

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW OF SUBJECT OF RESEARCH

Tourism is a global industry involving hundreds of millions of people who travel internationally and domestically each year. It increases international trade, inter-cultural understanding and goodwill, and is instrumental in improving the economic welfare of many nations (Davis et al., 1988). Tourism is important because of the enormous impacts it has on people's lives and on the places in which they live (Hall, 2000). Tourism is a human activity that takes place in the environment including both human and natural characteristics. Therefore, it is conventional to consider the impacts of tourism as multi –faceted under economic, social, cultural, as well as environmental aspects (Mason, 2003).

The subject of destination residents and tourism, notably the consequences of the inflow of tourists and the operation of the industry for local communities, has generated an extensive literature in recent years (Carmichael, 2000; Mason & Cheyne, 2000; Lindberg et al., 2001; Weaver & Lawton, 2001; Williams & Lawson, 2001; Ko & Stewart, 2002; Teye et al., 2002; Uriely et al., 2002). These studies have raised concerns about how the development of tourism is affecting the local community. It is evident that residents of areas that attract tourists hold diverse opinions about development in their region (Andereck et al., 2005). Therefore, it is essential to understand the possible impacts and identify the level of satisfaction, needs, and expectations of the local community in order to achieve successful tourism development (Jennings, 2001). Andereck et al. (2005) state that tourism contributes both positive and negative impacts. Even though the impacts of tourism are multi-faceted, Crompton and Ap (1994) report that residents perceive the change in or erosion of social and cultural values as constituting the most significant influence of tourism.

Mathieson and Wall (1982) note that there is no clear distinction between social and cultural phenomena and many theorists classify socio-cultural impacts of tourism in a broad context. The socio-cultural impacts of tourism are defined as the ways in which tourism contributes to changes in social structures and cultural integrity (Tatoglu et al., 2000; Pizam & Milman, 1984). According to Hashimoto (2002), socio-cultural change is difficult to quantify and occurs slowly over time in an unspectacular fashion (Swarbrooke, 1999). Therefore, it is not surprising that research on residents' attitudes towards tourism continues to be a topic of considerable interest (Weaver & Lawton, 2001; Teye et al., 2002).

The socio-cultural impacts of tourism can range from impacts which are more measurable such as the outbreak of a particular disease to those which are very hard to measure, such as changes in customs or codes of conduct. Yet, factors which appear to be more quantifiable (i.e. increases in crime rates and drug use or prostitution) is difficult to attribute solely to tourism (Cooper et al., 1998).

While researchers have pointed out various positive and negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism, there is no absolute consensus as to what constitute the dimensions of and the extent to which tourism impacts local cultures (e.g. Long et al., 1990; Lankford, 1994; McCool & Martin, 1994; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Andereck et al., 2005; Diedrich & Garcí'a-Buades, 2009). The literature offers a variety of dimensions of socio-cultural impacts in their studies.

Based on the literature, there are three main factors that influence socio-cultural conditions in a local community, namely tourism development (Doxey, 1975; Butler, 1980; Murphy, 1985; Teye et al., 2002; Besculides et al., 2002), tourist-host interaction (Cohen, 1984; Pizam & Milman, 1984; Smith, 1989; Besculides et al., 2002) and

demographic profile of host (Ritchie, 1988; Murphy, 1985; Haralembopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Williams & Lawson, 2001; Teye et al. 2002). Each of these dimensions influences a community in various ways and provides the baseline information on to what extent they influence the perceived socio-cultural impacts.

Tourism development is an ongoing process that requires careful planning and management (Godfrey & Clarke, 2000). It is often a strategy employed by different stakeholders to promote a particular region for the purpose of increasing goods and services to tourists (Sharma & Sharma, 2006). Tourism developments can contribute positively as well as negatively towards improving the well-being of the host population. The researchers who have examined residents' reactions have found that the most serious effects involve not only economic value to the community but also changes to the quality of life from a social perspective. According to Jurowski and Gursoy (2004), many communities encourage the development of tourism as a means to improve the quality of life for residents. The acceptability of these changes is likely to be influenced by perceptions of the benefits residents receive in exchange for the drawbacks they observe. The residents are willing to support tourism development as long as the benefits exceed the costs (Hashimoto, cited in Sharpley, 2002).

Dogan (1989) finds that tourism development has an effect on the socio-cultural characteristics of residents such as habits, daily routines, social lives, beliefs, and values. These factors may in turn, lead to psychological tension. Moreover, in areas with high levels of tourism there is an increase in population as a result of new residents relocating from outside areas (Perdue et al., 1990). However, high growth rates, if accompanied by poor planning and management, will result in a loss of resident identity and local culture (Rosenow & Pulsipher, 1979). Doxey (1975), Butler (1980), and Smith (1989) argue that the speed and nature of development could be a major influence

on the magnitude and direction of socio-cultural changes. Rapid and intensive tourism development contributes to different and usually less favorable impacts than organic and small-scale development (De Kadt, 1979; Getz, 1983; Krippendorf, 1987; Peck & Lepie, 1989; Pearce, 1989; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Page, 2001; Kreag, 2001).

The negative impacts of tourism are accentuated in locations at a mature stage of tourism development where the number of tourists is high (Doxey, 1975; Butler, 1980). Rapid development can strain a community's infrastructure and lead to serious dissatisfaction among the residents. Overall, at the early stage of tourism development, there is more positive response from the community (Walpole & Goodwin, 2000; Alhasanat, 2007). Allen et al. (1988) argued that residents' attitudes towards tourism may be directly related to the degree or stage of the development. Therefore, appreciation of this factor may allow a deeper understanding of why people hold the opinions they do.

Tourism is about people and how people as tourists interact with other locations and peoples, engaging in experiences that may influence their own or the host community's attitudes, expectations, opinions, and life styles. The tourist-host encounter, in which one or more visitors interact with one or more hosts, is staged within a network of goals and expectations (Sutton, 1967). Socio-cultural impacts of tourism also result from the interaction between 'hosts' and 'guests', or tourists and local people (Smith, 1989; Smith, 1995). The outcomes of host-tourist interactions may influence the residents' value systems, life quality, labor division, family relationships, attitudes, behavioral patterns, ceremonies, and creative expressions (Cohen, 1984; Pizam & Milman, 1984). Characteristically, the hosts and the guests are two different cultural entities each belonging to different socio-economic, cultural and even racial identities. They come

from different sets of belief and technological systems, different expectations and different economic backgrounds and language. Reisinger and Turner (2003) stated that the lack of agreement regarding the outcomes of the contact between tourists and hosts raises the possibilities of different factors that determine the results of the tourist-host contact. However, meeting up people from different cultural backgrounds can at times be beneficial (Reisinger & Turner, 2003) by fostering mutual appreciation, respect, and tolerance (Bochner, 1982). Tourism can be a vehicle for cultural enrichment and learning about others (Vogt, 1976; Fisher & Price, 1991), as well as reducing ethnic prejudices and racial tensions, and confound damaging stereotypes (Cohen, 1971; Robinson & Preston, 1976). At the same time, less positive outcomes may occur and the application of social distance theory (Lemaine & Ben Brika, 1997) has led to the conclusion that people are most comfortable with tourists who are physically and culturally closest to themselves (Thyne et al., 2006). Other researchers argue that the type of tourists could affect the degree of interaction and have complex effects on residents' reactions (Ryan & Cooper, 2004). The degree to which residents and tourists differ from each other thus has a bearing on responses (Dogan, 1989) and there is scope for conflict (McKercher, 1993) aggravated by divergences. The locals are likely to support tourism as long as they believe that the benefits exceed the costs (Ap, 1992; Perdue et al., 1990). An evaluation of costs and benefits will, however, depend on the individual and the intensity and forms of contact with tourists (Besculides et al., 2002).

Apart from that, the socio-demographic profile of the residents also plays a role in influencing their perception on socio-cultural impacts. Socio-demographic characteristics are a collection of the demographic factors associated with every member of a population (Hawkins et al., 2004). Host residents' perceptions of tourism, in terms of socio-demographic characteristics have been the subject of many studies

(Mok et al., 1991; Madrigal, 1993; Lankford & Howard, 1994; Seid, 1994; McCool & Martin 1994; Bastias-Perez & Var, 1995; Korca, 1996; Haralembopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Hernandez et al., 1996; Ritchie, 1988; Brunt & Courtney 1999; Williams & Lawson, 2001; Kreag, 2001; Tosun, 2002; Teye et al., 2002; Kuvan & Akan, 2005; Wang et al., 2006).

Some studies have demonstrated that the evaluation of costs and benefits varies with socio-demographic characteristics (Ritchie, 1988; Williams & Lawson, 2001). Williams and Lawson (2001) noticed that socio-demographic characteristics are likely to influence perceived impacts by host and subsequent support for development.

According to Wang et al. (2006), perceived personal benefit was found to be closely and positively related to residents' attitudes. Residents whose major source of income is derived from tourism related jobs are more welcoming of the positive changes and less disapproving of the negative impacts, compared to their counterparts who do not have a pecuniary interest in tourism. The influence between tourism related job and positive perceptions of socio-cultural impacts are also evident in several studies (Milman & Pizam, 1988; Lankford & Howard, 1994; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; McGehee & Andereck, 2004). Conversely, residents who do not share the economic benefits of tourism, as in the case of the respondents in the lower income categories, and those who do not have tourism related jobs, are more critical of the negative effects of tourism (Kuvan & Akan, 2005). They add that the educational level, family income, as well as the birthplace, and if the respondent has always lived in or moved into the area after the development of tourism are factors that have been found to have significant effects on attitudes.

Teye et al. (2002) found that there is an improvement in their social interaction with tourists with an increase in educational level in which case the socio-cultural impacts are viewed more positively. Similarly, the study of Hernandez et al. (1996) found that respondents with less than high school education express less favorable attitudes towards the proposed resort than those with higher education. This may be explained by the lower employability among the less educated respondents, which translates to lower personal benefit. The birthplace can also influence attitudes towards tourism development (Brougham & Butler, 1981; Um & Crompton, 1987; Davis et al., 1988; Brunt & Curtney, 1999). Davis et al. (1988) discovered that residents who are natives tend to view tourism more positively than the newcomers to the community. McCool and Martin (1994) noted that a greater sense of belonging to a country is correlated with higher rating of both positive and negative impacts of tourism. Nepal (2008) mentioned a significant relationship between community attachment and attitudes toward tourism. All of the above studies indicate that the identification of resident's socio-demographic characteristics is essential to understanding their perceived socio-cultural impacts.

Extensive studies have been conducted to examine the influence of tourism development, host-tourist interaction, and demographic profile on residents' perceived socio-cultural impacts. However, there could be other factor(s) that affect the local communities' perception. Religiosity is one of the factors that has not been explored and might influence the perceived socio-cultural impacts.

Religion is an organized system of beliefs, practices, rituals and symbols designed to facilitate closeness to the sacred or transcendent (God, higher power, or ultimate truth/reality) and to foster an understanding of one's relation and responsibility to others in living together in a community (King & Crowther, 2004). The degree to which

individuals are committed to a particular religious group is termed as religiosity (Delener, 1994; Sood & Nasu, 1995; Essoo & Dibb, 2004). Religion may be a key issue given its influence on cultural and individual values and behavior, shaping lifestyles and consumer decisions (Delener, 1990 & 1994; Essoo & Dibb, 2004; Fam et al., 2004; Nordas, 2005).

Muhamad and Ghani (2006) are of the opinion that religion also affects an individual's perception. However, the interpretations of religious structures are not uniform (Hassan, 2005). Variations exist within and among countries and it will result in correspondingly different socio-cultural impacts. The perception of the residents in two different countries may not be similar even though they share the same religion. Thus, in comparison to other Islamic countries, Iranian may differ in terms of Islamic devotion and eventually this will influence the perceptions of socio-cultural impacts accordingly.

Iran has been ruled by theocratic governments since the Islamic revolution, which took place in 1979. In this country, the state and religion are virtually indistinguishable and religion (Islam) has become an inseparable element of the country's socio-political structure. Almost every aspect of Iranians' lives is under direct or indirect influence of religion (Mehrabiy, 2007). In many Muslim nations, Islam is the foundation of society and Islamic principles support tourism policy, development objectives, management, and even the operation of industry. The society as a whole tends to be conservative as many Muslims are highly concerned about the immoral influence of tourism (Aziz, 1995; Baum & Conlin, 1997).

It is evident that residents' opinion on perceived socio-cultural impacts are varied and determined by multiple factors. This study is timely as it seeks to measure the local

attitudes towards the development of tourism in the context of Iran, particularly as there is little analysis to date from a Muslim perspective and existing studies are limited in scope (Din, 1989). To explore the socio-cultural impacts of tourism and to examine the affect of antecedents on the impacts' perception, two towns have been selected as case studies for this research: Sare'in and Masooleh, both located in the north and north-west of Iran respectively. These towns have not received any scholarly attention to date. These areas were primarily selected based on the size of the local community, their popularity as destinations among both domestic and international tourists, tourism seasonality and the growing level of tourism development. These factors are important in order to ascertain that the socio-cultural impacts that would be measured are more significant and visible to the local people. The researcher's familiarity with the destinations and her working experience in Iran's tourism industry make these towns valuable and accessible as case studies for this thesis.

In summary, the tourism industry is dependent on the local community's hospitality. A happy host is essential in creating a positive image of the destination and to generate positive word of mouth (Snaith & Haley, 1999). Their attitude influences visitor satisfaction and repeat visitations (Swarbrooke, 1993; Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001). Therefore, the measurement of the host community's perceptions of tourism development plays a vital role in the future success of a destination (Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Andriotis, 2005).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The tourism industry is booming rapidly and it represents one of the most dynamic economic sectors as it has been recognized as an important source of income for many countries. In developing countries, tourism is viewed as a preferred option and as part of their approach towards development. Tourism can also have important economic, environmental and socio-cultural impacts. However, it has to be noted that tourism does not necessarily result only in positive impacts but can also have various drawbacks. Many researchers have raised the concern of uncontrolled tourism development, which causes potential threats to the socio-cultural structure of a destination. With that, the studies on socio-cultural impacts of tourism are predominantly carried out in the west where the tourism development is more at an advanced phase (Madrigal, 1995; Snaith & Haley, 1999; Upchurch & Teivane, 2000; Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001; Besculides et al., 2002; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Perez & Nadal, 2005; Andriotis, 2005). Similarly, Keogh (1990) and Mason and Cheyne (2000) argued that most studies of host attitudes are conducted in areas where the tourism industry is already well established and very few studies have examined the hopes, expectations, attitudes, and concerns of residents prior to the onset of tourism development. Hernandez et al. (1996) suggested that more research should be done at the early phase of development. This study focuses on two towns that are still in the early stages of development and provides insight into residents' perceptions of tourism development.

Apart from the development stage, community reactions to tourism may also differ from one country to another as it is not generic in nature and the results derived from a study may not be generalized to other parts of the world especially in developing countries and Muslim nations. Therefore, the study on socio-cultural impacts should be further expanded to other geographical areas in order to test existing hypotheses and perhaps

devise new theories about the social impacts of tourism (King et al., 1993). The number of researchers who have explored the effects of tourism in Muslim communities especially in Iran is very limited. Henderson (2002) expressed the need for further research on Muslim views on the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Iranian civilization and culture is one the world's oldest and Iran's tourism was recognized as an industry worthy to be administered dating back to 1935 (ZamaniZenouzi, 1980). However, the effect of tourism on communities in Iran remains relatively unknown due to a lack of research. This thesis addresses the lack of research in this area.

Some fears surrounding tourism are closely associated with global terrorism and perhaps one of the greatest threats to tourism in Muslim countries is the growing perception that Islam is associated with terrorism (Aziz, 1995; Robinson & Meaton, 2005; Bennett & Bray, 2006; Al-Hamarneh, 2007; Christianto, 2009). The September 11 and other terrorist attacks which have targeted tourists and tourist destinations have sent a chill through the tourism industry and scared many visitors away. This has made many wonder whether Islam is against the tourism industry. Even though Aziz (1995) is convinced that Islam has no direct hostility towards or rejection of tourism, the potential threats of the industry to the violation of Islamic values and traditions are important issues to be considered.

Several studies have examined the relation between Islam and tourism (Ritter, 1975; Din, 1989; Delaney, 1990; Aziz, 1995 & 2001; Beckerleg, 1995; Burns & Cooper, 1997; Bhardwij, 1998; Russell, 1999; Abdurrahman, 2000; Taylor & Toohey, 2001; Domroes, 2001, Henderson, 2002 & 2003; Martin & Mason, 2003; Balkhy et al., 2003; Timothy & Iverson, 2006). These researchers have looked into religious travel, Islam and leisure, pilgrimage, touring Muslim style, gender differences concerning recreation

needs and Muslim tourist needs. In fact, some have also studied the role of Islam in tourism patterns and attitudes to development in Muslim countries. Besides, numerous studies have examined the association between tourism and religion in the perspective of tourists. However to date, there is no study which explores the effect of religion on the local community's behaviour and attitudes. Consequently, the literature regarding tourism and religion is still fragmented and lacks synthesis and holistic conceptualization' (Olsen & Timothy, 2006, p. 2). This study intends to fill in the gap which exists in the academic literature and this provides the justification for carrying out this research. This study provides the holistic view of perceived socio-cultural impacts by examining the religiosity factor and other antecedents.

In some Islamic countries, the tourism industry is seen as having potential to violate Islamic cultural values and traditions, and thus it has not been a major development priority. Some prefer not to have non-Muslim tourists (Robinson & Meaton, 2005) as they are highly concerned about the immoral influences of tourism and its impacts on the local community (Din, 1989). Being an Islamic country, it can be postulated that Islamic religiosity may have a negative influence on the perception of the tourism industry in Iran. While not all the residents will have homogeneous perception towards tourism, it is anticipated that residents with higher religiosity will tend to be more conservative. Therefore, this study intends to examine to what extent Islamic religiosity influences the residents' perception.

Tourism development must be based on research and evaluation in order to optimize the potential contribution of tourism to human welfare and environmental quality (Getz, 1987). Since the development of tourism is regarded cautiously in Iran, it is essential to study to what extent tourism development, host-tourist interaction, demographic profile

and religiosity can play in influencing the residents' perceptions. The residents' attitudes towards the development and impacts provide a significant input into identifying the strategic and managerial priorities of tourism (Tatoglu et al., 2000; Reisinger & Turner, 2003).

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study explores the socio-cultural impacts of tourism and the factors that are associated with host perceptions in the context of Iran by using two Iranian tourist towns. Particularly, the following research questions generated from the above statement of the problem that this research addresses are:

1. What are residents' perceptions of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in the study areas?
2. Do the factors of tourism development characteristics, host-tourist interactions, host profiles, and religiosity, affect the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in the study areas?
3. What is the most influential factor (antecedent) affecting the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in the study areas?

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

During the past decades, researchers have directed an increasing amount of attention to the impacts of tourism (Ap, 1992; Ap & Crompton, 1998). The most probable reason is that perceptions and attitudes of residents toward the impacts of tourism are likely to be an important planning and policy consideration for the successful development, marketing, and operation of existing and future tourism programs and projects (Reisinger & Turner, 2003). Besides, the perceptions of residents are considered very

important because of the significance of public attitudes in creating a hospitable environment for tourists and tourism in general (Davis et al., 1988). Therefore, it is essential to understand the locals' perceptions about the contribution of tourism as it provides an insight into the preferences and interests of the people served (Lankford, 1994). Improvements and changes can be made in the future policies and plans based on the residents' perceptions.

Since the mid-1970s, the majority of research took place in locations where tourism was already economically important. Limited research has been conducted in developing countries especially Muslim countries where the tourism development is still rudimentary. This study focus on areas which are still in the early stages of development and it will provide insight into residents' perceptions of tourism development in the study areas. The studies which focus on the initial tourism development stage in a developing country can provide a benchmark of the community attitudes and support the planning process. This research will provide a clear picture about to what extent the early stage of tourism development will influence the residents perception on the socio-cultural impacts. The results could then be compared with the studies conducted in destinations with more advanced phases of tourism development.

In some nations, particularly in the Middle East, religion (Islam) is the foundation of society and law. It supports tourism policy, development objectives and the management and operation of the industry (Timothy & Iverson, 2006). Religion plays an active role in people's daily activities and receives little attention in previous studies in relation to socio-cultural impacts of tourism. This study is the first to examine the effect of religiosity on the perceptions of socio-cultural impacts of tourism in a Muslim country. This study further contributes to knowledge on the perceptions of host

communities towards the presence of tourists and tourism in the Islamic community. Furthermore, there are no comprehensive studies which address these aspects in the context of Iran.

One of the main objectives of the Iranian Master Tourism Plan's long-term development and management of tourism (UNWTO, 2007a) is to ensure sustainable management of the tourism impacts on the socio-cultural, economic and natural environments of the country. This research thus marks a step towards understanding the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Iran. A systematic analysis of tourism impacts can help the authorities, local decision-makers, tourism promoters and managers identify real concerns and issues. Besides, it will also help to craft appropriate policies and actions to reinforce perceived positive impacts and minimize the negative ones.

In summary, this study is timely for several reasons. First, it provides knowledge on attitudes of local communities toward tourism and especially the perception of socio-cultural impacts among residents in the study areas. Second, the study pioneers the exploration of the relationship between numerous factors including Islamic religiosity and the perception of socio-cultural impacts and the strength of these factors. Finally, it provides some original insights into the interactions between the Islamic religion and tourism which are of value to authorities, the industry, academics and local communities.

1.5 LIMITATIONS

One of the limitations of this study is the lack of previous studies on socio-cultural impacts in the areas of research. This study focuses how religion affects the perception of socio-cultural impacts in an Islamic community, and no previous studies are available

on this subject at the moment. Besides, tourism research in many Muslim countries is still limited and some features of Islam and Islamic governance can be highly sensitive. The research is conducted in an environment where religion is favored politically and unfavorable responses to questions related to religion could lead to legal/political problems for respondents. Moreover, it is a challenging task for a female researcher to conduct research alone in an Islamic country because of cultural attitudes about women. The researcher also faces financial and time constraints due to the geographical distance between the locations of the researcher (Malaysia) and research areas (Iran). It explains the reason of limiting this study to only two tourist destinations in Iran. Considering the novelty of the subject, the researcher also faces inadequate resources.

1.6 THESIS ORGANIZATION

The thesis is organized into seven chapters. Chapter One introduces the study. It discusses an overview of the research, problem statements as well as the purpose, the objectives and limitations of the study. It is followed by the significance of the study.

Chapter Two provides a general review of the country of study (Iran), tourism development, and the two case-study areas, the northern Iranian towns of Masooleh and Sare'in. Each section deals with general tourism information. Chapter Three reviews important literature related to the study, including past theoretical and empirical work concerning the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. It explores the various definitions, theories, and measurement tools. Chapter Four lays out the proposed model that is used for this study and the proposed hypotheses to be tested.

Chapter Five presents in detail the methodology applied in this study, which includes research design, sampling techniques, and data analysis. Chapter Six presents the

analysis and results of the survey. The results are derived from several modes of statistical analysis and are presented according to the logical sequence of the analyses. Chapter Seven presents a discussion of the findings of the study, limitations, and its implications. This is followed by suggestions for the future research and a conclusion.

Chapter Two

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY AREA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the area of research and to provide an overview of current tourism development in the Islamic Republic of Iran. This chapter consists of six sections. The first three sections present the introduction to the paper, an overview of the topic, and tourism development in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Iran are also addressed in the third section. The following section presents the description of the research areas by providing details of the two case studies, which are Masooleh and Sare'in. The fifth section provides information on the background of the research on Iranian tourism. The last section is a summary of this chapter.

2.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE AREA OF STUDY (IRAN)

Iran is the fifth largest country in Asia and the second largest country in the Middle East. Its history dates back over 7000 years (Axworthy, 2008). The country was known as Persia until 1935. Iran is widely renowned for its diversity of attractions such as historic monuments, landscapes, climates, customs, and the people's lifestyles (Beheshti, 2003). There are thousands of historical places in Iran and most are yet to be discovered. To date, ten historical sites have been listed under the World Heritage List and fifty-nine sites are tentatively listed (UNESCO, 2009a). Besides, *NowRuz*¹ and *Radif*² are also recognized as World Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2009b).

According to UNESCO, Iran is ranked in the top ten countries in the world for the wealth of its ancient and historical sites (Alavi & Yasin, 2000). The country is famed for appearing to have four concurrent yet distinct seasons. O'Gorman et al. (2007) stated that Iran's archeology, cultural heritage, traditions, and natural characteristics are

¹ NowRuz is the beginning of the Iranian New Year, according to the solar calendar March 21st coinciding with the first day of Spring.

² Radif is a traditional form of Iranian music.

among the main factors that attract inbound tourists to the country. However, lack of information and advertising render the country unknown to most of the outside world.

According to the Iran National Census (2007), the total population of Iran is 70.5 million. Of these, 50.9% are male, and the remainders are female. The proportion of people living in the urban areas is 68.5% and in the rural areas it is 31.5%. The country's population is growing at an annual rate of 1.61%. There is a very high population of young people with 48.1% under the age of 30 years. The literacy rate is 86.2%. Iran estimates a total of 1.6 million immigrants living in the country who are mainly from neighbouring countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq.

Iran is the land of the world's first monotheistic religion (Zoroastrism). The religion is one of the oldest in the world. It was founded between 1,400 and 1,000 B.C in Persia by Zarathustra. In the seventh century AD, Islam was embraced as an important religion among Iranians. The next major change came with the Safavid period (1502-1736), during which Shiism was recognized as the state religion in the country (Faramarzi, 1995). After the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Islam became an inseparable element of the country's socio-political structure. Based on Article 12 of the Constitution, Islam is the official religion of Iran and 99.4% of the total population of Iran are Muslims, the majority being Shiites (89.1 %,) and the remainder belonging to the other Muslim sub-ethnic groups (Iran National Census, 2007).

In accordance with the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Persian or Farsi is the official language and the Persian script is the only one used in Iran. In addition, there are other languages and dialects which are spoken in various parts of the country such as Azari or Turkish (in the northwest), Kurdish (in the west), Arabic (in the south),

Lori (in the southwest), Baluchi (in the southeast), Taleshi (in the north) and Turkmen (in the northeast) (Faramarzi, 1995).

According to the solar calendar, March 21st (coinciding with the first day of Spring) is the beginning of the Iranian New Year. The festival lasts for 13 days and normally there will be a countrywide holiday during the first four or five days and on the 13th day (ZendehDel, 2001).

The main sources of Iran's economy are oil and natural gas. Oil reserves in Iran rank the third largest in the world (12 % of the world's overall reserves) and it also has the world's second largest reserves of natural gas (15% of the world's total). The World Fact Book (2007) stated that about 85% of the government's revenue is derived from oil and natural gas. Apart from that, agriculture, industry (mining and manufacturing) and fisheries (caviar) also contribute to the economy of Iran. Iran's economy is largely state owned and private sector activity is typically small-scale comprising workshops, farms, and services. Iran's economy is classified as semi-developed by the United Nations. The government continues its drive to privatize various sectors and to practise an open economy. The tourism industry is always regarded as a minor industry relative to the oil and other sectors. Therefore, the politicians have little interest in it (O'Gorman et al., 2007). Thus, the economic contribution of the tourism industry is minimal in terms of economic growth and its share of GDP. Among 176 countries worldwide, the Iranian travel and tourism economy is ranked 36th in absolute size having 0.4% of the world market share (WTTC, 2007).

However , the government is attempting to diversify the economy away from oil by investing in other areas including car manufacturing, aerospace industries, consumer electronics, petrochemicals and nuclear technology (Fars News, 2008). In addition,

Iran has great potential for the development of tourism, mining, and information and communication technologies.

Iran's tourism was first recognized as an industry worthy to be administered in 1935 (ZamaniZenouzi, 1980). Before the Islamic Revolution in 1979, tourism in Iran was solely focused on cultural and recreational aspects and there was no intervention of religion (Islamic codes) in tourism. A decade before 1979, there was a considerable effort made to promote tourism in Iran. At that point of time, the government had appointed a Swiss consultant (Tourist Consult) to study a comprehensive plan for the expansion of tourism in Iran. It was an extensive study of Iran's existing and future tourist market, its policies, resources, priorities, and potentials along with a detailed analysis and suggestions. However, the outcome was never put into practice due to the political crises which occurred before and after the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

The Islamic Revolution of 1979 was a critical event in the modern history of Iran (Mackey & Harrop, 1998). The event led to the ousting of the monarchy and the declaration of Iran as an Islamic Republic by Ayatollah Khomeini. The leader introduced theocracy in the government system based on the Islamic religion and politics. Following that, tourism has been hampered by the revolution, political turbulence, conflicts and the war with Iraq (between 1980 and 1988). Apart from that, natural disasters and shortcomings such as the strict social code, a shortage of adequate accommodation, bottlenecks in internal transportation and poor marketing have dampened the country's image as a tourist destination. The image of Iran has also been tarnished by negative reports by the Western media and Iran faced difficulties in promoting itself to the outside world (Vafadari & Cooper, 2007).

Iran has a complex political framework with a dual power structure involving the supreme religious leader and an elected president. A Guardian Council exists to ensure that the president and parliament abide by Islamic principles and the judicial system is based on Sharia law. Executive power is under the supervision of the president who is directly elected by the people for a four-year term. The country is divided into 30 Ostans (provinces) ruled over by Ostandars (governors-general) (Iran at a Glance, 1998). The national tourism office is led by the country's Vice President.

2.3 TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN IRAN

2.3.1 Structure

In 2004, parliament passed legislation which separated the Iranian Tourism Organization (ITO) from the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Later, the Iranian Tourism Organization (ITO) merged with the Cultural Heritage Organization and formed the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO). This organization is led by the country's Vice President and its objective is to introduce, protect, and resuscitate the tourism industry.

Referring to Iran's updated Tourism Master Plan, in force up to 2015, Iran aims to attract 1.5% of international tourist arrivals (20 million) and 2% of receipts of world tourism (US\$25 billion). It is expected that the average growth rate of tourism will be 30% during the 4th programme (2005-2009) and 20% in the 5th programme (2010-2015) (UNWTO, 2007b).

In Iran, “the leadership of public sector tourism, both in promotional and operational roles, is rarely professional or long term. State and quasi-state tourism organizations do not operate under commercial criteria like profitability and are subject to poor and

inconsistent management and high levels of political interference” (O’Gorman et al., 2007, p. 307). The objective of developing the tourism industry in Iran is solely focused on the cultural aspects. More emphasis is given to attracting tourists who have an interest and are familiar with the country’s rich history and culture and those who respect the Iranian people as well as Iranian cultural-religious traditions (Parseh, 2006). Factors such as cultural and political barriers and scarcity of investment in facilities and transport infrastructure inhibit the potential to develop tourism products for international markets even though the resources are available.

2.3.2 Existing Tourism Flows

In 2006, Iran received 2.7 million inbound tourists and concurrently 2.5 million Iranians travelled overseas (ICHHTO, 2007). Iran’s international tourism expenditure grew by 9.5% in 2006 in comparison to 2005 (UNWTO, 2008c). However, the international tourist arrivals decreased to 2.2 million in 2007 due to the global economic crisis and political issues in Iran. Such factors as the tension arising over Iran’s nuclear plans (Schwartz, 2006; Yaphe & Lutes, 2005), the denouncement of the Holocaust as deception and anti-Israel comments by Iranian officials (Ahouie, 2009) have all reinforced the negative image of Iran in the international media and affected tourist decisions to visit Iran (Zamani-Farahani, 2009).

2.3.3 SWOT Analysis

In this study, SWOT is used to assess the strengths and weaknesses of Iran as a tourist destination besides discovering the opportunities and threats that it might face. The strengths and weaknesses are internal factors, while the opportunities and threats are external factors. Appropriate goals, policies, and strategies can be developed for the

tourism industry in Iran based on both external and internal factors. The main issues in relation to each of these important factors are identified and evaluated below.

2.3.3.1 Competitive Strengths

Historically, the Persian Empire is one of the world's great ancient civilizations. Its contribution to architecture is reflected in the heritage buildings in Iran. The cultural heritage and history became the main competitive strength of tourism (ITTO, 2009; O'Gorman et al., 2007). Iran is rich in numerous historical attractions (Alavi & Yasin, 2000) such as Tchogha Zabnil, Persepolis, Takht-e-Solevman, Bam, and Pasargadee. The sites mentioned are registered under the UNESCO world heritage list. These masterpieces of architecture, which were built during various kingdoms that ruled Persia could draw tourists to visit Iran. Apart from the legacy, Iran is also rich in its diverse natural landscapes, flora, and fauna. In terms of physical landscapes, there are three major mountains, several forests, two deserts, and a major plateau area to the west. These landscapes lead to variable climates ranging from dry desert, cool, temperate, humid Mediterranean, and cold alpine. These climate variations attract tourists, as they are able to experience all four seasons (I .R. Iran's Tourism Development Master Plan, 2002)

In comparison to other countries within the surrounding region, Iran has a fairly well-developed transportation system, infrastructure, and well-established tourism facilities. Iran is connected by direct international air services to 35 cities abroad (ICHHTO report, 2006). The tourist facilities that exist are those established by the development of domestic tourism. This is due to the large population of Iran and their desire to travel within the country. The international market is also growing. More tourist attractions

and facilities are being developed and the service providers are trying to meet international standards in terms of hospitality services.

Being tagged as an inexpensive nation gives a competitive advantage to Iran as the lower currency exchange rate encourages tourists to visit Iran. Tourists in Iran will have greater purchasing power as compared to those who visit the Persian Gulf States. In addition, the friendliness of the locals and the unique Iranian hospitality have also enhanced the tourism industry in Iran.

The public sector in Iran gives emphasis to developing and implementing tourism related policies. For instance, after the Islamic Revolution, there were efforts directed to attracting international tourists during the presidency of Khatami in 1997. There was a clear plan to increase and enhance hospitality and tourism in Iran and to encourage moves to welcome foreign tourists. However, looking at the number of inbound tourists to Iran as compared to other countries in the continent, it is clear that Iran is still some way behind in attracting tourists. Despite all the strengths, there are also factors that weigh down Iran's ability to harness the full potential of its tourism resources. The weaknesses will be further discussed in the next section.

2.3.3.2 Competitive Weaknesses

The failure to attract tourists reflects weaknesses which may be due to a number of factors, namely laws and regulations, outdated databases, institutional structure and lack of promotion. It is important to address these weaknesses by undertaking corrective measures in order to ensure the industry's success.

In Iran, there are various written and oral laws and regulations that control the tourism sector which affect those involved in the tourism industry including the tourists themselves. Many existing laws and regulations are outdated and these obstruct the development of the tourism industry in the country. Some laws in Iran actively discourage the development of appropriate management practices and professional methods. The public sector needs to give attention to this matter as it could affect both the supply (service providers) and the demand (tourists). Besides, the laws and regulations governing the development and operation of tourist facilities overlap and lack transparency. In some cases, regulations have never been promulgated, thus rendering the law or particular provision to be doubtful (I .R. Iran's Tourism Development Master Plan, 2002). The government should publicize the laws to its citizens so that they are aware of the existing laws and they will know what ought and ought not to be done. Even the tourists are also subjected to the local laws.

All the laws and regulations in the tourism industry are subjected to the Islamic code of the country and the inbound tourists, particularly those from western nations, are not in favour of the religious restrictions that are imposed on them. The tourists are advised to respect the local norms and abide by the rules. Women especially are expected to wear suitable clothes and must cover their heads. This has affected the number and type of tourists coming to Iran. The western tourists dislike the stringent local norms and this may have affected their decision to visit Iran. Currently, the existing tourism industry is heavily dependent on tourists from the neighbouring countries who are generally low yield markets in terms of per capita spending with the exception of the Persian Gulf states. If the government continues to enforce such rules, it will affect the number of western tourists who represent the high yield market. It is difficult to state the exact

percentage of total receipts contributed by western tourists as the database of Iran's tourism industry is not up to date/updated in a timely manner.

