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Benchmarking the UNWTO Practical Tips for the Global Traveller: An Islamic Preview

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ABSTRACT

Despite the great emphasis on tourism as a worldwide leading economic sector, tourism basically remains as a social activity which has been typically associated with numerous positive and negative impacts. In this context, it could be understood why the UNWTO tended in 1999 to release its Code of Ethics for Tourism and to follow that by issuing the UNWTO Practical Tips for the Global Traveller in 2005 aiming mainly to set up a frame of mutual understanding and respect between tourists and their hosting societies in tourism destinations. On the other hand, almost all the known religions have a substantial component of social ethics, values and regulations. Accordingly, this paper aims to benchmark the UNWTO Practical Tips for the Global Traveller (PTGT) against the principles of Islam as one of the world's main religions. In this regard, content analysis of assorted, relevant documents in association with semi-structured interviews were employed as research methods, which resulted in identifying similarities and dissimilarities between the two models, and revealed the need for reforming some of the items of the PTGT as well as adding few new principles. The research findings could be of significance for several stakeholders including PTGT formers, sociologists, as well as tourism decision makers.

Keywords: Islam, Tourism, Code of Ethics, Travellers' Behavior, Social Impacts

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Introduction

Tourism is definitely one of the most important forces shaping our world nowadays (Cohen & Kennedy 2000). This could easily be evidenced in the worldwide interest in tourism as a fundamental sector in almost every development plan in either developing or developed countries, as well as the plethora of tourism-related texts, journals, conferences and research studies (Botterill et al 2002). Researchers commonly believe that this expansion of interest has been basically fuelled by the rapid growth of tourism as a significant economic contributor, especially over the last six decades, where statements such as “one of the largest and fastest growing industries” (UNCTAD 2013, p.3), “one of the major players in international commerce, and...one of the main income sources for many developing countries” (UNWTO 2015) have been frequently used to describe tourism. This overwhelming emphasis on tourism economic significances has resulted in a deeply-rooted conviction that tourism is an economic-oriented industry.

In this regard, some researchers argue that highlighting tourism as an industry and focusing majorly on its economic advantages have been exaggeratedly done on purpose by beneficiaries and governments for strategic reasons. For instance, Davidson (1994) claims that tourism beneficiaries have mainly reacted against the authentic notion of tourism – meant even by Thomas Cook – as a social activity, as it resulted in a failure of economists, developers and governments to take tourism seriously. Leiper (1995) debates that the beneficiaries’ striving to have tourism accepted as an industry, and mostly as an economic rather than a social activity, was stimulated by the need for winning respect, enabling data collection, creating an identity, securing self-esteem for those working in tourism and gaining considerable political support, which was pursued to obtain economic benefits. Accordingly, the undeniable positive economic contributions of tourism lured stakeholders (e.g. governments, professionals) to pay less attention to tourism non-economic aspects and impacts. On the other hand, a noteworthy number of tourism academics and researchers still deal with tourism as a basically social phenomenon where implanting values such as positive interaction, global peace and mutual understanding has the priority, and they believe that addressing tourism as an “industry” with massive economic positive impacts has largely overshadowed tourism drawbacks in general (Higgins-Desbiolles 2006).

In this regard, social interaction and mutual impacts between tourists and their hosting communities have always been major concerns for researchers involved in tourism non-economic influences, where researchers (e.g. Andereck et al 2005; Haley et al 2005; Waitt 2003) argue that negative social impacts exist mainly due to the dissimilarities between tourists and their hosting communities, where tourists transfer new habits to these communities which results in changing their social features and therefor damaging the community social structure. So, aiming to achieve more compatibility between tourists and their hosting communities, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) issued in 1999 the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET), which was later acknowledged in 2001 by the United Nations, as a fundamental frame of reference for responsible and sustainable tourism that includes a

comprehensive set of principles designed to guide key-players in tourism sector including governments, local communities, tourism professionals, as well as international and domestic tourists. Although not legally binding, the GCET features a voluntary implementation mechanism through its recognition of the role of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics, to which stakeholders may refer matters concerning the application and interpretation of the document.

