the ancient city of Konya in Turkiye, renowned for its deep historical and spiritual significance. Konya is famous for being the home of Rumi, the 13th-century Sufi mystic and poet. The tourist, who has a strong interest in spirituality and meditation, arrives in Konya to connect with the place's spiritual essence.

Whirling Dervishes Ceremony

The travellers attend a Sufi whirling dervishes ceremony in Konya. This mesmerising and meditative dance, known as the Sama, is not just a performance but a form of spiritual practice for the dervishes. As they watch the dervishes twirl in harmony with traditional music, the tourist

begins to feel a sense of transcendence. The repetitive movements and the spiritual atmosphere create deep connection and unity.

Visiting Rumi's Mausoleum

The travellers visit the mausoleum of Rumi, where the great Sufi poet is laid to rest. The serene and contemplative environment, combined with the knowledge of Rumi's profound teachings on love and spirituality, leads to moments of introspection and transcendental consciousness. The tourist may sit in quiet contemplation, meditating on the wisdom and universality of Rumi's poetry.

Nature and Silence

The travellers may also venture into the natural surroundings of Konya, such as the tranquil gardens and fields surrounding the city. Amidst the beauty of nature and the solitude of these places, they might experience a sense of oneness with the universe, feeling connected to the earth and sky.

During their visit to Konya, the tourist's exploration of spiritual and historical sites, combined with moments of reflection and meditation, leads to transcendental consciousness. They experience a profound connection with the spiritual heritage of the city and a sense of unity with the larger universe. These moments of transcendental consciousness can be deeply personal and transformative for travellers, offering a unique and meaningful dimension to their tourism experience. They serve as a reminder that travel can be more than just a vacation; it can also be a journey of self-discovery and spiritual connection.

Soul Reflection

Soul reflection, which involves deep introspection and self-examination, can significantly impact spiritual tourism in Turkiye. When tourists

engage in soul reflection during their journeys, it enhances their spiritual experiences and fosters personal growth. Here are some key points with examples regarding the impact of soul reflection on spiritual tourism in Turkiye:

Historical Sites

Turkiye is home to numerous historical sites, including the ancient city of Ephesus, the underground cities of Cappadocia, and the stunning Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. Exploring these sites can make tourists reflect on the passage of time and the enduring legacy of human civilisation.

Natural Beauty

Turkiye boasts diverse landscapes, from the otherworldly rock formations of Cappadocia to the pristine beaches of the Mediterranean and Aegean coasts. The breathtaking scenery encourages tourists to reflect on the beauty of nature and their connection to it.

Cultural Festivals

Turkiye hosts a variety of cultural festivals throughout the year. Participating in or witnessing these events can lead to reflections on the significance of cultural traditions and celebrations.

Culinary Delights

Turkish cuisine is a culinary journey that tantalises the taste buds. Savouring dishes like kebabs, baklava, and Turkish delight can lead to soulful reflections about food's pleasures and the culture surrounding it.

Warm Hospitality

Turkish people are known for their warm hospitality. The genuine friendliness and kindness of the locals can make tourists reflect on the power of human connection and the beauty of cultural exchange.

Spiritual and Religious Sites

Turkiye is a land rich with the imprints of diverse religions and spiritual traditions. Exploring sites such as the Sumela Monastery or the ancient churches of Cappadocia can evoke profound introspection and contemplation of one's faith. These places' historical and spiritual significance creates a unique atmosphere conducive to soul-searching. Visitors may immerse themselves in a reflective journey as they absorb the cultural and spiritual heritage, fostering a deeper connection with the profound history and spirituality that defines Turkiye's diverse landscape.

Traditional Arts and Crafts

In Turkiye, the intricate art forms, including Turkish rugs, ceramics, and calligraphy, provide a platform for soul reflection. Immersing oneself in exploring these crafts goes beyond mere aesthetic appreciation - it becomes a journey of connecting with the creativity and craftsmanship of the artisans. The careful consideration, precision, and cultural significance woven into these art forms invite visitors to reflect on the depth of human expression and the cultural legacy encapsulated within each piece. The experience of exploring Turkish art forms serves as a medium for contemplation, offering a space for visitors to connect with their sense of creativity and appreciation for the artistic endeavours of others.

Visitors in Turkiye engage in soul reflection through diverse experiences, such as exploring historical and spiritual sites like the Sumela Monastery and the ancient churches of Cappadocia. The country's rich diversity of religions and traditions creates moments for profound introspection and contemplation of faith. Additionally, Turkiye's intricate art forms, such as Turkish rugs and ceramics, serve as catalysts for soul reflection, inspiring a deeper appreciation for the creativity and craftsmanship of artisans. Whether immersed in cultural heritage or contemplating artistic expressions, visitors find meaningful connections that contribute to a

spiritual journey of self-discovery and appreciation in Turkiye's diverse and culturally rich landscape.

Self-Determination

Self-determination, defined as the capacity of individuals to make choices aligned with their values and beliefs, plays a crucial role in shaping spiritual tourism experiences in Turkiye. When tourists assert autonomy in their spiritual journeys, it enhances the potential for a personalised and significant encounter. Here are some key considerations and examples regarding the impact of self-determination on spiritual tourism in Turkiye:

Tailored Experiences

Self-determined tourists will likely seek out and create experiences that align with their unique spiritual inclinations, leading to more personalised and tailored journeys. i.e., self-determined tourists visiting the Hot Springs of Pamukkale desiring a holistic and rejuvenating experience may visit Pamukkale's thermal terraces. The healing properties of the mineral-rich waters offer a personalised journey of relaxation and well-being.

Cultural Respect

The exercise of self-determination involves making choices that respect and acknowledge Turkiye's cultural and spiritual diversity, contributing to a more inclusive and respectful tourism experience. i.e. Self-determined tourists showcasing cultural respect may choose to explore the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul. By immersing themselves in this vibrant marketplace, the tourists engage with diverse goods and experiences that reflect Turkiye's cultural and spiritual diversity. The choice to navigate the maze-like alleys and interact with local vendors demonstrates respect for Turkish culture's unique traditions and craftsmanship. This intentional decision contributes to a more inclusive and respectful tourism experience,

fostering a connection with the rich cultural and spiritual expressions in Turkiye's bustling markets.

Exploration of Diverse Practices

Tourists empowered with self-determination are more inclined to explore a variety of spiritual practices, engaging with Turkiye's diversity of religious traditions and historical sites. i.e. Self-determined tourists visiting Hagia Sophia in Istanbul may choose to explore the diverse spiritual practices associated with this iconic structure. Originally built as a cathedral, converted into a mosque, later as a museum and now as a mosque, Hagia Sophia embodies a diversity of religious history. Tourists, exercising self-determination, can witness or participate in various practices, such as observing Islamic rituals or reflecting on the Christian frescoes that still adorn its walls. This intentional engagement allows tourists to explore the rich spiritual diversity of the Hagia Sophia, contributing to a more profound and inclusive travel experience.