Even though databases exist on Iran's natural and cultural resources, they are not fully developed from the tourism perspective. The availability of data on tourism demand and supply is limited, unreliable, and incomplete as there is no proper system to gather statistics related to tourism (ICHHTO report, 2006). Data on the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impact of tourism is also limited and restricted to specific sites or cases. There are no specific indicators outlined which could be used to determine how sustainable current tourism practices are. This creates problems such as waste management, competition for scarce resources and the mismatch of supply and demand. There are inconsistencies in the data collection methods as they differ from province to province, making it impossible to compare results and to build a national tourism profile (ICHHTO report, 2006). There is no up-to-date inventory and evaluation of Iran's tourism industry and this causes difficulties in further developing and managing the available resources. Furthermore, without complete information the service providers will not be able to identify their potential target markets and the means to attract them. There is a need for systematic data collection as it could provide a profile of tourists who visit Iran, their level of satisfaction, feedback or comments and their intention to recommend and to return. All these are essential to further develop tourism facilities and infrastructure and also for promotional purposes.

With regard to infrastructure, the existing air, road and sea transportation owned and operated by Iran is generally aged, poorly maintained and in need of upgrading in order to attain acceptable standards (I .R. Iran's Tourism Development Master Plan, 2002). The same deficiencies apply to other tourist facilities and services, especially lodging.

Many of the newly developed hotels do not conform to the standards that have been set by the national tourism organization while the service levels are generally below the standards as compared to other successful tourist destinations. This may affect the tourists' satisfaction and the possibility of repeat visits. There is a need to improve tourist facilities and services and this needs to be conveyed to tourists through promotion as it could reflect Iran as an ideal tourist destination.

Promotion is a tool to communicate the products and services offered to tourists and it plays an important role in re-imaging the country. Being part of the Middle East region, Iran is subjected to various negative allegations and the image of Iran remains a major weakness. Besides external factors such as political disputes within the region, erroneous beliefs and perceptions about Iran are also caused by weak and inadequate tourism marketing, promotion and advertising policies. The promotion has failed to convey the fact that Iran is a safe tourist destination and it welcomes international tourists. Consequently, people around the globe are not familiar with Iran and they lack ideas about what travelling to Iran would be like. Aggressive promotion needs to be undertaken to revitalize the current image in order to attract more tourists to visit Iran.

Another weakness concerns the institutional structure and organization of the tourism sector in Iran. Tourism in Iran is monitored by the Iran Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO). The selection of top-level managers and key figures of this organization is based on their religious devotion, political alliances, and gender (preference for males). The qualification and skills needed in managing the organization are not taken into account (Zamani-Farahani & Henderson, 2010). In addition to that, various tourist facilities are still controlled by the public sector or quasi-public sector companies. These organizations lack management expertise and financial

capabilities (ICHHTO report, 2006). This results in inefficiency such as mismanagement of resources and poor marketing strategy and will negatively affect the industry.

2.3.3.3 Industry Opportunities

There are various opportunities for tourism development in Iran that need to be considered. Firstly, the tourism sector could take advantage of the diversity of tourist attractions. Various attractions and more new tourism products could be developed. For example, with regards to sports tourism, the service providers can offer activities such as skiing and rock and mountain climbing. Tour operators can organize various pilgrimage packages (i.e. Shia, Christian, and Zoroastrian pilgrimage). The products offered need to be differentiated from the competitors in order to create competitive advantage. However, merely providing the core products is not adequate as support services such as tourism infrastructure are also essential. All these facilities need to be upgraded and meet international standards. If Iran can provide superior products and services, it will be an added value for the tourism industry as tourists will be delighted and subsequently it will increase the intention to return and to recommend.

Secondly, there is an urgent need to review the existing laws and regulations related to tourism. The non-Muslim tourists should be given exception and they should not be subjected to the local norms and forced to follow local ethics. If the existing rules and laws continue to be enforced, it could jeopardize the tourism industry in the long run.

Thirdly, the opportunity lies in revising the existing structure, policies, and strategies of the public sector for tourism (ICHHTO) as it could enhance the industry as whole. For instance, the inefficiency of the management can be avoided by appointing key people in public sector tourism who have suitable skills and characteristics. The conventional

way, which is based on religious and political consciousness, should be abolished from the system. By having knowledgeable key personnel, the organization can further improve the industry. Being the watchdog of public sector tourism in Iran, ICHHTO should concentrate on its role of supervising the tourism industry. It should also focus on the development and implementation of policies in order to promote tourism development with the intervention of the private sector and the local community. The participation of local communities and the private sector is essential in the planning phase and decision-making process. The input from the stakeholders within the tourism industry is necessary for the successful operation and sustainability of tourism development and in the implementation of marketing programmes.

Fourthly, the existing promotional tools should be reviewed to ensure that they are distinctive from those of competing countries. Promotional tools such as advertising and public promotion can be used to enhance the positive image of the country. As the promotional tool used is associated to cost, a proportion of the marketing budget should be allocated for promotion purposes. Tourism marketing and planning can only be designed with comprehensive statistical data on tourism. Based on the information, one can lay out the tourism demand, supply, and impacts. This indicates the need for a tourism database, the information in which should be updated regularly as any tourism planning and decision-making will be based on it.

In conclusion, to enhance Iran's tourism industry, there is a need to focus on a revision of the laws and the institutional structure, to introduce innovations in products and services and to devise a proper marketing strategy. Iran can improve its tourism industry development by optimizing the opportunities available. The country could then strengthen its position as a tourist destination within the region.

2.3.3.4 Industry Threats

The players within the industry are unable to implement and monitor tourism development in Iran. There are no proper management principles and practices in relation to the impacts of tourism on the natural, socio-cultural, and economic environments. If this persists, tourism in Iran will be at stake in the future. Corrective measures should be taken to overcome these issues. There is a need for frequent site observation and inspection of the natural, historical, and cultural sites in Iran to ensure their compliancy with sustainable management practices. Issues related to sustainable tourism can be resolved by proper planning and execution but it is not possible to exert any control over threats such as political turbulence and natural disasters.

Crises and disasters such as wars, political turbulence, natural disasters, and conflicts over religious matters can be classified as threats as they can dampen interest in tourist destinations. Such issues can have an impact on the tourism operations of the country or a region, their marketing and management and eventually affect economic viability. It has to be noted that Iran is located in a seismic area and it is prone to earthquakes. Besides, Iran's nuclear activities have raised tensions among other nations and portrayed a negative image of Iran in the international arena (Schwartz, 2006; Yaphe & Lutes, 2005). Thus, this has led to economic, political, and social embargos by the United Nations and the country may face an economic downturn. This will impact the tourism industry as some nations may restrict the number of inbound tourists to Iran. With the restrictions, Iran may have insufficient funds to provide tourism facilities to cater for the tourists. Apart from that, the outbreak of war and political turbulence in neighbouring countries can also affect the tourism market, as it will deter the tourist from travelling to the region. In addition to that, the latest political rallies and violent clashes during the presidential elections in June 2009 could pose a credible threat to the tourism industry.

Iran faces threats not only due to its internal but also the external environment. Contingency plans cannot be made for all the events as some are unexpected.

Besides, Turkey and Dubai pose a threat to Iran as they are the main tourism competitors within the region. The tourism organization in Iran must be able to differentiate itself from the competitors by recognizing the unit-selling proposition. The marketers have failed to position Iran in the domestic and international markets, as there is no effective long-term destination-marketing programme. Product development, market penetration and market development are among the strategies that can be implemented by Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO) and this would require an aggressive promotional campaign. ICHHTO needs to advertise and to encourage more tourists from other parts of the world to visit Iran.

In summary, there are internal and external threats that may have an impact on the tourism industry. Some of the threats such as natural disasters and political turbulence cannot be controlled but others can be overcome if they are well managed. The tourism development that will take place should not ignore the sustainability considerations as they can affect the industry in the long run. With regard to tourist facilities and marketing, the service providers should offer or create products and services that fulfil the needs of tourists and the tourism industry. The existing products need to be revised accordingly and an effective marketing effort is needed to boost the industry.

2.3.4 Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism ³

The overall social and cultural impact that has been estimated by I.R. Iran's Tourism Development Master Plan (2002) is limited as the development of tourism in Iran is

³ This section, adapted from I.R. Iran's Tourism Development Master Plan (2002).

relatively modest and tourism activity is primarily directed to hosting tourists who share a similar culture and background.

I.R. Iran's Tourism Master Plan Report (2002) points out that tourism development resulted in positive socio-cultural impacts on the local communities. It has contributed to a stronger local economy (especially the towns and villages in the Caspian region) as tourism activities have generated employment opportunities for the locals. The locals are able to earn more and possess greater purchasing power. This indicates that the standard of living may rise, especially in the larger cities and towns.

The tourism development that has taken place has raised the status of the local community and their culture due to the recognition they have been given nationally and internationally. Revenues from tourism are reinvested in cultural assets and efforts are being made to preserve these assets. Tourism has also strengthened the continuity of cultural traditions and can be used as a differentiation factor in promoting Iran. There is an increase in cross-cultural understanding and tolerance especially through musical performances, local arts and crafts, presentation of local lifestyles, houses, and other village experiences. This creates interaction between tourists and hosts who can exchange insights into their culture and way of living. Interaction with tourists enables the locals to improve their English proficiency especially those who are trained as tour guides. Tourism has benefited the locals in various ways. However, there are still drawbacks that may cause dissatisfaction among the locals.

The commercialization of tourism causes harm to local communities. Even though the locals gain in terms of income from the high number of tourists, it also contributes to other negative effects such as the scarcity of resources and overcrowding. The issue of

the scarcity of resources arises parallel with the high number of tourists. The locals have to share the basic utilities such as drinking water and electrical energy. The rise in tourist numbers leads to overcrowding especially in sensitive cultural assets such as Persepolis and other sites. Over-exploitation of the cultural heritage may discourage tourists from further visiting these sites in the future. Even the locals do not have the opportunity to utilize some of the amenities during the peak seasons. For instance, Mashhad, Qom, and the Caspian Coast are full of tourists and the locals feel that they are being displaced. They are not able to enjoy the facilities built by the public sector as they are mainly used by tourists. The locals may tolerate this situation for a short period but if it continues, it may cause frustration among them as tourists are given higher priority. The public sector should provide more facilities and infrastructure to resolve this issue.

More facilities are being built to cater for the increasing number of tourists and this leads to unplanned development. More facilities are available in areas with high concentrations of tourists. Locals who live in that particular area will gain in terms of employment and a higher living standard. This accelerates the movement of people from rural to urban areas or into living spaces that are contemporary. Areas with more tourists will be highly developed as compared to other areas. Unbalanced economic benefits will lead to social distress in the nearby communities. Unplanned development could also damage the environment and ecological system. When the environment is no longer appealing, the number of tourists will decline. Efforts need to be made to create balanced expansion in order to protect the environment and the locals. Besides, it is also important to protect the cultural traditions and norms of Iran.

The inappropriate or culturally insensitive behaviour of tourists has caused anger among locals as some non-Muslim tourists still enter holy places even though it is prohibited. The scanty attire worn by female tourists has caused annoyance among locals. Some tourists do not respect and devalue the local culture and some of their behaviour runs counter to the local norms. The presence of tourists also in general contributes to unhealthy activities such as the consumption of drugs and alcohol and the exploitation of women and children. The increasing rate of social problems clearly indicates the downside of tourism (I.R. Iran's Tourism Development Master Plan, 2002).

To conclude, it is essential to have balanced development throughout the country. Positive impacts can be reinforced if tourism is well planned and the impacts are continuously monitored. However, one must comprehend that tourism development will have certain effects and the trade-offs must be tolerated as long they do not jeopardize the interests of the locals, the environment, or Iran's cultural assets and heritage.

2.4 GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS OF RESEARCH

As briefly mentioned in the introduction, this research was carried out in two small tourist centres located in the North (Masooleh) and North West (Sare'in) of Iran (see Figure 2.1 and Appendix F). This section presents some information concerning these areas.



Figure 2.1: Map of Iran and the location of the Sare'in and Masooleh
(Source: National Geographic Society, 2001)

2.4.1 Masooleh⁴

Masooleh has a land area of 160,000 m² and it is located in the northern part of Iran, 1,050 metres above sea level, a short distance away from the Caspian Sea and 60 kilometres south-west of Rasht (the center of Gilan province). It is surrounded by mountains in the north, west, and south. Masooleh has a moderate and humid summer and a rather cold and humid winter. The climatic conditions and the beauty of nature in all four seasons are distinctive features of the area (ICHHTO, 2001–2006).

The town has a recorded history of more than 1,000 years (ICHHTO, 2004). Glancing at its history, there were peasants who for unknown reasons migrated from different parts

⁴ This section is adapted from several sources such as UNESCO (2002 & 2003), ICHTO (2001-2006) and the researcher's personal observations.

of the vast plateau of Iran to Masooleh. The crossroads in Masooleh is a meeting point for the economically important cities in the region and with that, the immigrants have contributed to the vast economic activities within the region. However, the construction of roads joining the neighboring towns has resulted in the gradual desolation of the mountain passages which, in turn, has seriously damaged the market-based economy of the town. In the last 60 years, the economy in the area has been sluggish, many businesses have failed, and some locals have even migrated. Currently, tourism is the main source of income for the residents of Masooleh.

Ancient history and architecture, pleasant climatic conditions and natural beauty are among the distinctive features of this area. Masooleh has a remarkable stair-like architecture with courtyards and roofs both of which serve as pedestrian areas (ICHHTO, 2001–2006). The town has been in the list of the National Cultural and Natural Heritage Organization since 1976 (ICHHTO, 2001–2006). The people in Masooleh have a unique culture and even though Persian (Farsi) is the official language, the common dialect spoken by the local residents is Taleshi which is a derivation of an ancient Iranian language.

2.4.1.1 Masooleh and Tourism

The slow economic growth in Masooleh resulted in business failures and residents' out migration. Efforts were made by the government to revive the economy of Masooleh by developing tourism and other economic sectors. The national tourism development and management master plan regarded Masooleh as an important destination in the Sablan region (mountainous area in northwest Iran). Masooleh became a popular tourist destination since it was declared as a protected area. It is also listed in the UNESCO

tentative World Heritage list in 2007 (UNESCO, 2009a) and has gained recognition as a historical city.

The natural and cultural heritage of Masooleh is the major tourist attraction that draws tourists to visit this town. The town is well known for its traditional architecture, natural parks, forests, farming lands, ranching land, museums, mountaineering, mosques, and holy shrines (see Appendix A for more details). Besides that, tourists can also engage in various activities such as rock climbing, hiking and horse riding during their visits. Apart from that, Masooleh stands out for its unique layout where the streets are small and it has numerous stairs. The locals use wheelbarrows to carry goods from one place to another, as no motor vehicles can be used. It is the only place in Iran with such a layout and this distinguishes Masooleh from other towns.

Local traditional handicraft and gastronomy are among the attractions of Masooleh. Handicrafts, honey, dairy goods, and local cookies are the main products produced by the locals. Handicraft is one of the important sources of income for the local community. The local handicrafts produced by females are socks, woven dolls, *gelims* (rugs made of goat's hair), *jajims* (fine carpets, made of wool or cotton), and the traditional dress. Metalwork such as knives and traditional leather shoes called "*chamush*" are also available in the town. However, this craftwork is in danger of dying out. The local handicraft and products are sold to tourists in small shops in the bazaar area and at stalls along the pathway in Masooleh.

The majority of tourists who visit the area are domestic tourists, and their visits are normally short and seasonal. International tourists from the West mainly visit the area in organized tour groups. The peak seasons are during Iran's New Year holiday

(NowRuz), spring, summer, and other public holidays. During the peak season, Masooleh may host more than 10,000 tourists per day (Zamani-Farahani & Musa, 2008). Even though the town is inhabited by only 700 residents (Iran's Ministry of Health, 2006), the number escalates in spring and summer when the weather is more pleasant and job opportunities are in abundance especially in the tourism sector.

The tourist facilities provided in Masooleh are rather basic and not up to international standards. Among the public facilities available in Masooleh are sports facilities, a hospital, a library, mosques, banks, and a post office. However, there is no high school, adequate parking spaces and camping, or recreational facilities and some of the infrastructure is in need of upgrading. Besides, the tourists face difficulties in communicating, as there is no access to the public Internet and/or telephone booths in the town. The Cultural Heritage and Handicraft Tourism Base Office (ICHHTO) is located far from the entrance of the town and it is not easily accessible. In addition to that, there is no tourism information centre in Masooleh and this is rather inconvenient for the individual tourists especially for those who are international tourists as the locals are not fluent in English.

With regard to accommodation, Masooleh has several hotels, homestays and guesthouses. The occupancy rates for all the accommodation are very high during peak season. The price for homestays is flexible, however, and during the peak season the rates are higher than for local hotels. There is no supervision of the pricing of homestays, which is perhaps a source of dissatisfaction for some tourists.

The locals are subjected to stringent supervision on the construction and conservation of buildings. The construction of new houses is not allowed due to limitations of land in

Masooleh and this leads to inflated property prices. Major renovations are not allowed as the government (ICHHTO) intends to retain traditional architectural styles, as Masooleh is a protected area. Yet, the local communities are entitled to public financial and technical assistance for basic house renovation. In Masooleh, several authorities such as the Cultural Heritage, Handicraft and Tourism Office (ICHHTO), the Tourism Committee of Gilan Province, Masooleh Municipality, Gilan Governor Planning and Management Organization (PMO) and the Islamic City Council are involved in the planning and management of tourism. The local community's interference in tourism related decision making is limited and their participation is minimal. Local people often criticize the authorities and mutual mistrust is very common between both parties.

Overall, living in Masooleh as a permanent resident is not convenient as the mobility of the local people is restrained by the town's landscape and peculiar features and architecture. For instance, carrying goods from one place to another is rather difficult and it can only be done by using manpower or wheelbarrows. In addition, life becomes very hard during the cold seasons when the local community has no access to gas pipes. Every now and then they also face shortages of water and electrical power. Masooleh also faces a steady annual decrease in population due to the high unemployment rate especially among the youth (as stated by the locals although the official data are not available) and the limited number of houses due to the physical layout of the town.

2.4.2 Sare'in⁵

Sare'in is a town, which was founded during the periods of Medes (825BC) and Achaemenias (533-330 BC) (Sadeg Moganlo, 2004). It is located in the northwest of the Iranian Plateau and is inhabited by 4,446 people (Iran's Ministry of Health, 2006). The town's proximity to the Sabalan Mountains provides many attractive activities such as the hot springs, skiing, mountain and rock climbing and hiking. Sare'in has four regular seasons with a mild summer climate, but is cold in winter as well as the last weeks of fall. Sare'in is well known for the mineral springs, pleasant and cool climate, especially in spring and summer. The local dialect in Sare'in is Azari (Azerbaijani Turkish) even though Persian (Farsi) is the official language.

2.4.2.1 Sare'in and Tourism

Tourism development in Sare'in has taken place over the past three decades. Sare'in rapidly developed as a village and became a town well-known for its hot springs and health tourism after the opening of the Sabalan hydrotherapy complex in 1997 and a four-star hotel called Laleh by the Iranian Tourism Organization (ITO) (A Glance at Ardabil Province, 2001). These developments have raised Sare'in's image and prior to that, just a few traditional and old spa baths were run on a small scale. Sare'in's population was mainly engaged in farming, husbandry, and honey production. At present, over 70% of the population work in the service sector (Iran National Census, 2007). The majority of them run family hotels and other tourism related services. Currently, the tourism sector is the main source of the community's economic revenue.

Apart from the twelve mineral springs nearby (See appendix B for more details), Sare'in is home to a historical hill (Anahita Hill) and the Sabalan Mountains. The former is

⁵This section is adopted from diverse sources such as: A comprehensive Guidebook of Ardabil Province (2001), Sare'in (2005-2007), A Glance at Ardabil Province (2001), Sadeg Moganlo (2004) and the researcher's personal observations.

registered in the list of National Cultural and Natural Heritages (Sadeg Moganlo, 2004). The latter is a recreational site in Sare'in and it is one of the best places in Iran for skiing, mountain climbing, walking, and rock climbing (Sadeg Moganlo, 2004). Villa-Dareh village is another tourist attraction in Sare'in where tourists can enjoy natural waterfalls, cold spring mineral water, small caves, and a spectacular landscape. The mausoleum of Syed Abol-Ghasem (great-grandchild of the sixth Shiite Imam) is one of the places of pilgrimage in the region but it is not well known by outsiders. Some of the heritage sites have not been fully explored and their importance is neglected and has not been utilized for tourism purposes.

The majority of tourists come to Sare'in for therapeutic water treatment, wellness, relaxation, health and relaxation. According to the local official census, Sare'in may host 4,000 to 10,000 people per day during the peak season and attracts about two million tourists annually (Sare'in, 2005-2007). However, their stay is short and averages half a day to 4 days. Sare'in is affected by seasonality and it is primarily visited by domestic tourists. Similar to Masooleh, Sare'in also hosts a considerable number of international tourists mainly from the countries of the Persian Gulf states, the Middle East and Central Asia. Recently, the destination is also becoming popular among western tourists.

The amount of accommodation in Sare'in has increased due to tourism and the occupancy rate is affected by the seasonality. The hotels/inns are fully occupied during summer but they are closed during the winter. In general, there are sufficient tourism facilities in Sare'in. Honey, dairy products, herbal medicines, and carpets are among the local products that are sold in the shops near to the Sablan hydrotherapy complex.

The Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization of Ardebil province plays a supervisory role in the tourism development of Sare'in. All tourism projects are mainly managed, supported, and executed by Sare'in municipality. The tourism information office operated by the municipality is located at the entrance of the town but it is only open during the peak season. In the low season, the visitors who need further information are referred to the public relations office at Sare'in Municipality. It had to be noted that Sare'in does not have any travel agencies or trained local tour guides.

2.4.3 Population of the Area of Research

Masooleh's population is around 700 in the fall and winter (Iran's Ministry of Health office based in Fooman (Gilan Province), 2006). However, the number escalates in spring and summer when the weather is more pleasant and more job opportunities are available especially in the tourism sector. According to latest data (Table 2.1), Masooleh's population has been decreasing annually. In contrast, the population of Sare'in has increased constantly and in 2006, the year when the current research was conducted, its population had reached 4,446 (Iran's Ministry of Health office based in Ardail (Province), 2006).

The above data are difficult to find because the countrywide census is performed only every 10 years. The stated data regarding population dates back 10 years and a new census was just being undertaken. The researcher thus had to deal with administrative security, legal processes and formal communication in order to obtain the latest and most accurate data from the Ministry of Health. The detailed information was collected from the health centres based in each area.

Table 2.1: Population of Masooleh and Sare'in, by gender and number of families, during 5 years (2002-2006)

Year	2002			2003			2004			2005			2006		
Gender	F*	M*	TOT*	F*	M*	TOT*	F*	M*	TOT*	F*	M*	TOT*	F*	M*	TOT*
Masooleh	359	378	737	335	354	689	336	361	697	330	352	682	292	331	623
Sare'in	1912	2242	4154	1932	2278	4210	1993	2315	4308	2013	2379	4392	2044	2402	4446
Number of Families in Masooleh	206			210			218			217			198		
Number of Families in Sare'in	830			839			857			887			890		

F*= Female; M*=Male; TOT*= Total population

Source: Iran's Ministry of Health office (2006), based Ardail (Province) and Fooman (Gilan Province)

2.5 RESEARCH BACKGROUND OF IRANIAN TOURISM

There are limited studies available about tourism development and the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Iran with the exception of Alavi and Yasin (2000), Sheykhi (2003), Bahrainy and JahaniMoghadam (2004), Alipour and Heydari (2005), Hafeznia et al. (2007), Azimi (2007), Fouladiyan (2008) and Aref et al. (2009).

In 2000, Alavi and Yasin explained the use of the Constant Market Share (CMS) model. It provides Iranian policy makers with a systematic approach to understanding and narrowing the gap which exists between the potential of tourism and market realities. Sheykhi (2003) explored how the quality of life is influenced by tourism, leisure activities, and sports. He concluded that tourism is not well developed in many parts of the Third World especially in Iran. Bahrainy and JahaniMoghadam (2004) investigated the utilization of local assets for tourism promotion in Masjed-i-Soleiman. It is located in the south-west of Iran; the first place where oil was discovered in 1908. The research was completed with/within the framework of tourism development in this region. The authors proposed that the oil park-museum of Masjed-i-Soleiman should act as a centre of tourism activities.

Alipour and Heydari (2005) studied the challenges faced by the Iranian tourism industry and they suggested that the government should revive and restructure the tourism sector, as it can be an economic alternative. The research also pointed out some fundamental flaws in the government's attitude towards tourism. It stated that the government is lacking in commitment and there is no appropriate strategy for tourism.

Hafeznia et al. (2007) examined the effects of tourism policy-making during the pre and post Islamic Revolution in Iran with a comparative approach. The case study

concentrates on the city of Babolsar which is located on the coast of the Caspian Sea. The study indicated the differences in ideology and values between the pre and post Islamic Revolution periods. The religious aspect becomes the essence of the post Islamic era and subsequently affects tourism policy making in Iran. Even though tourism has provided various job opportunities and tourism infrastructure in comparison to the pre-revolution period, the community has had to bear the cost as the development damaged the coastal environment and shores (Hafeznia et al., 2007).

Azimi (2007) examined residents' attitudes towards tourism in the historic city of Esfahan. The study reported that although the economic impacts of tourism are positive, the residents indicated neutral views towards various aspects of tourism. Fouladiyan (2008) studied the effects of tourism in Abgram-E-Larijan and the author concluded that the positive effects have outnumbered the negative ones. Aref et al. (2009) investigated the community perceptions towards the economic and environmental impacts of tourism in Shiraz. Results showed that respondents strongly agree that tourism provides many economic benefits but are ambivalent about some other socio-economic aspects of tourism.

Besides the above-mentioned studies published in academic journals, other tourism related research on Iran has been undertaken by universities, major tourism foundations, the Cultural Research Bureau (CRB), and ICHHTO. The focus of research in universities is academic in nature and is usually related to advanced degree dissertations and theses. Research undertaken by the main tourism foundations and organizations such as the CRB tends to be applied research related to one or more of their functions.

Masooleh is a popular subject for many research studies especially by Iranian and international students studying architecture due to its unique architecture and historical buildings. Furthermore, university students (generally undergraduates) from other disciplines are interested in studying the area. However, their research results are often descriptive. An unpublished survey by ICHHTO also examined the motivation and travel pattern of domestic tourists who visited Masooleh during the Iranian New Year (NowRuz) in 2006. The details of the study could not be further elaborated as the report is inaccessible to the public.

The main Masooleh research project entitled "Development of Cultural and Eco-tourism in the Mountainous Regions of Central Asia and the Himalayas," was carried out between 2000 and 2003. The project was sponsored by the Norwegian Government and UNESCO Regular Program funds. The aim was to establish links and promote cooperation between local communities, national and international NGOs and tour agencies in order to create job opportunities and income generating activities among the locals. According to UNESCO (2003), tourism was seen as a means of protecting the environmental and cultural heritage of the region.

In Sare'in, a study was carried out to devise a Tourism Master Plan for Ardebil province by the University of Tehran in cooperation with the ICHHTO office in Ardebil. This study was completed in 2005. However, it is unpublished and inaccessible to the public. In 2002, Sare'in municipality hired a local private consultant organization named 'Kohan Dej Sharestan' to conduct a study on economic analysis. This study suggested that there is a need for further development of tourism facilities and attractions in Sare'in in order to gain a more positive economic impact.

Mehmaan Navaz Meghabloo (2006) from Mazadaran University carried out an undergraduate dissertation on the role of tourism in Ardabil province using Sare'in as a case study. The research is descriptive and focuses on the presentation of tourist attractions and tourism potential in Sare'in. It was based on secondary data and interviews with some key people.

The limited number of studies in this field has created a path for the-current research to analyze the socio-cultural impacts of tourism development in Iran and the factors that may affect the perceptions of local communities.

2.6 SUMMARY

This chapter provides an overview, the geographical and socio-economic aspects of the country and a description of the areas of the study (Sare'in and Masooleh). The significance of tourism industry before and after the Islamic Revolution is also discussed in detail. The external and internal environment of the tourism industry in Iran is analyzed by using SWOT analysis. The study on the structure of the present tourism development in Iran indicates that there is a huge potential for further development of the tourism industry in Iran. However, it is hindered by poor government policy and inadequate tourism management. Based on the SWOT analysis, historical monuments, the diversity of the climate and inexpensive facilities and services offered are among the strengths of the country. Iran's tourism industry should take advantage of the country's tangible and intangible culture and heritage and low currency exchange in order to attract more tourists. The strengths and the opportunities indicate that there is a potential to improve tourism. On the other hand, the country's policies and regulations, limited sustainable management practices and the religious restrictions have dampened the growth of the tourism industry. In addition, with the

current political crisis, the tourism industry is facing a critical situation if no corrective measures are taken to address the vital tourism management and institutional issues. The weaknesses and the threats should be given serious attention in order to avoid any barriers that may undermine its status as tourist destination.

Iran's Tourism Master Plan Report (2002) reported that in general the socio-cultural impacts are within the acceptable range. However, apart from this report, there are no previous studies that have contributed significantly to the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in town as popular tourist destinations in Iran. It is essential to assess the impacts of tourism on a continuous basis in order to examine the degree of those impacts. Appropriate management action could then be instituted. The present study has attempted to identify the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in two small tourist destinations, namely Sare'in and Masooleh. The levels of tourism potential and development of these two areas are found to be similar. The limited amount of tourism research in Iran, specifically in these two areas, justifies the current research undertaking. A complete review of the relevant literature is presented in Chapter Three.

Chapter Three

Literature Review

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to the study of socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Socio-cultural impacts, tourism development characteristics, host–tourist interaction, host profiles and religiosity are among the aspects reviewed in order to generate detailed understanding of the current literature pertaining to the research area. The chapter begins with an overview of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism and its dimensions. The second part of the chapter explores tourism development as a multidimensional concept. The next section provides a review of studies of host-guest interaction and underlying theories, followed by an account of the importance of host socio-demographic characteristics in influencing the perception of socio-cultural impacts. In addition, concepts of religiosity, in particular, Islam and its relationships with tourism are addressed. This review establishes the foundation for the theoretical model with an explanation of the characteristics and their interrelationships with tourism impacts as well as introducing the constructs to be tested in the study and their relationships.

3.2 SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACTS

3.2.1 An Overview of Tourism Socio-Cultural Impacts

Various perceptions of the impact of tourism by the residents can provide insights into the nature and degree of the impacts of tourism on a tourist destination. Therefore, it is not very surprising that research on residents' reactions continues to be a topic of considerable interest (Mason & Cheyne, 2000; Carmichael, 2000; Williams & Lawson, 2001; Weaver & Lawton, 2001; Lindberg et al., 2001; Ko & Stewart, 2002; Uriely et al., 2002; Teye et al., 2002; Haley et al., 2005; Cooper et al., 2005; Pérez & Nadal, 2005; Wall & Mathieson, 2006).

Among the impacts that have been put forward are economic, social, cultural and biophysical aspects. Early work on the perceived impacts of tourism, which dates back to the 1960s tended to focus on the economic and positive effects of tourism (Pizam, 1978). However, in the 1970s, the consequences of tourism were examined more critically by anthropologists and sociologists who emphasised negative socio-cultural impacts (De Kadt, 1979). The 1980s and 1990s were characterised by a more balanced perspective, recently called sustainable tourism, where positive and negative effects are discussed together (Ap & Crompton, 1998; Inskeep, 1991; Jurowski et al., 1997).

Social impacts revolve around immediate changes in the social structure of the community and adjustments to the destination's economy and industry. Social impacts can be described as having a more direct effect on both tourists and host communities in terms of their quality of life (Sharpley, 1994). Cultural impacts are concerned with changes in traditional ideas and values, norms and identities resulting from tourism (Glasson et al., 1995). These impacts focus on the longer-term changes in a society's norms and standards (Murphy, 1985) such as society's values, beliefs, and cultural practices. Since there is no clear distinction between social and cultural phenomena, many theorists have attempted to classify the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in a broad context (Mathieson & Wall, 1982).

Social and cultural impacts of tourism are described as the effects on host communities' direct and indirect relations with tourists, and of interaction with the tourism industry (UNEP, 2006). Pizam and Milman (1984) pointed out that socio-cultural impacts of tourism describes how tourism contributes to changes in value systems, individual behavior, family relationships, collective lifestyles, moral conduct, creative expressions,

traditional ceremonies, and community organization. Krippendorf (1987) claimed that the socio-cultural impacts are so important that they should be studied before anything else.

There is increasing evidence that residents of countries that attract tourists hold diverse opinions about developments in their region. Residents do agree that tourism increases both positive and negative community impacts (Dyer et al., 2003; Pérez & Nadal, 2005; Haley et al., 2005; Andereck et al., 2005; Wall & Mathieson, 2006). All the above studies suggested that both positive and negative impacts should be examined to better understand host communities' attitudes towards tourism (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Hernandez et al. (1996) argued that not only residents may have different attitudes, but they also might have ambivalent attitudes toward tourism. One of the goals of sustainable development of tourism industry is to maximize positive impacts and minimize potential negative impacts in a community. Thus, the identification of possible tourism impacts is crucial for the destination development and management.

Numerous authors have identified the major perceived impacts of tourism. Dyer et al. (2003) investigated the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Cairns (in North Queensland, Australia). The findings demonstrated the benefits of tourism in the area as revivals of local culture, employment opportunities, increased cross-cultural understanding and improved material welfare. However, Wall and Mathieson, 2006 disadvantages such as degradation of local culture, exploitation of the community, minimal tourist/host interaction and limited material improvement for the local community were also revealed. This finding shows the local community perceived both positive and negative impacts of tourism in their community.

Azimi (2007) assessed resident's attitudes and influence of socio-economic and demographic characteristics on tourism in the historic city of Esfahan⁶. The findings indicated that the economic benefit of tourism was high. However, the local community perceived some negative impacts such as increase in traffic and littering in their region. The residents who gained economic benefits from tourism expressed their support for tourism. There was a negative relationship between the residents' income and tourism development. The residents were more likely to support for further tourism development if their income diminish. This study also reported that those who were living closer to the tourist attractions tended to restrict tourism in their region.

Fouladiyan (2008) studied the tourism impacts in Abgram-E-Larijan⁷. The study found that, tourism was perceived to have both positive and negative effects in the village. Positive impacts were including 'creating job opportunities', 'reverse immigration', 'more income', 'increasing the region service capabilities', 'creating security', 'increasing social integrity' and 'increasing the social partnership and confidence among residents'. On the other hand, tourism has had some negative impacts on community such as 'social harms', 'expansion drug addiction', 'social tensions', and 'cultural change'. The tourism impacts perceived in this village are questionable as this village is not a very popular tourist destination. There is a need for further research to confirm the reliability of this study's findings. Aref et al. (2009) investigated the community perceptions toward socio-economic and environmental impacts of tourism in Shiraz⁸. Results showed that respondents strongly agreed that tourism provides many economic benefits such as 'employment opportunities' and 'increase in standard of living', but were ambivalent about some other economic aspects of tourism.

⁶ Esfahan (or Isfahan) is an historic city and World Heritage Site, lies in the central parts of Iran.

⁷ Abgram-E-Larijan, it is a village in north of Iran famous for its hot springs.

⁸ Shiraz is a famous tourist city which is located in the southwest of Iran.

However, ‘increasing rate of crime’, ‘traffic congestion’, ‘noise’, ‘air pollution’, ‘destroy of natural environment’ and ‘increase in value of real estate’ were found to be the negative aspects of tourism impacts.

Kim and Patrick (2005) identified five dimensions of positive impacts of tourism including resource development and urban revitalization, image enhancement, economic benefits, intercultural appreciation and tourism infrastructure development. Negative economic perspective, disorder and conflict and traffic problems and congestion were identified as three dimensions of negative impacts (Kim & Patrick, 2005). Brunt and Courtney (1999) stated that tourism has led to a greater investment in education, improvements in health care, social services, and leisure facilities. However, they also claimed that tourism has contributed to the increased perception of crime.