Following the issue of the GCET, the UNWTO published in 2005 the Practical Tips for the Global Traveller (PTGT) aiming to set a frame of recommendations to enrich the travellers' experience and achieve mutual understanding between both travellers' and their hosting communities. The guide comprises four essential sections, where each section includes three to five tips.

A. Honoring local traditions and customs

A.1 Research your destination to learn all that you can about local customs and traditions. It is a great way to build understanding of the local community and excitement for your adventure ahead.

A.2 Learn to speak a few words in the local language. This can help you connect with the local community and its people in a more meaningful way.

A.3 Experience and respect all that makes an international destination different and unique from its history, architecture and religion to its music, art and cuisine.

B. Supporting the local economy

B.1 Buy locally-made handicrafts and products.

B.2 Respect local vendors and artisans by practicing fair trade.

B.3 Do not buy counterfeit products and items that are prohibited by national / international regulations.

C. Being an informed and respectful traveller

C.1 Observe national laws and regulations.

C.2 Respect human rights.

C.3 Protect children from exploitation in travel and tourism.

C.4 Take appropriate health precautions.

C.5 Know how to access medical care or contact your embassy in case of an emergency.

D. Respecting the environment

D.1 Reduce your environmental impact by being a good steward of natural resources and archaeological treasures.

D.2 Protect wildlife and their natural habitats.

D.3 Purchase products that are not made using endangered plants or animals.

D.4 Take photos instead of protected artefacts as mementos of your trip.

D.5 Leave only your footprint and a good impression behind.

Tourism in Islam

Islam is a monotheistic religion articulated by the Qur'an, considered by Muslims as the verbatim word of Allah, and by the sayings (Hadith) and actions (Sunnah) of the Prophet Muhammad, which jointly lay the groundwork and provide guidance on

multifarious topics for all aspects of a Muslim's life, extending from the highly spiritual matters to the daily life issues (e.g. eating etiquette and ethics, community welfare, environment protection and family rules). Nowadays, with about 1.6 billion followers (23% of world population), Islam is one of the leading religions globally. Most Muslims reside in the 57 member countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), where it is the dominant and often formal or informal state religion (OIC 2014). These countries are mainly located in the Middle East, Africa, South and Southeast Asia as well as several of the former Soviet Republics of Central Asia.

The World Bank (2013) statistics show that in 2012, 35 of the 57 Islamic countries received about 160 million tourists (i.e. 14.5% of the international tourism arrivals). The top five destinations were Turkey (35.7 million tourists), Malaysia (25 millions), Saudi (14.3 millions), Egypt (11.2 millions), and UAE (11.1 millions). In this regard and nevertheless, the escalating importance of tourism for several Islamic countries as a vital component of their economies and an inevitable supplier of job opportunities, there are always concerns regarding its social impacts on Islamic communities as well as the compatibility of some tourism activities to the Islamic principles. These concerns led some segments to assume that tourism, in some of its current forms, is an impermissible deed in Islam as it promotes for immoral activities.

On the other hand, the same concerns stimulated pro-tourism segments to coin terms such as "Halal Tourism", to reflect what has been later on defined as "tourism geared towards Muslim families who abide by Sharia rules", where hotels, for instance, do not serve alcohol and have separate swimming pools and spa facilities for men and women. Countries such as Malaysia and Turkey are currently leading the pursuit of promoting this new trend, which The Economist's (2013) believes "will boom in the future". Another effort was issuing the Islamic Tourism blueprint providing recommended principles and plans for developing tourism in Islamic destinations (ITC 2013). Promoters of these approaches, on contrary to the anti-tourism segments, record that tourism and travel are greatly encouraged by Islam, as travel has been numerously referred to in several verses of the Holy Qur'an.

