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THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC TRASNPOTATION ON TOURISTS SATISFACTION: STUDY OF COLOMBO FORT TO GALLE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to assess tourists" satisfaction level and transport services in Sri Lanka (case study at Fort to Galle), and to identify the relationship between tourist satisfaction and transport service quality. In this study, five objectives and five questionnaires were developed in the study model. The empirical data were collected from tourists via a survey that yielded 300 usable questionnaires, these data were analyzed using a series of multiple regressions to determine the relationship between public transportation service quality and tourist satisfaction. The findings confirmed that transportation service quality has direct impact on tourist satisfaction throughout transport mode facilities, destination accessibility and destination attraction. As a result, this study argued that there is a significant impact of the public transportation service quality on tourist satisfaction, and therefore service quality plays an important role in tourism by increasing the level of tourist satisfaction. This study provides some theoretical and managerial implications based on the findings to academicians and managers/ policy makers of tourism sector. The researcher identified areas for future studies and he discussed the main limitations in this study.

Keywords: tourist's satisfaction, public transportation, punctuality and reliability, safety and security, service frequency.

INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka is famous as one of the favorite tourists' destinations in the world. Positioning of the island in the middle of the Indian ocean helps to attract transit visitors into the island.The government tourist bureau was to set up in 1937. The Bureau provided facilities to the large volume of tourists who sailed between the west and east through the port of Colombo on passenger ships (SLTDA 2008).

Sri Lanka's primary location on the world sea lanes attracted many cruise ships, freighters and other vessels. Passengers that entered the port of Colombo disembarked and enjoyed sightseeing in Colombo, Kandy and their surroundings. Sri Lanka gained independence in 1948 and the new government decided to revive tourist activities by setting up the second Tourist Bureau which came to be known as the Government Tourist Bureau. The Government Tourist Bureau which was set up in 1948 functioned under the Ministry of Commerce for some time and was brought under the Ministry of Defense. At the time of its independence from British rule in 1948, Sri Lanka's economy was considered much more prosperous than most of its Asian neighbors. Researcher identify the four main tourism industries in Sri Lanka such as heritage tourism industry, beach tourism, cultural tourism and hill and mountain tourism. Nowadays

government develop tourism industry because tourism is one of the major industry to increase income level of the country. Furthermore, government also wants to develop a proper transportation system. The country's main ports are in Colombo, Galle, Kankasanthuri, Hambanota, Trincomalee and Point Pedru (SLTDA 2008).

The loopholes of public transport in Sri Lanka creates number of problems in tourism industry. Lack of public transportation and traffic jams are major issues in many tourists' destination. According to those issues it's directly effects on their customer satisfaction level. Furthermore, the facts such as transport inadequacy, centralization, fixity are also effect on tourists' satisfaction level. The problem statement of this research is to identify that the existing facilities are not enough to fulfill the transportation needs of the tourists.

Proving a suitable output after the comparison of tourists' satisfaction level in tourism industry in order to make it easy to develop the supply of public transportation. Meanwhile special attention is given to find out the factors that enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the public transportation in order to maximize the satisfaction level of the tourism industry. Due to the high competition of the tourism industry the public transportation should be efficient in order to increase the level of satisfaction of tourists. Increasing level of satisfaction in tourism industry is an essential factor.

This research helps to cover the gap in fulfill the tourists' satisfaction of the transport system and give the suggestions to increase the many facilities for tourism industry. It's more important to increase the tourism attraction in Sri Lanka

LITERATURE REVIEW

Transportation systems can be defined as network that must be connected to travel routes. Natural and cultural resources and livelihoods support tourism. (Bramwell & Lane, 2002). Government plays a significant role in developing the infrastructure to support tourists' transportation (Khadaroo & Seetanah, 2008). According to this statement government has to plays major part to increase tourists' inflow. Because government has to develop new infrastructure facilities to tourists. Transportation increases the opportunities for travelers who want to visit out-of-town attraction (Matei,2005) some tourists like to use in public transportation for reach their destination. According to this statement public transport has to add some new facilities passengers its helps to increase opportunities to develop public transportation. Transportation network and infrastructure is some significant factors that affects the success of tourism development. (Prideaux, 2000).