Liu and Var (1986) found strong residential support for the positive cultural benefits of tourism in their study population. These included entertainment, historical, and cultural exhibits, with tourism as a means of cultural exchange, events, and identity. On the other hand, Page (2003) and Ratz (2000) stated that tourism contributes to changes in value systems (social and family), collective lifestyle, safety levels, moral conduct, traditional ceremonies and community organizations, creative expressions, individual behavior and family relationships. The majority of the residents in the Liu and Var study did not attribute social costs to tourism and they agreed that industry does not affect the crime rate.

Andereck et al. (2005), who examined residents’ perceptions of tourism’s impacts on communities in Arizona, identified six dimensions; namely community services, community image, community life, community problems, community environment, and

community economy. Residents of the examined community experienced both positive and negative impacts.

The results of a study by Pérez and Nadal (2005) in the Balearic Islands of Spain, indicated that the respondents were aware of both positive and negative effects of tourism. In this study, the cultural and social benefits were perceived as an advantage, but of a low degree. At the same time, it was recognized that tourism contributes to over-saturation of the community's services, traffic congestion, and inflation problems. Consequently, they were relatively ambivalent about development proposals that may imply an increasing number of tourists in their area.

Haley et al. (2005) identified the attitudes of residents in Bath (UK) towards tourism development. They stated that the respondents had a paradoxical attitude toward tourism. The researchers suggested that longitudinal and comparative research in Bath and other historic cities could provide necessary information for a stronger understanding and better planning decisions. A more specific list of the main positive socio-cultural impacts is presented in the Table 3. 1.

Table 3. 1: Main Positive Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism

Positive Impacts	Sources	Positive Impacts	Sources
Cultural activities	Gilbert & Clark, 1997; Andereck & Vogt, 2000	Exchange of cultures	Besculides et al., 2002; Teye, et al., 2002; Andereck & Vogt, 2000
Infrastructural development in the destination, increased the supply of services, and consequently improved quality of life for local residents	Upchurch & Teivane, 2000; Haley et al., 2005; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Besculides et al., 2002; Lankford, 1994 ;Wall & Mathieson, 2006	Increasing mobility of women and young adults	Pi-Sunyer, 1989; Mason, 1990; Kousis, 1996
Improving education	Lankford, 1994; McCool & Martin, 1994; Ross, 1992	More recreation/ entertainment opportunities	Andereck et al., 2005; Haley et al., 2005; Jones et al., 2000; Jurowski & Gurosy, 2004
Improves the image of the community	Andereck et al., 2005; Besculides et al., 2002; Beerli & Martín, 2004	Restoration and conservation of architectural and historical sites	Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Besculides et al., 2002
Opportunity for shopping	Brunt & Courtney, 1999	Maintains life traditional way	Besculides et al., 2002; Teye et al., 2002; Andereck et al., 2005;
Socio-cultural awareness	Harrison, 1992; Brayley et al., 1990	Maintenance of public facilities	Teye et al., 2002; Andereck & Vogt, 2000
Cultural revival	Grunewald, 2002; Mason, 2003	Preserve cultural identity	Teye et al., 2002; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Jones et al., 2000
Employment opportunities	Tosun, 2000; Coccossis & Parpairis, 1992; Wahab & Pigram, 1997	Pride Motivation	Kreag, 2001; Cooper et al., 2005; Gartner, 1996

While various empirical studies report the overall positive attitudes of host community residents, for others the socio-cultural factors may not always be positive. Ross (1992) stated that, in relatively small tourism resort towns, the increase of population and crowds, especially in summer seasons, causes noise, pollution and congestion. This limits the use of public areas such as parks, gardens and beaches as well as of local services by the residents, which sometimes result in negative attitudes towards tourists (Ross, 1992). Tosun (2002) investigated residents' perceptions on tourism impacts in three Turkish towns. Although the residents did not oppose the current tourism level in all the three towns, they did express several negative impacts such as drug addiction and individual/ organized crimes. The author concluded that residents' perceptions of the impacts appear to be affected by socio-cultural disparities between the residents and tourists, type, phase and scale of development and the distribution of tourism benefits between locals and non-locals. Leisure policies of local and central governments and level of local community participation in the development process were found to influence their perceptions of tourism development in the regions. A specific list of the main negative socio-cultural impacts is presented in the Table 3. 2.

Table 3. 2: The Main Negative Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism

Negative Impacts	Sources	Negative Impacts	Sources
Crime	Tosun, 2002; Haley et al., 2005; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Jurowski & Gurosy, 2004	Prostitution	Teye et al., 2002; Upchurch & Teivane, 2000; Gee et al., 1997; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997
Alcohol Consumption	King et al., 1993; Upchurch & Teivane, 2000; Besculides et al., 2002	Degradation of morality	Mok et al., 1991
Demonstration effect	Crandall, 1987; McElroy & Albuquerque, 1986; Greenwood, 1989; Pearce, 1989	Acculturation and cultural practices adapted to suit the needs of tourists	Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Dogan, 1989 as cited in Tatoglu, 2000 ; Johnson et al., 1994
Drugs trafficking	Upchurch & Teivane, 2000; Besculides et al., 2002; Tosun, 2002 ; Cooper et al., 2005	Increasing littering	Haley et al., 2005; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Gilbert & Clark, 1997
Robbery	Cooper et al., 2005; Upchurch & Teivane, 2000	Declining resident hospitality	Liu & Var, 1986
Crowding of public facilities and resources	Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997; McCool & Martin, 1994	New economically powerful groups emerging	Ap & Crompton, 1993; Johnson et al., 1994
Parking problems	Lindberg & Johnson, 1997	Effects on traditional family values	Kousis, 1989; Gee et al., 1997
Conflicts, enmities, community resentment/envy.	Cater, 1987; Dogan, 1989; Tosun, 2002	Increasing the Price	Keogh, 1989; Pizam, 1978; Tosun, 2002; Weaver & Lawton, 2001
Vandalism	Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Besculides al., et ., 2002; Brunt & Courtney, 1999	Religion Disruption	Sharpley, 1994; Khan, 1997
Disrupt the peace and tranquility	Andereck et al., 2005; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997	The change in language usage in the destination	Sharpley & Telfer, 2002

Tourism can yield enormous socio-cultural benefits as well as devastating costs, and these two aspects should be studied together. The net effect depends upon the responsibility exercised by the various stakeholders of the industry including the public and private sectors as well as the tourists and residents. Moreover, the external environmental forces such as political, economic, technological, social, cultural, and natural aspects also continuously influence the social and cultural characteristics of the host community. Authors such as Crandall (1987), Pearce (1989) and Crick (1996) have argued that the impacts caused by tourism and other external forces are not distinguishable and this problem remains unsolved. The main objective of socio-cultural impacts analysis is to provide the stakeholders with information on host communities' perceptions and attitudes towards tourism development in their residential area. Perceived positive impacts could thus be emphasized as well as minimizing the perceived negative impacts.

In conclusion, in recent years, there are numerous literatures that focus on the tourism impacts and it is known that the tourism contributes both positive and negative impacts. Even though researchers listed many positive and negative socio-cultural impacts, there is no absolute consensus of what constitutes the dimensions of tourism impacts (e.g. Diedrich & Garcí'a-Buades, 2009; Andereck et al., 2005; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Lankford, 1994; McCool & Martin, 1994; Long et al., 1990, Liu et al., 1987). All of these studies offer different dimensions for their impacts study. As remarked by (Tosun, 2002), the differences may be the results of the uniqueness in every impact study involving "idiosyncratic peculiarities" related to its case, making it difficult to derive "worldwide validity".

The need to examine these impacts is necessary in the attempt to achieve sustainable tourism development. The perceived factor of the local residents is essential as they are affected by the development that took place. In the tourism development, the tourism authorities play a vital role in maximizing the positive impacts and minimizing the negative ones.

3.3 TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS

“Tourism development is defined as the way in which tourism develops, and the economic and social effects of that development of the community, local economy region, or country” (Goodrich, 1991, p. 59). The definitions of tourism development evolved through time, as the appropriate measures were modified and developed for statistical, legislative, and operational reasons. All the elements of tourism development are interlinked and therefore, tourism development could not be considered as an isolation concept from other tourism related activities (Page & Connell, 2006). The stakeholders within the tourism industry play pivotal role in the tourism development and they should collaborate in line with the government’s policies.

Local and national governments usually have an essential influence over the local tourism industry as they fund tourism projects and providing numerous services including infrastructure, transportation, security, and engaged in marketing (Elliot, 1987). The contribution of tourism industry to overall economic and social development of a nation explains the motivation for government’s support for this industry. However, both public and private sector play an essential role in the tourism development process. Without the state intervention, tourism development will suffer from a lack of cohesion and direction necessary to sustain itself over the long run (Brohman, 1996). In protecting the industry’s

interest, the public sector's intervention is necessary to ensure the associated benefits of tourism are maximized and any potential problems are minimized for the benefit of the economy, society, and environment. Government has a number of legislative and regulative powers, which directly and indirectly impinge on tourism to ensure that tourism remains well controlled and organized (Moutinho, 2000). The tourism industry is multi-faceted and it is frequently viewed as being in need of external regulation in relation to tourism impacts (Swarbrooke, 1999).

Although there are a number of rules and regulations related to the operational aspects of tourism industry, there is still virtually no tourism legislation concerning certain key areas of significance to tourism in numerous destinations (Swarbrooke, 1999). These key areas include the socio-cultural impacts of tourism, environmental impacts of tourism, the carrying capacity of areas and sites and tourist behavior (Mason & Mowforth, 1996).

The degree of Cretan residents' satisfaction with the public sector governance was examined by Andriotis (2002). This study indicated that some residents recognized the significant role played by the public sector in tourism development (mainly in promotion, environmental protection, and provision of infrastructure and financial aid for tourism industry). However, the remaining residents stated that they had lost confidence in the public governance. They blamed the public sector for lack of organization, irresponsible acts, bureaucracy, irrelevant tourism policy, high taxation, insufficient funding, and shortage of infrastructure provision. The degree of the development that took place was also bound by the government's policies.

The 'consequences of tourism' vary depending on the form that it takes and the situations in which it occurs (Wall & Mathieson, 2006). The type, speed, and nature of tourism development can be a major influence on the magnitude and direction of change in a destination (Page, 2001; Tosun, 2002). Rapid and intensive tourism development results in different, and usually less favorable, impacts than organic and small-scale development (De Kadt, 1979; Getz, 1983; Krippendorf, 1987; Peck & Lepie, 1989; Pearce, 1989; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Page, 2001; Kreag, 2001).

Kreag (2001) noted that slower development provides time for residents and leaders to reassess tourism growth and make changes that might better serve the community. Destinations at an early stage of development are just as likely to experience high seasonality and a low tourist ratio, while negative impacts of tourism will be accentuated in destinations at a mature stage of tourism development, and where there is a high tourist ratio. The destinations at an early stage of tourism development with a low tourist ratio and domestic tourism orientation might receive a more positive community response (Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997).

Seasonality has long been recognized as one of the most distinctive features of tourism. It has frequently been viewed as a major problem for the tourism industry, and has been held responsible for creating a number of difficulties faced by the industry (Butler, 2001). Seasonality affects all aspects of tourism including marketing (packaging, distribution, pricing), labor market (nature and quality of employment, skills availability, sustainability of employment), business finance (cash flow, pricing, attracting investment), and stakeholder management (suppliers, intermediaries) (Baum & Lundtorp, 2001). In addition, the effect of seasonality on inflation during peak seasons should not be ignored. Baum and

Lundtrop (2001) also found that there is a parallel relationship between seasonal destination and specialization of tourism product(s).

Other researchers have recognized that reactions to tourism development may vary due to certain characteristics or circumstances associated with the residents; for example, socio-demographic characteristics (Belisle & Hoy, 1980; Liu & Var, 1986; Milman & Pizam, 1988), place of residence in terms of distance from the tourist area in the community (Belisle & Hoy, 1980), level of interaction with tourists (Cohen, 1984; Liu, 1986; Marsh & Henshall, 1987), and economic dependency on tourism (Liu et al., 1987; Allen et al., 1990). Tourist systems, tourists and their behavior have been suggested also as factors which may relate to attitudes toward tourism development (Cohen, 1984).

How the locals perceive the public sector's efficiencies or deficiencies concerning tourism development is important because it provides an insight into the preferences and interests of the people served (Lankford, 1994). This indicates what improvements or changes that should be adopted in future policies and plans accordingly as the residents are important players who can influence the success or failure of the local industry. The support of the local population and their goodwill is essential for tourism development and its successful operation and sustainability (Jurowski et al., 1997; Garrod & Fyall, 1998; Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001; Gursoy et al., 2002). Similarly, Tosun (1999 & 2006) also stated that the role community members play in tourism development is a strategic planning function.

It is residents' evaluation of the impacts that indirectly affects their support for tourism development (Jones et al., 2000). Besides, the attitudes, interests, and opinions of local people toward tourists are deemed important because of the significance of public attitudes

in creating a hospitable environment for tourists and tourism in general. Tourists will not return to destinations where they do not feel welcome and their unsatisfactory experience by word of mouth contributes in creating a negative image to destination. Therefore, without the support and positive attitude of local community, any marketing effort for destination will be unsuccessful. To achieve successful development, marketing, and operation of existing and future programs and projects, tourism related planning and policy needs to consider the attitudes of residents towards the tourism impacts (Ap, 1992; Lankford, 1994; Haley et al., 2005).

Therefore, the role of marketing as a tool to encourage sustainable tourism development is also well recognized (Dinan & Sargeant, 2000). In tourism, marketing should be used to identify appropriate visitor segments and execute proper marketing strategies in order to raise the net community benefits of the regional tourism industry. Government or quasi-government agencies play an important role in travel industry marketing through legislation aimed at enhancing the industry and through promotion of regions, states, and nations (Ryan, 1991; Teare et al., 1994). However, today the marketing of tourist destinations and its products is becoming a widely recognized practice, for both public and private sector organizations. Hence, marketing is a vital aspect in travel and tourism because tourism marketing can target the appropriate groups and tourists in order to minimize the unfavorable impacts. This requires careful planning and management.

The government's tourism policy in developing countries has become highly centralized, giving local people little say in decisions (Tosun, 2000; Tosun & Timothy, 2001). The government is more focused on developing places which are often largely self-contained with little multiplier effect in the local community and the region and shown less concern

of the rights of local people in developing tourism (Swarbrooke, 1999). It is evident that the policies implemented may not be successful if the public sectors fail to gain the support from local communities. General planning policy should allow the involvement of local communities in order to reinforce positive and mitigate the negative impacts. With that, the residents will be able to understand better about tourism, participate in its decision-making and benefit from the industry (McIntyre et al., 1993; Kavallinis & Pizam, 1994).

Tourism development can take place in a wide variety of forms. Some studies have attempted to provide formal models to explain tourism development and the host-tourist interaction. According to the existing academic research related to the impacts of tourism and residents' attitudes towards tourism, there are some models constituting the development of conceptual foundation of socio-cultural impacts (Wall & Mathieson, 2006). These models have been developed to help explain tourism impacts and their relationship with residents' perceptions. In next section, the significant of the tourism development models in interpreting the socio-cultural impacts of tourism are addressed.

In short, study of tourism development characteristics demonstrated that it is multidimensional, and multi faced activity. The public sector intervention and support is essential in tourism industry with regards to the tourism policy, planning, management regulation and marketing. Tourism development can take place in a wide variety of forms, type, speed, and nature. All these factors can be a major influence on the magnitude and direction of change in a destination. On the other hand, the support of the local community is also essential for success of tourism operation and its sustainability. The perceived impact of tourism development has a direct connection with host community and their

interaction with tourists. The feature of host-tourist interaction is discussed in the following section.

3.4 HOST-TOURIST INTERACTION

3.4.1 Hosts-Tourist Encounter

The socio-cultural impacts of tourism are about the effects on the people of host communities who have direct and indirect associations with tourists (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). Smith (1989) and Smith (1995) noted also that the socio-cultural impacts of tourism result from the interaction between 'hosts' and 'guests', or tourists and local people. Therefore, socio-cultural impacts are the 'people impacts' of tourism, with a focus on the changes in residents' day-to-day quality of life in tourist destinations. Tourism is usually a peaceful encounter among people from different countries, cultures, and professions and it can promote cultural contacts, understanding, cooperation and friendship as well as mutual respect. It may also renew and encourage the development of the personality and learning besides satisfying the intellectual curiosity by allowing people to get to know others through exposure to their customs and lifestyle (Vukonic, 1996).

According to Hofstede (1997), tourist-host contact can break the isolation of cultural groups, create awareness of each group, and provide an opportunity to learn each other's language and history. He concluded that the advantages outweigh disadvantages.

The nature of tourist-host encounters, in which one or more visitors interact with one or more hosts, are determined by the characteristics of the interacting groups or individuals and the conditions under which the contact takes place. According to Mathieson and Wall (1982), "direct contact" is not necessary for impacts to occur and the mere sight of tourists

and their behavior may induce behavioral changes on the part of permanent residents. De Kadt (1979) made the point that the quality of the host-guest relationship and community attitudes to tourism generally depends on the type of contact between host and guest, importance of the tourism industry to the community, and community tolerance threshold. De Kadt also pointed out that tourism is an important mechanism for increasing international understanding.

Douglas and Douglas (1996) stated that any analysis of host-guest impacts is a function of the interaction between these two groups. The interaction will be dependent upon the nature and extent of social, economic, and cultural differences between tourists and hosts, the ratio of visitors to residents, the distribution, and visibility of tourism development and the speed and intensity of development.

According to Jones et al. (2000) in reality, "hosts" are local people who often have little say about their roles. "Guests" are actually consumers with the economic power to purchase "rights" and "services" and they are not invited by local people. Therefore, when the encounter between hosts and tourists is asymmetric and unbalanced in character, either it may provide an opportunity for rewarding and satisfying social exchanges or it may stimulate and reinforce impulses for exploitation on the part of the host and suspicion and resentment on the part of the visitor (Sutton, 1967). Burr (2002) described the degree of tourist-host relationships and interaction depends on various factors. Among these factors are ethnic/cultural differences, language differences, expectations, time patterns, intensity of development, community size, commoditization, and trinketization. Teye et al. (2002) analyzed the impacts of cultural differences between the tourist and the host. They indicated that locals who are members of a community organization (social religious,

educational, and professional); their attitudes toward social interaction with tourists became less positive. Andereck et al. (2005) examined the nature of contact with tourists and its influence on attitudes towards tourism, behavior, and values. The research reported that people who are more knowledgeable and those who have more contact with tourists have more positive perceptions of tourism's impact on community life, image, and economy. However, these factors do not affect the community environment, services, or problems.

Several theories related to social contact between individuals from different cultural groups have been developed. One theory is the contact hypothesis. The contact hypothesis states that social contact between individuals from different cultures results in mutual appreciation, understanding, respect, tolerance, and liking (Bochner, 1982). It develops positive attitudes (Fisher & Price, 1991) and contributes to cultural enrichment and learning about others (Vogt, 1976). Besides, it also improves the social interactions between individuals, reduces ethnic prejudices, stereotypes, and racial tension (Cohen, 1971; Robinson & Preston, 1976; Bochner, 1982). Others have suggested that host-guest relations can be pleasant when both sense one another's feelings and needs (Hashim et al., 2007).

On the other hand, there are also negative effects of tourist-host contacts. Tourism can emerge as a source of conflict between hosts and visitors in destinations. The contact between tourists and hosts from different cultures could create misunderstanding due to differences in status, language, time, gesture and space (Pearce, 1982). Quite a number of tourists travel without having proper knowledge, understanding, and sensitivity about local culture and customs of the people living in the destination area. This often results in resentments among local people towards tourists (Telfer & Sharpley, 2008). The hosts and the guests belong to different socio-economic, racial backgrounds, language, and cultural

entities. The cultural differences may relate to basic values and logic systems, religious beliefs, traditions, customs, life-styles, behavior patterns, dress codes, and attitudes toward strangers. Sutton (1967) noted that the degree of cultural affinity depends on similarities and differences in the cultural background of the individuals. The greater the differences between the two cultures, the greater the probability that the encounters will lead to friction and misunderstanding. Therefore, in destinations where domestic tourists are dominant, the differences between the tourists and residents are perceived as minimal.

According to Coltman (1989), the degree of host-guest conflict depends on the similarity of their normal living standards, the extent to which these two groups can adapt one's norms and the intensity of tourism or the volume of tourist traffic. As the number of tourist increases, they become ordinary and the locals may ignore them. When the number of tourists reaches saturation point, the residents will experience a sense of displacement, obstruction, loss of community, or safety threat. These may result in resentment and resistance among the host (Kreag, 2001).

McKercher (1993) identified the tourist-host contact as a potential source of conflict because of the differences in tourists and hosts' demands. The interaction may be competitive wherein each individual wants a share of community facilities [especially when these facilities are not abundant] and usually the tourists carry superior status. McIntosh et al. (1995) explained that economic gaps between tourists and hosts cause resentment towards tourists. Tourists are on holiday and served by locals, which results in different attitudes and behavior (Sutton, 1967). Likewise, Nettekoven (1979) stated the obvious relative wealth of the tourists often leads to exploitative behavior on the hosts' side. Mathieson and Wall (1982) stated that there is also tendency for host-tourist relationships

to be unequal and unbalanced in character due to the gap of the lifestyle between these two groups. Tourists may represent the most explicit and tangible element of rich and comfortable societies, challenging all moral, religious and social values of the local society when they are on holiday (Aziz, 1995). Tension, conflict, dissatisfaction, and anger will rise if the local communities are ignored, exploited by guests or their needs are overlooked (Ap, 1992).

Rapid growth of tourism also may result in controversies among the residents (hosts) regarding the benefits and the costs of tourism development. “Conflicts within a community can arise among the various factions within the community as disparate groups seek to enhance their quality of life based on differing perspective” (Jones et al., 2000, p.131).

Conflicts could also arise due to religious values. Din (1989) stated that, in the Muslim world, the encounter between guests and hosts has at least three distinct dimensions; the differences between the hosts and the guest's personality, the interaction procedure itself, and the official response in dealing with any conflict that may arise from the interaction. However, in Islamic doctrine, contrary to modern/commercial tourism, the relationship between the host and the guest is directed towards one goal, which is submission to the way of God. In this way, hosts should treat travelers with compassion and thoughtfulness (Din, 1989) and its Muslims duty of being the host to offer hospitality to tourists. From an Islamic perspective, the positive attitudes of believers (tourists and hosts) are manifested in their views on loving peoples, need for global peace among nations and states and the right and freedom of all human beings. However, the degree of faith, observance, and interpretation of Islamic codes vary among the Muslim communities.

3.4.2 Host Attitudes toward Tourist

Mathieson and Wall (1982) argued that research should be directed more explicitly at determining the perceptions and attitudes of the host population towards the presence and behavior of tourists. Unless local inhabitants are contacted, it may not be possible to identify the real significance of any change.

According to Lawson et al. (1996), the acceptance and tolerance of tourists by a host community has been acknowledged as being vital for a successful encounter at a tourist destination. It is also one of the major factors in tourists deciding to return to a destination, or to recommend it to friends. According to Shaw and Williams (1994), the generally held view is that the impacts of tourism on host communities will vary according to the differences between tourists and their hosts. However, Shaw and Williams (1994) did not address the issue of how the social impacts of tourism varies according to these differences. The degree of differences in terms of racial characteristics, cultural background, and socio-economic status between hosts and guests will have a significant bearing on local reactions and preferences (Butler, 1975; Dogan, 1989; Schewe & Calantone, 1978). A study has indicated that residents show less acceptance or tolerance of tourists who are physically or culturally different from themselves (Krippendorff, 1982). However, the research on the impact of tourists' cultural background on the hosts' attitude is limited. Besides the different status between the host and guests, the types of tourists also affect the hosts' perception.

Cooper et al. (1998) argued that the categorization of tourists into typologies is now accepted as a conventional tool in the study of socio-cultural impacts. Smith (1989) gave an example of a tourist typology, which has implications for the tourism industry. Smith

distinguished between package tourists and independent tourists. The former usually demand western amenities, are associated with rapid growth rates, and often lead to the restructuring of the local economy. The latter however fit in better with the local environment and social structure, are associated with relatively slow growth rates, and often lead to local ownership. Individual travel enables the tourist to follow his or her interests and wishes, to choose travel goals and routes, and to prepare independently. Travel with family and friends or with public transportation make organization and social contacts easier (Rinschede, 1992). Therefore, it is evident that variations in attitudes towards and perceptions of tourists by resident populations are affected by the type of tourists visiting the area. Consequently, the type of tourists (i.e. packaged tours or independent travelers) could affect the degree of interaction between hosts and guests. According to Thyne et al. (2006) study, backpackers (independent backpacker compared to those on arranged bus tours) are the most preferred tourist type. However, Williams and Lawson's (2001) study found out that the majority of clusters group of participants, package tours, and backpackers are of equal value. Therefore, the acceptance pattern of typology of tourists is not unique and varies in different environments.

Pizam and Jeong (1996) and Pizam and Sussmann (1995) examined the extent to which residents' and tourism employees' perception of tourist behavior was affected by the nationality of tourists. These studies only measured the nationalities of the tourist and did not take the factors such as tourist's type, age, religion, and gender into account. Pearce (1982) and Sheldon and Var (1984) considered the nationality of the tourist as a significant factor. However, they only determined stereotypes perception of various nationalities of tourists. This study did not indicate how these stereotypes alter the hosts' attitudes towards tourism.

Thyne et al. (2006) examined the hosts' acceptance or tolerance of tourists in New Zealand. Their study was undertaken to assess the importance of tourists' type, nationality, and age in determining host community tourist preferences. This finding suggests that people are less willing to accept or tolerate tourists who are physically and culturally different from themselves and they are more comfortable with those who are similar to them. In consequence, tourists from the United States were recognized as the most preferred nationality. This may be explained by the higher purchasing power of this group and subsequently benefits to the local economy. In this study, the overall importance of the age factor is very low in comparison to the other two factors and it did not measure the religion and gender aspect. Williams and Lawson (2001) also conducted a study in New Zealand centered on residents in 10 towns. This study pointed out that the local community prefers to host tourists from New Zealand rather than tourists from elsewhere and prefers to have as little contact as possible with overseas tourists.

Mok et al. (1991) in their research in Hong Kong found that, despite physical and cultural similarities, respondents did not prefer the growth of tourists from the People's Republic of China. Apart from political reasons, the tourists from China have much less money to spend compared to tourists from other countries. These findings attempt to place nationality in a context with other socio-demographic attributes of the visitor that have been shown to influence host community responses to tourism. Furthermore, it is evident that the tourist's economic status plays an important role with regard to tourist preference among the host. Besides nationality, religion is a factor thought to determine the attitudes of the local community. Din (1989) had measured the religion dimension and concluded that from the Muslim visitor's point of view, religious affiliation does not seem to be influence the host's attitude. Some tentative evidence suggested that certain Muslim communities prefer non-

Muslim guests rather than Muslim guests (Var et al., 1985; Cohen, 1971) and some other communities seem to have closer affinity to the Muslim fraternity (Shoup, 1985).

Consequently, several studies stated that any analysis of tourism impacts is a function of the interaction between host-guest and will be dependent on the nature and extent of cultural background, socio-economic status between tourists and hosts, racial characteristics, tourist type, the ratio of visitors to residents, tourist's nationality and the level, stage and intensity of tourism development. It is evident that hosts hold diverse opinions about tourists. In results, some research finding suggest that host-guest relations could be pleasant and positive, and other states that tourism can emerge as a source of conflict between hosts and tourists in destinations. The findings as to how the host guest interactions affect the perception of tourism are the interest of the present study. In addition, there is a need to study the profile of the host as it may also influence their attitude towards tourism.

3.5 HOST CHARACTERISTICS (Host's Socio-Demographic Profile)

Hawkins et al. (2004) stated that demographics describe a population in terms of its size, distribution, and structure. According to Haralembopoulus and Pizam (1996), certain socio-demographic characteristics play an important role in understanding significant perceptual difference between groups of respondents. Demographics influence behavior both directly and indirectly. They affect attributes of individuals, such as their personal values and decision styles. In addition, they also influence how one thinks, makes decisions, and relates to others. For example, education has a strong influence on one's tastes and preferences. Age influences culturally defined behavioral and attitudinal norms and also affects one's self-concept and lifestyle.

There are numerous studies on host residents' perceptions of tourism in terms of socio-demographic characteristics (Ritchie, 1988; Mok et al., 1991; Bastias-Perez & Var, 1995; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Korca, 1996; Williams & Lawson, 2001; Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001; Kreag, 2001; Tosun, 2002; Teye et al., 2002; Beerli & Martín, 2004; Haley et al., 2005; Kuvan & Akan, 2005).

Kuvan and Akan (2005) identified significant relations between attitude statements and respondent characteristics. The educational level, family income, birthplace, and whether the respondent has always lived in, or moved into, the area after the development of tourism, are the factors that are found to have significant effects on attitudes. Bastias-Perez and Var (1995) stated that community support could be secured through an understanding of host's characteristics such as age, educational level, previous employment in the tourism industry, birthplace, level of income, and whether they have income derived from tourism related jobs. These factors can then be linked to negative or positive attitudes towards tourism.

Andereck et al. (2005) cited demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, race/ethnicity, and personal benefit from tourism, engagement with the industry, the community attachment, and income in their study. However, the results indicate, "there are no significant differences or weak relationship in terms of gender, age, and the community attachment variables" (Andereck et al., 2005, p.1068).

Haralambopoulos and Pizam (1996) stated that residents of an older age are less positive of tourism development. Education is found to have parallel relationship with positive attitudes towards tourism. On the other hand, Teye et al. (2002) also found that as the level

of residents' education level increased, attitudes toward social interaction with tourists and cultural impacts improved. Mason and Cheyne (2000) in their study found evidence of gender differences with regard to community attachment. In terms of development, it appeared that women were generally more opposed than men on the grounds of perceived impacts. However, the length of residency did not seem to affect the strength of views held.

Kreag (2001) stated that family status, age, education, and profession influence the actions and activities of tourists and their local visibility. These factors seem to influence the overall host-guest communication. Korca (1996) in his study conducted in Antalya (Turkey) tested the effect of 13 socio-demographic variables on the perception of tourism impacts. These were age, gender, marital status, length of residency, education level, occupation, income, tourism related job, income dependency on tourism, the usage frequency of beach and other tourism facilities, and distances of individual's home from tourism zones. The results show that all the variables are linked to residents' perceptions of tourism, with the exception of four items namely age, marital status, occupation, and income. Tosun (2002) findings based on his research in Urgup (Turkey) showed that a number of socio-demographic variables such as age, sense of belonging to an area and length of residency have an influence on the perception of tourism impacts. However, the number of children under 18 in the household, level of education and household income were statistically insignificant. Beerli and Martín (2004) in their study of destination image found that gender, age, level of education social class have a partially significant influence.

Several studies have suggested that attachment to the community is one of the factors that affects people's perception of tourism impacts and their support for tourism (Um & Crompton, 1987; Williams et al., 1995a & 1995b; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Tosun, 2002;

McCool & Besculides et al., 2002; Andereck et al., 2005). Findings demonstrated that residents who expressed a high level of attachment to their communities are more likely to view tourism as being both economically and socially beneficial (Besculides et al., 2002; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Similarly, Jurowski et al. (1997) argued that residents with high community attachment are likely to form positive perceptions of the economic and social impacts. Um and Crompton (1987) pointed out a negative relationship existed between community attachment and perceived impacts. However, Lankford and Howard (1994) and Gursoy et al. (2002) were unable to find a clear connection between community attachment and perceptions of impacts.

In terms of employment by tourism industry, a number of researchers have investigated its influence on the attitudes towards tourism (Lankford & Howard, 1994; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Jurowski et al., 1997; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Sirakaya et al., 2002; McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Andereck et al., 2005; Haley et al., 2005; Kuvan & Akan, 2005). Haley et al. (2005) stated that those employed in the industry were more supportive of further development of tourism and year round residence show weak influence. However, they did not find any connection to the other aspects of socio-demographic profiles such as age, gender, income, length of residence, distance of residence from tourism, city birth, and home ownership.

The results of study carried out by Kuvan and Akan (2005) and Faulkner and Tideswell (1997) and Andereck et al. (2005) stated that residents who have their major source of income from a tourism related job tend to welcome the positive changes and disapprove less of the negative effects, compared to those who do not have a financial interest in tourism. Conversely, Haralambopoulos and Pizam (1996) found that those who directly

depend on tourism perceive the industry in a more positive light in terms of employment opportunities, personal income, tax revenues, and standard of living. However, Teye et al. (2002) found that residents in Cape Coast tend to have negative attitude toward interaction with tourists if the family member employed in tourism had a negative experience. Therefore having a family member working in the industry does not automatically qualify for the social exchange theory's statement of obtaining benefits from the interaction instead, what matters is the nature of employment and the context in which the relationship is beneficial. Notably, there is also evidence that those who benefit from the industry are aware of the negative impacts (King et al., 1993; Snepenger et al., 2001; McGehee & Andereck, 2004).

Few studies found inconsistent relationships when testing the connection between various demographic variables and attitudes (McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Sirakaya et al., 2002; Tosun, 2002). Mok et al. (1991), in their study which took place in Hong Kong, found that there are no significant relationships between demographic variables of age, tourism related job, family with tourism related job, length of residency, educational level, income and gender with tourism impacts. The above literatures suggest that there are diverse opinions about socio-demographic characteristics as factors that are likely to influence the impacts perceived by the host. The present study therefore addresses this issue and explores the role of socio-demographic characteristics in local community perceptions.

In short, numerous studies have explored the relationship between residents' socio-demographic profile and their perceptions on tourism impacts. Generally age, gender, education, employment with the industry and income are among the significant demographic profile that influences the residents' perception. Particularly, factors such as

community attachment, length of residency, distance of residence from tourism zone, home ownership are found to be influential too. However, another demographic variable which is rarely examined as a factor that may influence the perception of socio-cultural impact, is religiosity.

3.6. Religiosity

3.6.1 A Review on Religiosity

In sociology, religion is a system of ideas by means of which individuals represent themselves to the society whose members they are, and the obscure but intimate relations that they have with it (Durkheim, 1915). Religiosity is the degree to which specific religious beliefs, values and ideals are held and practiced by an individual (Essoo & Dibb, 2004). It specifies behavioral patterns and encourages overt religious expression (Hill et al., 2000).

Religion has come to the forefront of the international public agenda following the end of the Cold War and the events of September 11 in 2001 and it has become one of the hottest issues in the 21st Century (Nordas, 2005). Religion is not only one of the major components of the development of human history and civilization; it is also one of the deepest of these components (Vukonic, 1996). According to Delener (1990) and Fam et al. (2004) religion can have considerable influence on individuals' values, beliefs, habits, and consumer decision behavior. Hence, religion is an interpretation of life that deals with people's values. Such values and attitudes shape the behavior and practices of institutions and members of a culture.

Religiosity is one of the most important cultural forces and a key influence on behaviour (Delener, 1994; Sood & Nasu, 1995; Essoo & Dibb, 2004). Researchers have demonstrated that religiosity provides a frame of reference for individuals to help them understand (Spilka et al., 1985), predict and control events, and to maintain self-esteem (Spilka et al., 1985; Sherkat & Reed, 1992; Commerford & Reznikoff, 1996; Hill et al., 2000), positive self-perceptions (Ellison, 1994) and social support and a sense of meaning (Idler & Kasl, 1992; George et al., 2000). Religion fosters established practices and provides a series of tools and techniques for social behavior (Hawkins et al., 1980; Schiffman & Kanuk, 1991; Diener & Seligman, 2002; Myers, 2000). Religions also often teach honesty and generosity toward others and they provide social arena that foster cooperation (Berggren & Bjørnskov, 2009).