Deeper Connection

By making choices that resonate with their personal beliefs, tourists can forge a deeper connection with the spiritual essence of Turkiye, whether through sacred sites, rituals, or cultural encounters. i.e. Tourists seeking a deeper connection with the spiritual essence of Turkiye often visit the Blue Mosque in Istanbul. This architectural marvel, with its iconic blue tiles and impressive domes, serves as a place of worship and reflection. Tourists make choices aligning with their beliefs by participating in the mosque's rituals, observing the intricate tilework, and appreciating the spiritual ambience. This intentional engagement allows them to forge a meaningful and more profound connection with the spiritual heritage of Istanbul, contributing to a profound travel experience.

Meaningful Reflection

Self-determination allows tourists to engage in meaningful reflection, fostering a sense of purpose and connection as they navigate the spiritual landscapes of Turkiye. i.e. Tourists exercising self-determination may find meaningful reflection in the Göreme Open Air Museum in Cappadocia. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is home to numerous rock-cut churches and frescoes, representing centuries of spiritual history. Visitors, empowered to explore at their own pace, can contemplate and reflect amidst the unique rock formations and sacred art. This intentional choice encourages a profound connection with the spiritual landscapes of Cappadocia, fostering a sense of purpose and a deeper understanding of Turkiye's rich cultural and historical tapestry.

The principle of self-determination profoundly shapes the landscape of spiritual tourism in Turkiye, offering travellers the autonomy to curate experiences aligned with their personal beliefs and values. From exploring diverse spiritual practices at historical sites like the Hagia Sophia to fostering a more profound connection through visits to sacred places such as the Sumela Monastery, self-determined tourists contribute to a more inclusive and respectful tourism experience. As they engage in meaningful reflection amidst the cultural richness of Turkey, the exercise of self-determination becomes a guiding force, allowing individuals to navigate the spiritual landscapes with purpose, forging connections that transcend the ordinary and creating an enriching spiritual exploration.

In the investigation of spiritual tourism in Turkiye, this chapter explored five crucial constructs: Life Purpose, Self-Consciousness, Transcendental Awareness, Self-Determination, and Soul-Reflection. The chapter underscored the significance of tourists' intentional choices aligned with their life purposes, fostering a deeper connection with the country's rich history and culture. Self-consciousness played a crucial role in adapting to local customs and promoting a respectful tourism experience.

Transcendental awareness was evident in exploring diverse spiritual practices at sacred sites. Self-determination empowered tourists to tailor experiences authentically, while soul-reflection emerged through moments of introspection and cultural immersion. Together, these constructs shape Turkiye's transformative and inclusive spiritual tourism landscape.

CHAPTER 7

A FUTURE OF SPIRITUAL TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

This final chapter gazes towards the horizon of possibilities, envisioning “A Future of Spiritual Tourism for Sustainable Tourism Development” in the vibrant landscapes of Malaysia and Turkiye. Throughout exploring spiritual tourism in these diverse and culturally rich countries, the authors have unearthed narratives that extend beyond personal journeys, intertwining with broader themes of cultural preservation, community engagement, and environmental sustainability.

This concluding chapter serves as a compass guiding through the uncharted territories of potential, where the fusion of spiritual experiences and sustainable tourism practices converges. Malaysia and Turkiye, both repositories of historical, spiritual, and natural treasures, stand at the forefront of this transformative journey. This chapter embarks on a forward-looking expedition to discern the contours of a future where Spiritual Tourism catalyzes Sustainable Tourism Development - unfold the pages of a narrative that reflects on the spiritual footprints left by travellers and envisions a sustainable legacy for the lands they traverse.

IMPLICATIONS OF SPIRITUAL TOURISM ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN TURKIYE AND MALAYSIA

One of the key outcomes of the study is the implication of Spiritual Tourism and its influence on Sustainable Tourism Development. The study identified five (5) constructs related to Spiritual Tourism, encompassing Transcendental Consciousness, Soul Reflection, Self-Determination, Self-Consciousness, and Purpose of Life.

The overall results (Chapter 6) indicated that the influence of the Life Purpose construct on a traveller was higher than Transcendental Consciousness, Soul Reflection, Self-Determination, and Self-Consciousness in determining Sustainable Tourism Development in Turkiye. Meanwhile, in Malaysia, the influence of the Transcendental Consciousness construct on a traveller was higher than Self-Determination, Soul Reflection, Self-Consciousness, and Life Purpose (Chapter 5) in determining Sustainable Tourism Development. These spiritual tourism constructs played a significant role in influencing sustainable tourism development in both countries. Based on the level of influence of tourists according to constructs, the findings indicated that all constructs had a moderate level of influence accepted by tourists in both Turkiye and Malaysia. The results of the inferential analysis of the study also showed that Spiritual Tourism had a positive and significant influence on the Sustainable Tourism Development of both countries.

Table 7.1: Regression Coefficient, Constructs and Probability Value (p) (Turkiye)

Constructs	Constructs	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Sustainable Tourism Development	Spirituality Tourism	0.324	0.43	7.561	***	Significant

*** Significant value at $p < 0.001$

Table 7.1 indicates that Spiritual Tourism in Turkiye has a significant direct effect on Sustainable Tourism Development, with an estimated regression value (regression weights, β) of 0.324 at a significant level of 0.001 (Estimate = 0.324, CR=7.561, $p < 0.001$). This implies that the “Spiritual Tourism” construct positively and significantly influences the “Sustainable Tourism Development” construct. In other words, when “Spiritual Tourism” increases by 1 unit, “Sustainable Tourism Development” is expected to increase by 0.324 units.

Table 7.2: Regression Coefficient, Constructs and Probability Value (p) (Malaysia)

Construct	Construct	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Sustainable Tourism Development	Spirituality Tourism	1.028	0.71	14.396	***	Significant

***Significant value at $p < 0.001$

Table 7.2 indicates that Spiritual Tourism in Malaysia has a significantly direct effect on Sustainable Tourism Development, with an estimated regression value (regression weights, β) of 1.028 at a significant level of 0.001 (Estimate = 1.028, CR=14.396, $p < 0.001$). This means that the “Spiritual Tourism” construct positively and significantly influences the “Sustainable Tourism Development” construct. In other words, when “Spiritual Tourism” increases by 1 unit, “Sustainable Tourism Development” is expected to increase by 1.028 units.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TOURISM INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT

The constructs of Spiritual Tourism, outlined in this book, serve as a foundational framework for analysing and shaping a new niche within the tourism industry. The spiritual tourism constructs provide travel agencies a valuable tool to craft tailored marketing strategies and customised packages for Spiritual Tourism attractions. This not only enhances the competitive edge of travel agencies but also contributes to achieving Sustainable Tourism Development. Acknowledging the growing niche capable of attracting more tourists aligns with the government's call for a globally embraced business model in the tourism industry. This strategic approach resonates with the 2030 tourism development goals of both countries.