Currie and Falconer (2013) suggested that tourism stakeholders should to increase reliance on transportation systems from central transportation hubs to public transportation areas for delivery to tourist attractions. Culpan (1987) explains the components of international transportation systems that are related to tourism, such as airports, trains specially on beachside railway facilities, as well as public transportatio n. Hall (1999) proposes that transportation is important to a tourism system.

According to this statement transportation is one of the major element to effect on the tourism satisfaction. If government wants to develop the tourism system also should develop the transportation system. Blancheton and Marchi (2013) suggested that rail tourism systems are an effective approach to tourism sustainability because rail systems

can bring many people to tourist attractions at once and are safe for the environment. Furthermore, if develop the tourism authorities have focus on environment. Because tourists are more attract on environmental behavior. Key success factors for leisure and tourist transportation involve target group identification, catchment areas, situations regarding motorized individual traffic, and intensive, creative, and continuous market communication (Gronau & Kagermeier, 2007). Many development activities that support tourism may bring negative consequences to the environment.

Measuring customer satisfaction with public transport services is an important topic in transportation research and practice. To improve services and increase the number of customers, providers need to understand how much customer expectations have actually been fulfilled. Customer surveys are critical, as they provide transport operators with valuable information such as what aspects are important for customers and what they are particular happy or unhappy about.

Customer satisfaction is defined as satisfaction based on an outcome that characterizes satisfaction as the end-state resulting from the experience of consumption, or a process that emphasizing the perceptual, evaluative and psychological processes contributing to customer satisfaction (Varvara, 1997). This definition, assessment of satisfaction is made during the service delivery process. Customer satisfaction can also be defined as feeling of the post utilization that the consumers experience from their purchase (Westbrook and Oliver, 1991; Um et al.,2006). Felleson and Friman (2008) reported on an annual transnational public transport customer satisfaction study in eight European cities (Stockholm, Barcelona, Copenhagen, Geneva, Helsinki, Vienna, Berlin, Manchester, and Oslo). Four satisfaction dimensions were delineated from a factor analysis of 17 attribute-related statements, system, comfort, staff, and safety. However, the results were not consistent in all cities, meaning that public transport services were perceived differently. Several factors contribute to the variation of customer perceptions, including those related to management has to find out solutio ns for how the services were provided to personal group. It is the feeling of happiness or unhappiness as a result of comparing the perceived performance of services or products with the expected performance. If the perceived performance does not meet the expected performance, then the customer will feel disappointed or dissatisfied (Kotler, 2008). A consumer is deemed to be satisfied upon the experience weighted sum total produce a feeling of enjoyment when compared with the expectation.

In tourism studies, customer satisfaction is the visitor's state of emotion after they experiencing their tour (Baker and Crompton, 2000; Sanchez et al., 2006). Customer satisfaction is one the most areas being researched in many tourism studies due to its importance in determining the success and the continued existence of the tourism business. Destination holiday's customer satisfaction is the extent of overall enjoyment that the tourists feel, the result that the tour experience able to fulfil the tourists" desires, expectation, needs and wants from the tour" (Chen and Tsai, 2007).

In study of customer satisfaction with public transport in Indonesia, Budiono (2009) identified two groups of service attribute. The "soft quality" factor includes security issues and comfort, and the "functionality quality" consists of frequency, travel time, punctuality, and time, with the latter being the more influential on levels of the customer satisfaction. In contrast, Tyrinopoulos and Antoniou (2008) emphasized the differences of customer perception

between different transit operators due to their specific characteristics and service conditions. In general, the most important satisfaction attributes across transit operators are service frequency, vehicle cleanliness, waiting conditions, transfer distance, and network coverage. However, the results are varied among transit systems. For instance, vehicle cleanliness, staff behavior, and ticketing systems are the most important attributes for metro (subway) operators. In the case of bus operators, customers stressed service frequency, vehicle cleanliness, and network coverage. A well-coordinated and reliable transportatio n environment is strongly preferred by all users. In their study of Swedish residents in Göteborg, Friman, Edvardsson, and Gärling (2001), and Friman and Gärling (2001) indicated a relationship between frequency of negative critical incidents and satisfaction with public transport (low frequency led to increased satisfactio n). Moreover, the authors believed staff behavior was of significant importance in customer perception, along with service reliability, simplicity of information and design.