Several researchers have also found a relationship between religiosity and positive aspects of psychological health and overall life satisfaction (Ellison, 1991; Levin & Chatters, 1998; Ayele et al., 1999; Fredrickson, 2002; Soydemir et al., 2004). Religiosity has a parallel relationship with good health (Sawatzky et al., 2005; Peterson & Webb, 2006; Williams & Sternthal, 2007) and subsequently it influences the degree of satisfaction. Researchers who study the characteristics of happy people also note that this group consistently exhibits higher levels of religious engagement when compared to their less-happy counterparts (Diener & Seligman, 2002; Myers, 2000). Furthermore, when other demographic variables such as race and education are controlled, religious activities are often cited as among the most significant predictors of subjective well-being (McDaniel & Burnett, 1990). The same source has also concluded that religious beliefs tend to be causally related to different attitudes and/or behavior among individuals in a population. Krause (2003) found out that older adults with high values gained from their religious beliefs and behaviors have higher

levels of life satisfaction, self-esteem, and optimism. Religion also influences gender role/behavior in a particular culture. For example, in Islamic countries, both men and women must cover their torso, upper legs at all times, and in the case of women, only their facial skin should be exposed (Deng et al., 1994). Moreover, in Muslim communities, males exercise the major social responsibilities.

Muhamad and AbGhani (2006) stated that religion affects individual behavior directly and indirectly through the rules and taboos it inspires and the imposition of strict codes of conduct. They claimed that since religion affects the way in which people behave; it may also affect an individual's perception. Evidence shows that there is also a strong relationship between religious persons and greater concern for moral standards (Wiebe & Fleck, 1980), being conservative (Barton & Vaughan, 1976) and possessing more traditional attitudes (Wilkes et al., 1986). Apart from the above factors, studies have shown that intrinsic religiosity may also be linked to prejudice (Batson & Ventis, 1982; Griffin et al., 1989; McFarland, 1989), authoritarianism (Kahoe, 1977), closed mindedness and dogmatism (Flere & Lavrič, 2006).

Religion may also provide guidance, emotional support and hope throughout the problem-solving and decision-making processes, particularly during stressful periods (Pargament & Hahn, 1986). Likewise, according to Gorsuch and Smith (1983), religion affects how individuals interpret problems and religious beliefs and practices help them to select solutions. Therefore, religious beliefs and practices may guide the individual behaviour in the process of selecting solutions to problems.

Various studies have confirmed the influence of religion on people's values, habits, attitudes and behavior (Sadler, 1970; Bahr & Chadwick, 1985; Spilka et al., 1985; Witter et al., 1985; Finke & Stark, 1988; McDaniel & Burnett, 1990; Raider, 1992; Chamberlain & Zika, 1992; Delener, 1994; Sood & Nasu, 1995; Grigg, 1995; Mahoney et al., 1999; Sherkat & Ellison, 1999; Ayele et al., 1999; Hill et al., 2000; Myers, 2000; Diener & Seligman, 2002; Poria et al., 2003; Soydemir et al., 2004; Maselko & Kubzansky, 2005; Tan, 2006; Weidenfeld & Ron, 2008).

Sood and Nasu (1995) found that devout Protestants were more concerned with prices and open to purchasing products from other countries than non-devout Protestants. They believe that there is very little relationship between price and quality. The economic and thoughtful characteristics of the devout Protestants provide a consistent picture of their consumer behavior as opposed to the casually religious Protestants. Hence, people's religion and religiosity will shape their consumption habits and pattern. Religion is found to influence individual consumption of food. The impact of religion on consumption patterns usually relates to the restriction of certain foods and beverages; for example, Jews and Muslims do not eat pork, Hindus do not eat beef, and drinking alcohol is frowned upon if not forbidden by Islam and strict Protestants (Poria et al., 2003).

In addition, religion also influences marital happiness and commitment (Bahr & Chadwick, 1985; Mahoney et al., 1999; Sherkat & Ellison, 1999; Raider, 1992), daily activities (Poria et al., 2003), family life and interaction (Raider, 1992) and social life (Hirschman, 1983). However, Tan (2006) who explored the relationship between religion and social preferences found that a general measure of religiosity has no predictive power for social

preferences behavior. Although religion is a major force in human society, its role in decision-making and behavior is still unclear (Delener, 1994).

3.6.2 Religiosity's Dimensions

Scutte and Hosch (1996) stated that religiosity is a difficult construct to measure because of various definitions and measurements. Generally, in literature, researchers measure religiosity using a range of two to seven dimensions (Stark & Glock, 1968; De Jong et al., 1976; Cornwall et al., 1986; Batson et al., 1993; Krause, 1993; Matsuoka, 1997; Duriez et al., 2000; Marks & Dollahite, 2001; Kendler et al., 2003; Maselko & Kubzansky, 2006; Tan, 2006) (see Table 3.3).

Batson et al. (1993) and Matsuoka (1997) measured religiosity using two main constructs namely the belief and the practice. According to Marks and Dollahite (2001), religious belief includes personal, internal beliefs, framings, meanings, and perspectives on religion. On the other hand, religious practice is outward and observable expressions of faith such as scripture study, prayer, traditions, and rituals. Maselko and Kubzansky (2006) also divided the religiosity construct into two categories; the activity and with whom it is performed. The two constructs consist of private religious activity (performed alone) and group religious activity (performed in a group).

The use of three religiosity constructs is the most common among researchers (De Jong et al., 1976; Cornwall et al., 1986; Krause, 1993; Duriez et al., 2000; Marks & Dollahite, 2001; Tan, 2006). However, all of them agreed on the existence of the previously discussed constructs: religious belief and religious practice. The third construct is termed differently by the authors; 'communities' (Marks & Dollahite, 2001), 'organizational' (Krause, 1993),

‘experience’ (De Jong et al., 1976; Tan, 2006), ‘spirituality’ (Duriez et al., 2000) and ‘affect’ (Cornwall et al., 1986). Religious ‘communities’ consist of support, relationships, and involvement based in a congregation or less formal religious group (Marks & Dollahite, 2001). ‘Organizational’ religiosity involves participation in religious institutions and is frequently related to religious institutional attendance and membership, or it is also embedded in a larger organizational context (Krause, 1993). The ‘experience’ dimension measures the extent to which an individual has encountered a religious context, which could be either non-institutional (spiritual experience) or institutional (experience of salvation in Christianity) (De Jong et al., 1976; Tan, 2006). ‘Spirituality’ is the belief and connection with a higher power and the feeling that this connection is very meaningful (spirituality dimension) (Duriez et al., 2000). ‘Affect’ is the spiritual and religious institutional commitment (Cornwall et al., 1986).

Table 3.3: Summary of Religiosity Constructs

Religiosity Construct	Source
Involvement and attitude	Batson et al., 1993
Behavior and belief	Matsuoka, 1997
Private religious activity and group religious activity	Maselko & Kubzansky, 2006
Beliefs, practices and communities	Marks & Dollahite, 2001
Organizational, subjective and beliefs	Krause, 1993
Belief, ritual, and experience	De Jong et al., 1976; Tan, 2006
Belief, practice, and spirituality	Duriez et al., 2000
Cognition (traditional and particularistic orthodoxy), affect (spiritual, religious institutional commitment), and behavior (religious behavior, religious participation).	Cornwall et al., 1986
Ideological, ritualistic, experiential, intellectual and consequential	Stark & Glock, 1968; Hasaan, 2005
General, social, involved God, forgiveness, God as judge, unvengefulness and thankfulness	Kendler et al., 2003
The total number of Holy places (mosques) in proportion to the total number of buildings in a destination.	Akdede & Hotunluogul, 2008

Authors such as Stark and Glock (1968) and Kendler et al. (2003) even proposed five and seven religiosity dimensions respectively. Stark and Glock (1968) identified five core dimensions of religiosity and labeled these dimensions as ideological, ritualistic, experiential, intellectual, and consequential. The religiosity dimensions proposed by Stark and Glock (1968) were used by Hassan (2005) in his study which was also the first attempt to compare and ‘map out’ Muslim religiosity in Muslim countries. Kendler et al. (2003) argued that religiosity is a complex, multidimensional construct with substantial associations with lifetime psychopathology. They identified seven religiosity dimensions, which are general religiosity, social religiosity, involved God, forgiveness, God as judge, unvengefulness, and thankfulness.

With the exception of Duriez et al. (2000), all the researchers who used three religiosity constructs viewed the third dimension as an extension of the religious practice construct. The third dimension proposed by Duriez et al. (2000) is 'spiritual' aspect (the feeling of connection with higher power) and it could be interpreted as a form of religious belief. Despite the multiple constructs of religiosity items by Stark and Glock (1968), Duriez et al. (2000), Kendler et al. (2003), all the items can be re-grouped into three and finally into two constructs namely religious belief and religious practice.

Wilde and Joseph (1997) developed the Moslem Attitude towards Religiosity Scale (MARS). The scale contained 14 items mainly measured Islamic belief and practice. Tiliouine and Belgoumidi (2009), based on Islam's main religious texts - the Quran and Hadith (the prophets' sayings and doings) - constructed an improved measure of Islamic religiosity from the fundamental Islamic prescriptions and code of conduct. From a total of 60 Islamic religiosity items, four main domains were derived. These were Religious Belief, Religious Practice, Religious Altruism (doing good to others), and Religious Enrichment (long life learning). However, it can be argued that Religious Altruism and Religious Enrichment are components of Religious Practice itself. According to Marddent (2009), the very basis of Islamic religiosity, according to the Quran and Hadith are *Iman* (the belief) and *Amal* (the practice).

Unlike other studies, Islamic religiosity is measured differently by Akdede and Hotunluogul (2008). It is measured by the total number of mosques and their proportion of the total number of buildings in the area of research. This measurement method was based on a particular Turkish community's values and perceptions of religiosity. Therefore, this statement could not be generalized to other Muslim counties. The validity of the construct

of the measurement is also questionable, as no previous study has adopted this measure. This study emphasizes the host's perception toward tourism impacts rather than measuring religiosity as an objective concept. The possible relationship of tourism and religion is discussed in the next part.

3.6.3 Religiosity and Tourism

Tourism has also been a way of changing people's attitudes towards other cultures, religions, countries, heritages, and even increasing people's awareness of key world issues (McIntosh & Bonnemann, 2006; Brown & Morrison, 2003; Schanzel & McIntosh, 2000). Tourism, like religion "provides people with 'non-ordinary or sacred' free time which allows them to reflect, think, and contemplate their lives" (Willson, 2007, p. 2).

Religion as a concept is linked to a variety of issues in the tourism research literature (Turner, 1973; Din, 1989; Hitrec, 1990; Rinschede, 1992; Smith, 1992; Cohen, 1998, 1992a & 1992b; Fleischer, 2000; Joseph & Kavoori, 2001; Poria et al., 2003; Matina & Dimitrios, 2006; Timothy & Oslen, 2006; Raj & Morpeth, 2007). Researchers have mainly focused on a number of theoretical and practical concerns including the planning of pilgrimage or religious tourism, the management and interpretation of sacred sites, impacts of tourism on religious sites, the economic impacts arising from religious tourism, religious ceremonies and religious travel (pilgrim) motivation and travel patterns.

Brunet et al. (2001) discovered that in Bhutan, the cultural traditions, the local religion, and the religious festivals are some of the potential factors to attract tourists. Vukonic (1996) stated that the Catholic Church has a positive view of the macro impacts of tourism on society because it helps people recover and attain perfection as well as establishing links

between people and nature and encourages the unification of the human family and social evolution. However, the author does not give details about the implications of the study for future research on tourism and religion. A study by Brunt and Courtney (1999) in Dawlish (a small seaside resort in South Devon, United Kingdom) shows that tourism could help to better maintain religious buildings.

More specifically, numerous studies have addressed tourists' religious needs in the hospitality industry (Dugan, 1994; Mansfeld et al., 2000; Shackley, 2004; Weidenfeld, 2006; Weidenfeld & Ron, 2008). Religion influences tourist behavior such as the choice of destinations and tourist product preferences (Weidenfeld & Ron, 2008). Weidenfeld's (2006) study was based on a sample of 179 Christian tourists in Israel. It highlighted the importance of fulfilling tourists' religious needs in order to increase their satisfaction. For example, he suggested employment of Christian workers at hotels together with providing information on religious activities and institutions as well as the provision of holy books (e.g. Bible) in hotel rooms. Mansfeld et al. (2000) addressed the religious needs of the Muslim tourist in the hospitality industry in Israel. Among the recommendations put forward by the authors are that the accommodations should be in close proximity to Muslim sites, placing 'Mecca stickers' and a copy of the Quran in every room as well as providing food which complies with Muslim dietary laws. There is also a massive and rapid development of 'Sharia-compliant hotels' especially in the Middle East (Heyer, 2008).

Some tourism industry practitioners in non- Muslim locations have taken a step ahead to satisfy the special needs of Muslim visitors, illustrated by the provision of *halal* meals and hotel signage pointing to Mecca for prayer as well as information about mosques. The service providers have to be sensitive to the needs of religious tourists and try to satisfy this

group of tourists. Din (1989) disclosed that the difference between the religion of the host and the guest may influence the service supplied to the guest in certain Muslim countries. The observation is supported by Brown (1996) who, in an ethnographic study of the 'Borscht Belt,' found that religious taboos influence the hospitality services, such as hotels, foods, and the services. Weidenfeld and Ron (2008) suggested that the relationship between tourism and religion constitutes a valid and important area of research. It is vital to satisfy religious needs in the tourism industry related to hospitality, attractions, airports, visitor information centers, and food outlets. They also argued that the religious aspect should be further studied in relation to other religions. The above studies suggest that more research should be conducted within the hospitality industry and the product and services offered should be in tandem with the needs of religious tourists.

It is evident that religion is linked to tourism in terms of consumer (tourist) and supplier (host) behavior and the relationship between them (Poria et al., 2003). Guiso et al. (2003) found that religious people are more intolerant of people of different background than themselves. Fundamentalist Protestants and Catholics trust others less than do individuals who do not claim a preference for a particular denomination (Daniels & Von der Ruhr, 2008). In rural Bangladesh, Muslims, and Hindus trust people of their own religion more than they trust others, and Muslims are relatively more distrustful of Hindus (Johansson-Stenman et al., 2009).

On the other hand, Joseph and Kavoori (2001) suggested that the fact that tourism is seen as a threat to the local community is linked to its perceived influence on local traditions, including religious habits, even though a large segment of the population is dependent on its economic benefits. Religious festivals and events for tourism will also lead to a loss of

meaning or authenticity and finally commoditization of religion, resulting in conflict between hosts and guests (Sharpley, 1994). Khan (1997) explained that in many tourist destinations, local communities often feel that their religious belief and human rights are taken away by external interests. The presence of non-believers mixing with serious religious pilgrims at a holy site can reduce the spiritual experience for true believers. Inappropriate behavior such as photography of holy shrines may cause disruption of religious life. Improper clothing and behaviour by tourists can offend the religious beliefs of the local community. Commoditization of religious ceremonies, rites and practices is viewed as frivolous and disrespectful (Khan, 1997). This indicates that religious values and tourism influence the socio-cultural values (Ichaporia, 1983; Wu, 1982).

Religion plays a visible role in the country's life and its global affairs especially in Islamic country, where this study took place. The element of Islamic beliefs, practical laws, and ethical issues are further discussed in the following section.

3.6.4 Islam

Islam is the name of the religion which originated in Arabia during the seventh century AD through the Prophet Mohammad who is the final prophet. According to the Quran, Islam is the primordial and universal religion, and even nature itself is Muslim, because it automatically obeys the laws God has ingrained in it (Fam et al., 2004; Von der Mehden, 1986). Followers of Islam are known as Muslims, and their religion embraces every aspect of life. They believe that individuals, societies, and governments should be obedient to the will of God as it is set forth in the Quran, which they regard as the word of God revealed to his messenger, Mohammad (s.a.w.) (Galwash, 1958; Ringgren & Strom, 1967; Noss & Noss, 1984; Armstrong, 2002; Fam et al., 2004).

The basic sources for Islamic jurisprudence are the Quran and the Sunna (customs of the Prophet Muhammad) as relayed in the hadiths (sayings of the Prophet and his companions), qiyas (analogy), ijma‘(consensus), and ijihad (individual reasoning) (Armanios, 2004). Muslims are instructed to practice what they believe. The five pillars of Islam stated below are the foundation of Muslim life (Noss & Noss, 1984; Essoo & Dibb, 2004; Armanios, 2004):

1. *Creed (Shahada)*: Consists of the verbal commitment and pledge that there is no God to be worshipped except Allah (the one God) and that Muhammad (s.a.w.) is his Messenger.

2. *Prayers (Salat)*: The performance of the five daily prayers is required of Muslims. It must be performed at fixed hours, five times a day (starting at just before sunrise, just after noon, mid afternoon, just after sunset, and after nightfall) while facing towards the holy city of Mecca. These five prayers contain verses from the Quran, and are said in Arabic, the language of the revelation, but personal supplication can be offered in one's own language. Although it is preferable to worship together in a mosque, a Muslim may pray almost anywhere. *Jum'ah* also known as Friday prayer is a congregational prayer that Muslims hold every Friday, just after noon (Quran, 62 (9-10)). It is obligatory for men and optional for women.

3. *Fasting (Saum)*: Every year in the month of Ramadan, all Muslims fast from first light until sunset, abstaining from food, drink, and sexual relations. Those who are sick, elderly, or on a journey, and woman who are pregnant or nursing are permitted to break the fast and make up an equal number of days later in the year. If they are physically unable to do this, they must feed a needy person for every day missed. Children begin to fast (and to observe the prayer) from puberty, although many start earlier. Even though fasting is seen as beneficial to the health, it is regarded principally as a method of self-purification.

4. *Purifying Tax (Zakat)*: The word zakat means both 'purification' and 'growth'. Our possessions are purified by setting aside a proportion for those in need. Zakat is an annual payment of a certain percentage of a Muslim's property, which is distributed among the poor or sick or for other rightful beneficiaries. There are two kinds of zakat. One is zakat ul-Fitr. This zakat is caused by breaking the fasting at the end of Ramadan and it is

mandatory for every Muslim. Another one is zakat on wealth (zakat ul-mal) . A transfer of a portion of the wealth given by the owner to those who deserve it (Quran, 9 (103); 7(156); 8(3-4); 3(92)). Giving zakat is an act of obedience to the command of Allah, and a fulfillment of His covenant.

5. *Pilgrimage (Hajj)*: The performance of pilgrimage to Makkah is required once in a lifetime, if one is physically able and can afford it financially. The rites of the Hajj, which are of Abrahamic origin, include circling the Ka'ba seven times and running seven times between the mountains of Safa and Marwa as did Hagar (the wife of Abraham) during her search for water. Then the pilgrims stand together on the wide plain of Arafat and join in prayers for God's forgiveness, in what is often thought of as a preview of the last Judgment (Quran, 3 (96-97); 2 (158,196,197); 22 (26,27)).

Islamic law, also known as shari'ah law (which is sourced from the Quran), provides guidelines for daily life interaction between the Muslims and their outlook on Islam's rules and regulations. Shari'ah is a code that prescribes and governs the duties, morals and behavior of all Muslims, collectively and individually, in all aspects of life (Coulson, 1964; Terpstra & Sarathy, 1994; Luqmani et al., 1987). Olayan and Karande (2000) explained that the shari'ah describes the values that Muslims should hold, including truth, honesty, social and collective obligations and responsibilities.

The Muslims are required to obey the Islamic law (based on Quran). However, the interpretation of Quran verse differs by Islamic countries. For instance, the wearing of *hijab* for woman is not applicable in all Muslim countries. In Quran the related verse says 'draw their clothes around them a little to be recognized as believers and so that no harm will come to them'(Quran,33:58-59) and 'guard their private parts... and drape a cover [*khamr*] over their breasts [when in the presence of strange men]' (Quran, 24:31). In some communities, the word hijab may refer to the head covering. At present only two countries

mandate women to be covered namely Saudi Arabia and Iran. Iranian women and men must maintain modest dress in the workplace.

In summary, Islam as a religion controls the society and factors associated with family, outfit, cleanliness, and ethics. Muslims are required to live and think in the way that Allah has instructed. Islam is an important factor in influencing the religious climate and religious commitment among Muslims.

3.6.5 Islam and Tourism

In many nations, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa, Islam and Islamic law principles are the foundation of the society. Thus, the Islamic law affects tourism policy, the objectives of development, management and operation of the industry (Timothy & Iverson, 2006). It is evident that Islam does influence the mode of tourism development in Muslim countries. However, the interpretation of Islam in these countries is determined by the country's social and political aspects (Hassan, 2005).

Islam is a comprehensive religion which rules and organizes the details of the minor aspects of everyday life. Muslim life is guided by the holy book of Quran and the *Sunnah* or *Hadith* which contains the sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad recalled by his companions and family. The verses of the Quran cited below endorse traveling with a view to achieve spiritual, physical, and social goals (based from the chapters in brackets):

- Ali-Imran (The Amramites): 137
- Al-An'am (Livestock): 11
- Al-Nahl (The Bee): 36
- Al-Naml (The Ant): 69
- Al-'Ankaboot (The Spider): 20
- Al-Room (The Romans): 42/9

- Saba' (Sheba): 18
- Yousuf (Joseph): 109
- Al-Hajj (The Pilgrimage): 46
- Faater (Initiator): 44
- Ghafer (Forgiver): 82/21
- Muhammad: 10
- Yunus (Jonah): 22
- Al-Mulk (Kingship):15

(Source: Quran, 1976 and Yusuf Ali, 2005; see appendix C, for more details)

The verses explain that more complete submission to God is possible through seeing first-hand beauty and bounty of His creation and that grasping the smallness of man reinforces the greatness of God. Travel can enhance health and well-being, reducing stress and enabling Muslims to serve God better. It leads to the acquisition of knowledge and is a test of patience and perseverance. Family and wider religious fellowship ties are affirmed. Muslims also are obligated to offer hospitality to visitors (guests). Thus, traveling is an important attribute in Islam and this has been evident throughout history (Kessler, 1992; Bhardwaj, 1998; Aziz, 2001). Hajj to Mecca is one of the five pillars of Islam and Ziyara applies to visits to shrines and holy places. Besides, traveling is also significant for education and commerce purposes. Traveling in Islam emphasizes spiritual journeys in the service of God which contribute to foster unity among the larger Muslim community or Ummah (Eickelman & Piscatori, 1990). This indicates that Islam encourages Muslims to travel.

There are a few studies that have examined the effect of Islam on tourism in Muslim communities. Din (1989) stated there is little written material on the official views of Islam regarding tourism. Theologians find it difficult to reconcile Islam with Western style tourism, stressing rather its spiritual and social dimensions. Meanwhile, several studies

have examined the overall dynamics of tourism in countries where Islam is the main religion, typically all focused on the implications of the religion for tourism (Din, 1989; Baum & Colin, 1997; Burns & Cooper, 1997; Bhardwaj, 1998; Timothy, 1999; Alavi & Yasin, 2000; Henderson, 2003; Timothy & Iverson, 2006). More specifically, Din (1989) recorded the influence of religion on tourism movements and policies in Islamic countries as a whole. Bhardwaj (1998) studied spatially distinctive cultural traditions of Islamic populations. Henderson (2003), using Malaysia as a case study, illustrated the problems and opportunities which arise when international tourism and the Islamic religion come into contact.

Timothy and Iverson (2006) examined the principles of Islam and their influence on travel, tourism, and pilgrimage. However, the study only concentrated on the perception of the hosts' hospitality as a religious duty. Din (1989) stated that from the Muslim visitor's point of view, religious affiliation does not seem to be influential. Similarly, from the hosts' point of view, some tentative evidence suggests that certain Muslim communities prefer non-Muslim guests rather than Muslims (Var et al., 1985; Cohen, 1971), although these studies do not explain clearly the reasons for this attitude. However, Muslims may prefer to remain within a familiar culture when traveling (Shoup, 1985). This is due to the revival of Islamic cultures and the spread of Islamic values, economic benefit for Islamic societies and strengthening of Islamic self-confidence, identity, and beliefs in the face of negative stereotyping in comparison to other cultures and cultures and lifestyles' (Al-Hamarneh, 2008, p. 2).

In some Islamic countries, the individuals or groups of Muslims may accept tourists as compared to others, but again it depends partly on the degree of liberalism, personal gains

and losses (Henderson, 2002), local culture and custom. In general, the Muslims are required to respect certain social behavior and norms such as shaking hands or any physical contact between members of the opposite sex, prohibition of public displays of affection, unmarried couples sharing rooms, gambling, breaking fast in daylight during Ramadan, consumption of pork and other *haram* (forbidden) foods, selling or drinking liquor and dressing inappropriately. Both genders must cover their torso and upper legs at all times and only women's faces can be exposed (Deng et al., 1994). Frequenting discotheques and bars and other miscellaneous entertainments are deemed unlawful. The amount of recreation time for locals is also circumscribed by religious duties in some Muslim countries.

Muslim as tourists are required to adhere to the customary restrictions where possible and 'abstain from profligate consumption and indulgence' (Hashim et al., 2007, p. 1085). They may, however, delay *Ramadan* fasting and curtail regular prayers when they are on the move (Timothy & Iverson, 2006). Individuals may also elect to ignore religious teachings when they are in a relatively open atmosphere. Non-Muslim tourists should also abide and respect the local norms and rules. For instance, in some Islamic countries, female tourists are expected to wear a head covering and males are required to dress modestly in the public. Excessive curbs on personal and social relations, entertainment, consumption of food and beverages and outfits are likely to depress international tourist arrivals. These requirements, however, vary across Islamic countries. Religious principles and practices are strictly enacted in certain states while others are more relaxed. Interpretations of religious strictures are not uniform, the variations within and between the countries have corresponded to different socio-cultural impacts (Hassan, 2005), but the societies as a whole tend to be conservative.

The image of the Muslim world as portrayed in the Western media often depicts Islamic societies negatively as oppressive, harsh, violent, and intolerant. “The portrayal of Muslim in the media has affected tourism around the world” (Timothy & Iverson, 2006, p. 201). Islam is often associated by outsiders with ultra-conservatism, terrorism, and oppression and anti-Western sentiment (Armstrong, 2002). A major setback which appeared lately among Muslims and Muslim countries is the growing association of Islam with terrorism. The events of September 11, 2001 and other terrorist attacks targeting tourists and tourist destinations have created doubt whether Islam perceives the tourism industry as having detrimental socio-cultural impacts on society. Among examples of terrorist attacks associated with Islam are those in Indonesia (Robinson & Meaton, 2005), Egypt (Aziz, 1995) and India (CNN, 2008). Some attacks specifically were targeted on tourists (Aziz, 1995; Grosspietsch, 2005). Despite these with terrorist attacks, Tiliouine & Belgoumidi (2009) warned that one should not have a stereotyped view that the strength of Islamic attachments or the degree of religious devotion among ordinary Muslims correlate with the likelihood of holding extremist political views. Aziz (1995) is also convinced that Islam has no direct hostility towards tourism; the locals are very much concerned by the potential threat posed by the industry in violating Islamic cultural values and traditions. According to Ritter (1975), there are a number of Islamic countries with high tourism potential are not interested in having non-Muslim visitors. Grosspietsch (2005) did not deny that certain tourist behaviours which go against religious values and traditions may cause some religious groups to act in a xenophobic way. This action can be a threat to tourism industry. Many Muslims are highly concerned about the immoral influence of tourism and this points out why the industry’s development is not a major priority in many Islamic nations (Baum & Conlin, 1997; Aziz, 1995; Mathieson & Wall, 1982). The political tensions between the West and some Muslim countries have also reinforced mutual suspicions, which may be

aggravated by media reporting. All these factors injure the development of the tourism industry in these countries. This indicates that tourism development in Islamic countries faces numerous challenges. The perceptions of outside world of Muslim countries also dampen its development.

3.6.6 The Role of Religion of Islam in Area of Research (Iran)

Islamic nations should not be viewed as homogenous. Although they have similar religious beliefs, the interpretation of Islam and the level of governmental intervention vary. Iran is a theocratic state where Islam is the dominant influence on life and it demands adherence to strict codes of conduct. As Iran is an Islamic institution, there is little division between the state and religion.

The Constitution of Iran declares that the official religion of Iran is Islam and the doctrine followed is Ja'fari (Twelver) Shi'ism⁹. During the Safavid period (1502-1736), Shiism was declared in Iran as the official religion. Before this period, Iran was dominated by Sunni although there was a minority Shiite presence in Qom and Isfahan. In 1979, the Islamic Revolution resulted in the overthrow of the Shah and the Islamic Republic was founded based on politicised Islam (Mackey & Harrop, 1998). The civil and criminal legal systems existing before the Islamic revolution (1979) were replaced by Islamic law. Hence, the legal system and the government reflect the values and the codes of Islam.

Religion has always played a key role in Iran's history, the ruling system of government and the people's attitudes. Over the years, almost every aspect of Iranian life has been

⁹ Shi'ism or Shia is the second largest denomination of the Islamic faith after Sunni Islam. Shi'a's Ja'fari (Twelver) people believe that after prophet Muhammad, Imam Ali (the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet) and his sons and grandsons are the imams of Moslems, and that the 12th imam (Mahdi(a.s.)) lives in the occult.

controlled by religion (Mehrabian, 2007; Praveen, 1999). At the same time, historically, modern Iran has its roots in ancient Persia and it is a combination of Persia and Islam. As stated by Willson (2007), religion takes a slant, a different shade of colour for each culture and for each tradition. Therefore, even though two different countries may have the same religion, the difference in cultures could produce different versions of Islam in terms of belief and practice. They also may have a different view on the perception of socio-cultural impacts of tourism.

In the Iranian society, the essence of religion is embedded in all aspects including the law, beliefs, culture, and norms. How one behaves and perceives is highly influenced by the degree of religiosity. Tourism is bound by this element and therefore this study intends to measure how religiosity influences the perception of social cultural impacts caused by tourism development as to date there is no study that has examined this relationship.

3.7 The Main Tourism Theoretical Perspectives

Few authors have created tourism development models and these models are designed to describe and explain the spatial organization of tourism activities in different contexts. Models are built and act as a source of working hypotheses for research. They can also be modified or reformulated depending upon the results (Oppermann et al., 1997). Doxey's (1975), Butler's (1980) and social exchange theory (Perdue et al., 1990 & Ap, 1992) are among the models that remain popular in determining the impacts of tourism and community responses.

Doxey's (Irridex) model (1975), based on what he found in Barbados and Majorca, suggested that as tourism develops in a destination, the attitude of local people towards

tourists changes along an irritation index that includes five stages: euphoria, apathy, irritation, antagonism and the final level as follows:

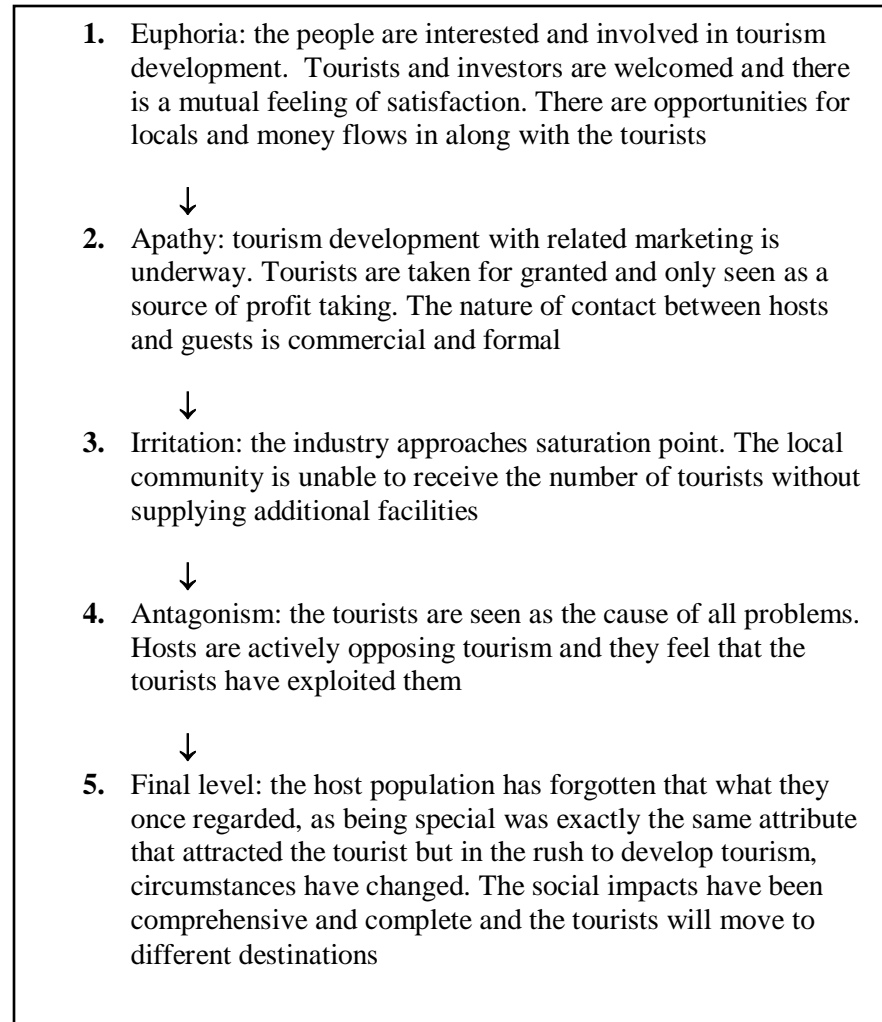


Figure 3.1: Doxey's Irritation Index

Doxey model suggests that, over time, as local communities become more hostile to visitors; the number of visitors will decline. However “regarded at the time as important and still seen as adding to understanding tourist-host interactions, Doxey’s Irridex was not based on detailed empirical research, but mainly on conjecture” (Mason, 2003, p. 23).

Butler's (1980) destination lifecycle model and notion of the evolution of a tourist area is probably among the most frequently cited and applied theories in tourism studies. He suggested a model in which a tourism destination develops over time. Butler argued that a destination evolves via the stages of exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, and stagnation, followed by either decline or rejuvenation. This model claims that social impacts emerge in the stages of consolidation and stagnation. The large numbers of visitors and the facilities provided for them can be expected to cause some opposition and discontent among permanent residents, since at the stagnation stage capacity levels for many variables would have been reached or exceeded with attendant environmental, social, and economic problems. The following is a detailed explanation of the stages in the model:

Exploration Stage: The resort is visited by a few adventurous tourists. Visitors are attracted to the resort by a natural physical feature, culture, and scale of the resort. The volumes of tourists are constrained by lack of access and facilities. There is a high degree of contact with local residents with very little social and economic impacts.

Involvement Stage: Local communities have to decide whether they wish to develop tourism. They also need to determine the type and scale of tourism development. Increasing visitation encourages some locals to offer facilities and basic services for tourists. A tourism destination and season emerges and advertising is initiated, which may encourage the public sector to provide infrastructure and institute controls. Contact with locals at this stage is still high and many adjust their social patterns to the changing economic conditions. At this point, it is important to establish appropriate organizations and decision-making processes for tourism. The involvement of the local community should ensure locally determined capacity limits are adhered to and that sustainable principles are introduced.

Development Stage: By this stage, large numbers of visitors are attracted to the destination and the number of visitors at peak periods far outweighs the size of the resident population. Accessibility is enhanced, advertising becomes more intensive and extensive, and more

elaborate and up-to-date ones displace local facilities. Artificial attractions, imported labor and auxiliary facilities and services become essential to support the rapid growth of tourism. The organization of tourism may change as control passes out of local hands and companies from outside the area move in to provide products and facilities. There is a resulting decrease in local control and participation and, in this way, if local decision-taking structures are weak, problems can occur. By this stage, travel arrangements are booked through the trade and hence, visitors become more dependent. The development stage is a critical stage as new facilities, and the changing nature of tourism can alter the very nature of the resort, and quality may decline through problems of over-use and deterioration of facilities.

Consolidation Stage: At this stage, tourism has become a major part of the local economy and is dominated by major chains and franchises. The rates of increase of visitors declines though the total number is still increasing and exceeds permanent residents. Marketing and advertising efforts are further widened to extend the tourism season and attract more visitors that are distant. Older facilities are now second rate and mostly undesirable. The resort is now a fully-fledged part of the tourism industry with an identifiable recreational business district.

Stagnation Stage: At this stage, peak numbers of tourists and capacity levels are reached. The resort has a well-established image, artificial attractions supersede the natural or cultural ones, and the destination is no longer fashionable, relying upon repeat visits from more conservative travelers. Surplus capacity exists. Resorts in this stage often have environmental, social, and economic problems and find that competition for visits is fierce and coming from a number of well-entrenched, mature resorts.