The book underscores the potential of Spiritual Tourism as a new and impactful segment, emphasising the importance of niche marketing for Sustainable Tourism Development. This highlights the need for the Ministry of Tourism and industry entities to actively facilitate the creation of new segments, provide guidance, and assist stakeholders. Collaborative efforts become essential to achieve a competitive advantage and position the countries among the top five visited globally. The strategic planning of introducing new segments, supported by the Tourism Ministry, is crucial for raising awareness and confidence among industry players.

SPIRITUAL TOURISM SEGMENTATION FOR FUTURE ATTRACTION

The novel constructs of Spiritual Tourism and their significance in influencing Sustainable Tourism Development offer valuable insights for the Ministry of Tourism in positioning the sector as a significant contributor

to national income. In light of the proposed model, the tourism industry is recommended to prioritise Spiritual Tourism for Sustainable Tourism Development. The following considerations are proposed:

- a) As tourism and travel agencies expand their business scope, introducing a new segment, spiritual tourism, is crucial. The efficiency of travel organisations and agencies becomes pivotal, necessitating competent and knowledgeable teams for the success of the Spiritual Tourism segment. Findings suggest alignment with spiritual values in promoting Spiritual Tourism, urging travel agencies to align with the industry's vision and mission.
- b) The Ministry of Tourism needs proactive support in launching the new segment of Spiritual Tourism, strategically planning for its success based on the evident impact on Sustainable Tourism Development. Although elements conducive to this segment exist in both countries, fostering Spiritual Tourism can indirectly boost foreign tourists.
- c) With substantial growth in the tourism sector, concerted efforts toward achieving Sustainable Tourism Development are needed. The goal should be establishing the country as a premier travel destination by 2030, ranking among the top countries in visitor numbers and generating significant profits. Establishing Spiritual Tourism in innovative ways is crucial for achieving this vision.
- d) Exciting and creative tourism products play a vital role in supporting the creation of a new segment of Spiritual Tourism. Embracing technology, especially in line with Industry 4.0, can draw attention to Gen Z decision-makers in travel choices. The Ministry of Tourism should seize this opportunity, recognising technology as a focused approach to spirituality in the tourism industry.

- e) Segmentation emerges as a pivotal marketing strategy, focusing on consumer groups with distinct preferences. Understanding diverse segments among potential tourists is essential for attracting future visitors to spiritual tourism. This underscores the importance of grasping diverse preferences for successful attraction and engagement in spiritual tourism.

CONCLUSION: A VISION FOR ‘SUSTAINABLE SPIRITUAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT’

As we draw the curtains on the chapters exploring the intricate realm of spiritual tourism in Malaysia and Turkiye, a compelling narrative unfolds - a narrative woven with threads of cultural richness, spiritual exploration, and the pursuit of sustainability. This book embarked on a journey to unravel the complexities of Spiritual Tourism, seeking to understand its role in shaping Sustainable Tourism Development in these two diverse yet interconnected nations - Malaysia and Turkiye.

The exploration transcended conventional tourism paradigms in these two nations, exploring the profound connections between spirituality, cultural heritage, and environmental stewardship. The empirical insights from the study validated existing models and paved the way for a bespoke Model of Spiritual Tourism. This model, intricately developed based on the specific tourism dynamics of Malaysia and Turkiye, introduces five fundamental constructs - Transcendental Consciousness, Soul Reflection, Self-Determination, Self-Consciousness, and Life Purpose.

The implications of these constructs extend beyond the theoretical realm, resonating with practical implications for the tourism industry in both countries. The awareness and acceptance of spiritual tourism as a niche market have become palpable, influencing not only the behaviour of tourists but also shaping the trajectory of sustainable tourism development.

This book substantiates that harmonising spiritual experiences with tourism practices contributes to a more sustainable and culturally sensitive industry.

As the final chapter unfolds, it envisions a future where insights from this exploration become catalysts for transformative change. It beckons stakeholders, policymakers, and industry players to recognise the potential of spiritual tourism in fostering sustainable tourism development. This concluding chapter does not merely signify the end of a book. However, it marks the beginning of a dialogue. This ongoing conversation invites collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment to nurturing a tourism landscape that is spiritually enriching, culturally respectful, and environmentally sustainable.

In essence, the journey through these chapters illuminates the path towards a future where Spiritual Tourism coexists with Sustainable Tourism Development and emerges as an integral force propelling it forward. The exploration may conclude, but the vision for a sustainable and spiritually conscious tourism industry in Malaysia and Turkiye is a perpetual voyage guided by the wisdom of this transformative odyssey.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abdullah, M. (2012). *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim* by Ibn Kathir. In Y. Harun, F. A. Okbah, Y. Qadir, T. Saleh, F. Gasim, A. Amri, & B. Salam (Eds.), (3rd ed., Vol. 5). Pustaka Imam Asy-Syafii'i.
- Abd Halim, M. S., Tatoglu, E., & Mohamad Hanefar, S. B. (2021). A review of spiritual tourism: A conceptual model for future research. *Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 27(1), 119-141. <https://doi.org/10.20867/thm.27.1.7>
- Academy for Cultural Diplomacy. (n.d.). *Examples of interfaith dialogue that contribute toward the understanding of global religious traditions*. https://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/academy/index.php?en_historical-examples
- Ahmad, W., Kim, W. G., Anwer, Z., and Zhuang, W. (2020). Schwartz personal values, theory of planned behavior and environmental consciousness: How tourists' visiting intentions towards eco-friendly destinations are shaped? *Journal of Business Research*, 110, 228-236. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.01.040>
- Aktaş, S. G., and Yilmaz, A. (2019). Views on the effects of nature-based tourism activities on the environment: the case of fairy chimneys tourism region (Turkey). *Journal of Tourism Leisure and Hospitality*, 1(1), 35-42.
- All About Turkey. (n.d.). Mugla. <https://www.allaboutturkey.com/mugla.html>
- Amram, Y., and Dryer, C. (2008). *The integrated spiritual intelligence scale (ISIS): development and preliminary validation*. In 116th annual conference of the American Psychological Association. Boston. American Psychological Association.