Tourists exhibited a diverse perceptions and transport attitudes. Their satisfaction with transport is influenced by several factors. According to this statement those factors differs by different countries. According to that particular country economy. Stradling et al. (2007) argued that age and frequency of use are the most influential while factors such as household income, car availability and gender are less significant. Thompson and Schofield (2007) studied the relationship between public transport performance and destination satisfaction. According to this statement showed that tourists evaluation of public transport performance slightly influenced their satisfaction with destination. Furthermore, these authors emphasized by, the importance of public transport's ease-of-use as it has great impact on satisfaction than efficiency and

safety. Public transport is considered as an additional tourism product, which adds to the total tourist experience. However, despite high investment costs and potential value, some public transport systems are still not favored by visitors (Bramwell, 1998).

Service quality is defined as what the customer gets out and is willing to pay for" rather than "what the supplier puts in (Ducker, 1991). Tourists like pay for facilities but those facilities must have satisfied their expectations. Service quality has been defined to the extent where the service fulfils the needs or expectation of the customers has conceptualized service quality as the overall impression of customers towards the service weakness or supremacy. Per this statement service quality is most important factor for satisfaction level. Service quality is encouraging or discourage tourists' inflow. Parasuraman et al. (1988) introduced the SERVQUAL model to measure service quality including 22 items in five dimensions: reliability, tangible, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

These dimensions have specific service characteristic link to the expectation of customers. The SERVQUAL scale was developed in the marketing context and this was supported by the Marketing Science Institute. Even though this model as an instrume nt has been used in various studies in across industries, the SERVQUAL has received many criticisms from other scholars (e.g., Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Brown et al., 1993). However, there are many researchers opposed the use of SERVQUAL to measure service quality due to the industry characteristics differences. Other previous researches confirmed that SERVQUAL instrument is applicable in tourism industry (Fick and Ritchie, 1991; Yuan et al., 2005; Shaikh and Khan, 2011). Medlik and Middleton (1973) noted that „the tourist product is to

be considered as an amalgam of three main components of attractions, facilities at the destination and accessibility of the destination'. In other words, the tourist product is 'not as airline seat or a hotel bed, or relaxing on a sunny beach but rather an amalgam of many components, or a package'. While, Middleton and Clarke (2001) indicated that there are five main components in the overall product, and their destination attractions and environment, destination facilities and services, accessibility of the destination, images of the destination, and Price to the consumer.

Destination attractions and environment

These are the component elements within the destination that largely determine tourists' choice and influence their motivations to visit that destination. They include Natural attractions, such as landscape, seascape, beaches, climate, flora and fauna and other geographical features of the destination and its natural resources. Built attractions such as buildings and tourism infrastructure including historic and modern architecture, monuments, promenades, parks and gardens, convention centers, marinas, ski slopes, industrial archaeology, managed visitor attractions generally, golf courses, specialty shops and themed retail area. Cultural attractions such as history and folklore, religion and art, theatre, music, dance and other entertainment, and museums. Social attractions, such as way of life and customs of resident or host population, language and opportunities for social encounters.

Destination facilities and services

These are the component elements located in the destination, which make it possible for visitors to stay and to enjoy in that destination. They included accommodation unit, such as hotels, holiday villages, apartments, villas, campsites, caravan parks, hostels, condominiums, farms, guesthouses, restaurants, bars and café's, ranging from fast-food through to luxury restaurants. Tourists satisfaction level depend on transport at the destination, such as taxis, coaches, car rental, cycle hire. Sports/interest activity, such as ski schools, sailing schools, golf clubs and spectator stadiums and centers for pursuit of arts and crafts and nature studies. Other facilities and services, such as language schools, health clubs. Retail outlets: shops, travel agents, souvenirs, camping supplies information services, equipment rental, tourism police.

Government regulations, such as the range of regulatory controls over transport operations (Middleton and Hawkins, 1998). A study conducted by Karim and Geng-Qing Chi (2010), they confirmed that destinations' food image influenced travelers' visit intention positively. While Awaritefe (2004) found that the most prominent motivations for tourism destinations choice in a third world country are, self-actualization in an appreciative, educational or cultural context and leisure pursuits. Attractiveness of destination, quality services, facilities/amenities, favorable location and accessibility of centers also emerged as important considerations in tourist destination choice.