Decline (first part of stage six): Tourists are drawn away by newer destinations; those remaining are mostly weekend or single day visitors. Non-tourism establishments replace tourism facilities as the area disengages from the industry. Local involvement probably increases again as the price of facilities drops along with the market decline.

Rejuvenation (second part of stage six): A dramatic change in the resource base is established. Destination managers may decide to rejuvenate or re-launch the destination by

looking at new markets, or developing the products such as creating a new set of artificial attractions, business, casino, conference, or special interest tourism. The previously unexploited natural resources could be also utilized. Rejuvenation strategies are difficult to implement as managers are dealing with the built fabric of tourist destinations rather than with a consumer product.

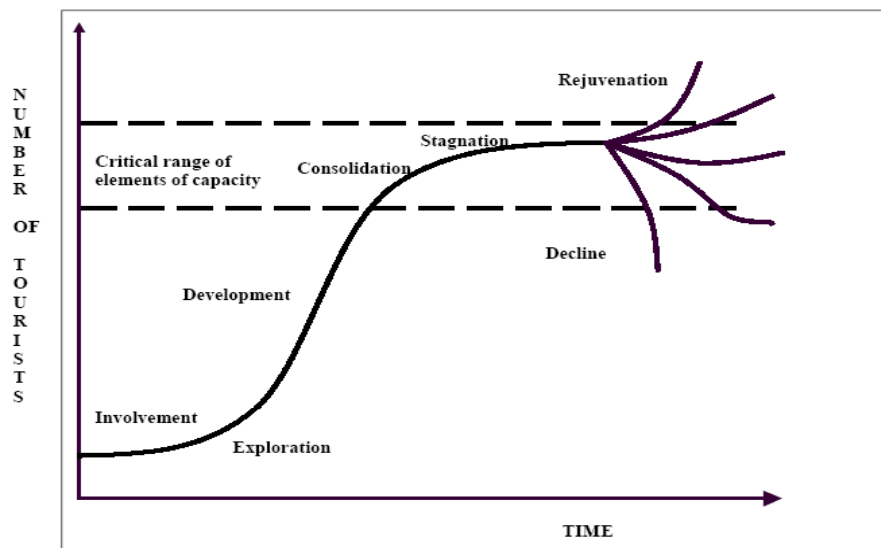


Figure 3.2: Butler's Tourism Destination Lifecycle Model

Butler developed a stage-related model, but focused more on the general issue of the evolution of tourism areas. This model considered the attitudes of residents and community support for the industry as part of wider issues of development. It also suggests that each stage of the cycle has implications for tourist numbers and types, level and nature of contact between hosts and guests, the degree of change in the destination and finally who is in control of the local tourism industry.

Butler believed that as the destination develops, problems arise in relation to the fact the outsiders begin to take control of the local tourism industry, and contact between locals and

visitors becomes more formal and institutionalized. At the same time, the tourist area lifecycle also shows that resorts can decline which is a threat to the idea of sustainability because it leads to reduced income and less employment, under-used infrastructure or even derelict buildings and the demoralization of the local population. Butler's model remains popular for placing tourism destination development into a theoretical model, probably the single most important theory in tourism contributing to planning and management.

However, there are also critical views of life cycle models. One argument against the destination life-cycle models as well as the standard product life-cycle model is that the evolutionary pattern is not inevitably or even frequently going to follow a biological pattern of birth, growth, decline, and death. In a basic product life cycle, the product remains unchanged while marketing efforts and strategies are adapted to each stage. If a product were to be changed, the cycle would begin anew. With a tourism attraction, however, the product (the destination) undergoes an evolutionary process of continual change in response to changes in demand and supply. This would suggest that any pattern is possible (Choy, 1992). Furthermore, life cycle can also be affected by social, economic, or political changes. Political terrorism can also be a factor that in recent years has seriously diminished the popularity for tourists of many countries and destinations in the area affected (Aziz, 1995).

The other theory which has become recognized as the most appropriate one for developing and understanding the perceptions and attitudes due to tourism is the social exchange theory. This theory provides a model for explaining the relationship between individual benefits and perceptions of economic development. The use of the social exchange paradigm for predicting residents' attitudes is proposed by Perdue et al. (1990) and Ap

(1992) who posited that this theory offers explanations of both positive and negative perceptions, and can examine relationships at the individual and collective level. This theory is an attempt to adopt a theoretical orientation. According to this theory, the perceived value of the outcome is the single most important determinant underlying the residents' perception of and attitudes towards tourism (Ap, 1990 & 1992; Perdue et al., 1990; Madrigal, 1995; Jurowski et al., 1997; Yoon et al., 1999; McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Andereck et al., 2005; Kuvan & Akan, 2005).

In fact social exchange theory suggests that residents are likely to support development as long as they believe that the expected benefits exceed the costs. However, social exchange theory relies not just on the existence of an exchange, but the relative perceived fairness of that exchange. There has been mixed support for social exchange theory in the tourism literature. Some studies have found support for it while others have not been conclusive (Jurowski et al., 1997; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997; Gursoy et al., 2002; McGehee & Andereck, 2004). The role of tourism development models in the interpretation of tourism impacts cannot be ignored, and these models also could be improved on or evaluated by other researchers. It could be used in interpreting the impacts of tourism and community responses.

3.8 SUMMARY

This chapter defined the study's constructs that were derived from previous empirical and theoretical studies. The first section of this chapter presented the relevant literature on socio-cultural impacts of tourism. The local community's perception of tourism can provide insights into the nature and degree of tourism impacts of a tourist destination. With that, both positive and negative impacts of tourism were identified and discussed. The second

section examined the characteristics of tourism development and the review indicated that stage, scale, and type of tourism development could be a major influence on the magnitude and direction of change in a country's tourism destination. Several studies reported that any analysis of tourism impacts is a function of host community's interaction that has direct and indirect associations with tourists. Therefore, different aspects of tourist-host encounters and host attitudes toward tourist are discussed in the third section. The finding of how the host-tourist interactions could affect the perception of tourism is one of the present study's interests. The following section reviewed the relationship between residents' socio-demographic characteristics (i.e. age, gender, marital status, education, income, job related to tourism, community attachment, and birthplace) and their perceptions of tourism impacts. This study intends to explore these factors as some studies concluded that demographic profile could affect individual behaviors' directly and indirectly.

The fifth section examined the affect of religiosity on perception of tourism impacts. Religion concept is linked to a variety of issues in the tourism literature. The literature pointed out that religion influences the ideals of life, which in turn are reflected in the values and attitudes of societies and individuals. Hence, the significance of religion and its dimensions have been discussed in detail. The Islamic beliefs, practical laws, and ethical issues have also been addressed as this current study took place in an Islamic country. In addition, this study also investigates the connections of Islam and tourism as well as the role of religion in Iranian society. It is expected that religiosity and degree of piety will influence one's perception on tourism development. In final section, the significant of the various tourism development models in interpreting the socio-cultural impacts of tourism are laid out. The following chapter (Chapter Four) provides a summary of the framework and the proposed research hypotheses.

Chapter Four

MODEL & HYPOTHESES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review presented in Chapter III has set the background for the development of the framework and hypotheses for the present study. In this chapter, theoretical and empirical justifications for specific relationships among the variables will be presented together with the hypotheses.

4.2 BACKGROUND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRAMEWORK

This study develops a theoretical model for the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by residents which is drawn from empirical studies and research as well as concepts and theories. The model is presented in Figure 4.1. The structural model indicates the directions of the causes and effects in the interplay of factors relating to tourism development characteristics, host-tourist interactions, host profiles and religious orientations and the socio-cultural impacts as perceived by the hosts. In particular, the socio-cultural impacts perceived by the hosts are affected directly by the interplay of the above factors. Thus, the investigation of the structural relationships among the proposed constructs is a major focus of this study.

It should be noted that tourism issues are generally multi-faced. The social and cultural characteristics of society are also continuously influenced by the political, economic, technological, social, cultural, natural and environmental aspects. The problem of separating the impacts of tourism from these influences is still unresolved (Pearce, 1989; Crandall, 1987; Crick, 1996). Consequently, this research deals only with socio-cultural impacts of tourism development as perceived by the residents.

Based on the above framework, several hypotheses have been developed to test the effects of the independent variables, namely tourism development characteristics, host-tourist interactions, host's profile, and religiosity on the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by the local community, which is the dependent variable. With the exception of the demographic profiles, all the independent variables in this study are exploratory in nature as many socio-cultural studies are specific to a particular destination.

4.3. LEVEL OF SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACTS

Socio-cultural impacts constitute the greatest number of observed impacts resulting from tourism as perceived by residents (Crompton & Ap, 1994). Studies on socio-cultural impacts have listed many possible negative and positive impacts that could be derived from the tourism industry. While various empirical studies report the overall positive attitudes of host community residents, socio-cultural factors may not always be as positive. The models developed by Doxey (1975) and Butler (1980) recognized the increasing intensity of socio-cultural impacts as the stages of development progress. Therefore, it is expected that a highly developed tourist destination will most likely result in less favourable attitudes among the local residents. Residents in a destination where the development is still in its early stages will express more positive perceptions of tourism (Doxey, 1975; Butler, 1980; Ryan et al., 1998; Page, 2001). Both Masooleh and Sar'een are considered as in their early stages of tourism development. Therefore, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H1: Socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by residents are positive.

4.4 THE EFFECTS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Allen et al. (1988) argued that residents' attitudes towards tourism may be directly related to the degree or stage of development. Doxey (1975), Butler (1980), Smith (1989), and Page (2001) stated that the speed and nature of development could be a major influence on the magnitude and direction of the socio-cultural changes in the local community. Rapid and intensive tourism development results in less favorable impacts than organic and small-scale development (De Kadt, 1979; Getz, 1983; Krippendorf, 1987; Peck & Lepie, 1989; Pearce, 1989; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Kreag, 2001).

Destinations at an early stage of tourism development with a low tourist ratio and domestic visitor orientation might be expected to elicit a more positive community response (Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997). Allen et al. (1993), in their study, found that resident attitudes towards tourism development in communities with both high economic and tourism development and low economic and tourism development were more positive than those residents of the low/high or high/low economic and tourism development communities.

According to Jurowski and Gursoy (2004), many communities encourage the development of tourism as a means of improving the quality of life. The acceptability of these changes is likely to be influenced by perceptions of the benefits that residents will gain in exchange for the disadvantages they experience.

It is important to involve communities in the general planning policy of tourism to reinforce the positive impacts and mitigate the negative impacts. This will enable the residents to understand tourism, allow them to participate in the decision-making, and

receive benefits from the industry (McIntyre et al., 1993; Kavallinis & Pizam, 1994). Therefore, for successful tourism development to take place, the involvement and the participation of the residents in the destination areas are vital (Costa & Ferrone, 1995).

Moreover, understanding the determinants of support by local residents for tourism development is crucial for local governments, policy makers and businesses because the success and sustainability of any development depend on the active support of the local population. The importance of local community support has also been widely recognized and thus has been a growing area of research (Akis et al., 1996; Jurowski et al., 1997; Garrod & Fyall, 1998; Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001; Gursoy et al., 2002; Gursoy et al., 2004). Based on the conceptual and empirical information from the literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Tourism development characteristics have significant relationships with the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people.

4.5 THE EFFECTS OF HOST-TOURIST INTERACTION

Tourism is about people and how they interact with other people, engage in experiences that may influence their own or the host community attitudes, expectations, opinions, and lifestyles. For thousands of years, human beings have travelled in order to get to know other places and cultures. This intercultural exchange has contributed to the enrichment of civilizations.

Tourism constitutes a mechanism that makes people-to-people encounters possible. This, in return, can foster an understanding of the differences among societies. Tourism enables

people to establish bonds of friendship who would otherwise continue to view each other with wariness and mistrust (UNWTO, 2007d). Sutton (1967) stated that tourist-host relationships are determined by the characteristics of the interacting groups or individuals and the conditions under which contact takes place.

Smith (1995) noted that the socio-cultural impacts of tourism result from the interaction between 'hosts' and 'guests', or tourists and local people. Likewise, Mathieson and Wall (1982) stated that the socio-cultural impacts are the effects on the host communities of their direct and indirect associations with tourists. The same authors pointed out that direct contact is not necessary for impacts to occur as even the mere sight of tourists and their behaviour may induce behavioural changes on the part of permanent residents.

Din (1989) suggested that host-tourist relations could be friendly when both are sensitive to one another's feelings and needs. Williams (1998) commented that cultural similarity or dissimilarity between the host and guest is one of the contributing factors in shaping socio-cultural impacts. Impacts tend to be greater between the host and the guest when they are far apart culturally and geographically while the socio-cultural impacts will be limited if the tourists and the hosts share the same culture.

Tourism, if developed and managed well with proper preparation of both tourists and host communities, serves to reduce the distances that separate people and bring their points of view closer. Tourism development may also create social conflicts at the tourist destinations due to the socio-cultural, economic welfare, and purchasing power gaps between the host community and the tourists (Tosun, 2002).

Hence, in line with the above literature, it is anticipated that:

H3: Host-tourist interactions have significant relationships with the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people.

4.6 THE EFFECTS OF SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

A number of studies have explored the relationships between residents' socio-demographic characteristics and their perceptions of the impacts of tourism. According to Bastias-Perez and Var (1995), community support can be attained by understanding a host's characteristics (such as age, acquired educational levels, previous employment in the tourism industry, whether they are native born, levels of income and whether they derive income from tourism-related jobs) and linking these to negative or positive attitudes towards tourism.

Haralembopoulus and Pizam (1996) stated that some socio-demographic characteristics play an important role in understanding significant perceptual differences between groups of respondents. The most crucial and explanatory of these characteristics were occupational status, years of living in the area, number of minors in the family, size of household, education, income and employment of one or more family members in tourism.

According to Brunt and Courtney (1999), younger residents seem to perceive more positive behaviour changes compared to older residents. The significance of age in influencing the residents' attitudes towards tourism development is also found to be a factor in the studies carried out by Lankford and Howard (1994) in the Columbia River Gorge and Bastias-Perez and Var (1995) in their study which took place in Darwin, Australia.

The study conducted by Hernandez et al. (1996) found that respondents with less than high school education expressed less favourable attitudes towards a proposed resort than those with higher education. This may be explained by the lower employability among the less educated respondents which translates into lower personal benefit. Teye et al. (2002) found that with an increase in educational levels, there is an improvement in social interaction with tourists and that the socio-cultural impacts are viewed more positively.

Birthplace can also influence attitudes towards tourism development (Brougham & Butler, 1981; Um & Crompton, 1987; Davis et al., 1988; Brunt & Curtney, 1999). Davis et al. (1988) discovered that residents who are natives tend to view tourism more positively than newcomers to the community. Lankford and Howard (1994) reported a significant relationship between community attachment and perceptions of tourism. McCool and Martin (1994) noted that a greater sense of belonging to a country is correlated with higher ratings of both the positive and negative impacts of tourism. The findings of the study conducted by Bradford (1994) indicated that perceptions of the impacts of tourism are effected by length of residence. Some studies have also demonstrated that the evaluation of costs and benefits varies according to socio-demographic characteristics (Ritchie, 1988; Williams & Lawson, 2001). Based on these findings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Host's socio- demographic profiles are significantly different in their perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by the local people.

4.7 THE EFFECTS OF RELIGIOSITY

Religion, being an aspect of culture, has a considerable influence on people's values, habits, and attitudes. Religion guides traditions, rites, morals, and values. It also identifies 'right' from 'wrong' and has been regarded as the central social cement binding individuals and social groups together in an integrative value system (Nordas, 2005). There are numerous examples in the literature that suggest religion is a fundamental element of our culture and is linked to many aspects of our life and behaviour (Krausz, 1972; Lupfer & Wald, 1985; Wilkes et al., 1986; McDaniel & Burnett, 1990; Lupfer et al., 1992; Bailey & Sood, 1993; Walter, 2002). Delener (1994) stated that religiosity is an important value that can influence an individual's behaviour and perceptions. According to Batson et al. (1993), religiosity measures can focus on either religious involvement and behaviour or on religious attitudes and orientations. Religion thus affects the way people behave (Sadler, 1970) and this also applies to tourism.

Teye et al. (2002) analyzed the impacts of the cultural differences between tourists and hosts linked to religion. They indicated that when people are members of a community organization such as social and religious organizations, their attitudes towards social interaction with tourists become less positive.

Although religion and religiosity are well-known factors that influence behaviour in different social settings, very little research explores the links between them. Even host attitudes regarding tourism development and its impacts are not investigated by many researchers either. However, it is evident that religion has links with tourism in terms of consumer (tourist) and supplier (host) behaviour as well as the relationship between them (Poria et al., 2003).

In most Muslim countries, Islam is not just a religion and a separate entity from everyday life; it is deeply intertwined with people's lives and culture. It controls the way of life of Muslim society, especially relating to family, dress, cleanliness, and ethics (Aziz, 1995; Bhardwaj, 1998; Fam et al., 2004). Islamic political, economic, legal, and social policies affect many aspects of believers' lives, including travel and tourism in Muslim countries (Huntington, 1996; Timothy & Iverson, 2006). Many Muslims are also greatly concerned about the immoral influence of tourism (Aziz, 1995, Baum & Conlin, 1997). To examine the extent to which such religious feelings affect local community perceptions of tourism, it is hypothesized that:

H5: Religiosity has a significant relationship with the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by the local people.

The literature that focuses on the relationship between religion and behaviour has confirmed that the level of religiosity strongly influences an individual's emotional experience, thinking, behaviour and psychological well-being (Witter et al., 1985; McDaniel & Burnett, 1990; Chamberlain & Zika, 1992; Sood & Nasu, 1995; Myers, 2000; Diener & Seligman, 2002).

Other studies found that older adults with high values gained from their religious beliefs and behaviour have higher levels of life satisfaction, self-esteem, and optimism (Krause, 2003).

Therefore, to find out whether the level of religious devotion affects an individual's perception of tourism, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: The perception of socio- cultural impacts of tourism varies according to the degree of religiosity.

4.8 THE MOST INFLUENTIAL DIMENSION AND ITS AFFECTS

There are certain key factors contributing to the nature and direction of the impacts of tourism. Besculides et al. (2002) suggested that the contribution of tourism to social and cultural change could be grouped into tourism development and tourist-host interaction and culture, where each allows for specific impacts. Allen et al. (1988) claimed that residents' attitudes towards tourism are directly related to the degree or stage of development. As a destination develops, problems arise in relation to the fact that contact between locals and visitors becomes more formal and institutionalized and the attitude of local people towards tourists will change. Wall (1997) identified the type of tourism activities, the characteristics of the host community in the destination region and the nature of the interaction between visitors and residents that may affect the tourism destination. Hence, the host-tourist encounter could have an important role in determining the direction of socio-cultural impacts in the community.

Ratz (2000) suggested that changes in the host community's quality of life are influenced by two major factors: the tourist-host relationship and the development of the industry itself. The extent of the difference in socio-cultural characteristics between hosts and guests can also determine the magnitude of the socio-cultural impacts associated with tourism development (Sharpley, 1994). From the above literature, it could be assumed that host-

tourist interaction is the most important factor influencing the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by the local community. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H7: The Host-tourist interaction is the most influential dimension of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people.

4.9 SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the theoretical framework of the study, followed by a discussion of the hypotheses to be tested and their development. It began with the proposed research framework of the antecedents and the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people as the dependent variable. The remaining sections focused on the development of the six main research hypotheses. Based on the extensive literature review covered in Chapter three and this chapter, there is evidence to show that all the independent variables (tourism development characteristics, host-tourist interaction, host socio-demographic profiles, and religiosity) have a significant relationship or differences in the perception of socio-cultural impacts of tourism. The outline of the research design and the methodology used is presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Five

METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research methodology employed and it is divided into various sections namely methods of data collection, research design, measurement of variables and the analytical procedures used in the study.

5.2 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION USED IN THE STUDY

This research was undertaken using an integrative approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods (Berno, 1999; Tosun, 2006). Quantitative research is undertaken when the research is primarily explanatory and mainly concerned with discovering general patterns and distinguishing features of population perception (Weaver & Lawton, 2001; Fallon & Kriwoken, 2003; Mbaiwa, 2004).

Quantitative research is also widely recognized in the literature. The main advantage of a quantitative approach is that it can measure the reactions of a great number of people to a limited set of questions, which facilitates comparison and statistical aggregation of the data (Haley et al., 2005; Preece, 1994). In the tourism field, impacts are commonly measured quantitatively to investigate residents' perception and attitudes (Deery et al., 2005).

However, it is evident that it is not always possible to obtain information from respondents by fully structured or formal methods. People may be unwilling or unable to answer certain questions. Hence, the researcher may use semi-structured personal interviews with officials and members of the public as a complementary method during the data collection. Thus in this study, quantitative approaches were used as the main research method and qualitative research as a complementary method.

5.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

5.3.1 Survey Instrument

The research instrument is an eight page structured questionnaire and most of the questions are closed response. The questionnaire was designed according to the objectives of the study. The content was based on previously validated conceptual research on perceived socio-cultural impacts of tourism (see section 3.2) and researcher's personal experiences. The effect of respondents' religiosity level on their perceptions is also included in the questionnaire as a new construct that has not been considered in previous studies.

There are five sections in the questionnaire: tourism development, host-tourist interaction, religiosity, socio-cultural impacts, and socio-demographic characteristics (see Appendix D). There are 74 questions in the first four sections of the questionnaire and 15 questions in the last section (see Appendix D for more details). A 5-point Likert type scale (Strongly disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Neither agree /Nor disagree (Neutral) = 3; Agree = 4 and Strongly agree = 5) was utilized in order to measure the constructs. This measurement was recommended by Maddox (1985) for tourism impact research due to its superior validity.

The first section was designed to examine the residents' general opinions concerning tourism characteristics such as the level, nature, and speed of tourism development in their destination. This was followed by questions about the level of the local community's involvement in the tourism industry. In the second section, respondents were asked about their interrelationship with the tourists. The third section revolves around locals' attitudes towards the diverse positive and negative socio-cultural impact caused by tourism development in their region. Questions on religious beliefs and practices were placed in the last section, as it was a sensitive issue to be asked to the local community.

In the socio-demographic section, the questions were in the form of dichotomous, multiple choice (single-response) scale, and open-ended. In this section, among the items examined were age, gender, marital status, place of birth, length of residency, education, income, occupation, tourism-related job, interaction with local/international tourists and overall level of religious devotion. This was followed with a series of questions, which were designed to measure the respondents' degree of awareness about the region's tourist attractions and their overall satisfaction about tourism development. The questionnaire was concluded by an open-ended question in which the respondents were asked about their general opinions concerning the subject of the research.

The questionnaire was translated into the Persian (Farsi) language (see Appendix E) using the back-to-back translation method as suggested by Greco et al. (1987) and Guillemin et al. (1993). This was considered necessary bearing in mind the level of educational achievement of the population in the areas of research. Subsequently a revised questionnaire was circulated to the tourism and Persian literature experts for feedback concerning understanding, phrasing, and design. From the feedback gathered, the questionnaire was revised accordingly.

5.3.2 Sampling Technique

Special attention was given by the researcher to select the research destination based on the researcher's familiarity with the destinations and her working experience in Iran's tourism industry. Community size is important in relation to the degree of reactions to tourism development (Capenerhurst, 1994; Pearce et al., 1996; Mason & Cheyne, 2000). In smaller communities, tourism development impacts appear to be more visible and the locals have stronger views with regard to any development that takes place (Pearce et al., 1996).

Several factors were taken into consideration when selecting the areas of research. First, the two destinations are relatively small with tourist attractions concentrated within the vicinity. Second, both are visited by a high number of tourists (both domestic and international tourists) and finally, the destinations have distinct patterns of seasonality. All these factors may affect the perceptions of socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Consequently, two destinations in the north and north-west of Iran (Masooleh and Sare'in) were selected as the sample of this study. It has to be noted that only two destinations were selected due to temporal and financial constraints.

5.3.3 Sample Size

In general, there is no correct sample size in the absolute sense, but larger samples are always preferable. In order to secure an adequate sample for this study, it was essential to know the exact size of the population in both geographical areas of research. Obtaining the information on the exact size of population is difficult because the countrywide census is only performed every 10 years. The new population census was just about to start and the available data is dated 10 years back. For the purpose of this study, the most recent data was obtained from the Ministry of Health.

According to Neuman (2000) for a population under 1,000, a researcher should sample 30% of the population. For a population over 1,000 researchers should sample a minimum of 10% of the population. According to Cooper and Schindler (2003), larger sample should be selected in order to obtain greater desired precision and a higher level of confidence in the estimate. A larger sample size will more accurately represent the population (Gravetter et al., 2006). The sample for study included permanent residents who were at least 18 years old and who live within the township areas in two destinations stated above. Recognizing

that seasonality of residence might influence the responses, only permanent residents in the community were considered (Andriotis, 2002). In this study, permanent residency refers to people who live and work in the area of research for a minimum length of five years.

There were 198 households in Masooleh. Taking an estimate of three adult per-household, it was estimated that there were 594 adults in the township. As stated earlier, for a total population of 1,000, 30% of them should be sampled to yield a representation (Neuman, 2000). Therefore the minimum sample for Masooleh should be 178. Due to the small sizes of the townships, and to minimize statistical errors (Black, 2009), all houses in the area were visited. Even though Sare'in population was estimated to be 4,500 people, for the conformity with Masooleh, only 198 houses nearest to the thermal hydro-complex were visited. The thermal hydro-complex is located in heart of Sare'in and considered as center of tourist area. This area has more distinct evidence of tourism development and with that, the perception of impact of tourism could be examined more evidently. For each destination, a total of 400 questionnaires were distributed. A total of 250 usable questionnaires were returned from respective study areas. For each area, the response rate was calculated to be 62.8%. The high response rate recorded in this study could be the result of researchers' effort visiting each house and following it up. This method has been shown to have a better response rate (Andereck & Nickerson, 1997) as the respondents are more willing to answer when there is a face-to-face communication.

5.3.4 Data Collection Technique

An introduction letter from Iran Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization's (ICHHTO) Research Department assisted the researcher to conduct data collection in the two study areas. The letter legitimized the research proceedings and such

official approval was necessary given the prevailing socio-political environment in Iran. Iran Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO) officers in Ardabil and Masooleh were unable to provide assistance to the researcher due to administrative regulations as this research is carried out by an outsider.

A survey questionnaire was used to collect data. As stated earlier, a total of 800 questionnaires translated into Persian were hand delivered. Two volunteer research assistants (one from Masooleh and one from Sare'in) who were familiar with the local dialect accompanied the researcher. The communication barriers were overcome by the presence of the research assistants. They also helped to inspire trust and confidence amongst respondents. The researcher preferred to be involved personally in order to exercise control and prevent any possible difficulties as this research could not easily be repeated without considerable resources in terms of time, energy and money.

The respondents were selected based on their willingness to participate. Within one household, a minimum of two adults (preferably one man and one woman) were requested to answer the questionnaire. Should they refuse the request, they were asked to suggest who else could answer the questionnaire. In most cases, the questionnaires were self-administered and residents completed the questionnaires themselves. However, the researcher also helped some of the respondents in filling out the questionnaires, especially when the respondent's literacy was limited. The respondents were given up to three days to fill out the questionnaires. During the questionnaire collection, the researcher scrutinized the incomplete answers on the spot. They were immediately clarified with the respondents. However, sensitive questions such as income were often left unanswered.

Finally, a total of 500 questionnaires were completed by respondents. In addition, field observations and semi-structured personal interviews were conducted with the local community members and local representatives of the tourism industry in order to gain deeper insights. Data collection was carried out during the months of September to November in 2006.

5.4 MEASUREMENT OF VARIABLES

This section details the scales and items that were employed in the measurement of the research constructs. All of the items in the first four sections were exploratory in nature and derived from related previous published researches. For each item, the respondents were asked to rate their responses to the statements on a five point Likert Scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. All the questions were positively worded. Section five of the questionnaire consists of socio-demographic profiles and general information. The questionnaire ended with an open-ended question so that the respondents would be able to provide any further opinions on related issues (Oppenheim, 1992).

5.4.1 Tourism's Socio-Cultural Impacts

In this section, the respondents were asked to express their view regarding positive and negative impacts of tourism development in their community based on 24 statements (see Table 5.1). Among the positive impacts are better recreational opportunities, better maintenance of public facilities, increased quality of life, peace and tranquility of the area, provision of public health services, infrastructure development, job opportunities, a variety of cultural activities and an improvement in educational opportunities.

In addition, the statements on maintaining traditional ways of life, improving destination image, preserving cultural identity, cultural exchange, preserving religious practices, maintenance of historical sites and improving the socio-economic status of women were also included. On the other hand, the negative impacts consisted of littering, an increase in crime, pick pocketing and robbery, prostitution, drug addiction and trafficking, alcohol consumption and vandalism.

Table 5.1: Items Used for the Measurement of Tourism Socio-Cultural Impacts

Item	Sources
1- Tourism development provides a better recreational opportunity for local residents	Andereck et al., 2005; Haley et al., 2005; Allen et al., 1993; Akis et al., 1996; Jones et al., 2000; Lankford, 1994; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Jurowski & Gurosy, 2004; Madrigal, 1995
2- Tourism development improves the positive image of the community	Turco, 1998; Andereck et al., 2005; Besculides et al., 2002; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996
3- Tourism stimulates a better maintenance of public facilities	Teye et al., 2002; Akis et al., 1996; Andereck & Vogt, 2000
4- Tourism development increases the quality of life among local people	Sharpley, 1994; Haley et al., 2005; Ryan et al., 1998; Allen et al., 1993; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Besculides et al., 2002; Madrigal, 1993; Lankford, 1994; Mok et al., 1991
5- Tourism development maintains my traditional way of life	Besculides et al., 2002; Teye et al., 2002; Andereck et al., 2005; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Besculides et al., 2002
6- Tourism helps to preserve the cultural identity of my community	Teye et al., 2002; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Jones et al., 2000
7- Tourism does not disrupt the peace and tranquility of this area	Andereck et al., 2005; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997
8- Tourism stimulates cultural exchange	Teye et al., 2002; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Mok et al., 1991
9- Tourism does not contribute to the increase of crime in this area	Haley et al., 2005; Long et al., 1990; Ryan et al., 1998; Allen et al., 1993; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Jones et al., 2000; Mason & Cheyne, 2000; Lankford, 1994; Mok et al., 1991; Madrigal, 1995 & 1993; Besculides et al., 2002; Jurowski & Gurosy, 2004; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996
10- Tourism improves the provision of public health services	Hashimoto, 2002; Brunt & Courtney, 1999
11- Tourism development does not affect the religious practices of local people	Sharpley, 1994
12- Tourism stimulates local infrastructural development	Sharpley, 1994; Andriotis, 2002; Jones et al., 2000; Besculides et al., 2002

‘Table 5.1, continued’.

13- Tourism stimulates the maintenance of historical sites	Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Akis et al., 1996; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Besculides et al., 2002
14- Tourism improves women’s socio-economic situation	Urry, 1991; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996
15- Littering does not get worse in this region because of tourism	Haley et al., 2005; Lankford, 1994; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Madrigal, 1995 & 1993
16- Tourism does not increase the amount of pick-pocketing and robbery in this area	Upchurch & Teivane, 2000
17- Tourism creates better job opportunities for local people	Andereck et al., 2005; Sharpley, 1994; Haley et al., 2005; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Teye et al., 2002; Ryan et al., 1998; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Jones et al., 2000; Lankford, 1994; Um & Crompton, 1987; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Besculides et al., 2002; Madrigal, 1995
18- Tourism encourages a variety of cultural activities among local residents	Andereck & Vogt, 2000
19- Tourism does not increase drug addiction and trafficking among local people	Upchurch & Teivane, 2000; Mok et al., 1991; Besculides et al., 2002; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996
20- Tourism improves the educational level of local people	Andereck & Vogt, 2000
21- Tourism does not increase vandalism in this area	Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Besculides et al., 2002; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996
22- Tourism development makes local people more satisfied with their living in this area	Turco, 1998
23- Tourism does not increase alcohol consumption in this area	Upchurch & Teivane, 2000; Besculides et al., 2002
24- Tourism does not increase prostitution in this area	Teye et al., 2002; Upchurch & Teivane, 2000; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996

5.4.2 Tourism Development Characteristics

This section contained 16 questions, which are designed to assess the residents' general opinions concerning the characteristics of tourism development (see Table 5.2). The respondents were asked to evaluate tourism planning, management and promotion by the public sector through six items (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9). The pace of tourism development was asked in question six. Statement 8, 11, 12, 13 and 14 ask participants about the degree of local involvement. The local community support for tourism development was asked about in three items (7, 10 and 15).

Table 5.2: Items Used for the Measurement of Tourism Development Characteristics

Items	Sources
1- The public sector gives a lot of attention to promote tourism in this area	Andereck & Vogt, 2000
2- Tourism public authorities plan and manage tourism development well in my area	Allen et al., 1993; Davis et al., 1988; Andriotis, 2002
3-Tourism is well promoted during the off-season	Baum & Lundtrop, 2001; Butler, 1994
4- Tourism is a major contributing factor to the development of this area	Getz, 1992
5- The regional tourism authorities do an excellent job in making the right decisions for this area	Ryan et al., 1998
6- Tourism in this area develops very rapidly	Ryan et al., 1998
7- Most people I know are in favor of tourism development	Lankford, 1994; Andereck & Vogt, 2000
8- The host community is actively involved in tourism planning and management	Kavallinis & Pizam, 1994
9- Tourism destination marketing and advertising, are managed well in this area	Ryan et al., 1998; Davis et al., 1988; Andriotis, 2002 & 2005
10- I fully support the future development of tourism infrastructures and facilities in my area	Ryan et al., 1998
11- In this region, local people control the development of tourism industry	Swarbrooke, 1999; Fitton, 1996
12- The majority of people who work in public authorities are local people	Andereck et al., 2005
13- Most tourism investment in this area is by people	Getz, 1992
14- Public authorities always consult local people in tourism development processes in this area	Ryan et al., 1998
15- Further tourism development in this area would always be supported by local people	Lankford, 1994; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Jurowski & Gurosy, 2004, Haley et al., 2005
16- In this area the tourism rules and regulations do not need to be revised frequently	Davis et al., 1988

5.4.3 Host-Tourist Interaction

The items on the level of host-tourist interaction consist of 17 questions (see Table 5.3). Eleven items (1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 14) assessed the respondents' general attitudes/opinions toward tourists. Data on tourist preferences was collected using three items (2, 7, and 13). Finally, the attitudes of tourists toward hosts, as conceived by the local community were measured by item 15, 16, and 17.

Table 5.3: Items Used for the Measurement of Host-Tourist Interaction

Item	Sources
1- Generally, tourists that I have met in this area have little consideration for local people	Ryan et al., 1998
2 - I prefer local tourists to international tourists	Thyne et al., 2006
3 - I have developed friendships with some tourists	Teye et al., 2002
4 - There are things that I cannot do in this area at certain times just because of the tourists	Ryan et al., 1998
5 - I would like to meet tourists from as many countries as possible in order to learn about their culture	Teye et al., 2002; Akis et al., 1996
6 - I can extend my cultural experiences when I talk to the tourists	Andereck et al., 2005; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004
7 - I prefer only Muslim tourists in this area	Shoup, 1985
8 - Sometimes there is resentment between local people and tourists when they come into contact	Brunt & Courtney, 1999
9 - I prefer tourists to stay longer in this region	Davis et al., 1988
10 - I enjoy interacting with tourists	Teye et al., 2002
11 - I think that attracting more tourists to this area is a good idea	Haley et al., 2005; Long et al., 1990; Ryan et al., 1998; Allen et al., 1993; Perdue et al., 1987
12 - When tourists are in my area, I am happy	Teye et al., 2002
13 - I prefer tourists on packaged tours to individual tourists.	Author
14 - I am always very friendly to the tourists	Author
15 - The majority of tourists are interested in my culture	Besculides et al., 2002
16 - The majority of tourists respect our culture	Andereck et al., 2005
17- The tourists who visits this region respect our rules and regulations	Author

5.4.4 Religiosity

Seventeen questions revolve around the level of their religious beliefs and religious practices (see Table 5.4). Respondents were asked about their belief in the existence of Allah and prophet hood of Muhammad (saw)¹⁰ and their overall devotion. As Islam is a ritual-rich religion, Muslims are required to perform specific rituals as religious duty or as an expression of their faith.