- Andriotis, K. (2009). Sacred site experience: A phenomenological study. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 36(11), 64-84. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2008.10.003>
- Anatolia Travel Services. (n.d.). *Trabzon: An inspiration for travellers*. <https://www.anatoliatravelservices.com/en/guide/69/trabzon-an-inspiration-for-travellers.html>
- Antalya, Istanbul among most visited cities in world: Data. (2024, February 10). *Hurriyet Daily News*. <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/antalya-istanbul-among-most-visited-cities-in-world-data-190570>
- Antalya: Capital of Turkish tourism, world's open-air museum. (2020, August 16). *Daily Sabah*. <https://www.dailysabah.com/arts/antalya-capital-of-turkish-tourism-worlds-open-air-museum/news>
- Aulet, S., Diam J., and Vidal. D. (2017). Developing spiritual tourism for youngsters, the spirit-youth example. *Philosophy*. <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1007&context=irtp>
- Aulet, S. and Duda, T. (2020). Tourism accessibility and its impact on the spiritual sustainability of sacred sites. *Sustainability*, 12(22), 9695. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12229695>
- Baloch, Q.B., Shah, S.N., Iqbal, N., Sheeraz, M., Asadullah, M., Mahar, S. and Khan, A.U. (2023). Impact of tourism development upon environmental sustainability: A suggested framework for sustainable ecotourism. In *Environmental Science and Pollution Research International*, 3, 5917-5930. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-022-22496-w>
- Bebbington, J. (2001). Sustainable development: a review of the international development, business and accounting literature. *Accounting Forum*, 25(2), 128-157. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6303.00059>
- Blomfield, B. (2009), Markers of the heart: Finding spirituality in a bus marked tourist. *Journal Management Spirituality & Religion* 6(2), 91-105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080902815122>

- Brämer, P. (2009), "From the Editor". *Common Ground Journal*, 7 (1), 8 - 13. <https://www.edcot.com/cmngnd/volnum/v07n01.pdf>
- Bowler, B. (2014, January 30). *How spiritual tourism might change the world*. *huffpost*: https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/ben-bowler/can-the-changing-face-of-_b_4363378.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xILmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAAT418ASNVIXI6ODJqKw0rmbV4n94gDduwiDVcedc2xpeiVP1r-UKk5zM9iADnFAV-vBjimotGJeXUsecC9c9T9H3
- Bolghan-Abadi, M., Ghofrani, F., and Abde-Khodaei, M. S. (2014). Study of the spiritual intelligence role in predicting university students' quality of life. *Journal of Religion Health*, 53(1), 79-85. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-012-9602-0>
- Brenner, T. (2005). Tourism and religion. In Jones, L. (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Religion*. (2nd ed.) Macmillan Distribution
- Brida, J.G., Osti, L. and Barquet, A. (2010). Segmenting resident perceptions towards tourism - a cluster analysis with a multinomial logit model of a mountain community. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 591-602. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.778>
- Britannica (n.d.). Turkey. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Turkey>
- Britannica. (n.d.). Antalya. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Antalya>
- Britannica. (n.d.). Trabzon. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Trabzon-Turkey>
- Britannica. (n.d.). Kuala Lumpur. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kuala-Lumpur>
- Britannica. (n.d.). Mugla. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Mugla>
- Brownstein, B. (2008), Profitability and spiritual wisdom: A tale of two companies, *Business Renaissance Quarterly*, 3 (3), 13-43.
- Budeanu, A. (2007). Sustainable tourist behaviour – A discussion of opportunities for change. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 31(5), 499-508.

- Budovich, L., S. (2023). The impact of religious tourism on the economy and tourism industry. *HTS Theological Studies*, 79(1), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v79i1.8607>
- Byrd, E. T. (2007). Stakeholders in sustainable tourism development and their roles: applying stakeholder theory to sustainable tourism development. *Tourism Review*, 62(2), 6-13. <https://doi.org/10.1108/16605370780000309>.
- Byrch, C., Kearins, K., Milne, M. J. and Morgan, M, K. (2007). Sustainable 'what'? A cognitive approach to understanding sustainable development. *Qualitative Research in Accounting and Management*, 4(1), 26-52.
- Bywater, M. (1994). Religious travel in Europe. *Travel and Tourism Analyst*, 39- 52.
- Cheer J.M., Belhassen Y., and Kujawa J. (2017), The search for spirituality in tourism: Toward a conceptual framework for spiritual tourism. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 24, 252 - 256. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2017.07.018>
- Choi, H.S.C. and Sirakaya, E. (2005). Measuring residents' attitude toward sustainable tourism: development of sustainable tourism attitude scale. *Journal of Travel Book*, 300-304. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287505274651>
- Cochrane, J. (2009). Spirits, nature and pilgrimage: The other dimension in Javanese domestic tourism. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, 6(2), 107-120. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080902815130>
- Cohen, E. (1992). Pilgrimage centre: concentric and excentric. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 18(1), 33-50. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383\(92\)90105-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(92)90105-X)
- Coghlan A. (2015), Tourism and health: Using positive psychology principles to maximise participants' wellbeing outcomes – A design concept for charity challenge tourism. *Journal of*

- Sustainable Tourism*, 23, 382 - 400. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2014.986489>
- Conrad, D. and Barreto, I. (2005). Redefining tourism. *International Trade Forum*, 2, 22-33.
- Cottrell, S.P. and Raadik, J. (2008). Socio-cultural benefits of PAN Parks at Bieszczady National Park, Poland. *Finnish Journal of Tourism Research*, 4 (1), 56-67.
- Cottrell, S.P., Vaske, J.J. and Roemer, J.M. (2013). Resident satisfaction with sustainable tourism: the case of Frankenwald Nature Park, Germany. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 511-525. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2013.05.005>
- Cutler S., Carmichael B. (2010). *The dimensions of the tourist experience*. In Morgan, M., Lugosi, P., and Ritchie, B. (eds.), *The Tourism and Leisure Experience: Consumer and Managerial Perspectives*, Channel View Publications, 3-26. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781845411503-004>
- Deci E.L., Ryan R.M. (1985). The general causality orientations scale: Self-determination in personality. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 19 (2), 109 - 134. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0092-6566\(85\)90023-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0092-6566(85)90023-6)
- Domestic tourism surges 19 Pct, records 58.6 million visitors in Q1 2024. (2024, June 12). *Bernama*. <https://bernama.com/en/news.php?id=2307059>
- Dunlop, D. (2023). *Erdine. – Turkiye's European city*. <https://themaritimeexplorer.ca/2023/09/11/edirne-turkiyes-european-city/>
- Ernst & Young. (2023). *Tourism Update 2023. Turkiye and Istanbul*. https://assets.ey.com/content/dam/ey-sites/ey-com/tr_tr/pdf/ey-tourism-market-overview-2023-v22.pdf
- Ferreira, D. and Perks, S. (2020). A Dimensional Framework of Tourism Indicators Influencing Destination Competitiveness. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 9(3), 1 – 21. https://www.ajhtl.com/uploads/7/1/6/3/7163688/article_1_9_3_1-21.pdf