METHODOLOGY

Conceptualization Framework

As per the research objectives and literature review following

conceptualization framework has been showed,
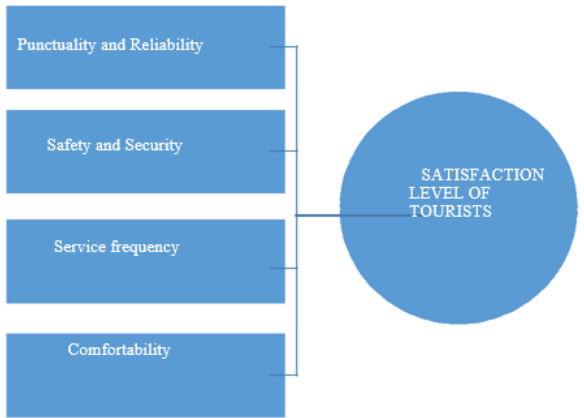
Flow chart: Independent and Dependent variables

According to the above diagram (Figure 1) Dependent variable could be taken as tourists' satisfaction level on public transportation meanwhile punctuality of buses and trains, safety and security on public transportation, service frequency of public transportation and comfortability of public transportation are considered as Independent variables

Data Analytical Tools

As soon as the data collection is finalized analysis of data will begin. In order to carry out a more comprehensive analysis of the data using factor analysis. Factor analysis is closely related to principal components analysis (on the correlation matrix), but, unlike principal components analysis, it is based on a specific statistical model. Factor analysis should not be blindly applied to a dataset with several variables hoping that some underlying patterns would be uncovered, instead, a theoretical motivation should drive factor analysis applications.

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The statistical information for the given research was gathered by dint of passenger satisfaction survey. Therefore, researcher composed a questionnaire which was based on research form 300 selected passengers who have been in researchers' case study areas. According to researcher's own experience, people do not tend to spend much time on answering survey questions. Therefore, only 13 questions were included to this particular questionnaire. As is customary, questionnaires normally contain questions of different types. Therefore, the research survey was comprised of 5 closed questions, 3 open questions, 3 scale questions and 2 dichotomous question. The survey was logically divided into three parts due to their belonging to certain topics. The first part of questionnaire comprehended 4 questions that were aimed at define informants' general attributes such as gender, age, country of residence and their traveling preferences. The main goal of questionnaires' second part was tourists' satisfaction level related with public transportation. It included just three questions which could be also named as introductory questions to the main part of the survey. Question number 6 formed the backbone for the analytical section of the current research as researcher was intended to collect the most essential data about respondents' attitudes and opinions towards public transportation service facilities. Open questions in the third part of survey were mainly aimed at inquiring people's suggestions how public transport facilities can be improved. It is always better to ask directly from consumers than trying to find possible hints from theory as passengers always know what they want to obtain at the end. Researcher process of data analyzing MS excel and SPSS were used.

Reliability Test of the Study

Reliability is the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results. That measure how much that reliable for the study.

According to Tavakol & Dennick (2011), Alpha was developed by Lee Cronbach in 1951 to provide a measure of the internal consistency of a test of scale, it is expressed as a number between 0 and 1. The number of test items, its inter-relatedness and dimensionality are the things to affect this Cronbach Alpha value. The range of acceptance level is 0.7-1.

Researcher selected 300 respondents to check the reliability of the research instrument. If the respondents provide the same respond every time if the instrument provided to them, consider as there is reliability. Reliability is concern as often risky because subjectiveness of the response might be varying according to the situation of the respondents. Researcher tests the validity of the independent and dependent variable to identify how far variables are reliable.