Adherence to the religious rituals commonly performed by Muslims was used to ascertain the degree of devotion in this study. All Muslims adults are required to perform prayers five times a day as a part of their religious duty. They are also required to pay zakat (tax for the poor) and fast in the month of Ramadan. Muslims are also expected to read the Holy Quran since it is the most important sacred text of Islam. Muslims are obligated to perform Friday prayers and they are also encouraged to carry out their daily prayers in the mosques. In some Muslim countries, women are required to wear a head covering, or *hejab*. Besides all the above stated items, supplication and charity were also included in the religiosity construct. The items chosen in this section were mainly based on the Holy Quran, Hadith and previous studies (Stark & Glock, 1968; Wilde & Joseph, 1997; Hassan, 2005) (See Table 5.4).

¹⁰ SAW represents the Arabic phrase *salla Allah alaihi wa sallam*, meaning "may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him." It is a standard Muslim expression of love and respect for the Prophet Mohammed.

Table 5.4: Items Used for the Measurement of Islamic Religiosity

Items	Sources
1- I strongly believe in God	Hassan, 2005; Stark & Glock, 1968; Wilde & Joseph, 1997
2- I read the Quran regularly	Hassan, 2005; Stark & Glock, 1968
3- I believe that Allah helps me	Hassan, 2005; Stark & Glock, 1968; Wilde & Joseph, 1997
4- I pray five times a day	Wilde & Joseph, 1997
5- I perform the obligation of zakat maal (asset/income) annually	<i>Quran</i> : 9 (103), 8 (3 & 4), 3 (92), 9 (34 & 35), 7 (156); Hassan, 2005
6- I always conduct my prayer on time	Author
7- The supplication (dua') helps me	Wilde & Joseph, 1997
8- I observe my daily prayers in the Mosque	Wilde & Joseph, 1997
9- I believe hejabis obligatory for all women	<i>Quran</i> : 24 (31), 33 (58 & 59)
10- Islam helps me lead a better life	Wilde & Joseph, 1997
11- I fast the whole month of Ramadan	Hassan, 2005; Stark & Glock, 1968
12- Performing the Hajj at least once is compulsory for Muslims who are financially and physically able	<i>Quran</i> : 3 (96-97), 2 (158 & 196 & 197), 22 (26 & 27)
13- In my personal life, religion is very important	Author
14- I regularly contribute to charity/sadaqah ¹¹	<i>Quran</i> : 9 (103), 8 (3,4), 3 (92), 9 (34,35), 7 (156)
15- Mohammed (saw) provides a good mode of conduct for me	Wilde & Joseph, 1997
16- I go to mosque on Friday for Jum'ah prayer regularly	<i>Quran</i> : 62 (9 & 10)
17- I am a religious person.	Author

¹¹ *Sadaqah* is a voluntary charity or the money given to charity secretly. It is considered as a proof of one's faith in Islam.

5.4.5 Demographic Variables

Referring to previous relevant research (see Chapter III), a series of questions about socio-demographic characteristics were included in order to identify the profile of the sample. Items included in the demographic variables are age, gender, marital status, place of birth, length of residency, education, income, occupation, tourism related job, interaction with local/international tourists, level of religious devotion and satisfaction with tourism development. The section on socio-demographic profiles and general information consists of 14 questions.

The questions related to age and birthplaces were asked in the form of open-ended questions. The information was later re-categorized during the analysis. The age was grouped into six categories: 18-27 years, 28-37 years, 38-47 years, 48-57 years, 58-67 years and 68 years and above. The birthplace was later classified as local birth, city/village nearby, same province and other provinces. The length of residency was categorized into the following range: less than 5 years, 5-10 years, 11-20 years and 21 years or more.

Income, education (No formal education, Primary School, Secondary School, High School, Diploma, Matriculation, Junior College Diploma, Bachelor Degree, Master Degree and above) and marital status (Married, Engaged, Widowed, Divorced or Single) were also included in the demographic profiles. The engaged category was included in marital status since it is very common among Iranians. The occupational status was also asked in the form of an open-ended question. The respondents were asked about their job's connectivity to the tourism industry. With exception to age, place of birth and occupation, other questions

were designed in accordance to nominal scale and the respondents were asked to tick the relevant box.

5.4.6 General information

In order to gain more information about the subject of the research, the following questions were posed; interaction with local and international tourists, variety of tourist attractions, level of devotion to religion (Islam) and general satisfaction with tourism development. The final question was designed in an open-ended form where the respondents were requested to express any general comments. This will encourage free and spontaneous answers.

5.5 ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

5.5.1 Pilot Test

By conducting pilot testing, the researcher was able to determine the validity of the questions, reliability of the measures, understandability of the term, flow of the questions and whether the time taken for answering the questionnaire is reasonable. Pilot studies should be conducted on the respondents who reflect the characteristics of the sample (Jennings, 2001; Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

Therefore, prior to data collection, a pilot test with a total of 30 questionnaires was conducted by the researcher to detect weaknesses in design and instrumentation and to provide proxy data for the selection of probability samples. The questionnaires were distributed in September 2006 in Sare'in. The comments and suggestions from pilot test were used to further refine the questionnaire. Based on the feedback from the pilot test, the socio-demographic variables have been reduced, repetitive questions were discarded, and the structure of questions was revised.

5.5.2 Plan for Data Analysis

The statistical package for social sciences "SPSS" (version 16) was employed for the purpose of data management and statistical analysis. According to Pallant (2005), the statistical analysis is useful in developing sufficient knowledge to describe the body of data. This can help to understand the level of measurement, distribution, characteristics of location, spread and shape of data (Pallant, 2005). Before conducting further analysis, the collected data was subjected to editing and coding. Miscoded values, missing data and other problems in the data set were discovered and addressed. This was followed by descriptive statistical analysis.

A frequency distribution was obtained for each variable in the data. Frequency distributions were the fundamental building block of analysis and offer a simple and quick look at the data. They reveal insights into the central tendencies, variability, and shape and indicate the extent of out-of-range or missing data and expose extreme values (Malhotra, 2004).

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to test the reliability of the data. The measure of reliability ranges from 0 to 1 and the values of 0.60 to 0.70 is regarded as the lower limit of acceptability (Hair et al., 1998 & 2006). Therefore, the coefficient level should not be below 0.60 for internal consistency (Teye et al., 2002; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997).

Pearson Correlations were employed to explore the strength of the relationship between each independent and dependent variable (continuous variables). The Pearson Correlation coefficient "r" is also known as the product moment correlation or simply the correlation coefficient. It indicates the degree and direction of the association between variables (Malhotra, 2004). The covariance "r" varies between -1.0 and +1.0. A correlation of zero

specifies no relation and a correlation of 1.0 indicates a large/strong positive correlation, while a value of -1.0 means a large/strong negative correlation (Pallant, 2005; Malhotra, 2004).

Factor analysis was used to refine and reduce the large set of items to form a smaller number of coherent subscales (Hair et al., 1998). Moreover, more than one item in a factor is necessary to apply quantitative techniques to determine the reliability of the factors (Mouton & Marais, 1996). Before this test, two statistical measures, namely Bartlett's test of sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value, were used for sampling adequacy (Kaiser, 1970). Bartlett's test of sphericity should be significant ($p < .05$) for the factor analysis to be considered appropriate. Values of KMO (between 0.5 and 1.0) indicate a good factor analysis (Malhotra, 2004).

An Eigenvalues test with above 1.00 was considered as the criteria for the extraction of factors. The factors were rotated using the Varimax method. The rotation served to make the output more understandable and this was done to facilitate the interpretation of factors. According to Hair et al. (2006), although factor loadings of ± 0.3 to ± 0.4 are minimally acceptable, values greater than 0.5 are generally considered necessary for practical significance. For this reason, items recorded with factor loadings of less than 0.5 were not accepted for testing the hypotheses. Conceptually, meaningful domains from the factor analysis results were tested for reliability, which was assessed by Cronbach's Alpha coefficients. Pearson Correlation, t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Multiple regression were used to test the hypotheses. Pearson Correlation is used to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between variables. T-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to compare the means between groups. Multiple regression was

used to explore the interrelationship among dependent and independent variables. To conclude, this study employed descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, *t*-test, one-way ANOVA and Multiple regression analysis to analyze the hypothesized relationships.

5.7 SUMMARY

This chapter has explained the research methodology used in the study. First, the research design and survey instrument were specified, including the description of the survey population and sampling frame. Second, the method of the data collection, the measurement scales, and constructs were discussed, and the pilot test and its procedure were explained. Third, the statistical methods employed to analyze the data were outlined in detail. The results of the data analysis will be presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Six

ANALYSIS & RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis and hypothesis testing. It begins with a brief description of the sample and is followed by the presentation of the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. Next, the validity and reliability of the measurement scales are described. The following section reports the results of the descriptive statistics of four constructs, namely the socio-cultural impacts of tourism, tourism development characteristics, host-tourist interactions and religiosity. The exploratory factor analysis results are presented and this is followed by the results of hypotheses testing.

6.2 ARRIVING AT THE SAMPLE FOR THE STUDY

As stated earlier 800 questionnaires were distributed. However, a total of 500 usable questionnaires analyzed. The following sections present the results of the data analysis.

6.3 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

6.3.1 Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic profile indicates that the majority of the respondents of this study are males (64.6 %), while females constitute only 35.4 %. With regard to age, the result shows that 43.8% are between 18 and 27 years, followed by 25.4% who fall within the age group of 28 to 37. The majority of respondents are young which corresponds to the national population census of 2006. A total of 56.8 % of the respondents are married and 36.8% are single. Respondents who are engaged, and divorced or widowed constitute 4.0 % and 2.4%, respectively. Concerning educational background, 29.3% of the respondents have diplomas, followed by 16.4% who have secondary school education. About 21.2% of the

respondents have college/ university education. This result implies that most of the respondents are moderately educated. In terms of their place of birth, 67.8% were born within the research areas, while 20% were born in the city/village nearby. Approximately 66.2% have been living in the areas for 20 years or more. Hence, the majority of respondents are native to the areas and perhaps with close community ties. About 52.8% of the respondents stated that they are involved in tourism. They are either directly employed in the tourism industry or regard their employment as being dependent on the industry to some extent. Almost one quarter of the respondents opted not to answer the question related to their monthly income and many may have provided inaccurate answers. Income seems to be a sensitive question because respondents do not prefer to divulge their financial status (refer to Table 6.1).

Table 6.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic variable	Frequency	(%)
Gender		
Male	323	64.6
Female	177	35.4
Total	500	100.0
Marital Status		
Married	284	56.8
Engaged	20	4.0
Widowed	7	1.4
Divorced	5	1.0
Single	184	36.8
Total	500	100.0
Age		
18-27	219	43.8
28-37	127	25.4
38-47	88	17.6
48-57	38	7.6
58-67	8	1.6
68 and above	20	4.0
Total	500	100.0
Education		
No formal education	19	3.8
Primary School	46	9.1
Secondary School	83	16.4
High School	71	14.1
Diploma	148	29.3
Matriculation	26	5.1
Junior College Diploma	44	8.7
Bachelor Degree	56	11.1
Master Degree & above	7	1.4
Total	500	100.0
Place of Birth		
In area of research	339	67.8
The city/village nearby	98	19.6
Same province	25	5.0
Other Province	38	7.6
Total	500	100.0

‘Table 6.1, continued’.

Demographic variable	Frequency	(%)
Income (IRR /US \$)		
1,000,000 & less (Around \$100 & less)	152	30.4
1,100,000-2,000,000 (Around \$101-\$ 200)	103	20.6
2,100,000-3,000,000 (Around \$ 201-\$ 300)	76	15.2
3,100,000-4,000,000 (Around \$301-\$ 400)	25	5.0
4, 100, 000-5,000,000 (Around \$ 401-\$ 500)	8	1.6
5, 100, 000 & above (Around \$ 501& above)	20	4.0
No answer	116	23.2
Total	500	100.0
Length of Residency		
Less than5 years	38	7.6
5-10 years	41	8.2
11-20 years	90	18
21 years or more	331	66.2
Total	500	100.0
Job Related to Tourism		
Yes	264	52.8
No	236	47.2
Total	500	100.0

6.3.2 General Opinions

The respondents were asked their general impression regarding tourism development in the areas of research and local communities’ opinions concerning interaction with local and international tourists, tourist attractions, level of religious devotion and satisfaction with tourism development. The respondents were also asked to express their views related to the subject of the research in an open-ended question.

The majority of the local community (82.4%) have more interactions with local tourists as compared to the international tourists (57.2%) and this is probably due to the low number of international tourists in the regions. Lack of communication skills and language proficiency among the locals may also have influenced the degree of their interactions.

Around 13.0 % of the local people are of the view that thermal and wellness tourism (hot springs and cool weather) has attracted tourists to visit their areas followed by cultural and heritage (11.8%) attractions. The former view is probably contributed by respondents from Sare'in, which has many mineral springs, while the latter response could be mainly contributed by the respondents from Masooleh. Besides, the locals also state that tourists visit their regions for recreation (8.0%) and scenery/nature (7.8%). Another 39.2% of respondents express a mixture of motivations, which include recreation, culture, history, health, scenery, nature, and relaxation.

In terms of the respondents' religious devotion, 64.6 % stated that they are quite religious, followed by 31.8% who categorize themselves as religious. Only 3.0 % of respondents remarked that they are not religious. A majority of the respondents (52.2%) are satisfied with the tourism development in their areas, while 25.4 % are not satisfied. A total of 22.4% of the respondents have a neutral opinion. The results prove that the respondents are generally satisfied with tourism development in their areas.

The socio-demographic section concluded with an open-ended question in which the respondents were asked to state their general opinions concerning the subject of this research. Open-ended questions give respondents the freedom and spontaneity to answer as they wish.

The results of the open-ended question show that the majority of the respondents would like to have a better provision of infrastructure and facilities in the regions. Among the suggested basic facilities are more paved roads, higher educational institutions, better health and sanitation facilities, water and gas supplies, a garbage disposal system, a well-equipped hospital, an airport and recreational facilities. Some of the respondents also expressed the view that tourism services could be improved by offering tourist information centres, by building new hotels and restaurants, and providing tourist signboards, hotel/room reservation services, parking spaces, public toilets, cable cars, ski lifts, campsites, petrol stations, bakeries and newspaper kiosks.

According to 120 respondents, more attention should be given to further development of the tourism industry in the areas. The respondents provide some recommendations to enhance tourism development. Among the suggestions given are selecting qualified officials, stepping up advertising, developing a tourism census, tackling tourism seasonality, better utilization of hot springs resources and modeling tourism development on that of successful countries. They also point out the need for an improvement of the tourism management system and investment opportunities. Besides, the local communities are not in favour of political and religious interference in tourism development.

The local community would also like to participate in the tourism development decision-making process. They also stated that the availability of more job opportunities would control the level of migration among the local residents. They would like to have education and training opportunities concerning the tourism business and development. The local community also intends to minimize the negative impacts of tourism. Living cost and environmental impacts are among the issues raised by the respondents. According to them,

the living cost had increased, as these areas have a greater concentration of tourists in comparison to other regions. They have requested the government to control the prices as it burdens them. They have also suggested that the tourism officials should pay more attention to conserving nature. Some of the respondents stressed the importance of reviving local handicrafts and cultural events in order to strengthen and sustain their traditional customs and practices.

6.4 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH CONSTRUCTS

A measure has practical value for the research if it is economical, convenient and interpretable. Sound measurement must meet the tests of validity, reliability and practicality (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). According to Hair et al. (2006), validity is concerned with how well the concept is defended by the measure(s), while reliability is related to the consistency of the measure(s). Therefore, validity is the degree to which a measure accurately represents what it is supposed to measure, whereas reliability is the degree to which the observed variable measures the "true" value and is "error free".

6.4.1 Validity Test

In research literature, content validity, criterion-related validity and construct validity are three forms of validity used to evaluate the measurement scale (Hair et al., 2006; Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Pallant, 2005). The face or content validity is assessed by the correspondence between individual items and the concept through rating by expert judges (Hair et al., 2006). The instrument was checked by three tourism experts in the area of the research and they provided feedback for further improvement. The comments given by them were discussed with the supervisor for further amendments to the questionnaire. Besides, the correlation technique is also used in order to explore the association between

the variables. Through these methods, the content validity of the measurement scales is achieved.

6.4.2 Reliability Test

Reliability is an estimation of the degree of consistency between multiple measurements of a variable. There are three forms of reliability, which are stability, equivalence, and internal consistency. The pilot test was used with similar populations to refine the questions and measurement.

The most widely used measure of internal consistency is Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Hair et al., 2006). According to Hair et al. (1998 & 2006), measures of reliability range from zero to one. Ideally, the Cronbach alpha coefficient should be above 0.7 (Malhotra, 2004; Pallant, 2005) although it may be as low as 0.60 in exploratory research (Robinson et al., 1991 cited in Hair et al., 2006). Therefore it is decided that an acceptable level of coefficient should be 0.6 and above for internal consistency (Teye et al., 2002; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Perez & Nadal, 2005; Andereck et al., 2005). An initial examination of the reliability of the measurement scales for the four constructs (exception of socio-demographic items) is presented in Table 6.2.

All four constructs obtained an acceptable level of coefficient alpha. The religiosity score is the highest (alpha value of 0.904) among the constructs. The results indicate that the measurement scales are reliable and appropriate for further data analysis.

Table 6.2: Summary of the Measurement of Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)

Variables	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Socio-Cultural Impacts	26	0.840
Tourism Development Characteristics	16	0.695
Religiosity	17	0.904
Host-Tourist Interactions	17	0.658

6.5 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE STUDY VARIABLES

In this section, mean (central tendencies) and standard deviation are employed as the tools of descriptive data analysis. The variables in this study are measured on a five-point Likert scale (Strongly disagree =1; Disagree=2; Neither agree/Nor disagree=3; Agree=4; Strongly agree=5). As stated by Tosum (2002), the scale could be further reduced to 'negative perception' (values of 1 to 2.4), 'neutral perception' (values of 2.5 to 3.4) and positive (values of 3.5 to 5).

6.5.1 Results of the Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism

The results of the descriptive statistical analysis for the socio-cultural impacts of tourism are presented in Table 6.3. A total of 24 items are measured by the five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). As shown in Table 6.3, with the exception of one item, the mean scores of the other measurement items are between 3.03 and 4. 22.

The results point out that tourism development has not only provided job opportunities but also an overall improvement in cultural activity and life quality. The development does not affect the religious practices of the local people. Among other positive benefits are better

destination image, maintenance of historical sites, cultural exchange, and activities, preservation of the community's traditional culture and more recreation opportunities. The negative socio-cultural impacts are the issues of less concern in the research areas.

Table 6.3: Descriptive Analysis of Tourism Socio-Cultural Impacts

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tourism stimulates the maintenance of historical sites	4.22	.88
Tourism development improves the positive image of the community	4.21	.85
Tourism creates better job opportunities for local people	4.09	1.02
Tourism development provides a better recreational opportunity for local residents	4.07	1.01
Tourism development makes local people more satisfied with their living in this area	3.98	1.00
Tourism development increases the quality of life among local people	3.97	.99
Tourism stimulates a better maintenance of public facilities	3.91	.92
Tourism stimulates local infrastructural development	3.91	.94
Tourism improves the provision of public health services	3.89	1.05
Tourism improves the educational level of local people	3.88	.97
Tourism stimulates cultural exchange	3.86	.98
Tourism encourages a variety of cultural activities among local residents	3.79	1.01
Tourism helps to preserve the cultural identity of my community	3.78	.98
Tourism improves the women's socio-economic situation	3.67	2.59
Tourism development does not affect the religious practices of local people	3.51	1.17
Tourism does not increase vandalism in this area	3.33	1.12
Tourism does not contribute to the increase of crime in this area	3.32	1.23
Tourism does not increase drug addiction and trafficking among local people	3.30	1.18
Tourism development maintains my traditional way of life	3.30	1.17
Tourism does not increase the amount of pick pocketing and robbery in this area	3.22	1.22
Tourism does not disrupt the peace and tranquility of this area	3.21	1.20
Tourism does not increase prostitution in this area	3.11	1.30
Tourism does not increase alcohol consumption in this area	3.03	1.26
Littering does not get worse in this region because of tourism	2.76	1.32

Scale: Strongly disagree = 1; Disagree= 2; Neither agree/Nor disagree= 3; Agree= 4; Strongly agree= 5. Total number of respondents (n) = 500

According to mean comparison, the respondents are rather neutral in their opinion with regard to the possible influence of tourism development on vandalism, crime, drug addiction/trafficking, alcohol consumption, prostitution, peace and tranquility, pick pocketing and robbery, littering and the maintenance of the traditional way of life. Therefore, negative socio-cultural impacts are the issues of less concern in the research areas.

Further enquiries during the structured and semi-structured interviews with the local community and some key tourism/local players confirm further the positive impacts of tourism development on the local community. Among them are the revival of the local arts, handicrafts, and traditions and the creation of market opportunities for the local products. However, tourism is, indeed, considered a cause of inflation in property prices. With the presence of local and international tourists, both Sare'in and Masooleh are overcrowded especially during peak season. Apart from that, some female residents complained about the lack of control on the rental of private houses/rooms and this may have encouraged the activity of prostitution in the areas. The interviews with locals and policemen reveal that, with the exception of a small number of robberies and brawls committed by outsiders during peak season, the crime rate recorded in the areas can be considered as negligible. Another impact that the researcher observed, especially in Masooleh, is the progressive decrease in the resident population due to the lack of life facilities and job opportunities in the area.

6.5.2 Results of Tourism Development Characteristics

The descriptive statistics for tourism development characteristics are presented in Table 6.4. This measurement scale consists of 16 items and is measured on a five-point Likert

scale. Based on the mean score of each item, the respondents strongly agree that the local communities are in favour of the current and further development of the tourism industry. On the other hand, the locals expressed their neutral stand on the statements regarding the rapid development in the research areas, the efficiency of the tourism authorities in the decision making process and the good management of tourism development. Besides, their impartial view is also reflected with regard to tourism rules and regulations not needing to be revised frequently and tourism destination marketing and advertising being well executed. According to mean comparison, the respondents express negative opinions concerning tourism being well promoted during the off-season and locals being actively involved in the tourism development process.

Table 6.4: Descriptive Analysis of Tourism Development Characteristics

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Most people I know are in favor of tourism development	4.33	0.94
Further tourism development in this area would always be supported by local people	4.29	0.99
Tourism is a major contributing factor to the development of this area	4.24	1.08
I fully support the future development of tourism infrastructure and facilities in my area	4.20	1.04
Most tourism investment in this area is by local people	3.70	1.32
The host community is actively involved in tourism planning and management	3.66	1.14
The public sector gives a lot of attention to promoting tourism in this area	3.20	1.29
In this region, local people control the development of the tourism industry	3.15	1.22
Tourism in this area is developing very rapidly	2.99	1.28
Tourism destination marketing and advertising are managed well in this area	2.71	1.23
The regional tourism authorities do an excellent job in making the right decisions for this area	2.65	1.20
In this area, the tourism rules and regulations do not need to be revised frequently	2.63	1.30
Tourism public authorities plan and manage tourism development well in my area	2.61	1.11
Tourism is well promoted during the off-season	2.39	1.25
Public authorities always consult local people in the tourism development processes in this area	2.28	1.17
The majority of people who work in tourism public authorities are local people	2.27	1.22

Scale: Strongly disagree =1; Disagree= 2; Neither agree/Nor disagree= 3; Agree= 4; Strongly agree= 5. Total number of respondents (n) = 500

6.5.3 Results of Host-Tourist Interactions

Table 6.5 indicates the descriptive statistics of the host-tourist interactions. The measurement scale contains 17 items which are measured on a five-point Likert scale. The overall local community attitude towards tourists is highly favourable. The majority of respondents are in favour of attracting tourists from as many countries as possible in order to learn about their culture and extend their cultural experiences. The locals are very friendly towards the tourists and they are happy with tourists' presence. In fact, the respondents enjoy interacting with tourists and wish that tourists would stay longer in the regions. The locals believe they could extend their cultural experiences and develop friendships with some tourists when communication with the tourists takes place. The tourists are also interested in and respect the local culture as well as their rules and regulations.

The respondents express a neutral stand on resentment between local people and tourists when they come in contact, preferences over packaged tours and local tourists, and disruption of the daily routine of the local community due to tourism. The local communities also share a similar stand on the statement about tourists having little consideration for local people. The respondents did not convey any significant reference when it comes to the religion of tourists. They are interested in hosting all tourists whether they are Muslim or non-Muslim.

Table 6.5: Descriptive Analysis of Host-Tourist Interactions

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
I think that attracting more tourists to this area is a good idea	4.46	.81
I would like to meet tourists from as many countries as possible in order to learn about their culture	4.42	.89
I am always very friendly to tourists	4.36	.79
When tourists are in my area, I am happy	4.29	.86
I prefer tourists to stay longer in this region	4.28	.99
I enjoy interacting with tourists	4.20	.89
I can extend my cultural experiences when I talk to tourists	4.18	.93
The majority of tourists are interested in my culture	4.08	.89
I have developed friendships with some tourists	3.95	.99
The majority of tourists respect our culture	3.91	.94
Tourists who visit this region respect our rules and regulations	3.65	1.00
Sometimes there are resentments between local people and tourists when they come in contact	3.32	1.15
I prefer tourists on packaged tours than individual tourists	3.11	1.08
There are things that I cannot do in this area at certain times just because of tourists	2.95	1.25
I prefer local tourists to international tourists	2.88	1.29
Generally, tourists that I have met in this area have little consideration for local people	2.68	1.23
I prefer only Muslim tourists in this area	2.47	1.25

Scale: Strongly disagree= 1; Disagree= 2; Neither agree/Nor disagree= 3; Agree= 4; Strongly agree= 5. Total number of respondents (n) = 500

6.5.4 Results of Islamic Religiosity

Religiosity was measured by 17 items. The respondents were asked to indicate their degree of preferences on each item using the five-point Likert scale. Table 6.6 presents the means of the multi-item religiosity measure. The scores of the measurement items are between 3.08 and 4.84.

Respondents registered the highest agreement on believing in God, believing that Allah and supplication helps them, Muhammad instructs them in good conduct, Islam helps them to lead a better life, and religion is important in their personal life. Apart from that, the respondents also strongly agree that they regularly contribute to charity, believe that *hejab* is obligatory for all women and that performing *hajj* will be a priority once all the necessary conditions are fulfilled. The respondents state that they are religious, fast the whole month of Ramadan, pray five times a day on time and read the Quran regularly. They are also agree that performing zakat is an annual obligation. Respondents' perceptions are rather neutral on the statements regarding performing Friday and daily prayers in the mosque. In short, the respondents score higher means on religious belief items rather than religious practice items.

Table 6.6: Descriptive Analysis of Islamic Religiosity

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
I strongly believe in God	4.84	.48
I believe that Allah helps me	4.77	.51
The supplication (dua') helps me	4.52	.72
Muhammad (peace be upon him) instructs me in good conduct	4.44	.78
Islam helps me lead a better life	4.40	.81
In my personal life, religion is very important	4.38	.84
I regularly contribute to <i>charity/sadaqah</i>	4.22	.88
I believe hejab is obligatory for all women	4.21	1.04
Performing <i>hajj</i> will be my priority the moment I've fulfilled all the necessary conditions	4.20	.99
I'm a religious person	4.19	.94
I fast the whole month of Ramadan	4.19	1.06
I pray five times a day	4.11	.97
I perform the obligation of zakat maal (asset /income) annually	3.69	1.09
I always perform my prayer on time	3.64	1.09
I read the Quran regularly	3.64	.98
I perform Friday Prayer regularly	3.13	1.15
I perform my daily prayers in the mosque regularly	3.08	1.14

Scale: Strongly disagree = 1; Disagree= 2; Neither agree/Nor disagree= 3; Agree= 4; Strongly agree= 5. Total number of respondents (n) = 500

6.5.5 Total Mean and Standard Deviation for Study Variables

Table 6.7 indicates the average mean of all the variables. Among the independent variables, religiosity scores the highest mean (4.09), followed by host-tourist interactions (3.72) and tourism development characteristics (3.20). The dependent variable (socio-cultural impacts) mean scores 3.55.

Table 6.7: Total Mean and Standard Deviation for Study Variables

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Tourism Development Characteristics	3.20	1.17
Host-Tourist Interactions	3.72	1.01
Religiosity	4.09	.91
Socio-Cultural Impacts	3.55	1.14

Scale: Strongly disagree = 1; Disagree= 2; Neither agree/Nor disagree= 3; Agree= 4; strongly agree=5.

*The Socio-demographic variables measured by nominal scale are not included.

6.6 FACTOR ANALYSIS

By using factor analysis, the researcher is able to refine and reduce a larger set of variables to form a smaller number of coherent subscales and a more manageable number. This method also confirms the validity of the variables that emerge.

Factor Analysis based on the principal component method with Varimax rotation is carried out for the independent variables (tourism development characteristics, host-tourist interactions, and religiosity) and the dependent variable (socio-cultural impacts). A cut-off point of 0.5 is used to include items in the interpretation of a factor (Hair et al., 2006). A reliability test is performed on the dimension derived from the factor analysis. Items with *Cronbach* Alpha of less than 0.6 are omitted.

6.6.1 Factor Analysis for Socio-cultural Impacts

From a principal component factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is 0.873 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant which indicates that items are appropriate for factor analysis. Five factors are initially derived. Four items did not load on any factor: 'tourism development increases the quality of life among local people', 'tourism development maintains my traditional way of life', 'tourism stimulates the maintenance of historical sites,' and 'littering does not get worse in this region because of tourism.' The item of 'tourism improves the women's socio-economic situation' is excluded as it loads as a single factor. All these five items are omitted from further analysis.

The four conceptually meaningful dimensions of the factor analysis results are then tested for internal reliability by using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. One dimension with two items (tourism helps preserve the cultural identity of my community and tourism does not disrupt the peace and tranquility of this area) produces Cronbach Alpha values of less than 0.6. Therefore, this dimension is dropped from further analysis. The deletion of these items reduced the measurement items for socio-cultural impacts from 24 to 17. Factor Analysis revealed three main factors of socio-cultural impacts and they are labeled as Social Problems (SP), Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII), Cultural Activity, and Life Quality (CALQ). Table 6.8 displays the dimension descriptions and factor loading.

Table 6.8: The Factor Loading Results on Socio-Cultural Impacts

Factor/Items	Factor Loading
Social Problems (SP) ($\alpha= 0.824$)	
Tourism does not increase drug addiction and trafficking among local people	.758
Tourism does not increase prostitution in this area	.720
Tourism does not increase alcohol consumption in this area	.715
Tourism does not increase vandalism in this area	.714
Tourism does not increase the amount of pick-pocketing and robbery in this area	.619
Tourism does not contribute to the increase of crime in this area	.591
Tourism development does not affect the religious practices of local people	.591
Image, Facilities and Infrastructure Improvement (IFI) ($\alpha= 0.725$)	
Tourism developments improve the positive image of the community	.670
Tourism development provides a better recreational opportunity for local residents	.646
Tourism stimulates local infrastructural development	.643
Tourism improves the provision of public health services	.643
Tourism stimulates a better maintenance of public facilities	.598
Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) ($\alpha= 0.738$)	
Tourism encourages a variety of cultural activities among local residents	.703
Tourism creates better job opportunities for local people	.698
Tourism improves the educational level of local people	.648
Tourism development makes local people more satisfied with their living in this area	.562
Tourism stimulates cultural exchange	.505
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy= 0.873 Bartlett's Test of Sphericity= .000 Cronbach's Alpha of total scale = 0.835	

Only factor loading >0.5 are shown.

The Cronbach Alpha for Social Problems is 0.824, which indicates an excellent internal consistency of the items in the scale. Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement has a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.725, while Cultural Activity and Life Quality produces a value of 0.738. All the above Cronbach Alpha values indicate good contributions of the items in representing the socio-cultural impacts dimensions (George & Mallery, 2003).

6.6.2 Factor Analysis for Tourism Development Characteristics

From a principal component factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is 0.797 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant which indicates that the items are appropriate for factor analysis.

Based on 15 items, the outcome of the analysis reveals four dimensions. Two items, 'host community is actively involved in tourism planning, and management' and 'the majority of people who work in tourism public authorities are local people' did not load on any factor. The statement that tourism rules and regulations do not need to be revised frequently loaded as a factor. Consequently, all three items are dropped from further analysis.

Three dimensions from the factor analysis results are then tested for reliability. One dimension (with two items) with a Cronbach Alpha value of less than 0.6 is dropped from the analysis. The deletion of these items reduced the measurement items for Tourism Development Characteristics from 16 to 11. Finally, only two dimensions are derived, namely Tourism Development Activity (TDA) and Community Support (CS). Table 6.9 displays the descriptions of the results and factor loadings. The Cronbach Alpha value for TDA is 0.777, which indicates a good contribution of the items for the factor. On the other

hand, the Cronbach Alpha value of CS is 0.609 which signifies a moderate contribution of the items within the factor.

Table 6.9: The Factor Loading Results on Tourism Development Characteristics

Factor/Items	Factor Loading
Tourism Development Activity(TDA) ($\alpha= 0.777$)	
The regional tourism authorities do an excellent job in making the right decisions for this area	.776
Tourism public authorities plan and manage tourism development well in my area	.765
Tourism destination marketing and advertising are managed well in this area	.708
The public sector gives a lot of attention to promoting tourism in this area	.615
Public authorities always consult local people in the tourism development processes in this area	.580
Tourism in this area is developing very rapidly	.574
Tourism is well promoted during the off-season	.564
Community Support(CS) ($\alpha= 0.609$)	
Most people I know are in favor of tourism development	.749
Further tourism development in this area would always be supported by local people	.658
I fully support the future development of tourism infrastructure and facilities in my area	.644
Tourism is a major contributing factor to the development of this area	.639
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy= 0.797 Bartlett's Test of Sphericity= .000 Cronbach's Alpha of total scale = 0.665	

Note: Only factor loading >0.5 are shown.

6. 6. 3 Factor Analysis for Host-Tourist Interactions

From a principal component factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is 0.813 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant which indicates that the items are appropriate for factor analysis.

The outcome of this analysis reveals four dimensions with 17 items. These dimensions are then tested for reliability. Two dimensions with an alpha value of less than 0.6 are dropped from further analysis. The deletion of these dimensions resulted in a reduction in the measurement items from 17 to 11. The remaining two factors are labeled as Positive Tourist Interactions (PTI) and Perceived Positive Tourist Attitudes (PPTA). Table 6.10 displays the domain descriptions and factor loading. The Cronbach alpha tests for both dimensions are acceptable: Positive Tourist Interactions (PTI) is 0.784 and Perceived Positive Tourist Attitudes (PPTA) is 0.652.

Table 6.10: The Factor Loading Results on Host-tourist Interactions

Factor/Items	Factor Loading
Positive Tourist Interactions (PTI) ($\alpha = 0.784$)	
I would like to meet tourists from as many countries as possible in order to learn about their culture	.698
I have developed friendships with some tourists	.684
I enjoy interacting with tourists	.671
I can extend my cultural experiences when I talk to tourists	.631
When tourists are in my area, I am happy	.620
I prefer tourists to stay longer in this region	.576
I think that attracting more tourists to this area is a good idea	.562
I am always very friendly to tourists	.502
Perceived Positive Tourist Attitudes (PPTA) ($\alpha = 0.652$)	
The majority of tourists respect our culture	.785
The majority of tourists are interested in my culture	.746
The tourist who visits this region respects our rules and regulations	.607
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = 0.813 Bartlett's Test of Sphericity = .000 Cronbach's Alpha of total scale = 0.794	

Note: Only factor loading >0.5 are shown.