For instance, The Amramites (3: 137) , Livestock (6: 11) , Jonah (10: 22) , Joseph (12: 109) , The Bee (16: 36) , The Pilgrimage (22: 46) , The Ant (27: 69) , The Spider (29: 20) , The Romans (30: 9 & 42) , , Sheba (34: 18) , Initiator (35: 44) , Forgiver (40: 21 & 82) , , Mohamed (47: 10) , and Kingship (67: 15) (Farahani and Henderson 2010).

According to Islamic scholars (e.g. Al-Qurtabi, Ibn Kather; Al-Sharawi), several lessons are encompassed to Muslims in those verses. For example, the Qur'an endorses travel as a mean to (1) achieve spiritual, physical and social goals, (2) have more submission to God through seeing the beauty and bounty of His creation, (3) grasp the smallness of man, which reinforces the greatness of God, (4) enhance health and wellbeing, reduce stress and enable serving God better, (5) attain knowledge (Farahani and Henderson 2010), as well as (6) understand the cultural and social features of other communities. As well, Hajj (i.e. pilgrim) is one of the Islam five pillars, where Muslims are required to travel to Mecca at least once in their lifetime unless prevented by a critical reason such as poverty or physical incapacity. Finally, throughout history, Muslim travelers and

explorers (e.g. Ibn Batouta, Ibn Magah, Al Masoudi) have contributed significantly to travel and discovery early activities as well as to travel literature (Hassan 2013).

In this regard and despite the plethora of tourism studies, there is little work on tourism and travel from an Islamic viewpoint (Farahani & Henderson 2010). For instance, Al-Hamarneh (2008) discusses the impact of the 9/11 attacks on the tourism sector in Islamic and Arabic countries and the need for new strategies for overcoming the consequences. Din (1989), describes the pattern of tourist arrivals to Muslim countries and examines the extent to which the religious factor has bearing on policy and development strategy affecting tourism. Aziz (2001) provides a historical and modern overview of tourism and travel in an Arabic/Islamic context. Hashim et al. (2007) explores the religious destinations imagery online. Finally, Henderson (2003, 2008 & 2009) covers areas such as tourism in Malaysia and Dubai as Islamic major tourism destinations as well as examines the nature and significance of Islamic tourism as a human and commercial activity.

1. Research Aim

Examining the mutual impact between tourists and their hosting communities has always been a significant research area for tourism researchers. Some researchers (e.g. Andereck et al 2005; Haley et al 2005; Waitt 2003) argue that tourists may contribute negatively to the tourism hosting communities due to transferring unauthentic traditions and living habits. With the continuous and incremental flow of tourists towards any given tourism destination, tourists' habits become more influencing, where the hosting communities usually find themselves under the threat of losing tourists if opposing their habits and routine requirements (e.g. sexual relationships, alcohol consumption, costumes fashions).

Being aware of such conflict, the UNWTO tends in 2005 to issue the PTGT assuming that following such tips will help achieving more compatibility between tourists and hosting community for the sake of both tourists who will have the chance to examine the authentic life of the tourism destination and the hosting community itself which will not be forced to abandon its local attributes for external ones. On the other hand, it should be understood that each and every society is continuously evolving its own ethical and moral codes for handling every aspect of life including travelling. Such separately-developed codes of ethics should be examined to illustrate the extent to which they match the UNWTO.PTGT and can contribute to it. In this context, with one-fourth of the world's total population identifying themselves as Muslim and with the consideration that they are active in both inbound and outbound tourism, it is imperative to consider the Islamic principles when forming tourism ethics. Accordingly, this research aims to examine the tips included in the PTGT against the generic principles of Islam, which may help:

- Understand the compatibility of both tourism and Islamic ethics.
- Identify gaps between the two models.
- Support the PTGT with additional tips derived from Islam.

Finally, it should be notified that similar studies have been conducted to examine the compatibility of Islamic principles to other subjects such as trade (e.g. El-Ajou 2010), banking (e.g. Rammal & Zurbruegg 2007; Warde 2000), human rights (e.g. Anver et al 2012; Brems 2001), children and women rights (e.g. Hosseini 2009; Ali 2008). However, to date no such study has been conducted in regard with tourism ethics and principles.