Summary of Reliability Test

Table 1: Summary of reliability test

Variable name	Chronbach's alpha	Decision rule	Comment about reliability
Punctuality and Reliability	0.944	0.944> 0.7	Reliable
Safety and Security	0.956	0.956> 0.7	Reliable
Service frequency	0.943	0.943> 0.7	Reliable
Comfortability	0.959	0.959> 0.7	Reliable
Satisfaction level of Tourists	0.894	0.894> 0.7	Reliable

Descriptive Statistics

In this study, descriptive statistics reflect demographic information of respondents.
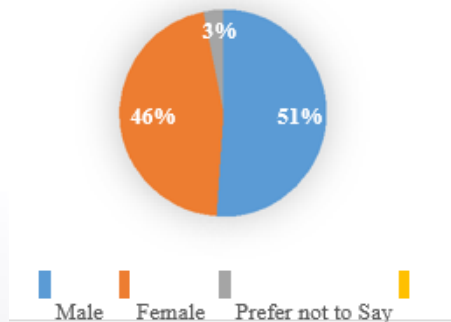

Chart 1 Gender of respondents

As it is clearly seen from chart 1, the majority of respondents are males (153 respondents). Only 138 females (46%) took part in the survey. 3% tourists (9 respondents) are not prefer to say their gender.
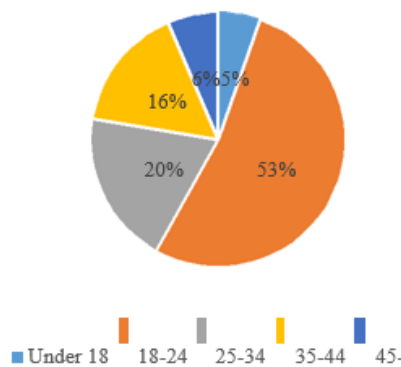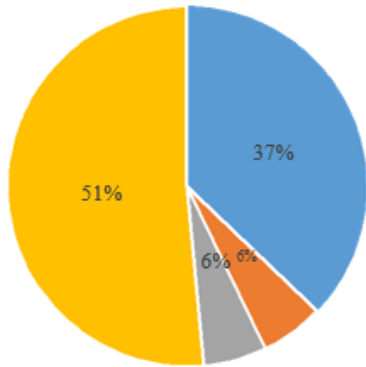

Chart 2 Respondents' age

The pie chart represented above in chart 2 deals with the age of respondents. It is clearly seen from the chart that the biggest age group is people at the age of 18-24.60 participants (20%) said that their age is on the interval from 25-34. The smallest number very presented by adult categories

48 respondents at the age 35-44 (16%) and only 18 persons older than 45 (6%).

The reason behind the great majority of respondents are young people was social media networks (online) were used by researcher.


Chart 3 Employment status

The pie chart represented above in figure 3 deals with the employment status. It is clearly seen from the chart that the biggest grope of people are students. There were 51% who identified themselves as students in young generation.37% participants said that there are employed people. The same percentage of people are unemployed and self-employed, that is 6% there were no informants about retired and other employment status.
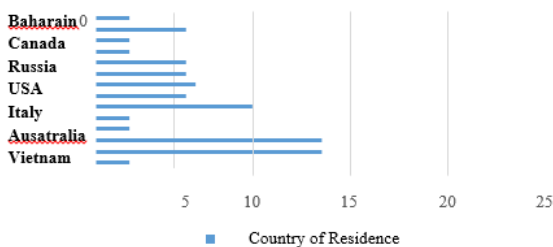
The chart represented above in Chart 4 illustrates the list of countries that respondents consider as their nationality. According to questionnaire most tourists

were represent Australia and United Kingdom. The second majority came from Italy at 9.9%.

Reasons for visit their destination
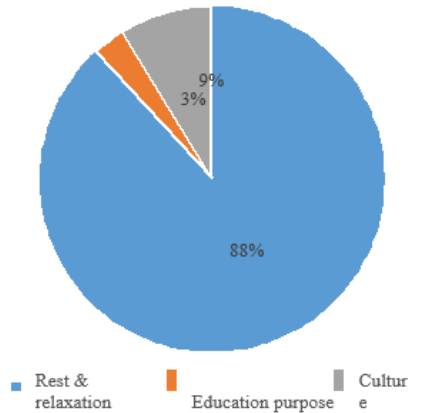
The pie chart represented above illustrates what are the reasons tourists are visit their destination. According to above pie chart 264 respondents are visit for rest and relaxation it's took part 88% in this chart. Most tourists travel for their rest and relaxation it is evident that Sri Lanka is one of the best countries which tourists can relax themselves.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is a term used to donate the association or relationship between two or more quantitative variables (Gogtay & Thatte, 2017).