- Finney, R. Z., Orwig, R.A., and Spake, D. F. (2009). Lotus-eaters, pilgrims, seekers, and accidental tourists: How different travelers consume the sacred and the profane. *Services Marketing Quarterly*, 30(2), 148-173.
- Font, X. and McCabe,S. (2017). Sustainability and marketing in tourism: its contexts, paradoxes, approaches, challenges and potential. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 25 (7), 869-883.
- Giampiccoli, A., and Saayman, M. (2018). Community-based tourism development model and community participation. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 7(4), 1-27.
- Goeldner, C. R., Ritchie, J. R. B., and McIntosh, R. W. (2000). *Tourism: Principles, practices, philosophies*. Wiley.
- Graci, S. (2016). Collaboration and partnership development for sustainable tourism. In *Understanding Tropical Coastal and Island Tourism Development* (pp. 25-42). Routledge.
- Greg, R. (2011). Tourism trends; tourism, culture and cultural routes. Council of europe publishing: Cultural tourism trends in Europe: a context for the development of cultural routes. In: Khovanova-Rubicondo, K. (ed.) *Impact of European*.
- GSTC. (2022). What is sustainable tourism. <https://www.gstccouncil.org/what-is-sustainable-tourism/>
- Gupta, G., and Chopra, P. (2014). Eco-tourists and environment protection: A pro-environment behavioural segmentation approach. *Amity Global Business Review*, 9 (February), 90-95.
- Gursoy, D. and Rutherford, D.G. (2004). Host attitudes toward tourism: an improved structural model. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31 (3), 495-516.
- Hall, C. M. (2019). Constructing sustainable tourism development: The 2030 agenda and the managerial ecology of sustainable tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 27(7), 1044–1060. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2018>

- Hanefar, S.B. (2015). *Development of spiritual intelligence model for adolescents in Malaysia*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Malaya.
- Hanefar, S.B. Saari, Z. and Siraj, S. (2016). A synthesis of spiritual intelligence themes from Islamic and Western philosophical perspectives. *Journal of Religion and Health*. 55(6), 2069-2085.
- Haq, F., Wong, H.Y. and Jackson, J. (2008). Strategic destination planning: analyzing the future of tourism. *Journal of Travel Book*, 46, 355- 367.
- Haq, F. and Jackson, J. (2009), Spiritual journey to Hajj: Australian and Pakistani experience and expectations. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, 6(2), 141-156.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080902815155>
- Haq, F. and Wong, H.Y. (2011). Exploring marketing strategies for Islamic spiritual tourism. *Handbook of Islamic Marketing*. Edward Elgar Publishing, 319-337.
- Haq, F. and Wong, H. Y. (2013). Branding Islamic spiritual tourism: An exploratory study In Australia and Pakistan. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 5(11), 154-162.
- Haq, F. and Wong, H.Y. (2015). Branding Islamic spiritual tourism: An exploratory study in Australia & Pakistan. *International Journal of Islamic Management and Business*, 106-124.
- Haq, F. (2017). *Marketing strategy for inclusive spiritual tourism*. Proceedings of 43rd International Business Book Conference (pp. 1-11). Toronto, Canada: Ryerson University.
- Heintzman P. (2002), A conceptual model of leisure and spiritual well-being. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*. 20 (4), 147 - 169.
- Heintzman P. (2013). Retreat tourism as a form of transformational tourism. In Reisinger, Y. (Ed.) *Transformational Tourism: Tourist Perspectives*. CABI International, 68 - 81.

- Heitmann S. (2011), Tourist behaviour and tourism motivation. In Robinson, P., Heitmann, S. and, Dieke, P, (Eds.), *Research Themes for Tourism*. CABI International, 31 - 44. <https://doi.org/10.1079/9781845936846.0031>
- Hughes, K., Bond, N. and Ballantyne, R. (2013). Designing and managing interpretive experiences at religious sites: Visitors' perceptions of canterbury cathedral. *Tourism Management*, 36, 210-20.
- Jarratt D., Sharpley R. (2017). Tourists at the seaside: Exploring the spiritual dimension. *Tourist Studies*, 17 (4), 349 - 368. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1468797616687560>
- Jackowski, A. (2000). Religious tourism: Problems with terminology. *Peregrinus Cracoviensis*, (10).
- Karim, F. (1991). Imam Ghazali's Ihya Ulumuddin. *The book of religious learnings* (Vol. 3). Islamic Book Services.
- Kelly C. (2012). Wellness tourism: Retreat visitor motivations and experiences. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 37 (3), 205 - 213. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2012.11081709>
- Khanam, S. (2017, February 9). *This is why you should travel, according to islam*. <https://www.havehalalwilltravel.com/why-you-should-travel-islam/>
- King, D. B., & DeCicco, T. L. (2009). A viable model and self-report measure of spiritual intelligence. *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 28, 68–85.
- Kiper, T. (2013) Role of ecotourism in sustainable development. In Murat Ozyavuz (Ed.). *Advances in Landscape Architecture*. <https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/45414>
- Koc, E., and Altinay, G. (2007). An analysis of seasonality in monthly per person tourist spending in Turkish inbound tourism from a market segmentation perspective. *Tourism Management*, 28(1), 227-237. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2006.01.003>

- Kotler, P.T. and Armstrong, G. (2018). *Principles of Marketing*. (17th Global Edition). Pearson.
- Langgulong, H. (1986). *Manusia dan Pendidikan*. Pustaka Al Husna.
- Lanquar, R. (2013). *Tourism In the Mediterranean: Scenarios up to 2030*. MedPro.
- Lee, S. and Bai, B., 2016. Influence of popular culture on special interest tourists' destination image. *Tourism Management*, 52, 161-169
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2015.06.019>
- Lepherd, L. (2015). Spirituality: Everyone has it, but what is it? *International Journal of Nursing Practice*, 21(5), 566-574. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijn.12285>
- Letsch, C. (2016, Oct 5). *Turkey Holidays*. Retrieved from The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2016/oct/05/turkey-tourism-industry-reels-year-to-forget-istanbul-antalya>
- Little D.E., and Schmidt C. (2006). Self, wonder and god! The spiritual dimensions of travel experiences. *Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal*, 54 (2), 107 - 116.
- Lunn, J. (2009). The role of religion, spirituality and faith in development: A critical theory approach. *Third World Quarterly*, 30(5), 937-951. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436590902959180>
- Lloyd, D. (1998). *Battlefield Tourism*. Berg.
- Wen, H.J. (2024, April 30). Malaysia sees 32.5% more tourists in first quarter of 2024, says Tiong. *The Star*. <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2024/04/30/malaysia-sees-325-more-tourists-in-first-quarter-of-2024-says-tiong>
- Mamat, K., Du, P. and Ding, J. (2017). Ecological function regionalization of cultural heritage sites in Turpan, China based on GIS. *Arabian Journal of Geoscience*, 10(90). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12517-017-2892-5>