2.Methodology

Through the history of social research, content analysis has been widely employed as a competent data-collection method (Punch 1998). This method includes gathering data from sources such as books, journals, official records, personal notes (e.g. letters; diaries) and visual documents (e.g. films) (Jupp 1996), where documents "rather than acting as an introduction to the research...take on a central role as the actual thing that is to be investigated. In this sense, documents can be treated as a source of data in their own right - in effect an alternative to questionnaires, interviews or observation" (Denscombe 1998, p.158).

For this research, the data are all drawn from official sources relating to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) including its Global Code of Ethics for Tourism issued in 1999 and its Practical Tips for the Global Traveller issued in 2005. Other relevant official documents of the UNWTO are as well utilized when required for detailed understanding of specific issues. A two-way typology for documents, based on authorship and accessibility, is commonly used in document analysis (Hodder 1998; Denzin and Lincoln 1998). Authorship refers to "the origin of the document (e.g. personal; official-private; official-state), while access refers to the availability of documents to people other than the authors (e.g. restricted; open-archival; open-published)" (Punch 1998, p.191). In respect of this research, the examined UNWTO documents can be classified as "official-state, open-published documents", as all the researched documents are accessible openly through the UNWTO official website without requesting permissions. The justifications of utilizing document analysis within this research are:

§ Accessibility: as the researcher is working in a Tourism Higher Education entity, he has a guaranteed access to all the available UNWTO official documents.

§ Sufficiency: governmental bureaucratization usually leads to comprehensive documentation, a situation, which robustly exists in the UNWTO, where all the procedures are routinely documented in detail.

§ Official documents usually provide data that can be described as:

- "Authoritative. Since the data have been produced by the state, employing large resources and expert professionals, they tend to have credibility" (Denscombe 1998, p.163).

- "Factual: in the case of statistics, they take the form of numbers that are amenable to computer storage/analysis, and constitute "hard facts" around which there can be no ambiguity" (Denscombe 1998, p.164).

On the other hand, semi structured interviews with prominent Islamic scholars were utilized as semi-structured interview was effective as a method of research in several

aspects. First, it facilitated asking analogous questions, which helps comparing data. Second, it was appropriate for altering the discussion sequence, as well as, expanding its scope to probe for more information when useful. Accordingly, seven interviews were conducted with prominent Islamic scholars. The interview checklist covered two main areas: identifying the Islam's point of view towards different tourism activities; and checking the compatibility of the PTGT tips to the Islamic generic principles. During the interviews, the interviewees were allowed to develop their own ideas and to pursue any new thoughts they believe to be associated with the researched issues. All the interviews were conducted face-to-face in the interviewees' workplace between the 10th of August and the 29th of August 2014, where each interview extended between 30 to 50 minutes.

3.Data Analysis

Comparing the four major concepts mentioned in the PTGT to the main principles of Islam reveals the following analysis.

A. *Honoring local traditions and customs*

Revising the three tips encompassed in this section (see tips A1 – A3) reveals that they can be summarized in one short guiding phrase: know about the hosting community customs, language and respect their distinction.

In this regard, Islam looks at acquiring knowledge about others as a significant merit. It is to the extent that the first word in Qur'an is an imperative verb to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to look for knowledge "Read! In the Name of your Lord Who has created (all that exists)" (Qur'an 96:1). It is as well attributed to the Prophet (PBUH) the he said "pursuing knowledge is a duty" (Al-Bukhari 860).

It is understood in Islam that individuals differentiate in their languages, colors, religion, sex, traditions, etc. and that these – as well as any other – differences should not be a pretext for discrimination; alternatively Islam sees differentiation as a valuable part of the human diversity and are meant to encourage communication and cooperation between communities. "O people, We created you from a male and female, and We made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another" (Qur'an 49:13).