6.6.4 Factor Analysis for Islamic Religiosity

From a principal component factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is 0.918 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant which indicates that the items are appropriate for factor analysis. The outcome of this analysis reveals two dimensions. The item "I regularly contribute to charity/sadaqah" did not load on any factor. Thus, it is omitted from further analysis. The deletion of this item reduced the number of items measurement for Religiosity from 17 to 16.

Factor Analysis reveals two main factors which are labeled as Islamic Belief (IB) and Islamic Practice (IP). The Cronbach Alpha value is 0.872 for Islamic Belief (IB) and 0.847 for Islamic Practice (IP). This indicates the excellent contribution of the items in each factor (George & Mallery, 2003). Consequently, all these items are valid and reliable for the hypothesis testing (refer to Table 6.11).

Table 6.11: The Factor Loading Results on Islamic Religiosity

Factor/Items	Factor Loading
Islamic Belief(IB) ($\alpha= 0.872$)	
In my personal life, religion is very important	.726
Islam helps me lead a better life	.711
The supplication (<i>dua'</i>) helps me	.694
Muhammad (peace be upon him) instructs me in good conduct	.685
I believe in God strongly	.646
Performing <i>hajj</i> will be my priority the moment I've fulfilled all the necessary conditions	.637
I believe that Allah helps me	.624
I believe <i>hejab</i> is obligatory for all women	.584
I'm a religious person	.567
I fast the whole month of Ramadan	.558
Islamic Practice(IP) ($\alpha= 0.847$)	
I perform Friday Prayer regularly	.776
I always perform my prayer on time	.770
I perform my daily prayers in the mosque regularly	.766
I perform the obligation of <i>zakat maal</i> (asset /income) annually	.739
I read the Quran regularly	.647
I pray five times a day	.556
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy= 0.918 Bartlett's Test of Sphericity= .000 Cronbach's Alpha of total scale = 0.901	

Only factor loading >0.5 are shown

6.7 TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

The results of the previous analysis are utilized to test the proposed hypotheses. In this study, a total of seven main hypotheses and related sub-hypotheses are proposed and tested by using Descriptive Statistics, Pearson Correlation, *t*-test, ANOVA and Multiple Regression.

By using Pearson Correlation, the researcher will be able to examine the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables. The *t*-test is employed to find out whether there is a statistically significant difference in the means scores for two different groups of subjects. ANOVA is applied to explore mean differences between three or more groups. Multiple Regression is used to explore the relationship between one dependent variable and numerous independent variables or predictors (Pallant, 2005; Hair et al., 2006). As a result, both bivariate and multivariate statistical analyses are employed to explain the relationship between the variables and respondents' attitudes.

6.7.1 The Level of Socio-Cultural Impacts

It is postulated that the level of socio-cultural impacts as perceived by the local community is positive. This hypothesis is examined by using descriptive statistics.

Hypothesis One (H1): Socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by residents are positive.

Table 6.3 presents the descriptive analysis of residents' perceptions of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Based on the mean score of each item, the respondents had the highest agreement on the statements that tourism stimulates the maintenance of historical sites,

provides a positive image and better job and recreational opportunities for local residents. Respondents also have positive perceptions that tourism leads to better quality and life satisfaction, the maintenance of public facilities, local infrastructure development, education and health services, and cultural preservation, exchange and activities. Tourism development does not affect the religious practices of local people. Residents' perceptions were rather neutral on the statements regarding the effects of tourism development on social issues such as vandalism, crime, drug addiction and alcohol consumption. Therefore, the socio-cultural impacts as perceived by the respondents in the study areas are positive, especially for the improvement of destination image, facilities, infrastructure, cultural activities and life quality. Thus, *H1* which stated that *Socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by residents are positive* is supported.

6 .7.2 The Effect of Tourism Development Characteristics

It is hypothesized that tourism development characteristics have a significant relationship with the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. The relationship between tourism development characteristics and the socio-cultural impacts of tourism is examined by using Pearson correlation.

Hypothesis Two (H2): Tourism development characteristics have significant relationships with the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people.

H2a (i): Tourism Development Activity (TDA) has a significant relationship with Social Problems (SP).

H2a (ii): Tourism Development Activity (TDA) has a significant relationship with Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFI).

H2a (iii): *Tourism Development Activity (TDA) has a significant relationship with Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ).*

H2b (i): *Community Support (CS) has a significant relationship with Social Problems (SP).*

H2b (ii): *Community Support (CS) has a significant relationship with Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII).*

H2b (iii): *Community Support (CS) has a significant relationship with Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ).*

The results show that there is a positive relationship between Tourism Development Activity and Perceived Positive Social Problems ($r = 0.144$, $p = 0.001$). Therefore, H1a (i) is supported. There is no significant relationship between Tourism Development Activity (TD) and Image, Facilities and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII) as ($p = 0.276$) and Cultural Activity and Life Quality ($p = 0.375$). This has resulted the hypotheses H2a (ii) and H2a (iii) as not supported.

The relationship between Community Support and Social Problems (SP) is significant ($r = 0.173$, $p = 0.000$) and confirms the hypothesis H1b (i). Pearson correlation between Community Support (CS) and Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII) is 0.499 and it is significant at $p = 0.000$. Pearson correlation tests on the relationship between Community Support (CS) and Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) yields $r = 0.388$ and is significant ($p = 0.000$). The finding indicates that Community Support is positively correlated to Social Problems, Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement and Cultural Activity and Life Quality. Hence, hypothesis H1b (iii) is supported.

6.7.3 The Effect of Host-Tourist Interactions

It is postulated that there are significant relationships between host-tourist interactions and the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Pearson correlation is used to test the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis Three (H3): Host-tourist interactions have significant relationships with the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people.

H3a (i): Positive Tourist Interactions (PTI) has a significant relationship with Perceived Positive Social Problem (SP).

H3a (ii): Positive Tourist Interactions (PTI) has a significant relationship with Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII).

H3a (iii): Positive Tourist Interaction (PTI) has a significant relationship with Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ).

H3b (i): Perceived Positive Tourist Attitude (PPTA) has a significant relationship with Perceived Positive Social Problems (SP).

H3b (ii): Perceived Positive Tourist Attitude (PPTA) has a significant relationship with Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII).

H3b (iii): Perceived Positive Tourist Attitude (PPTA) has a significant relationship with Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ).

The findings indicate that the correlation coefficient between Positive Tourist Interactions (PTI) and Perceived Positive Social Problems (SP) is 0.288 and is significant at $p= 0.000$ which provides high support for the acceptance of hypothesis H3a (i). When the relationship between Positive Tourist Interactions (PTI) and Image, Facilities and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII) is examined, the correlation coefficient (r) indicates 0.552 and it is significant at $p= 0.000$ which provides great support for hypothesis H3a (ii). There is a strong, positive correlation between Positive Tourist Interactions (PTI) and Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) ($r= 0.549$, $p= 0.000$). Hence, Positive Tourist

Interactions (PTI) is found to have a positive relationship with Perceived Positive Social Problems (SP), Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII) and Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ). The result provides great support for the acceptance of hypothesis H3a (iii).

There is a relationship between Perceived Positive Tourist Attitudes (PPTA) and the three dimensions of socio-cultural impacts. The Pearson r correlation coefficient indicates a positive correlation between these variables; Perceived Positive Tourist Attitudes (PPTA) and Perceived Positive Social Problems (SP) ($r = 0.198$, $p = 0.000$), Image, Facilities and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII) ($r = 0.354$, $p = 0.000$) and Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) ($r = 0.337$, $p = 0.000$). Consequently, H3 is supported.

6.7.4 The Effect of Host Profile

It is hypothesized that the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by the local community differ according to their socio-demographic profile (HP). A series of t-tests is performed to assess the mean difference for the variables with two groups; gender (1= male, 2= female), marital status (1= married, 2= single) and those with tourism related jobs (1= yes, 2= no). As the remaining host profiles (age, place of birth, length of residency and education) are categorized into more than two groups, a One-way ANOVA is used to test the hypothesis.

Hypothesis Four (H4): Host's socio- demographic profiles are significantly different in their perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by the local people.

As stated in the above hypothesis, host profiles of gender, age, marital status, place of birth, length of residency, education, and job related to tourism are expected to have differences in terms of the perceptions of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. The results indicate that there are no significant differences for the demographic factors of age and place of birth with all the three dimensions of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism.

None of the demographic profiles is found to have a significant difference in the perception of Social Problems (SP). In terms of Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ), there are significant differences for gender [$t(498) = 2.17, p = 0.03$], marital status [$t(466) = 2.3, p = 0.02$], length of residency [$f(3,496) = 4.02, p = 0.008$] and level of education [$f(8,491) = 2.273, p = 0.02$]. Respondents, who are male, married, have lived longer in the area and with junior college diploma are found to have a more positive perception of Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ). These groups of respondents perceive that there are more improvements in terms of the local education level, stimulation of cultural exchange, creation of job opportunities and the variety of cultural activities.

With respect to the Image, Facilities and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII) dimension, only two demographic variables are found to be significant: education [$f(8,491) = 3.94, p = 0.000$] and employment [$t(498) = 4.57, p = 0.000$]. The respondents who have obtained a junior college diploma and those who are engaged in tourism related jobs have more positive perceptions than those with a lower level of education and those who do not work in the tourism industry. These groups of respondents believe that tourism has improved the image of the community, provided better recreational opportunities, improved the public health services, maintained public facilities and developed infrastructure (refer to Table 6.12 to Table 6.15). Based on the results, H4 is partially supported.

Table 6.12: T-test between Impact Variables and Gender, Marital Status and Job Type

Socio-cultural Impacts	Gender		<i>t</i> Value	Sig	Result
	Male (Mean & Std Deviation)	Female (Mean & Std Deviation)			
SP	M= 22.89 SD= 5.94	M=22.69 SD= 5.89	.355	0.72	Not Supported
IFII	M= 20.12 SD=3.30	M=19.73 SD=3.33	1.257	0.20	Not Supported
CALQ	M= 19.85 SD= 3.54	M=19.15 SD=3.37	2.172	0.03	Supported
Socio-cultural Impacts	Marital Status		<i>t</i> Value	Sig	Result
	Married Mean & Std Deviation)	Single Mean & Std Deviation)			
SP	M= 22.93 SD= 6.09	M= 22.74 SD=5.49	.343	0.732	Not Supported
IFII	M= 20.07 SD= 3.49	M=19.92 SD= 2.92	.473	0.637	Not Supported
CALQ	M= 19.85 SD= 3.56	M= 19.08 SD= 3.44	2.297	0.022	Supported
Socio-cultural Impacts	Job type		<i>t</i> Value	Sig	Result
	Tourism Related Mean & Std Deviation)	Non-Tourism Related Mean & Std Deviation)			
SP	M= 23.10 SD= 6.08	M= 22.51 SD= 5.73	1.120	0.263	Not Supported
IFII	M= 20.61 SD= 3.06	M=19.28 SD=3.44	4.569	0.000	Supported
CALQ	M= 20.23 SD= 3.36	M= 18.90 SD= 3.52	4.342	0.000	Supported

Table 6.13: ANOVA between Impact Variables and Age

Socio-cultural Impacts	Age groups/ years (Mean & Std Deviation)						Univariates		Results
	18-27	28-37	38-47	48-57	58-67	68 and above	F	P	
SP	M=22.22 SD=5.43	M=23.38 SD=6.11	M=23.24 SD=6.91	M=22.92 SD=5.73	M=25.38 SD=7.41	M=23.18 SD=4.42	0.941	0.46	Not supported
IFII	M=19.73 SD=2.98	M=20.43 SD=3.64	M=20.15 SD=3.82	M=20.16 SD=2.74	M=19.38 SD=3.70	M=18.97 SD=3.38	0.975	0.44	Not supported
CALQ	M=19.12 SD=3.24	M=20.12 SD=3.70	M=20.26 SD=3.73	M=19.37 SD=3.47	M=19.13 SD=4.42	M=19.29 SD=3.09	1.779	0.10	Not supported

Table 6.14: ANOVA between Impact Variables, Length of Residency/Year and Place of Birth

Length of Residency/Year (Mean & Std Deviation)							
Socio-cultural Impacts	Less 5 years	5-10 years	11-20 years	21 years and more	F	P	Result
SP	M=22.11 SD= 6.95	M=21.90 SD= 4.92	M=22.10 SD= 5.53	M=23.21 SD= 5.99	1.450	0.22	Not Supported
IFII	M=19.95 SD= 3.58	M=19.78 SD= 3.08	M=19.20 SD=3.37	M=20.23 SD= 3.32	2.359	0.07	Not Supported
CALQ	M=19.16 SD= 2.99	M=18.49 SD= 3.68	M=18.93 SD= 3.09	M=19.98 SD= 3.58	4.022	0.00	Supported
Place of Birth (Mean & Std Deviation)							
Socio-cultural Impacts	At area of research	The city/village nearby	Same province	Other Province	F	p	Result
SP	M=22.99 SD= 6.16	M= 22.92 SD= 5.29	M= 23.24 SD= 4.64	M= 20.76 SD= 5.80	1.684	0.169	Not Supported
IFII	M= 20.01 SD= 3.34	M=19.97 SD= 3.39	M= 19.48 SD= 2.79	M= 20.11 SD= 3.29	0.219	0.883	Not Supported
CALQ	M=19.72 SD= 3.65	M=19.68 SD= 3.01	M=18.72 SD= 3.45	M=18.97 SD= 3.30	1.079	0.357	Not Supported

Table 6.15: ANOVA between Impact Variables and Education

Socio-cultural Impacts	Education (Mean & Std Deviation)									Univariates		Result
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	F	P	
SP	M=22.73 SD=5.25	M=22.70 SD=5.37	M=21.77 SD=6.27	M=22.41 SD=5.68	M=24.05 SD=5.47	M=21.31 SD=5.84	M=23.32 SD=5.65	M=22.21 SD=7.01	M=21.86 SD=8.82	1.536	.142	Not Supported
IFII	M=18.26 SD=3.96	M=19.07 SD=3.04	M=19.17 SD=3.93	M=19.65 SD=3.18	M=20.51 SD=3.02	M=19.42 SD=2.93	M=21.36 SD=2.63	M=20.80 SD=3.05	M=19.57 SD=4.28	3.942	.000	Supported
CALQ	M=17.00 SD=3.56	M=19.57 SD=3.38	M=19.76 SD=3.51	M=18.97 SD=3.51	M=19.91 SD=3.45	M=19.19 SD=2.33	M=20.30 SD=3.66	M=20.07 SD=3.21	M=18.57 SD=4.43	2.273	.022	Supported

Group 1: no formal education; Group 2: primary school; Group 3: secondary school I; Group 4: high school; Group 5: diploma; Group 6: matriculation; Group 7: junior college diploma; Group 8: bachelor degree and Group 9: master degree and above.

6.7.5 The Effect of Islamic Religiosity

It is hypothesized that there is a relationship between host religiosity and the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Therefore, Hypotheses 5 and 6 are proposed. To test hypothesis 5, Pearson product-moment correlations are performed between the two dimensions Islamic Beliefs (IB) and Islamic Practice (IP) on the perception of the socio-cultural impact factors.

Hypothesis Five (H5): Religiosity has a significant relationship with the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by the local people.

H5a (i): Islamic Belief (IB) has a significant relationship with Social Problems (SP).

H5a (ii): Islamic Belief (IB) has a significant relationship with Image, Facilities and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII).

H5a (iii): Islamic Belief (IB) has a significant relationship with Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ).

H5b (i): Islamic Practice (IP) has a significant relationship with Social Problems (SP).

H5b (ii): Islamic Practice (IP) has a significant relationship with Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII).

H5b (iii): Islamic Practice (IP) has a significant relationship with Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ).

The hypothesis testing shows there is a positive relationship between Islamic Belief and Perceived Positive Social Problems ($r = 0.11$, $p = 0.014$), Image, Facilities and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII) ($r = 0.213$, $p = 0.000$) and Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) ($r = 0.225$, $p = 0.000$). The results support the acceptance of Hypotheses 5a (i), 5a (ii) and 5a (iii).

The Pearson correlation coefficient measured the relationship between Islamic Practice (IP) and three dimensions of socio-cultural impacts. Only one of the dimension; Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) ($r= 0.103$, $p= 0.021$) is positively related to Islamic Practice (IP). This supports Hypothesis H5ba (iii). Social Problems (SP) ($r= 0.064$, $p= 0.154$) and Image, Facilities and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII) ($r=0.076$, $p= 0.089$) do not have a significant relationship with the perception of socio-cultural impacts and, therefore, Hypotheses H5b (i) and H5b (ii) are not supported. Consequently, Hypothesis H5 is partially supported.

The degree of religiosity (religious) is the measure of how important people believe religion is in their life. While piety is the degree to which an individual shows respect for religion. Therefore, it is hypothesized:

Hypothesis Six (H6): The perception of socio- cultural impacts of tourism varies according to the degree of religiosity

H6a (i): Residents' perceptions of Social Problems (SP) will differ according to their level of Religiosity.

H6b (ii): Residents' perceptions of Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII) will differ according to their level of Religiosity.

H6c (iii): Residents' perceptions of Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) will differ according to their level of Religiosity.

To find out whether the perceptions of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism differ based on the level of religious devotion, the aggregate score of religiosity was calculated for each respondent. Religiosity consists of 16 questions, therefore, the minimum score is 16 and the maximum will be 80. The difference between these two groups is 64 which is divided

equally into 3 groups. The initial scale of religiosity was in the interval form and it has been converted to a nominal scale. Based on the value of religiosity score, respondents were grouped into three levels of religious piety: high, medium, and low. Frequency of these groups indicates that the majority of the respondents (46.3%) are moderately religious, followed by those who are highly religious (29.7%) and less religious (23%). However, only the two extremes of religiosity (group 1: low religiosity, and Group 3: high religiosity) were used for further analysis. An independent-sample *t*-test is conducted to compare the mean score of the three dimensions of the socio-cultural impacts for respondents who fall into the groups of high and low religiosity.

The results show that there is no significant difference in the scores for respondents with lower religiosity (Mean= 21.77, SD= 5.36) and higher religiosity (Mean= 23.30, SD= 7.02; $t(221) = -1.81, p = 0.070$) with regard to Social Problems (SP). The perceptions of social problems in the areas are not affected by the degree of religiosity. Thus, H6a (i) is not supported.

Concerning Image, Facilities and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII), there is a significant difference in scores for those with higher (Mean= 20.78, SD= 3.99) and lower (Mean= 19.04, SD= 3.02; $t(221) = -3.66, p = 0.000$) religious piety. Hypothesis H6b (ii) is not supported as the results show that the respondents with a higher level of religious devotion have a better perception of Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII).

There is a significant difference in the scores for Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) for those with higher (Mean= 20.71, SD= 3.49) and lower (Mean= 18.32, SD= 3.37; $t(221) = -5.20, p = 0.000$) religious piety. Residents with higher religious devotion are

more likely to have a better perception of Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ), hence H6c (iii) is accepted. Based on the above results, hypothesis H6 is partially supported.

6.7.6 The Most Influential Dimension of the Perception of the Socio-Cultural Impacts

It is hypothesized that host-tourist interaction has the most influential effect on the level of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by the local community.

Hypothesis Seven (H7): The Host-tourist interaction is the most influential dimension of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people.

Standard multiple regression is used to test the predictive power of a set of variables and to assess the relative contribution of each individual variable. The beta value is used to compare the contribution of each independent variable, meaning that the variable with the largest beta value makes the strongest contribution in explaining the dependent variable.

In this case, both host-tourist interaction ($p= 0.000$) and tourism development ($p= 0.000$) make a significant unique contribution to the prediction of the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. The largest beta coefficient is 0.525, which is for host-tourist interaction. This means that this variable makes the most significant contribution to explaining the dependent variable. The beta value for tourism development is slightly less (0.160) indicating that it made less of a contribution. Both variables explain 36.5 per cent of the variance in socio-cultural impacts. The statistical results indicate that Host-Tourist Interactions is the most important in influencing the perceived socio-cultural impacts of tourism in the areas of the research and thus the results support H7 (refer to Table 6.16).

Table 6.16: Standard Multiple Regression between Independents Variables and Socio-Cultural Impacts

Hypothesis	Independent variable	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	<i>t</i>	Sig	Result
		B	Std. Error				Not Supported
H5	(Constant)	3.782	4.435		.853	.394	
	Tourism Development	0.256	.061	0.160	4.19	0.000	
	Host-Tourist Interactions	0.862	.061	0.525	14.01	0.000	
	Religiosity	0.066	.038	0.064	1.71	0.087	

6.8 SUMMARY

The summary of the results of this study is presented in Table 6.17. The profile of the respondents indicates that the majority are male, young, married and with a moderate educational background. The high degree of dependence of the residents on tourism is reflected by the fact that more than half of the respondents earned their living from tourism. The local communities greatly support current and future tourism development in their areas as tourism development has benefited the locals in various ways especially in terms of improvements of community welfare facilities, cultural opportunities, and infrastructure. They also expressed their interest in participating in the tourism development decision-making process as they will be able to voice their opinions. The respondents have overall positive attitudes toward tourism and they welcome further tourism development.

The hosts express their intention to have more tourists visiting their area regardless of the tourists' religion. The presence of tourists is welcomed and the host preference for international tourists may indicate that they are not perceived as a threat to the local culture. The results of the study clearly indicate that the socio-cultural impacts in the study areas are positive and thus the first hypothesis is supported. The second hypothesis indicates that there is a partial relationship between tourism development characteristics and the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Community Support (CS) has an association with all three dimensions of socio-cultural impacts (Social Problems (SP), Influence Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII) and Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) unlike Tourism Development Activity (TDA), which only associated with Social Problems. The hypothesis concerning host-tourist interactions is fully supported. It reflects that the host-tourist interaction dimensions (Positive Tourist Interactions (PTI) and Perceived Positive Tourist Attitudes (PPTA) are related with all three dimensions of socio –cultural impacts (SP, IFII, and CALQ).

With regard to the host profile, the perception of the impacts of tourism does not vary according to age and birth place. Respondents who are male, married, and working in the tourism industry tend to have a more positive perception of CALQ. Those who are engaged in tourism related jobs also expressed their constructive view on the Influence Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII). Respondents with a junior college diploma tend to view the positive impact of IFII and CALQ as compared with those with no formal education. With regard to length of residency, respondents who have lived for 21 years or more tend to perceive CALQ positively.

The results reported that there is a positive relationship between hosts' Islamic Belief and socio-cultural impacts. The hosts' Islamic belief is found to have a positive relationship with socio-cultural impacts. However, for Islamic Practice, only Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) has a statistically significant relationship. On the other hand, residents with higher religious devotion are more likely to have a better perception of Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) and Image, Facilities and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII). However, the perception of social problems is not affected by the hosts' degree of religiosity.

This study also revealed that overall, among the predictor variables examined in this study, host- tourist interaction is found to be the most important variable that influences the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people. The following chapter revolves around a discussion based on the above summary. In addition, the limitations and implications of this study and the future direction of research will be also be further discussed in the next chapter. This is followed by the conclusion to the research.

Table 6.17: A Summary of Hypothesis Testing

No.	Hypothesis	Results	Detail
H1	<i>Socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by residents are positive.</i>	H1 is supported	
General H2	<i>H2: Tourism development characteristics have a significant relationship with the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people.</i>	H2 is partially supported.	
H2a (i)	TDC * has significant relationship with SP	Supported	
H2a (ii)	TDC has significant relationship with IFII	Not supported	
H2(iii)	TDC has significant relationship with CALQ	Not supported	
H2b (i)	CS has significant relationship with SP	Supported	
H2b (ii)	CS has significant relationship with IFII	Supported	
H2b (iii)	CS has significant relationship with CALQ	Supported	
General H3	<i>H3: Host-tourist interactions have a significant relationship with the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people.</i>	H3 is supported.	
H3a (i)	PTI have significant relationship with SP	Supported	
H3a (ii)	PTI have significant relationship with IFII	Supported	
H3a (iii)	PTI have significant relationship with CALQ	Supported	
H3b (i)	PPTA have significant relationship with SP	Supported	
H3b (ii)	PPTA have significant relationship with IFII	Supported	
H3b (iii)	PPTA have significant relationship with CALQ	Supported	
General H4	<i>H4: Host's socio- demographic profiles are significantly different in their perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by the local people.</i>	H4 is partially supported.	
H4a (i)	Residents' perception of (SP) differ according to their age	Not supported	
H4a (ii)	Residents' perception of (SP) differ according to their gender	Not Supported	
H4a (iii)	Residents' perception of (SP) differ according to their marital status	Not Supported	
H4a (iv)	Residents' perception of (SP) differ according to their place of born	Not Supported	
H4a (v)	Residents' perception of (SP) differ according to their length of residency	Not Supported	
H4a (vi)	Residents' perception of (SP) differ according to their level of education	Not Supported	
H4a (vii)	Residents' perception of (SP) differ according to their tourism involvement (those who were dependent on job related to tourism with those who were not)	Not Supported	

‘Table 6.17, continued’.

H4b (i)	Residents’ perception of (IFII) differ according to their age	Not Supported	
H4b (ii)	Residents’ perception of (IFII) differ according to their gender	Not Supported	
H4b (iii)	Residents’ perception of (IFII) differ according to their marital status	Not Supported	
H4b (iv)	Residents’ perception of (IFII) differ according to their place of born	Not Supported	
H4b (v)	Residents’ perception of (IFII) differ according to their length of residency	Not Supported	
H4b (vi)	Residents’ perception of (IFII) differ according to their level of education	Supported	No formal education(lower mean) & Junior College Diploma (higher mean).
H4b (vii)	Residents’ perception of (IFII) differ according to their tourism involvement (those who were dependent on job related to tourism with those who were not)	Supported	Job related to tourism with higher mean.
H4c (i)	Residents’ perception of (CALQ) differ according to their age	Not Supported	
H4c (ii)	Residents’ perception of (CALQ) differ according to their gender	Supported	Male with higher mean.
H4c (iii)	Residents’ perception of (CALQ) differ according to their marital status	Supported	Married with higher mean.
H4c (iv)	Residents’ perception of (CALQ) differ according to their place of birth	Not Support	
H4c (v)	Residents’ perception of (CALQ) differ according to their length of residency	Supported	Group 2 (5-10 years) with lower mean and Group 4 (21 years and more) with higher mean.
H4c (vi)	Residents’ perception of (CALQ) differ according to their level of education	Supported	Group 1 (No formal education) with lower mean and group 7 (Junior College Diploma) with higher means.
H4c (vii)	Residents’ perception of (CALQ) differ according to their tourism involvement (those who were dependent on job related to tourism and those who were not)	Supported	Job related to tourism with higher mean.

Table 6.17, continued’.

General H5	<i>Religiosity has a significant relationship with the socio-cultural impacts as perceived by the local people.</i>	H5 is partially supported.	
H5a (i)	IB has significant relationship with SP	Supported	
H5a (ii)	IB has significant relationship with IFII	Supported	
H5a (iii)	IB has significant relationship with CALQ	Supported	
H5b (i)	IP has significant relationship with SP	Not supported	
H5b (ii)	IP has significant relationship with IFII	Not supported	
H5b (iii)	IP has significant relationship with CALQ	Supported	
General H6	<i>The perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism varies according to the degree of religiosity.</i>	H6 is partially supported.	
H6a (i)	Residents’ perception of (SP) differ according to their level of religiosity.	Not supported	
H6a (ii)	Residents’ perception of (IFII) differ according to their level of religiosity	Supported	Higher religiosity with higher mean
H6a (iii)	Residents’ perception of (CALQ) differ according to their level of religiosity	Supported	Higher religiosity with higher mean
H7	<i>The Host-tourist interaction is the most influential dimension of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people.</i>	H7 is Supported	Host-tourist interaction was the most determinant factor.

Chapter Seven

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the discussion, limitations, the implications, and conclusions of the research. It begins with the discussion of the research findings and hypotheses. This is followed by the limitations and various implications of the research findings. Suggestions for future research are also given before making concluding remarks.

7.2 DISCUSSION

7.2.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The profile of the respondents indicates that the majority are male, young, married with a moderate education background. This study discovered the dominant representation of males (64.6%) compared with female respondents. This result duplicates the findings of Kuvan and Akan (2005) and Tosun (2006) and is perhaps explained by the reluctance of women to talk to strangers in the areas where traditional norms and customs prevail. Men often make decisions for the family, including taking the lead in answering the questionnaire. This problem, according to Haralambopoulos and Pizam (1996), is endemic to traditional societies around the Mediterranean region. In addition to that, Sonmez (2001) claimed that ‘women's inferior status is legitimized’ in the Middle East by the ‘misinterpretation’ of the religious texts, resulting in barriers to participation in tourism as well as other spheres of activity.

The majority of respondents are young. This reflects the population census in Iran according to which 48% of the population consists of those who are less than 30 years of age (Iran National Census, 2007). The high dependency of residents on tourism is reflected by the fact that more than half of the respondents earned their living from tourism. More than 50% of the respondents have lived in the research area for more than 21 years and

probably have high community attachment as the majority of them are natives to the areas. Besides, more than half of the respondents considered themselves as being quite religious. The finding is consistent with Hassan's (2005) study on the comparison of Muslim piety among Muslim nations. His findings indicate that secular societies like Kazakhstan, Turkey or the community with high attachment to their national/historical identity such as Iran were the least likely to express their religiosity in comparison to other countries.

The frequency of interaction with domestic tourists is higher than that with international tourists. Less interaction with international tourists could be due to the presence of high numbers of local tourists as compared to international tourists. Besides, the locals also encounter communication skill and language proficiency problems.

In terms of tourist attractions, the results show that the local community is well informed about the tourist attractions in their areas. The majority of the respondents (52.2%) are satisfied with tourism development. This could be due to the slow pace of development in those areas. Based on the tourism destination life cycle model proposed by Butler (1980), the development of both Sare'in and Masooleh could be categorized under the early phase. In line with this, Faulkner and Tideswell (1997) stated that the early stage of tourism development normally receives a positive response from the community.

The open-ended questions revealed that the respondents demanded more tourism development and infrastructural facilities in the region. There are requests also for the improvement of tourism management systems and increasing job opportunities. They also expressed their intention to be part of the development planning process. The tourism authorities should take into account of their request as Mowforth and Munt (1998) stated

that the involvement and participation of the residents of the destination area are crucial in order to achieve successful tourism planning and development. In addition, by identifying and differentiating between resident perceptions that support or are likely to hinder tourism development, planners and managers can address concerns through strategically targeted community consultation or provision of information (Dyer et al., 2007).

7.2.2 Research Questions and Hypotheses

7.2.2.1 Research Question 1:

What are residents' perceptions of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in the study areas?

The proposed hypothesis which stated that the socio-cultural impacts are positive as perceived by local people is fully supported. Socio-cultural impacts in the study area are found to be largely positive. Similar to previous studies, this research discovered that tourism has not only brought about an improvement to its image (Hashimoto, 2002; Kim & Patrick, 2005), facilities (Perdue et al., 1990; Brunt & Courtney, 1999) and infrastructure development (Mbaiwa, 2004; Kim & Patrick, 2005) in the areas, but has also contributed to the improvement of cultural activities (Mbaiwa, 2004; Andereck et al., 2005; Kim & Patrick, 2005) and life qualities (Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Hashimoto, 2002; Lepp, 2007) among residents.

Overall, local residents in Masooleh and Sare'in regard tourism as bringing positive development in terms of the maintenance of historical sites, improved image of the destinations and better job opportunities and recreational facilities. The result is supportive

of previous findings by authors such as Liu and Var (1986), Korca (1996), Brunt and Courtney (1999), Dyer et al. (2003), Kim and Patrick (2005), Fouladiyan (2008), and Aref et al. (2009). Apart from that, the result also indicates that tourism developments have improved the locals' life quality and public facilities. This result is in line with other studies conducted in Iran. Azimi (2007), Fouladiyan (2008), and Aref et al. (2009) stated that tourism development contributed to increases in the standard of living, more employment opportunities, and income. Besides, studies by Brunt and Courtney (1999), Kim and Patrick (2005) and Wall and Mathieson (2006) also lend support to this finding. Similar to the previous findings (Liu & Var, 1986; Dyer et al., 2003; Kim & Patrick, 2005; Perez & Nadal, 2005), this study also demonstrates that tourism development encourages cultural exchange and the preservation of the community's identity.

The respondents expressed the view that tourism development does not affect their religious practice. The finding is similar to the previous observation made by Sharpley (1994). However, it contradicts Khan (1997) who noted that tourism development resulted in the disruption of religion.

The local communities are rather neutral in their opinions concerning vandalism, increasing crime, drug addiction, preservation of the community's traditional culture, pick-pocketing and robbery, alcohol consumption, prostitution, littering and noise. In this study, the above stated social impacts are not seen as issues of serious concern. Similar to the studies of Liu and Var (1986), Snaith and Haley (1999) and Azimi (2007), this research finds that the majority of the residents in Sare'in and Masooleh do not attribute social costs to tourism and they agree that the industry does not affect the crime rate. This finding is similar to that of Alhasanat (2007) who, in his comparative study on the different tourist sites in Jordan,

found that the socio-cultural impacts of tourism on the local community are still limited. There is still much to be done in terms of improving the tourism industry as it has not achieved its full potential. Yet, Ross (1992) has pointed out that even though empirical studies reported the overall positive attitudes of host community residents, the socio-cultural factors may not always be positive. The studies conducted by Fouladiyan (2008) and Aref et al. (2009) which took place in Iran (Abgram-E-Larijan, a village in the north of Iran) and Shiraz (a city located in the southwest of Iran), respectively also reported that to some extent the locals do perceive negative impacts unlike those in Sare'in and Masooleh. Mathieson and Wall (1982) and Butler (1980) stated that the level and stage of the impacts will change through time in response to structural changes in the industry. Even though the respondents expressed neutral opinions regarding the negative impacts, the officials need to prevent and eradicate any social problems that arise.

In the open-ended question, some of the responses given by the respondents are similar to the closed response questions. However, they also mentioned additional aspects. Among them are selecting qualified officials, controlling out migration, no interference of political and religious issues with tourism development, the production of local handicraft etc. The respondents stated that demands of tourists for cultural souvenirs can result in revitalizing local arts and handicrafts and it creates a market opportunity for the local products in the areas of research. This finding is supportive of previous studies by Grunewald (2002) and Mason (2003). However, the traditional designs and some materials used in producing some handicrafts (i.e. local socks in Masooleh) are modified to suit the needs of tourists. Dogan (1989), Johnson et al. (1994) and Brunt and Courtney (1999) also addressed this issue in their studies.

On the other hand, the respondents also expressed their concern about overcrowding and traffic congestion (Kim & Patrick, 2005; Perez & Nadal, 2005; Azimi, 2007; Aref et al., 2009), noise and pollution (Aref et al., 2009) and the crowding of public facilities and resources (McCool & Martin, 1994; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997; Brunt & Courtney, 1999) during the peak season. The diminishing curve of community size also worries the local residents. The progressive decline in the population in Masooleh can be explained by the fact that there has been an out-migration of mostly young and educated people due to the limitations in employment opportunities in the study areas and they are not satisfied with the infrastructure and public facilities. However, this is in contrast with the study conducted by Fouladiyan (2008) which demonstrated that reverse immigration in Abgram-E-Larijan (Iran) is one of the positive impacts of tourism.

7.2.2.2 Research Question 2:

Do the factors of tourism development characteristics, host-tourist interactions, host profiles and religiosity, affect the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in the study areas?

The second research question addressed the influence of tourism development characteristics, host-tourist interactions, host profiles, and religiosity on the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. These relationships were examined through hypotheses 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. The examination of these hypotheses is discussed by each related hypothesis.

Tourism Development Characteristics

The result indicates that, overall, the residents' perception of tourism development in the area is favourable. The local community strongly supports current and future tourism development in the areas. Hypothesis two proposed that tourism development characteristics influence the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Community Support (CS) has a positive relationship with all the socio-cultural impact dimensions unlike Tourism Development Activity (TDA), which is partially supported as only Social Problems (SP) is positively associated.