- Manzoor, F., Wei, L., Asif, M., Haq, M.Z. and Rehman, H. (2019). The contribution of sustainable tourism to economic growth and employment in Pakistan. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(19), 3785. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16193785>.
- Marshall, D. A. (2002). Behavior, belonging, and belief: A theory of ritual practice. *Sociological Theory*, 20(3), 360-380. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9558.00168>
- McChesney, I. G. (1991). *The Brundtland report and sustainable development in New Zealand*. Lincoln University and University of Canterbury: Centre for Resource Management .
- McKercher, B. and Prideaux, B. (2014). Academic myths of tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 46, 16-28. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2014.02.003>
- Ministry of Culture and Tourism. (2007). *Tourism Strategy of Turkey 2023*. Ministry of Culture and Tourism Publications.
- Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture (MOTAC). (2020). *National Tourism Policy 2020-2030*.
- Mohamed Radhi, Nor Ain and Sallehudin, Qistina. (2024, June 25). Tourist surge: Malaysia welcomes over 7.5mil visitors from January to April this year. *New Straits Times*. <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2024/06/1067992/tourist-surge-malaysia-welcomes-over-75mil-visitors-january-april-year>
- Morgan A.D. (2010). Journeys into transformation: Travel to an “other” place as a vehicle for transformative learning. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 8 (4), 246 - 268. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1541344611421491>
- MOTAC. (n.d.) *Program pengalaman homestay malaysia*. Ministry of Tourism Arts and Culture. <https://www.motac.gov.my/en/programme/tourism/homestay>

- Malaysian Investment Development Authority - MIDA. (2024). *Hospitality (Hotels & Tourism)*. <https://www.mida.gov.my/industries/services/hospitality-hotels-and-tourism/>
- Malaysian Investment Development Authority - MIDA. (2024). *Smart tourism: Future of tourism in Malaysia*. <https://www.mida.gov.my/smart-tourism-future-of-tourism-in-malaysia/>
- Miner-Williams D. (2006), Putting a puzzle together: Making spirituality meaningful for nursing using an evolving theoretical framework. *Journal of Clinical Nursing Science Quarterly*, 15 (7), 811 - 821. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2702.2006.01351.x>
- Mulupark.com. (n.d.) Mulu Park. <https://mulupark.com/>
- MySabah.com. (n.d.). *How to climb Mount Kinabalu and how much it cost (Year 2024)?* <https://www.mysabah.com/wordpress/how-to-climb-mount-kinabalu-and-how-much-it-cost/>
- National Geographic. (2018). *Escape to Turkey's otherworldly landscape*. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/world-heritage/article/cappadocia>
- Niedziolka, I. (2012). Sustainable tourism development. *Regional Formation and Development Studies*, No. 3 (8). <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/233176826.pdf>
- Norman, A., 2014. The varieties of the spiritual tourist experience. *Literature & Aesthetics*, 22(1). <https://openjournals.library.sydney.edu.au/LA/article/view/7573/7905>
- Olsen, D.H. and Timothy, D.J. (2002). Contested religious heritage: Differing views of Mormon heritage. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 27(2), 7–15. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315237749-21/contested-religious-heritage-differing-views-mormon-heritage-daniel-olsen-dallen-timothy>
- Pacific Asia Travel Association. (n.d.). *Ten must-visit places in Sarawak, Malaysia*. <https://www.pata.org/blog/ten-must-visit-places-in-sarawak-malaysia>

- Pahang Tourism. (n.d.). *Tioman island*. <https://www.pahangtourism.com.my/tioman-island/>
- Pan, S. Y., Gao, M., Kim, H., Shah, K. J., Pei, S. L., & Chiang, P. C. (2018). Advances and challenges in sustainable tourism toward a green economy. *Science of the Total Environment*, 635, 452-469. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2018.04.134>
- Pargament, K. I. (1997). *The psychology of religion and coping: Theory, research, practice*. Guilford Press.
- Pargament, K. I. (1999). The psychology of religion and spirituality? Yes and no. *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 9, 3–16. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327582ijpr0901_2
- Perkin, F. (2013). *Spiritual Tourism*. International Conference on Spiritual Tourism for Sustainable Development. Ninh Binh Province, Vietnam: UNWTO.
- Ponder L.M., and Holladay P.J. (2013). The transformative power of yoga tourism. In Reisinger, Y. (Ed), *Transformational Tourism: Tourist Perspectives*. CABI International, 98 - 108. <https://doi.org/10.1079/9781780642093.0098>
- Prakoso, A. A., Pradipto, E., Roychansyah, M. S., and Nugraha, B. S. (2020). Community-based tourism: Concepts, opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism and Entrepreneurship*, 2(2), 95-107. <https://doi.org/10.35912/joste.v2i2.563>
- Presidency of The Republic of Turkiye Investment Office. (n.d.). *Tourism sector in Turkiye*. <https://www.invest.gov.tr/en/library/publications/lists/investpublications/tourism-industry.pdf>
- Rainforest World Music Festival. (n.d.). <https://rwmf.net/>
- Rasool, H., Maqbool, S. and Tarique, M. (2021). The relationship between tourism and economic growth among BRICS countries: A panel cointegration analysis. *Future Business Journal*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s43093-020-00048-3>