On the other hand, Islam urges Muslims to communicate with other nations and learn others languages. "And from His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the difference of your tongues and your colors. In that are signs for the world" (Qur'an 30: 22). Additionally, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was encouraging his companions to learn different languages. Zayd ibn Thabit (one the Prophet companions) is reported to have said "The Prophet asked me if I master Syriac. I said, no. The Prophet said, then go and learn it" (Al-Bukhari 860). Commenting on that, Interviewee no. 3 records "For a reason, Allah created people as different nations with different colors and tongues. Since languages are human means of communication, building vigorous relationships between nations enjoins Muslims to master other languages". Interviewee no. 6 records as well that "respecting the non-Muslims traditions including their religious customs and belongs is an important part of the Islam rules. In the well-known

historical incident, Omar Ibn Al Khatab was visiting a church in Jerusalem, when the time for the pray came. Although the church bishop invited him to pray inside the church, Omar replied “No, if I do so, the Muslims may one day make this an excuse for taking over the church from you”. And he prayed outside the wall of the church as a sign of respecting the non-Muslims’ belongs”.

B. Supporting the local economy

Aiming to economically help local communities UNWTO encourages travellers to buy locally-made handicrafts and products, treat vendors fairly and kindly, and not buy counterfeit products.

Typical principles exist in Islamic teachings, where Islam obligates Muslims to consider socio-economic justice (El-Ajou 2010) and to act honestly and kindly when trading. “And measure full when you measure. And weigh with an even balance. This is better and its end is good” (Qur’an 17:35); and “Do not withhold from the people the things that are their due and do not commit mischief in the land, causing corruption” (Qur’an 11:85). Encouraging gentleness in merchandizing, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) informed “May Allah’s mercy descends on him who is gentle [lenient] in his buying, selling, and demanding back his money [debts]” (Al-Bukhari 860).

Islam as well condemns fraud, deception, counterfeiting, and other dubious means in merchandising, where the Prophet announced “Whoever fools us, is not a part of us” (Al-Bukhari 860). He as well notified “... if both the parties [The seller and the buyer] spoke the truth and described the defects and qualities [of the goods], then they would be blessed in their transaction, and if they told lies or hid something, then the blessings of their transaction would be lost” (Al-Bukhari 860). Selling counterfeit products and all suchlike means of deceiving buyers are totally prohibited in Islam, “the Prophet passed by a pile of food in the Market. He put his hand inside it and felt dampness, although the surface was dry. He said “O owner of the food, what is this?” The man said, “It was damaged by rain, O Messenger of God.” He said, “Why did you not put the rain-damaged food on top so that people could see it! Whoever cheats us is not one of us” (Muslim). Shedding more lights on other merchandising activities which are unacceptable in Islam, interviewee no. 7 adds that “Placing faked labels on products, cheating in materials, weight or prices are all kinds of fraud, which are also prohibited in Islam”. On the other hand, interviewee no. 1 notifies that buyers as well have a role to play “It is not just sellers who should apply Islamic ethics, but buyers as well. For example, in Islam it is prohibited to buy stolen or illegal goods Yes of course, products made of endangered animals, plants or any other rare materials, which are not allowed by the authority, are also included amongst goods which should not be bought according to the Islamic rules”.

C. Being an informed and respectful traveller

The five tips in this section (see tips C1 – C5) can be summarized in one short guiding phrase: visitors should respect laws, regulations, and human rights, protect children from exploitation, take sufficient health precaution and medical care.

Islamic view regarding other communities is built upon a basic notion that humans have equal rights and that discrimination on the basis of race, color, language, belief, sex, religion, political affiliation, social status or other considerations is forbidden

(CDHRI 1990); humanity should be honored, "And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea ..." (Qur'an 17: 70); and that thoughtfulness, respect and justice should frame the relationship between individuals, "Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity" (Qur'an 60:8); additionally "And We have not sent you (O Muhammad) except as a mercy to the worlds" (Qur'an 21:107). Prophet Muhammad notified as well that "All mankind is from Adam and Eve, no Arab has any superiority over a non-Arab; no dark person has a superiority over a white person and no white over a dark person. The criterion of honor in the sight of God is righteousness and honest living" (Al-Bukhari 860). In another hadith the Prophet said, "If a believer is not able to benefit others, he must at least do them no harm" (Al-Bukhari 860).