The local communities show a neutral view on Tourism Development Activity (TDA) such as proper management by regional tourism authorities, good promotion of tourism during off-season, high tourism development, local active involvement in tourism and proper functioning of rules and regulations. Residents also have a neutral view that marketing and promotion of the areas have been carefully handled. Results reported here are consistent with previous research by Andriotis (2002) on Cretan residents' satisfaction with public sector governance. The findings showed that although certain residents recognized the significant role played by the public sector in tourism development, others blamed the public sector for inappropriate management and organization in tourism. In Iran, tourism is not well promoted due to a lack of enthusiasm by government officers who are largely religious leaders to develop tourism due to the concerns about immoral influences. Consequently, the tourism industry has not been a major development priority in Iran as compared to other industries. It is not an income generating industry and it is merely regarded as a way of promoting cultural and political relations with other countries.

The relationship between tourism development activity and socio-cultural impacts could be explained by tourism life cycle models. According to Doxey's model, (1975), Iran could be seen as being at an early stage of tourism development despite the long history of travelling activities especially among regional and domestic tourists. Similarly, based on Butler's model, tourism development in the two study areas could be labeled as the exploration and the early involvement stages. Iran provides an interesting challenge to the application of Butler's (1980) tourism area life cycle in terms of how the change in political orientation and policies interrupts the expected progression of the destination lifecycle.

Based on Butler's (1980) tourism destination life cycle model, Iran's tourism development was at the late involvement or early development stage prior to the Islamic revolution. However, after the Islamic revolution there was a decline in tourism development. There was an adverse effect on the development curve which moved to between the early stage of involvement and late stage of exploration. The decline was probably due to the ambivalent attitude of the Islamic theocratic government as to whether or not to support further development of the tourism industry in the country. Furthermore, the effects of the Iraq – Iran war also contributed to the decline of tourism development in Iran (O'Gorman & Baum, 2010).

The results show that Community Support (CS) has positive relationships with all of the socio-cultural impact dimensions. Contrary to the poor level of participation by residents in the decision-making process, the local community strongly supports current and future tourism development in the areas. They also agreed that tourism is a major contributing factor to the development. These results are in line with Faulkner and Tideswell (1997) who stated that destinations at an early stage of tourism development might be expected to

elicit a more positive community response. Similarly, the findings of this study are congruent with the results of Allen et al. (1988) and Allen et al. (1993) who found that tourism is often considered beneficial and tends to cause positive perceptions in areas that are at the beginning of their tourism development.

However, the finding is in stark contrast to Cooke's (1982) who advocates that residents view tourism more favourably when they perceive themselves as being able to influence decision outcomes related to development. In fact, in many developing countries community participation relates mainly to employment as workers in different sectors or as small business operators, rather than participation in the decision making process of tourism planning. This is noted, for example, by Li et al. (2006). Thus, research into the antecedents of community support to tourism can help in framing tourism policy. By identifying the reasons why residents support or oppose the industry, it will be possible to select the developments that can minimize negative social impacts.

Host-Tourist Interactions

The findings reveal that overall local community attitude towards tourists is favourable. The proposed hypothesis that host-tourist interaction has a relationship with the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people is fully supported. Both dimensions of host -tourist interactions, Positive Tourist Interactions (PTI) and Perceived Positive Tourist Attitudes (PPTA), are positively correlated with Social Problems (SP); Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII) and Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ).

This finding can be explained by the social exchange theory which suggests that residents are likely to support tourism as long as the perceived benefits exceed the perceived costs. People engage in an interaction process where they seek something of value, be it material, social, or psychological. For the Iranian people who feel isolated socio-politically, they perceive that tourists have improved their destination image and bring them an extra income. Residents have a positive attitude towards tourists and tourism (Perdue et al., 1990; Yoon et al., 1999; Jurowski & Brown, 2001; Gursoy et al., 2002; Kayat, 2002; Madrigal, 1995; Kuvan & Akan, 2005; Andereck et al., 2005) due to the socio-economic benefits that they have gained.

Local residents who enjoy interacting, being friendly and welcoming the presence of tourists tend to perceive more positive impacts of tourism. This is in line with the study of Andereck et al. (2005) who reported that those who have more contact with tourists have more positive perceptions of tourism's impacts on community life, image and economy. Besides, the locals are also interested in cultural exchanges. Tourist-host contact can break the isolation of cultural groups, create awareness of each group, and provide an opportunity to learn each other's language and culture (Hofstede, 1997). The findings show that respondents have a neutral opinion of the preference regarding local tourists to international tourists. Ironically, the local residents in Masooleh and Sare'in have no preference over the tourists' religion. They are interested in hosting all tourists regardless of their being Muslim or non-Muslim. The results support the findings of earlier studies conducted by Cohen (1971), Var et al. (1985) and Din (1989) who stated that religious affiliation is not an influential factor in hosting tourists. The finding is inconsistent with Krippendorf's (1982) study which demonstrated that residents show less acceptance or tolerance of tourists who are physically or culturally different from themselves. Concerning the types of tourists, the

hosts prefer free/independent tourists to package tours. Perhaps independent tourists are more flexible and have more opportunity to interact with the host as opposed to tourists who travel on package tours. This finding is consistent with Thyne et al. (2006) who found that the independent tourists (backpackers) are the tourists most preferred by the local community.

Even though findings indicate that tourism does not disrupt the daily routine of the local community, in the semi-structured interviews, local people expressed occasional resentment and stress which exist between local people and tourists especially during the peak seasons. This could be attributed to the observable economic gap between tourists and hosts as suggested by McIntosh et al. (1995). Besides, the problem may also arise due to lack of sufficient infrastructure and public facilities. A potential source of conflict between the tourists and hosts could be due to the differences in their respective demands as stated by Mckercher (1993). This problem could be minimized if the authorities provide adequate facilities for both local people and tourists. If priority is given to the tourists, local residents will feel neglected and this could further worsen the relationship between them.

The socio-cultural impacts of tourism are the result of the interaction between 'hosts' and 'guests', or tourists and local people (Smith, 1995). Residents can influence the success or failure of the local tourism industry (Ap, 1992) and it must be noted that successful human contact depends on the host community (Millman, 1988). The local people's attitudes towards tourists are deemed important because they play a significant role in creating a hospitable environment for tourists and tourism in general. Therefore, it is essential to examine the interaction between these two groups as it has been found that residents' attitudes towards tourists are the single most important factor in determining tourists' repeat

visitation (Hoffman & Low, 1981). A positive interaction between hosts and tourists will result in mutual benefit for both groups. The tourists will gain a positive experience and with the increasing number of tourists, local residents will benefit through the tourists' spending and the economic benefits gained from this will eventually improve their quality of life.

Host Socio-demographic Profile

The hypothesis on the socio-demographic characteristics being different in the perception of socio-cultural impacts of tourism is partly supported. The results show there are no significant differences between the perception of socio-cultural impacts and the demographic variables of age and place of birth. This finding coincides with Mok et al. (1991), Korca (1996), Andereck et al. (2005), Haley et al. (2005), and Thyne et al. (2006). However, it contradicts studies conducted by Bastias-Perez and Var (1995), Tosun (2002), Kuvan, and Akan (2005) who reported that there are significant differences in these two variables on the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism.

According to the findings, respondents who are male, married, with a junior college diploma, with tourism related job and those who have lived for 21 years or more in the area perceive the Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) factor greater than other respondents. Those who are engaged in a tourism related job and a with junior college diploma also expressed their constructive view on Image, Facilities, and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII). The finding shows that males have a higher perception of the Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ) factor than females. This result is congruent with the finding of Mason and Cheyne (2000) who reported that in terms of development, it appeared that women were generally more negative in their perception of socio-cultural

impacts. The observation may be explained by the fact that males may have more opportunity for employment, education, cultural communication, and cultural activities than females in a traditional community under a theocratic government. In this study, education is associated with positive attitudes towards tourism as reported by previous authors (e.g. Bastias-Perez & Var, 1995; Korca, 1996; Haralambopulos & Pizam, 1996; Kreag, 2001; Teye et al., 2002; Kuvan & Akan, 2005). Locals who possess a junior college diploma tend to have a more positive perception than the rest. Besides, there is not much difference in terms of their perception between those with no formal education and those with a master's degree and above.

The results show that residents who are strongly attached to their community and have a tourism related job are more concerned about the benefits of tourism. These findings are consistent with the results reported by Bastias-Perez and Var (1995), Korca (1996), Jurowski et al. (1997) and Tosun (2002) all of whom indicated that residents who feel a strong attachment and have lived longer in the place are more likely to evaluate the impacts of tourism positively. They are more aware of the positive social benefits of tourism development. However, this result is contrary to other studies by Brougham and Butler (1981), Lankford and Howard (1994) and Azimi (2007) who suggested that residents who were born in the study area and those who had lived there for a long time, are somewhat less favourable towards tourism. Furthermore, residents who are employed by the industry, or express a higher level of dependence on or benefit from it, have more positive attitudes towards tourism. This result is in line with many previous studies (e.g. Lankford & Howard (1994); Korca (1996); Haralambopulos & Pizam (1996); Faulkner & Tideswell (1997); Jurowski et al. (1997); Brunt & Courtney (1999); Sirakaya et al. (2002); McGehee &

Andereck (2004); Haley et al. (2005); Andereck et al. (2005); Kuvan & Akan (2005); Azimi (2007)).

In summary, there are some differences in residents' perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism with regard to socio-demographic factors. The implication of these findings will be discussed in the management recommendations. .

Religiosity

The common association between religion and tourism is normally referred to pilgrimage tourism. However, this study attempts to view the relationship between religiosity and socio-cultural impacts as perceived by the local people. The findings indicated that more than three-quarters of the respondents stated that they are quite religious. Two factors, namely Islamic Belief (IB) and Islamic Practice (IP) are derived from factor analysis performed on the religiosity items. This finding supports the researchers who advocate the existence of two basic dimensions of religiosity (Allport, 1950; Batson et al., 1993; Matsuoka, 1997).

More importantly, it is consistent with the claim made by Marddent (2009) who states that the basis of Islamic religiosity from Quran and Hadith are *Iman* (the belief) and *Amal* (the practice). Essoo and Dibb (2004) have clearly pointed out the difference between religious belief and practice. The former is the adherence of individuals to a particular religious group and the latter explains the degree to which beliefs in specific religious values and ideals are held and practised by an individual. The residents of the case studies with high Islamic Belief (IB) expressed positive views on the perception of the socio-cultural impacts

of tourism as compared to those with higher Islamic Practice (IP). This result lends support to Krause (1993) who reported that religious beliefs are the core beliefs of the people.

This finding also confirms the result of Hassan (2005) who compared Muslim piety among several Muslim nations and reported Iranian religiosity as moderate. This observation may be explained by the claim of Willson (2007) that religion often takes a slant according to the previous culture of the area. Furthermore, a person's religious beliefs could be shaped by his/her cultural background, race, language, level of civilization/development, history, and even the level of liberalism of a country (Hassan, 2005). In Iran, the influence of *Zoroastrianism*, which was the religion before the Muslims conquered the country in the 7th century AD, remains strong among Iranians. As an example, the main holiday in Iran is *NowRuz*, and not the *Aid* which is globally celebrated as the main holiday in Islamic countries. Iranians have a strong attachment to their history and culture. The other reason could be the current oppression under the Islamic state that may have caused a backlash effect among residents as regards Islamic practice. Furthermore, the relative strength of religious belief may be explained by Tiliouine and Belgoumidi (2009) who state that Islamic Belief provides a framework with which Muslims make sense of their life. It can also be argued that one has to believe in something before one actually performs the act. In the modern world, the younger generations are more open-minded. Attitudes towards music, dancing, social and physical contact between members of the opposite sex and not wearing head cover are contradictory to Islamic Practice. This may explain why the value of religious practice in Islamic societies has declined. As educational levels among people increase, they are more relaxed in their religious practices (Loeffler, 1988). This could explain the overall positive perception of the respondents who are young and have received a moderate level of education. As a whole, the author is unable to make a comparison due

to the lack of prior research in this subject. Therefore, there is a need for further research to be conducted in other Islamic countries (E.g. Turkey, Egypt, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia) which have different based culture and history.

The hypothesis on the relationship between religiosity and the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism is partially supported. There is a positive relationship between Islamic Belief and all three dimensions of socio-cultural impacts. This implies that the higher the Islamic Belief among respondents, the higher perceptions of Image, Facilities and Infrastructure Improvement (IFII), Cultural Activities and Life Quality (CALQ). However, Islamic Practice only has a significant positive relationship with the socio-cultural impact factor of CALQ but not IFII and SP. This means that the higher the Islamic Practice among respondents, the more likely they are to view that tourism provides a positive benefit towards Cultural Activities and Life Quality (CALQ). The bigger role played by Islamic Belief in influencing the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism is expected as both Sadler (1970) and Delener (1994) agreed that religious belief is an important value in an individual's characteristics, which can influence an individual's perception in different situations.

In addition to that, McDaniel and Burnett (1990) also mentioned that religious beliefs tend to be causally related to different attitudes and behaviour among individuals in a population. The positive perception may also have indicated that tourism activities do not jeopardize the locals' religious beliefs and practices. This contradicts Khan (1997) who claimed that in many tourist destinations, local communities often feel that their religious beliefs are taken away by external interests. This result also justifies Aziz's (1995) finding which demonstrated that Islam has no direct hostility towards tourism and as evident in this

study, it is also well perceived by both residents of Masooleh and Sare'in. The positive perception of tourism development in these areas could also be explained with Butler's (1980) tourism destination life cycle model. It points out that the associated impacts have a parallel relationship with the development phase of tourism.

Hypothesis six was formulated in order to examine whether there is any difference in the perceived socio-cultural impacts of tourism with regard to the degree of religiosity. Religiosity may also be measured based on how pious a person is in believing and practising the Islamic religion. The result shows that high piety is related to higher positive perceptions of the socio-cultural impact factors of Image, Facilities and Infrastructure Improvements (IFII) and Cultural Activity and Life Quality (CALQ). The tourism development in both study areas is not regarded as a threat to their local traditions and customs. In fact, they are perceived as a means to up-grade the destination's image as well as improving facilities and infrastructures. In addition, the standard of living among locals is believed to have increased to a certain extent due to the development. Unexpectedly, the result indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the social problems scores for the two religiosity groups. This contradicts Delenar's (1994) finding which concluded that the pro-religious individuals are likely to be more dogmatic and more conservative than are the non-religious. Comparably, according to Berggren and Bjornskov (2009), religion often teaches honesty and prohibits destructive behaviour. Hence, it was expected to observe dissimilar attitudes towards social problems between the respondents who belong to different degrees of religious devotion. This finding is incongruent with the results reported by Muhamad and Ghani (2006). These authors found that the degree of religiosity has a significant influence on the perceptions of unethical practices among

Muslims. Therefore, it is not surprising that highly devoted people have more positive perception towards the socio-cultural impacts of tourism.

7.2.2.3 Research Question 3:

What is the most influential dimension on the residents' perception of the socio-cultural impact of tourism?

Among the predictor variables, host-tourist interaction is found to be the most important variable that influences the socio-cultural impacts of tourism as perceived by local people. Douglas and Douglas (1996) stated that any analysis of host-tourist impacts is a function of the interaction between these two groups. The interaction will be dependent upon the nature and extent of social, economic and cultural differences between the tourists and hosts, the ratio of visitors to residents, the distribution and visibility of tourism development and the speed and intensity of development.

According to Smith (1995) and Telfer and Sharpley (2008), socio-cultural impacts of tourism largely depend on the tourist-host encounter. The acceptance and tolerance of tourists by a host community has been acknowledged as being vital for a successful encounter at a tourist destination (Lawson et al., 1996) and it also leads to positive perception of socio-cultural impacts by the host community. However, if there is an unbalanced encounter or relation which takes place, the local residents will be more likely to perceive negative impacts (Telfer & Sharpley, 2008). Therefore, host attitudes towards tourists and tourism play an important role in determining the socio-cultural impacts.

Both dimensions of host-tourist interactions extracted from the Factor Analysis, namely Positive Tourist Interactions (PTI) and Perceived Positive Tourist Attitudes (PPTA) are positively associated with socio-cultural impacts. Of these two dimensions, positive tourist interactions (PTI) scores a higher percentage variance explained as compared to perceived positive tourist attitudes (PPTA). The local communities welcome the presence of tourists in their area and they also enjoy interacting with them. The locals have good interaction with the tourists and that clearly explains their positive perception towards the socio-cultural impacts. De Kadt (1979) points out that the quality of the host-tourist relationship and community attitudes towards tourism generally depend on the type of contact between the hosts and tourists, the importance of the tourism industry to the community, and the community tolerance threshold.

The residents in Masooleh and Sare'in expressed positive views of tourism development and tourists, as they are sensitive about local culture and norms. Aziz (1995) claims that the tourists who visit these areas do not challenge the moral, religious, and social values of the local society when they are on holiday. According to Ap (1992), tension, conflict, dissatisfaction and anger will rise if the local communities are ignored, exploited by guests or their needs are overlooked. However, this circumstance is not applicable in Masooleh and Sare'in as the locals expressed Positive Interaction with Tourists (PTI) and Perceived Positive Tourist Attitudes (PPTA).

Apart from the good interaction between tourists and hosts, the disparity between these two groups also influences the socio-cultural impacts perception (Douglas, 1996). The interaction between hosts and tourists will lead to friction if there is a great difference in terms of cultural background (Sutton, 1967) and economic status (Coltman, 1989;

McIntosh et al., 1995). Since most of the tourists who visit the study areas are mainly domestic tourists, the socio-cultural impacts experienced in the areas may not be similar to areas visited mainly by international tourists. International tourists (westerners) who visit the areas are normally on organized tours and they have minimal contact with local people. The majority of foreign tourists are from the neighbouring countries and they share similar characteristics in terms of religion and codes of conduct. The similar cultural background between the host and the tourist may explain the insignificant perception of social problems as perceived by local people in the study areas (Weaver & Lawton, 2001). The observation may also be explained by the Social Distance Theory (Thyne et al., 2006) which proposed that subjects are more tolerant to/accept people more socially and culturally similar to themselves. Therefore, the gap between the host and tourists in both Masooleh and Sare'in is perceived to be minimal as they mostly host domestic tourists. Despite that, Douglas (1996) also mentioned that intensity of development also influences the interaction. Since the tourism development in Masooleh and Sare'in is at an early stage, the residents did not experience a sense of displacement and obstruction as demonstrated by Kreag's (2001) study.

In general, host and tourist interaction in Masooleh and Sare'in is influenced by positive perceptions towards tourists, good interaction with tourists, minimal cultural differences and an early stage tourism development.

7.3 STUDY LIMITATIONS

Overall, conducting research in Iran is a very difficult task due to the limited secondary data, strict control by officials and the bureaucratic processes such as the requirement of

personal identification letters in order to carry out the field research. All these requirements demand the researcher's patience and hard work.

Choosing two different tourist destinations for this research requires more financial resources, time, and effort. The researcher had to conduct the field research on her own due to budgetary limitations. The researcher was also under pressure to complete the task satisfactorily as it would be difficult to repeat the research.

Furthermore, conducting research in an Islamic country such as Iran is not an easy task for a female researcher. In fact, it would be easier for a male researcher or a group of researchers to conduct field research in the country. It is suggested that the female researcher should be accompanied by a member of her family such as her husband, father, brother, uncle or a group of researchers. The presence of family members of the researcher is well accepted by the community and thus it creates a comfortable atmosphere. It eases the process of field research.

The research was conducted in an environment where religion is favoured politically and unfavourable responses to questions related to religion could lead to legal/political problems for respondents. This made some respondents reluctant to answer questions related to religiosity. However, this problem was overcome by offering more explanations while distributing the questionnaires as well as assuring participants about the confidentiality of their identity and responses given.

The results of this study reveal the opinions of the populations of Masooleh and Sare'in. Therefore, the generalization of the results as being representative of Iran should be carried

out with caution. Furthermore, this research was undertaken during the early part of the low season, and thus the acute impacts of heavy tourist concentrations at the destinations were not evident. However, this creates a space for the local community and they had ample time to spend with the researcher.

Considering novelty of subject of study at University of Malaya, and insufficient resources, led the author to visit other academic places and libraries (for example: National University in Singapore (NUS)) in order to find out the essential data for this research. This takes other extra time, planning and expenses.

7.4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

7.4.1 Implications for Tourism Policy Makers, Planners, and Managers

The importance of residents and their perception of tourism and tourists have been laid out in this study. The results indicate that community support has a parallel relationship with perception of the socio-cultural impacts. In other words, the higher the community support, the more the residents will have positive perceptions of the socio-cultural impacts. Therefore, it is vital for the stakeholders within the tourism industry to take into account the local residents as they are a crucial stakeholders who can influence the success or failure of tourism development in their areas. Page (2003) points out that residents' attitudes may be a barometer of an area's ability to absorb tourists and that indicates that the sustainability of any tourism development depends on the active support of the local population.

The residents' intention to participate in tourism development and the related decision-making should be taken into consideration by the relevant authorities. This can be done by

educating the residents, and training them with the required knowledge, skills, and information, which will allow them to be actively involved in tourism development and management. The planners and developers must design communication strategies with the local community. They should also clearly spell out the development that is going to take place and the authorities must take residents comments and feedback into consideration.

On top of that, the tourism authorities should have proper planning in managing tourism development. The indication of positive perceptions by the local residents should not be taken for granted as the developments in both areas are still at an early stage. The locals' perceptions will change parallel with the level of development. Once it reaches saturation point, the residents may no longer be in favour of tourists and tourism development as stated in Butler's (1980) tourism destination life cycle model. This explains the need to monitor the perceptions of local residents on a continuous basis in order to avoid any adverse effects. The tourism policymakers need to evaluate the applicability of the current policies and revise them according to the level of development and the perceptions of the local residents. Besides, the authorities have to ensure that the tourism players respect the regulations. Proper planning of tourism development is essential in order to ensure that the players within the industry are not at stake especially the local residents.

Host-tourist interaction has been identified as the most important variable in influencing the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in the study areas. The related authorities should examine to what extent the host communities are able to cope with identified tourism impacts. The success of the interaction is reliant on public attitudes in creating a hospitable environment for tourists and tourism in general. There will be a

decline in the number of tourists if the local residents are hostile towards tourism and tourists. This could be attributed to the observable economic gap between tourists and hosts as suggested by McIntosh et al. (1995), the lack of sufficient infrastructure and public facilities (Mckercher, 1993), overcrowding (Andereck et al., 2005), culture destruction (Liu & Var, 1986; Milman & Pizam, 1988) and the increasing cost of living (McCool & Martin, 1994) among others that might lead to the feelings of resentment by host communities. These issues could be faced if the relevant authorities protect the well-being of the locals as well as providing adequate infrastructure and facilities for both residents and tourists. The authorities can provide employment opportunities and reward the local community fairly. Local residents must also benefit from the tourism infrastructure and development projects. Residents are normally satisfied with the development when it helps them to raise their quality and standard of living.

The organizers of cultural events in these areas have to preserve the local culture. The debasement of the local culture, norms and traditions may trigger friction between tourists and residents. Various stakeholders within the tourism industry, namely public policy-makers, planners, managers, and tourism investors should focus on attaining sustainable tourism development in both study areas.

In Iran, the policies adopted by the religious leaders may oppose tourism development. The public policy maker needs to review the existing policies and enact new policies which are more relevant to the current circumstances. Besides, non-tourism related policies also need to be looked into in order to avoid contradicting policies, which will hinder the progress of the tourism industry. Iran should open up its tourism related policies which are bound by the religion in order to attract more tourists. Increasing numbers of tourists can offer major

opportunities for local economic development, which eventually could enhance the positive effects of tourism on local socio-economic, employment opportunities, and infrastructure development. This could be done by forming collaboration between stakeholders and attempting to build a consensus about tourism policies that may be beneficial as claimed by Bramwell and Sharman (1999).

7.4.2 Implications for Academics (Theoretical Aspects)

From an academic point of view, this study has attempted to provide a conceptual framework that permits continued advancement in the development of socio-cultural impacts studies. The underlying theme of this research is that the socio-cultural impacts perceived by the residents are influenced by host-tourist interaction, tourism development characteristics and religiosity. The socio-demographic factors had been excluded from the model as they play a rather minor role in explaining residents' perceptions of socio-cultural impacts. Besides, this relationship has been examined in many previous studies. The proposed model intended to understand and explore the residents' perceptions of the impacts of tourism. The predictor variables that are employed in this study provide a basis for the identification and definition of the central concepts involved in measuring residents' perceptions of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. The major contribution to the knowledge from this study is the consideration of religiosity as a variable which influences the perceptions of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Figure 7.1 presents the final model examined in this study.

This study tries to fill the gap which exists in the academic literature regarding the factors that may influence local community attitudes towards tourism development. In the proposed model, Host-Tourist Interactions, Community Support, and Religiosity (Islamic

Belief) are found to be the strong determinants of the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism among the residents of Masooleh and Sare'in. The new finding on the influence of religiosity gives a broader perspective of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in a Muslim country and particularly of Iran. However, residents' attitudes may change according to the level of development. Future studies can look at the impacts of the religiosity variable in the destination, which has reached more advance stages of tourism development.

Overall, there are few tourism studies which have been conducted in Iran especially concerning the impacts of tourism. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge concerning the perceptions of Iranian communities towards the presence of tourists and tourism. Besides, similar studies have been conducted in largely urban and rural communities. Both Aref's (2009) and Azimi's (2007) studies took place in Shiraz and Esfahan city, respectively. On the other hand, Fouladiyan (2008) conducted his study in Abgram-E-Larijan village. However, this research has been carried out in two small towns at the early stages of urbanization and tourism development in the Iranian community. This study's contribution resides in its being the first to examine the socio-cultural impacts in a small town in Iran.

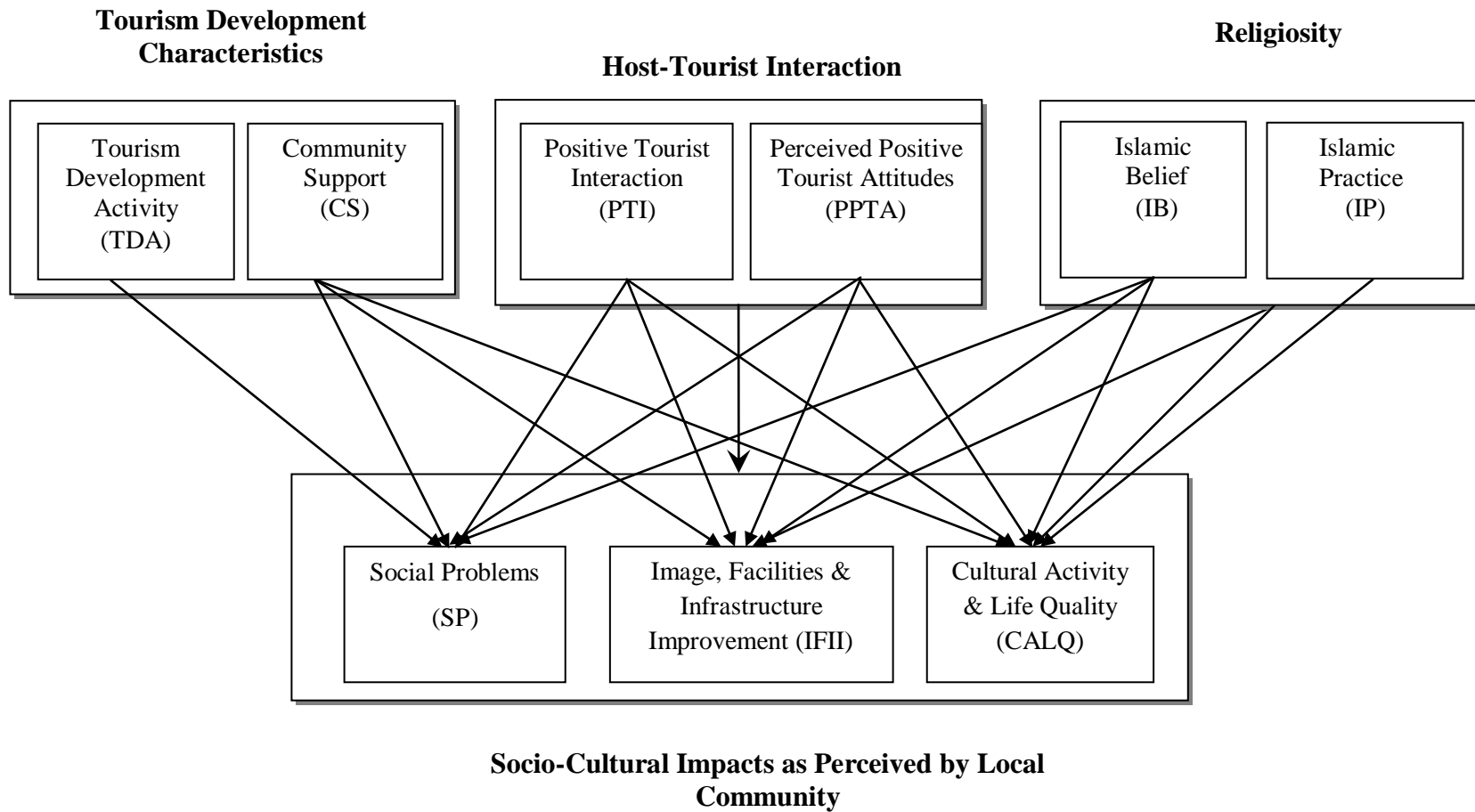


Figure 7.1: Final Structural Model of the Influence and Antecedents on the Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism

7.4.3 Implications for Tourism Marketers

The study demonstrates that local community has no preference in terms of the religion or nationality of tourists. However, this is not parallel with the tourism policy of the public sector and officials in Iran which concentrates on attracting tourists from Muslim countries. Efforts must be taken to market the country in the non-Muslim countries in order to attract more tourists. Based on the database of the inbound tourists, the market segment can be identified and appropriate marketing planning must be formulated for different markets. To be a successful tourist destination, Iran should not merely depend on tourists from Muslim countries but also from non-Muslim countries. Iran can project a friendly image to the outside world through advertisements. The advertisements should aim at reflecting that Iranians are warm, friendly and welcoming to the non-Muslim tourists. Conventionally, Iran is well known for its cultural /heritage tourism and pilgrimage tourism. There should be a diversification in terms of product offerings by the tourism industry. Iran's tourism public sector can also promote other products like the eco-tourism, sport tourism, thermal, and health tourism, which have great potential in the country.

The local community plays a vital role in determining the success of a destination as a tourist attraction. The result indicates that the locals welcome the presence of tourists regardless of their nationality. If the public sector is very concerned about the host response, then they should engage in discussions between national and regional tourist boards, the local residents, and the institutions involved in local economic development. They can promote a destination and develop destination-marketing strategies based on local attitudes.

Furthermore, according to the findings, the respondents have no significant opinion concerning the management of tourism marketing and advertising. This ambivalent view may reflect that the level of tourism promotion for their destination is not satisfactory. Low numbers of international inbound tourists and seasonality are the results of unsuccessful marketing. This study suggests that Iran's marketing strategies need to be reviewed with probably the help of expert consultancy. Besides, both Iran's public and private tourism sectors should cooperate to supervise and manage the marketing strategy.

7.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has examined the religiosity perspective in Masooleh and Sare'in, which are located in the North and North West of Iran. Future studies should concentrate on other regions of Iran as well as in the other Muslim countries to enhance the understanding of the effect of religiosity on the socio-cultural perceptions. Besides, a comprehensive study of hosts, tourists, and tourism authorities' attitudes will provide a holistic view. It will provide more accurate information and the tourism planners will be better equipped to make the right decisions for sustainable tourism development.

The researchers can engage in a longitudinal study in order to observe the changes that take place. Similar research could also be carried out during low and high seasons and also at different stages of tourism planning and development. The researchers will be able to identify the dissimilarity in the perceptions with the various degrees of destination maturity. This type of study could also provide an insight into the type of tourism development that has been acceptable for the various groups within the community. Besides, the adverse impacts could be minimized with continuous monitoring and the tourism planners will be able to formulate contingency plans

accordingly. Further studies should be conducted in different geographical areas in order to gain a better understanding of residents' attitudes towards the socio-cultural impacts of tourism of a particular destination.

The main essence of this study is on socio-cultural impacts. Future research should also consider the economic and environmental factors that may influence the perception of tourism impacts. Follow-up studies which measure these variables will provide a better understanding of the acceptance level of the locals and the tourism planners can develop a particular destination based on the response given by the locals.

7.6 CONCLUSION

This study offers an insight into residents' attitudes towards the impacts of tourism in two small tourist areas (Sare'in and Masooleh) in an Islamic society where tourism is at an early stage of development. The major theoretical contribution of this study lies in the exploration of the perceived socio-cultural impacts of tourism and the factors that are likely to influence these impacts, especially Islamic religiosity.

Overall, the socio-cultural impacts are perceived to be positive by the local residents and in fact they also expressed great support for current and further tourism development. The economic contribution of tourism is one of the main factors that leads to the high acceptance of tourists and tourism. Tourism is found to raise the locals' living standard.

The host-tourist interaction is found to be the most essential factor in determining the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. The positive host-tourist interaction in this study is explained by the social exchange theory and the benefits perceived by

the residents outweigh the risks associated with tourism. The residents have also expressed their intention to participate in the tourism development process. The authorities should pay more attention to this matter and they should allow the residents' participation in the planning, decision-making and management of tourism. The success and sustainability of any development depend on the active support of the local population (Akis et al., 1996).

The locals are Muslims and they are expected to be highly religious as Iran is an Islamic republic. Islamic religiosity among respondents is found to be high on Islamic Belief and moderate on Islamic Practice. The results show that Islamic Belief is significantly related to all socio-cultural impact factors. Meanwhile, the higher the Islamic Practice among respondents, the more likely they are to view that tourism provides positive benefits for Cultural Activities and Life Quality. In terms of religiosity, the findings are contradictory to the current perception that religious individuals are likely to be more dogmatic and more conservative than the non-religious (Delenar, 1994). It also strengthens the statement made by Tiliouine and Belgoumidi (2009) who warn that one should not have a stereotyped view that the strength of Islamic attachments or the degree of religious devotion among ordinary Muslims signifies a likelihood of holding extremist political views. However, it contradicts the earlier claim of a strong relationship between religious persons with being conservative (Barton & Vaughan, 1976) and possessing more traditional attitudes (Wilkes et al., 1986) in terms of the perception of tourism development. In addition, the socio-demographic variable appears to play an insignificant role in explaining the perceived social cultural impact.

Only two destinations were selected in this study due to time and financial constraints. Thus, the result may not be generalized as a representative of Iran or Muslim society.

Future studies should attempt to measure a more representative sample of the Iranian population. Since most of the tourists who visit the study areas are mainly domestic tourists, the socio-cultural impacts experienced in the areas may not be similar to areas visited mainly by international tourists. International tourists (westerners) who visit the areas are normally on organized tours and they have minimal contact with local people. The majority of foreign tourists are from the neighbouring countries and they share similar characteristics in terms of religion and codes of conduct. The similar cultural background of the host and the tourist may explain the insignificant perception of social problems as perceived by local people in the study areas (Weaver & Lawton, 2001). The observation may also be explained by the Social Distance Theory (Thyne et al., 2006) which proposed that subjects are more tolerant /accept people more socially and culturally similar to themselves.

In terms of the theoretical and contextual contributions, this study is the first to explore the influence of Islamic religiosity on the perception of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Iran. The results support the Social Exchange Theory (Ap, 1992) and the Social Distance Theory (Thyne et al., 2006), and positioned Masooleh and Sare'in as at the involvement (Butler, 1980) and Euphoric (Doxey, 1976) stage of tourism development. The results, to a certain extent, could indicate that Islamic religiosity does not, in principle, play a role in instilling negative perceptions of tourism development. The current positive impacts experienced by local people are evidence that the residents are in favour of the development and are also likely to support a further expansion of the tourism industry. This research is a valuable step in monitoring and managing the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in the areas. It has succeeded in providing some original insights into the interactions between the Islamic religion and tourism, which are of value to authorities, the industry, academics, and local communities.

To conclude, it is hoped that this research provides some insights into the socio-cultural impacts of tourism and its effect on the local community's perceptions in an Islamic country which are of great value to the authorities, the industry, academics and the local communities in both the Muslim and non-Muslim worlds.

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