- Reisinger Y. (2013). Connection between travel, tourism, and transformation. In Reisinger, Y. (Ed.), *Transformational Tourism: Tourist Perspectives*. CABI International, 27 - 32. <https://doi.org/10.1079/9781780642093.0027>
- Richards, D. H. (2002). *Tourism and sustainable community development*. Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.
- Rocio, H-G, Jaime, O-C, and Cinta, P-C. (2023). The role of management in sustainable tourism: A Bibliometric analysis approach. *Sustainability*, 15(12), 9712. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15129712>
- Rosentraub M.S. and Joo M. (2009). Tourism and economic development: Which investments produce gains for regions?. *TourismManagement*, 30(5), 759-770. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2008.11.014>
- Rumi's legacy draws visitors to Türkiye on his death anniversary. (2022. December 9). *Daily Sabah*. <https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/rumis-legacy-draws-visitors-to-turkiye-on-his-death-anniversary/news>
- Sabah Tourism. (2023). *Kinabalu Park*. <https://sabahtourism.com/destination/kinabalu-park/?locale=en>
- Sarfaraz, H. Z., Maedeh, S, Reza, M. and Edmundas, K. (2015). Sustainable tourism: A comprehensive literature review on frameworks and applications. *Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja*, 1-30, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1331677X.2014.995895>.
- Seifi, S. and Crowther, D. (2011). Disclosing the jargon of sustainability. *Social Responsibility Review*, 3, 35-40.
- Selangor.Travel. (n.d.). *Explore Selangor and beyond*. <https://selangor.travel/>
- Selstad L. (2007). The social anthropology of the tourist experience. Exploring the "Middle Role". *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 7(1), 19 - 33. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250701256771>

- Sharpley R., Sundaram P. (2005). Tourism: a sacred journey? The case of ashram tourism, India. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 7(3), 161 - 171. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.522>
- Shen, S., Sotiriadis, M. and Zhao, Q. (2020). Could smart tourists be sustainable and responsible as well? The contribution of social networking sites to improving their sustainable and responsible behavior. *Sustainability*. <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/4/1470>
- Statista. (2023). *Most visited states by domestic tourists in Malaysia in 2022*. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1024350/most-visited-states-domestic-tourists-malaysia/>
- Statista. (2023). *Travel and tourism in Malaysia: Statistics and facts*. <https://www.statista.com/topics/5741/travel-and-tourism-in-malaysia/>
- Statista. (2023). *Travel and tourism in Turkiye: Statistics and facts*. <https://www.statista.com/topics/9676/travel-and-tourism-in-turkey/>
- Stylidis, D., Kokho Sit, J., and Biran, A. (2018). Residents' place image: a meaningful psychographic variable for tourism segmentation? *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 35(6), 715-725. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2018.1425176>
- Sustainable Development Goals. (2018). *About the SDG media compact*. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sdg-media-compact-about/>
- Swarbrooke, J. (1999). *Sustainable tourism management*. Cabi.
- Smith M.K., and Diekmann A. (2017). Tourism and wellbeing. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 66, 1 - 13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2017.05.006>
- Smith, M., and Kelly, C. (2006). Wellness Tourism. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 31(1), 1-4
- Steiner C.J., and Reisinger Y. (2006), Ringing the fourfold: A philosophical framework for thinking about wellness tourism. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 31(1), 5-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2006.11081242>

- Tanyi R.A. (2002), Towards clarification of the meaning of spirituality, *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 39(5), 500-509. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.2002.02315.x>
- Terzidou, M., Scarles, C., and Saunders, M. N. (2018). The complexities of religious tourism motivations: Sacred places, vows and visions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 70, 54-65. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2018.02.011>
- Tourist arrivals on track to surpass 2023 target. (2024, August 19). *The Edge Malaysia*. <https://theedgemaalaysia.com/node/687409>
- The Star. (2023). *Tourist arrivals to pick up significantly next year*. <https://www.thestar.com.my/business/business-news/2023/12/07/tourist-arrivals-to-pick-up-significantly-next-year#:~:text=From%20January%20to%20September%2C%20the,from%20the%20initial%2016.1%20million.>
- Timothy, D.J. and Iverson, T. (2006). Tourism and Islam: Considerations of culture and duty. In Timothy,D and Olsen,D.(Eds.) *Tourism, Religion and Spiritual Journeys*,186-205. Routledge.<https://perpus.univpancasila.ac.id/repository/EBUPT190758.pdf#page=203>
- Todorović, N. and Jovicic, D. (2016). Motivational factors of youth tourists visiting Belgrade. *Journal of Geography Institute 'Jovan Cvijic'*, 66(2), 273-289. <https://doiserbia.nb.rs/ft.aspx?id=0350-75991602273T>
- Tourism Malaysia. (2019). *Malaysia's tourist profile 2019 by selected markets*. <https://mytourismdata.tourism.gov.my/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Tourism-Profile-2019.pdf>
- Tourism Malaysia. (2021). *2021 Malaysia tourism key performance indicator*.<https://mytourismdata.tourism.gov.my/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/KEY-PERFORMANCE-INDICATORS-2021.pdf>
- Tourism Malaysia. (2022). *Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026*. https://www.tourism.gov.my/files/uploads/TM_Strategic_Plan.pdf

- Tourism Malaysia. (2023). *Tourism Malaysia highlights sustainable tourism at world travel market 2023*. <https://www.tourism.gov.my/media/view/tourism-malaysia-highlights-sustainable-tourism-at-world-travel-market-2023>
- Tourism Malaysia. (2024). *Malaysia tourism statistics in brief*. <https://www.tourism.gov.my/statistics>
- Tourism rebounded in 2022, contributed 14% to GDP. (2023, September 20). *The Sun*. <https://thesun.my/business/tourism-rebounded-in-2022-contributed-14-to-gdp-AE11513762>
- Turkey's iconic Sümela Monastery draws tourists after reopening. (2022, January 1). *Daily Sabah*. <https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/turkeys-ionic-sumela-monastery-draws-tourists-after-reopening/news>
- Türkiye welcomes over 33 million foreign tourists in eight months. (2023, Sept, 23). *Hurriyet Daily News*. <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkiye-welcomes-over-33-million-foreign-tourists-in-eight-months-186492>
- Turkiye Tourism Promotional and Development Agency. (n.d.). *Sustainable tourism program*. <https://tga.gov.tr/about-the-sustainable-tourism-program/#:~:text=Following%20the%20innovative%20and%20sustainable,tourism%20opportunities%20across%20the%20globe>
- Turkish Archaeological News. (2017). *Karain Cave*. <https://turkisharchaeonews.net/site/karain-cave>
- Turkish Travel Agencies (TÜRSAB). (2015). *Foreign Visitors Figure & Tourist Spendings by Years*. <https://www.tursab.org.tr/statistics-en/foreign-visitors-figure-and-tourist-spendings-by-years>
- UNDP. (2024). *Human Development Report 2021/2022*. <https://hdr.undp.org/reports-and-publications>
- UNDP. (2022). *Malaysia maintains spot in 'Very High Human Development' category in new HDR Report*. <https://www.undp.org/malaysia/blog/malaysia-maintains-spot-very-high-human-development-category-new-hdr-report>

