


Chapter 17

Religious Tourism, Economic Behavior, and Global Change: A Multidimensional Study of Devotee Spending at Cultural Festivals

Suraj Jaywant Yadav

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2687-4852>

D.Y. Patil Agriculture and Technical University, Kolhapur, India

Murali Manohar Bhupathi

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1514-9727>

D.Y. Patil Agriculture and Technical University, Kolhapur, India

ABSTRACT

Religious tourism, a key part of the global travel industry, involves individuals or groups traveling to sacred sites for spiritual fulfillment, rituals, or to experience religious heritage. This paper highlights the importance, growth, and effects of religious tourism, focusing on major pilgrimage destinations, traveler motivations, and socio-economic outcomes. Religious sites serve not only spiritual purposes but also foster cultural exchange and contribute to local economic development. The discussion also addresses challenges such as overcrowding, commercialization, and the need to preserve the sanctity of these sacred places amid growing tourism.

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-1727-4.ch017

INTRODUCTION

A platform for changes in geographical spaces, tourism has grown to be one of the biggest and most lucrative sectors of the global economy thanks to its distinctive and unique features (Budovich, 2023). Its history is as old as religious tourism itself, making it one of the most enduring and successful forms of travel in the world today. It is unaffected by weather conditions. The term “religious tourism” refers to the practice of tourists visiting cultural, religious, and ritually significant locations as cultural, ideological, and recreational travelers. One of the traits of religious tourism is that it frequently involves a large number of passengers and is not time-dependent, which boosts group tourism's prosperity and typically doesn't end at one time (Budovich, 2023). Pilgrimage and other religiously driven travel are among the earliest types of tourism. Religiously inspired travel has grown significantly over the last 50 years. Scholars from a wide range of disciplines are increasingly investigating religious tourism, which has developed in a variety of settings and locales. According to the literature currently available on religious tourism, the declining importance of traditional religious beliefs in modern societies is driving a growing diversity of tourists (Choe, 2024). The significance of tourism for the local economy in terms of creating jobs, stimulating the economy, and creating wealth has been emphasized more than ever in recent years. In this sense, tourism is seen as a catalyst for development as well as a factor in political and economic shifts. By employing creative tactics, the tourism industry offers the foundation for drawing in more visitors, creating revenue, and adding value to the city. As a result, the majority of nations have already taken into account the potential of tourism in urban development. The tourism sector is one of the most significant drivers of the economic growth of both urban and rural communities, and one of its primary objectives is the economic development of local communities (Budovich, 2023). The institution of pilgrimage has historically connected religion and tourism, and it was from this that the phenomenon of religious tourism developed. Although many studies have looked at how tourism affects places and how locals perceive it, few have specifically looked at how religious tourism and tourists impact locals who live in “holy or sacred” places. Economic growth is essential for preserving jobs, raising taxes, and promoting consumption, all of which work together to lessen poverty and inequality while improving public services and drawing in investment. As a result, nations with slower growth rates actively seek out sustainable economic growth. A number of crucial elements need to be taken into consideration in order to accomplish this, including infrastructure and institutional development, tourism development, financial development, and foreign direct investment (Sun et al., 2025). Religious tourism significantly contributes to local and national economies by enhancing income, creating jobs, and fostering sustainable development. This

18 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/religious-tourism-economic-behavior-and-global-change/385990

Related Content

Reinforcement of the NATO Eastern Flank

Przemyslaw Furgacz (2020). *Analyzing Political Tensions Between Ukraine, Russia, and the EU* (pp. 153-179).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/reinforcement-of-the-nato-eastern-flank/250138

I Can't Breathe: The African American Male With Emotional Disabilities in Education

Richard D. Williams and April J. Lisbon (2022). *Research Anthology on Racial Equity, Identity, and Privilege* (pp. 907-920).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/i-cant-breathe/296983

Movement Control Order (MCO) - A Viable Legal Mechanism in the Management of COVID-19 Pandemic in Malaysia?

Suzana Muhamad Said, Aini Aman, Mohd Rohaizat Hassan and Omkar Dastane (2022). *Journal of Comparative Asian Development* (pp. 1-15).

www.irma-international.org/article/movement-control-order-mco---a-viable-legal-mechanism-in-the-management-of-covid-19-pandemic-in-malaysia/315650

Navigating Central-Local Dynamics: Hong Kong's Adaptation of Public Space Governance amid China's Shifting COVID-19 Policies in 2022

Wing-chung Ho (2024). *Journal of Comparative Asian Development* (pp. 1-24).

www.irma-international.org/article/navigating-central-local-dynamics/357992

The Effect of Technological Development on Renewable Energy

Diyar Avar, Dilek Temiz and Aytaç Gökmen (2025). *Journal of Comparative Asian Development* (pp. 1-28).

www.irma-international.org/article/the-effect-of-technological-development-on-renewable-energy/367696