Table 2: Correlation matrix

		Punctuality& Reliability	Safety & Security	Service Frequency	Comfortability	Tourists Satisfaction
Punctuality and Reliability	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Safety and Security	Pearson Correlation	.946***	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005				
Service Frequency	Pearson Correlation	.897	.888	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.098	.785			
Comfortability	Pearson Correlation	.840	.876	.877	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.245	.147	.258		
Tourists Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.833	.834**	.872**	.810***	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.156	.075	.058	.000	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.1 level.
***. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

Correlation analysis suggests that all four independent variables have positive relationship with tourists' satisfaction. Out of those, the relationship between Punctuality and Reliability of transport services and tourists' satisfaction is insignificant. It seems that tourists are expecting delays in transportation schedules and cancellation of schedules within the South Asian countries like Sri Lanka. On the other hand, the study was based on Colombo fort to Galle which has many alternative travel modes as well.

The relationships between Safety/Security, Frequency of service, Comfortability have significant positive relationship with Tourists' satisfaction. Specially, there is a significant positive relationship between Comfortability and Tourists' satisfaction at 0.05 level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The research findings have demonstrated that overseas visitors not only use different information sources to local users, but also use the same source to different degrees. Sri Lanka has a public transportation system which has less punctuality and reliability and It seems tourists are aware about that fact. Therefore visitors may willing to change their traveling modes if things get changed. But generally, tourists don't like to looking for much time at terminal or any other station for their transport mode. Firstly, policy makers should have to investigate each and every terminal and station or at least particular authority party should have to focus on main terminals and stations. Therefore, it is recommended to examine further the influence of punctuality and reliability on tourists' choice of public transportation and broader implications this may have for yield.

Secondly, the traditional view that public transport riders (such as bus driver) have not driven in safety such their drive not in good manner. That has significant impact on tourist's satisfaction level. According to the test results satisfaction level heavily depends on the security of visitors. Responsible parties should focus on how to improve the safety and security levels of public transportation in Sri Lanka.

Next, the service frequency of public transportation, as stated above, is important in short distances. The development of it will make the tourists' travel through highways which will be secure and efficient. In order to develop the automobile transportation, the countries may have to build new highways, rebuild older ones, and build motels and restaurants along the highway.

Consequently it will lead to the development of tourism in the country. Finally, public transportation is likely to be judged not only on the basis of punctuality and reliability, safety and security and service frequency but also on comfortability.

Since the public transport authority has direct control over less than one quarter of the comfortability of public transportation which overseas tourists to Sri Lanka use, the quality of public transportation is largely out of their control. Therefore need for greater cooperation between the public transport authority and service quality is required in order to ensure the comfortability of public transportation for the tourists.

CONCLUSION

Transport is an essential element in Tourism. As tourism cannot exist without transport, sustainable tourism strongly links to sustainable mobility. Public transport plays a vital role in sustainable

tourism development. However, there is little information on tourists' use of public transport at the destinations. This paper contributes to the understanding of tourists' satisfaction with public transport and the factors influence their perception. Four service dimensions were identified, which are punctuality and reliability, safety and security, service frequency and comfortability. Public transport services in Fort to Galle were positively evaluated by the tourists and their perceptions are independent from these major factors. Therefore, this study suggests that the quality of tourism services has a positive impact on the level of tourist satisfaction by enhancing destination facilitates, destination accessibility and destination attractions. Transport infrastructure plays a key role in destination development. As a vital component of the tourism system, sustainable transport is also essential for sustainable tourism. Understanding tourist's public transportation use at the destination is therefore important to motivate sustainable mobility. This paper provided an overview of research in public transportation and tourism. Some major conclusions could be drawn.

There are differences in the level of public transport use by tourists between rural and urban destinations. Public transport tends not to be attractive for visitors in remote areas, whereas the situation is more promising in urban areas. Although there is no indication that city visitors are more aware of their environmental impacts nor that they show preferences for public transportation. The differences can be interpreted with respect to issues of convenience and comfort. In most cases, public transportation in the cities is more accessible and reliable and thus is more attractive. As researcher observed, a high-quality public transport system motivates use tourists. Improving the services of public transportation, including in rural destinations, is therefore critical if tourism planners are to encourage a modal shift by tourists.

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