ABSTRACT

This chapter is based on a study of tourism in India and Pakistan and is associated with Islamic faith and practices in both countries. Islam-oriented destinations in both countries have been marketed as products of heritage, cultural, historical, or archaeological tourism. The aim of this chapter is to present the argument that all tourism destinations linked with Islam in India and Pakistan need to be marketed as Islamic tourism products. This chapter makes a contribution to the theory and practice of tourism, marketing, and Islamic marketing. The discussion in this chapter covers the historical perspective of Islamic tourism in literature review and provides an understanding of halal branding of Islamic tourism in the context of India and Pakistan. Recommendations are provided to governments at local, regional, and national levels, private sector, and the local population to reap benefits from opportunities arising from Islamic tourism. The findings and conclusion of this chapter also attempt to make a social and political contribution by promoting peace, mutual social harmony, and universal spiritual understanding between the people of India and Pakistan for economic prosperity.
INTRODUCTION

The discussion in this chapter highlights the growth of Islamic tourism that is based on various activities related to the Islamic faith and practices. The focus is on Islamic tourism in India and Pakistan while the discussion is related to opportunities and challenges. Islamic tourism could be based on various forms of tourism such as cultural, spiritual, heritage, adventure and medical tourism. The expression ‘Islamic’ has been used frequently to illustrate religious, political, authoritarian and aggressive affairs, but recently; it has been related to commercial and business affairs (Alserhan, 2011; Zamani-Farahani & Henderson, 2010; Al-Shakry, 2001). Al-Shakry (2001) further elaborated ‘Islamic’ in marketing context as based upon the revival of Islam’s traditions and values that provide competitive advantage to Muslim countries, private organisations, governments and individuals at local, national, and at a global level.

Islamic tourism is being recognized by various scholars as tourism for Muslim tourists, offered by Islamic countries or companies, involving destination, people, places and events associated with Islam (Scott & Jafari, 2010; Zamani-Farahani & Henderson, 2010; Al-Hamarneh & Steiner, 2004). Al-Hamarneh and Steiner (2004, p. 24) further specified: ‘the economic concept of Islamic tourism focuses on the importance of intra-Muslim tourism for new markets and destinations’.

The chapter introduces the concept of Islamic tourism and discusses it in the context of Indian and Pakistani tourism business and practices. Various opportunities and challenges faced in both countries regarding the Islamic tourism are identified and analysed. Suggestions are presented towards development of Islamic tourism as a new type of exclusive tourism to improve the mutual social and political relationships as well as on the business and economy fronts that will benefit the population of both countries. Islamic Tourism is recently being oriented towards the halal Islamic brand and subsequently termed as Halal tourism.

India and Pakistan together have many Islamic tourism sites that are historical, cultural and spiritual in nature and can be visited by Muslim tourists from both countries and around the world (Haq & Medhekar, 2010). India is famous for many cultural and historical World Heritage UNESCO listed Islamic tourism destinations (Medhekar & Haq, 2012). Similarly Pakistan is rich in Muslim as well as Buddhist and Sikh sacred places associated with people and places (Haq & Wong, 2011). India and Pakistan present several sites reflecting upon the historical and architectural prime of the Mughal Indian Empire stretching around a millennium, which are on the must-see list of many Islamic tourists. The case of Islamic tourism in India and Pakistan is further supported by the fact that these countries have all resources to fulfil the requirements of Halal tourism specified by Battour, Ismail, and Battor (2010), which will be elaborated further in this chapter.
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