Additionally, Islam establishes a legal framework, and embodies a code of ethics, designed to protect the rights of children, which begin even before their birth. For instance, The Quran and Hadith make it clear that two persons should not enter into a marriage carelessly. Children have as well the right to be fed, clothed, and protected; they must have the respect, to enjoy love and affection from their parents; as well as to be treated equally, vis-a-vis their siblings in terms of financial gifts, with a preferential treatment if a child is, for instance, handicapped while the others are not. Muhammed has said: "Allah has cursed those parents who (by their behavior) compel their children to disobey them"; and said "Every one of you is a protector and guardian and responsible for your wards and things under your care and a man is a guardian of his family members, and is accountable for those placed under his charge." Accordingly, children neglect and physical, psychological, emotional or sexual abuses are strictly banned in Islam.

On another hand, Islam gives great attention to the different aspects of humans' physical and psychological health. For instance, aiming to stop spreading diseases and matching the regular efforts of organizations such as the World Health Organization in alerting people from visiting epidemic areas, it is attributed to the Prophet (PBUH) that he said "If you hear the news of an outbreak of an epidemic (plague) in a certain place, do not enter that place; and if the epidemic falls in a place while you are present in it, do not leave that place" (Al-Bukhari 860). Islam as well highlights that mercy should wrap relationship between humans "...and say kind things to the people..." (Qur'an 1:83), whereas the prophet notified that "A true believer is one with whom others feel secure. One who returns love for hatred."

D. Respecting the environment

Environment has always been a critical tourism-related subject. Concerned segments typically accuse tourism of destroying or at least neglecting its impact on natural resources and environment. Understanding these concerns, UNWTO has always been a key player in encouraging sustainable applications and environment protection efforts. In this context, section "D" in the UNWTO: PTGT has been entirely dedicated to advising travellers about methods of respecting and conserving environment in the hosting destinations, where tips focus mainly on issues such as reducing harmful impacts, protecting wildlife, and not purchasing products of endangered animals.

Almost identical advices exist in Islam, which pays extraordinary attention to protecting creatures including humans, animals and plants, believing that it is the responsibility of Muslims to deal with the environment in a proactive manner. Qur'an mentions that even animals should be treated thoughtfully "And there is not a creature on the earth, nor a bird that flies with its wings, except they belong to nations like you belong. We did not leave anything out of the record; then to their Lord they will be gathered" (Qur'an 6:38). The Prophet informed as well that the relationship of care and nurture for man's good works are not limited to the benefit of the human species, but rather extend to all beings; "there is a reward in doing good to every living thing" (Al-Bukhari 860). He declared as well that "If any Muslim plants a tree or sows a field, and a human, bird or animal eats from it, it shall be reckoned as charity from him" (Al-Bukhari 860).

Significant congruence emerges between both Islam and sustainability principles. Initially, Islam promotes for appreciating and thinking about natural phenomenon, "Do you not see that God sends down water from the sky, then lets it run as springs in the earth, then He produces with it plants of various colors, then they grow until they turn yellow, then He makes them dry and broken? In this is a reminder for those who possess intelligence" (Qur'an 39:21); "Did they not look to the earth, how many plants have We raised in it, from each a good pair" (Qur'an 26:7). As well, destroying or even abusing natural resources are prohibited; "And if he gains power, he seeks to corrupt the earth and destroy its crops, and the lineage. God does not love corruption" (Qur'an 2:205). Acts such as overconsumption or wasting resources are detested in Islam; "... Eat from its fruit when it blossoms and give its due on the day of its harvest; and do not waste. He does not like the wasteful" (Qur'an 6:141). Finally, applying constructive, sustainable development is always esteemed, as the prophet announced "If the day of resurrection comes upon anyone of you while he has a seedling in hand, let him plant it" (Al-Bukhari 860).

In the same context, Interviewer no. 4 records that "May be the word "environment" does not exist in the Islamic terminologies, instead Qur'an and Hadith are using the term "earth" to refer that everything should be treated fairly...As Muslims we believe that Allah creates everything, so simply, everything should be treated with respect even nonliving items".