- UNDP. (n.d.). *Capacity development for sustainable community based tourism*. <https://www.undp.org/turkiye/projects/capacity-development-sustainable-community-based-tourism>
- UNDP. (n.d.). *Eastern Anatolia tourism development project*. https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/TUR/00045114_Signed%20Project%20Document.pdf
- UNESCO. (n.d.) Gordion. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1669/>
- UNESCO. (n.d.). Goreme National Park. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/357/>
- UNESCO. (n.d.). Historic Areas of Istanbul. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/>
- UNESCO. World Heritage Convention. (n.d.). Historic areas of Istanbul. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/>
- UNESCO. (n.d.). *Selimeye Mosque and its social complex*. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1366/>
- United Nations. (2015). *Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development*. <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>
- UNWTO. (2012). *UNWTO Annual Report 2011*. <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/epdf/10.18111/9789284415366>
- UNWTO (2019). *Global Report on Sustainable Tourism Development 2019: Tourism and jobs: A better future for all*.
- UNWTO. (2020). *Sustainable tourism for development: global report on an observed increase in volunteering and other forms of giving back by travelers*.
- UNWTO (2023) *International tourism to end 2023 close to 90% of pre-pandemic levels*. <https://www.unwto.org/news/international-tourism-to-end-2023-close-to-90-of-pre-pandemic-levels#:~:text=International%20tourist%20arrivals%20hit%2091,the%20end%20of%20the%20year>.

- United Nations World Tourism Organization & United Nations Development Programme. (2017). *Tourism and the sustainable development goals – journey to 2030*. UNWTO.
- Vaughan, F. (2002). What is spiritual intelligence? *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 42(2), 16-33.
- Vukonić, B. (1996) *Tourism and religion*. Elsevier.
- Vukonic, B. (1998). Religious tourism: Economic value or an empty box? *Zagreb International Review of Economics and Business*, 83-94. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/file/54551>
- Vu, J.C. and Turner, L. (2009). The economic structure of world tourism. *Tourism Economics*, 15(1), 5-21. <https://doi.org/10.5367/000000009787536717>
- Vocabulary.com (n.d.). *Transcendence*. <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/transcendence#:~:text=Transcendence%20comes%20from%20the%20Latin,beyond%20physical%20needs%20and%20realities.>
- Wang, Y., Alli, H., and Ishak, S. M. M. (2023). Sustainable tourism souvenirs: fostering cultural heritage preservation through local handicraft product. In *6th Langkawi International Multidisciplinary Conference 2023*, 90. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ahmed-Hammad-54/publication/375915662_From_Tradition_to_Exclusion_Analysing_the_Surge_of_Gated_Communities_in_Jordan_and_their_Societal_Consequences/links/656305c6ce88b87031117d6c/From-Tradition-to-Exclusion-Analysing-the-Surge-of-Gated-Communities-in-Jordan-and-their-Societal-Consequences.pdf#page=97
- Wedel, M. and Kamakura, W.A. (2012). *Market segmentation: conceptual and methodological foundations*. (2nd ed.). Springer.
- Wilson G.B., McIntosh A.J., Zahra A.L. (2013), Tourism and spirituality: A phenomenological analysis. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 42, 150 - 168. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2013.01.016>

- Wondirad, A., Tolkach, D., and King, B. (2020). Stakeholder collaboration as a major factor for sustainable ecotourism development in developing countries. *Tourism Management*, 78, 104024. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.104024>
- World Population Review (n.d.) *Istanbul population 2023*. <https://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/istanbul-population>
- World Tourism Destination Forum. (2018). Building an outstanding world-class tourism destination. *World Tourism Destination Forum*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- Yan, P. (2020). A guide to scaling and normalization in data science. *Statistical Methods and Applications*, 29(2), 167-181. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10260-020-00531-8>
- Zohar, D., & Marshall, I. (2000). *SQ: Spiritual intelligence the ultimate intelligence*. Bloomsbury Publishing PLC.

INDEX

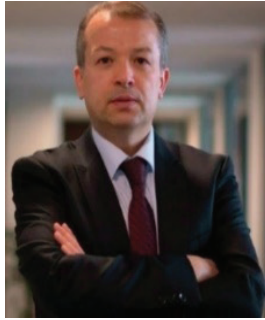
AUTHORS' BIOGRAPHIES



Mutia Sobihah Abd Halim (PhD) is an Associate Professor and Head of the Strategic Business Unit at Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA). She is prominent in marketing, tourism, e-commerce, management information systems, and entrepreneurship. With over 16 years in higher education and seven years in industry, she brings a wealth of experience to her roles. She has served as an advisor for Terengganu State Tourism and as the former Director of the Corporate Communication Centre at UniSZA. Her impressive academic contributions include more than 40 journal publications and the authorship of 5 books, solidifying her reputation as an influential expert in her field.



Shamsiah Banu Mohamad Hanefar (PhD) is a passionate educator with 22 years of working experience. Her specialisation is in the field of educational psychology, and she is a strong advocate of spiritual intelligence. Well-versed in multidisciplinary fields, including education and spiritual tourism, she currently serves as a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Education and Liberal Arts (FELA), INTI International University, Malaysia. Shamsiah has a vast experience as an external examiner and advisor, article reviewer, program coordinator/ leader, faculty’s teaching and learning chairperson, and modules developer (at both undergraduate and master levels). In her previous role, she was responsible for the Teacher Training Programme under the World Bank and the Bangladesh College Education Programme, and she managed Master Trainer Associates from Bangladesh. Shamsiah has conducted training sessions for individuals/ educators from various parts of the world, including Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh, and others. She is keen on research, and her current focus areas include holistic well-being, holistic intelligence (including spiritual intelligence), spiritual tourism, spiritual-servant leadership, and women empowerment.



Ekrem Tatoglu (PhD) is an International Business professor affiliated with the Gulf University for Science & Technology, Kuwait and Ibn Haldun University, Istanbul, Turkiye. He obtained a BSc in Management from Middle East Technical University, Turkiye, in 1991, followed by an MBA from the University of Nottingham, U.K., in 1994, and a PhD in International Business from the University of Leeds, U.K., in 1998. His research interests include global and operations management strategies and strategies in emerging countries. He has published over 120 scholarly articles in esteemed international journals. Notably, he co-authored two seminal books, *Dimensions of Western Foreign Direct Investment in Turkiye*, published by Quorum Books, and *Turkish Multinationals*, published by Palgrave Macmillan. He also served on several editorial boards, including *Employee Relations*, *International Journal of Emerging Markets* and *European Journal of International Management*. Professor Tatoglu's scholarly endeavours have garnered significant acclaim at the international level, exemplified by a cumulative Google Scholar citation count surpassing 14,200, coupled with an impressive H-index score of 61, which speaks to the impact and reach of his research. He has been a Fellow of the *Turkish Academy of Sciences (TÜBA)* since 2015.