4. Islamic Contribution to the Unwto.Ptgt

Despite the inclusiveness of the UNWTO: PTGT, it could be recorded that Islamic rules and ethics can still contribute significantly to the PTGT which still misses few basic ethics which have been alternatively highlighted in Islam.

5. Water Overuse

In the last 50 years global water use has tripled (Carbon Disclosure Project 2010). Recent studies estimates that one billion people live in water-stressed basins all-over the world (WBCSD 2006); at least 1.8 billion people drink contaminated water; and up

to 3.2 billion people would face water stress by 2100 (Parry et al 2009). In this regard, it has been well documented that tourism is a water-intensive-consumption sector. On global average, it is assessed that an international tourist consumes 400 L or even higher per day (Eurostat 2009; Gössling et al 2012), comparing to 240 L per/person in average worldwide. In Spain, for example, tourist water consumption is estimated at around 440 L per day; more than double the average local consumption per person (UNEP 2009).

On the other hand, Islam shows sincere concerns in regard with overusing resources especially water. Caring for water in particular is evident in numerous Qur'anic verses where water represents a major theme in Islamic cosmogony as well as a recurrent topic in liturgy and daily life (Gilli 2011). Some of the sixty verses pertaining to water are "We made from water every living thing" (Qur'an 21:30); as well "And it is He who has created from water a human being and made him [a relative by] lineage and marriage. And ever is your Lord competent [concerning creation]". (Qur'an 25:54); "And it is He who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and his Throne was upon water". (Qur'an 11:7).

Referring to the importance of water sharing and not preventing its supply, the Prophet Muhammed said "Men are co-owners in three things: water, fire and pastures". Most importantly for the purpose of this research is the Prophetic Hadith saying, among the three people God will ignore on the Day of Resurrection there will be "the man who, having water in excess of his needs refuses it to a traveler". The Prophet Muhammed condemned clearly water excess use even when in presence of an abundant flow. He as well urged moderation and thriftiness in the use of water even for a liturgy purpose such as pray. (Gilli 2011). Interviewees No. 3, 4 ensured the same meaning. "Overusing sources such as water or food are specially prohibited in Islam. Even owning plenty of money is not an excuse to overuse things".

In this context, it may worth mentioning that some of the most significant destinations, especially in the Middle East and Africa (e.g. Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, and South Sahara destinations) are suffering from severe water scarcity (UN Water 2013) and therefore tourists' excessive use of water resources is currently a major concern, which in some cases delay their initiation for developing tourism. Accordingly, it could be claimed that encouraging tourists as well as tourism facilities (e.g. hotels) to reduce their water consumption could be a significant suggestion for the PTGT.

6.Prostitution

In their exclusive report entitled "The Incidence of Sexual Exploitation of Children in Tourism" (WTO 2001, p.iii), the UNWTO records that "The rapid growth of international tourism does not only represent an economic boon for most tourism destinations; it sometimes also produces negative socio-cultural impacts which become evident, in particular, in the exploitation of human beings through sex tourism. This abhorrent phenomenon is even more repulsive when those who are directly affected by it are children and adolescents". In the past, some governments and local players in the

tourism industry were reluctant to support campaigns to end 'sex tourism' because they perceived these campaigns to be anti-tourism.

"This was at a time when sex tourism was seen by policy makers (mostly male) as an unspoken but lucrative way of increasing (mostly male) tourist arrivals and by implication government and private sector revenues" (WTO 2001, p.19). However, such reluctant attitude towards preventing sex tourism has been approved to be incorrect in several destinations such as Thailand, Cambodia, and Indonesia, where social, cultural and health severe negative impacts were repeatedly recorded, despite what was believed to be a lucrative economic benefit (WTO 2001). In the same context, several researchers (e.g. Ryan and Kinder 1996; Oppermann 1999; Brown 1999) record that sex tourism is usually associated with illegal activities such as human's trafficking, children exploitation and money laundering.

On the other hand, Islam has clear terms regarding sexual relationships. While prohibitions against extra-marital sexual relationships are strong, sex itself is not a taboo subject in Islam; oppositely, permissible sexual relationships are described in Islamic sources as great wells of love and closeness for the couple involved. Interviewees no. 1, 2 and 5 notify that prostitution is a major sin in Islam due to the extra-marital sexual relationships and the potentiality of other corrupted acts such as human exploitation.

Accordingly, it could be claimed that adding another tip in regard with prostitution will fit with the rules of both Islam and the UNWTO, which aim to prevent humans' exploitation and trafficking.

7.Poverty Alleviation

According to the World Bank, an estimated 1.4 billion people were living in extreme poverty in 2005. As tourism continues to grow, there are stronger evidences that tourism can make a significant contribution to tackling poverty and fostering development, especially in rural areas, where most of the poor live (UNWTO 2011). UNWTO statistics clearly demonstrate the growing strength of tourism as a means for development and the participation of the least developed countries (LDCs) in the global economy. International tourist arrival in the 48 LDCs almost tripled between 2000 and 2010, reaching over 17 million in 2010. It may worth mentioning that tourism is the first or second source of export earnings in 20 of the 48 LDCs. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimates that by 2020, Africa and Asia — the two regions with the most LDCs — are expected to see 75 million and 416 million of these arrivals respectively (30.6% of the international arrivals) (UNDP 2011).

As well, the Sustainable Tourism-Elimination Poverty Initiative is directly tied to the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which include the goal of "halving extreme poverty by 2015". Tourism is particularly linked to this specific goal through the seven ST-EP mechanisms including: Employment of the poor in tourism enterprises; supply of goods and services to tourism enterprises by the poor or by enterprises employing the poor; direct sales of goods and services to visitors by the poor; Establishment and running of small, micro or community-based tourism enterprises or joint ventures by

the poor; Redistribution of proceeds from tax or charges on tourists or tourism enterprises; voluntary giving and supply by tourists and tourism enterprises; Investment in infrastructure stimulated by tourism also benefiting the poor in the locality, directly or through support to other sectors (UNWTO 2011). Accordingly, it is widely believed that tourism can play a key role in poverty alleviation.

In this context, Islam has the same intention to reduce poverty relying on (1) encouraging work and self-reliance for those who can do it and (2) giving alms to those who cannot. For instance, Islam makes it obligatory on every Muslim to pay poor communities and individuals an annual tax (i.e. Zakat), on their accumulated wealth. Among tens of Quranic verses which encourage Muslims to play a role to reduce poverty and help people in need. The Qur'an records that "And be steadfast in prayer and regular in charity" (Qur'an 2: 110). Scholars say in this regard "Every needy person has to be granted what will sustain him and instill in him some sort of constant financial security. This ranges according to each individual's need: for example, a worker, whose main concern is how to get equipment for his work, must be assisted to obtain such equipment no matter how costly it is".

Ideas such as encouraging tourists to act more generously in the Least Developed Tourism Destinations (LDTDs) by applying ideas such as (1) accepting fair prices rather than bargaining; (2) paying more tips for good services; (3) buying more goods if applicable; and (4) doing charity, may all help eliminating poverty.

Conclusion

Tourism ethics has become a major topic of discussion among tourism professional individuals, communities and other related organizations. In this regard, it has been broadly believed that actions should be conducted to ensure more harmony between tourists and their hosting communities for the mutual benefit of the two sides. Accordingly, the UNWTO issued its PTGT aiming to set a frame of recommendations to enrich the travellers' experience and achieve mutual understanding between both travellers' and their hosting communities. Benchmarking the different terms mentioned in the UNWTO.PTGT against the Islamic rules and ethics shows clear matching between their ethical backgrounds, where Islamic ethics are fully supporting and congruent with the UNWTO.PTGT. However, some Islamic concerns are still not covered within the current tips of the UNWTO.PTGT including areas such as water excessive use, prostitution and poverty alleviation.

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