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The accommodation and transport modes of choice of Siedlce and Siedlce powiat residents engaged in domestic religious tourism in the years 2017-2019

Abstract: The objective of the present work was to fill in the research space exploring the existential issues of people participating in religious tourism. The authors undertook to indicate places of accommodation and transport modes of choice for the purpose of religious trips made by people living either in the town of Siedlce or in the surrounding area called Siedlce powiat. The following determinants were used while establishing the aim of the study: gender, age and level of education. The study here involved the method of diagnostic survey whose research tool was the authors' own questionnaire. The analysis conducted in the study reported here demonstrated significant relationships between accommodation of choice and gender, level of education as well as age of the pilgrims. By far the greatest number of respondents used accommodation offered in pilgrim hostels. The majority of subjects travelling for religious purposes in Poland participated in walking pilgrimages. Despite a convenient location of Siedlce powiat with regard to airports, tourists from the study area did not choose this mode of transport at all.

Keywords: tourism, pilgrimage, tourist-oriented infrastructure, Siedlce, Siedlce powiat

1. Introduction

In the contemporary world, tourism has become an inseparable aspect of the society's lifestyle. It is a widespread form of spending free time, getting acquainted with the world and self-defence against negative results of modern civilisation. Moreover, it gives pleasure and is a source of joy.

The need to travel is behind religious tourism. This type of tourism is defined as trips made by faith-motivated or faith-motivated and exploration-oriented tourists to religious places (Jackowski, 2009). According to Różycki (2012), religious tourism consists in visiting sacred places for spiritual reasons by tourists who also have exploration and sight-seeing in mind. Buczkowska (2012) advocates using the term 'religious tourism' to describe trips motivated by either spiritual reasons (including pilgrimages) or both spiritual and exploratory needs. In literature, there is a wide range of works discussing whether people participate in religious, pilgrimage or cultural tourism.

Jackowski (2009) even suggests that the term 'religious tourism' may be synonymous with 'pilgrimage' (pilgrimage tourism) if a trip is made primarily due to religious (pilgrimage) or spiritual reasons. Travelling to sacred sites solely because of exploratory purposes is called cultural tourism (Jackowski, 2009; Różycki, 2012; Buczkowska, 2012). Recognising the long-standing terminology-related issues pertaining to this phenomenon in the scientific community (Różycki, 2016), in the present work, the authors adopted the term 'religious tourism' accompanied by religious or religious and exploratory motives.

Many studies examining religious tourism issues deal with relaxation and spiritual well-being of the participants, the aspects contributing to quality of life enhancement (Jafari et al., 2010; Counted et al., 2018; Vitorino et al., 2018). Searching for the purpose of human existence and divinity by travelling to sacred places has

been another important issue explored in studies (Sharpley, 2016; Ivona and Privitera, 2019; Buzinde, 2020). Armin Mikos von Rohrscheidt (2016) was the first author to suggest in the Polish literature the demand-based typology of organised religious trip participants supported by case studies.

According to Žižka-Salamon and Hodorowicz (2009), religious tourism is within the scope of interest of the geography of religion and geography of tourism, particularly in terms of involvement in this form of tourism as related to free-time activities of people.

Accommodation and modes of transport are not consumption targets as such. Rather, they make it possible, or at least easier, for tourists to travel and stay at a destination, which in this case is a religious site/place (Turkowski, 2003).

Few researchers have looked into organisational aspects of religious tourism. Air transport used for tourist mobility purposes, including religious tourists and pilgrims, has been examined by Cisowski (2019). By contrast, in their work on passenger transportation utilisation in tourism development, Roman, et al. (2019) mention neither religious nor pilgrimage-related motives but discuss only exploratory motives which only partially coincide with the definition of religious tourism.

Participation in pilgrimage tourism is fairly often a subject of research by authors who present data obtained from religious centres of worship. Statistical information on organised groups is collected by many sanctuaries; however, only few record independent visits to such centres (Bączek, 2008). There have been published, among others, analyses of pilgrim mobility to sanctuaries in the Tatras and Podhale (Hodorowicz and Mróz, 2009), the Island Beskids (Beskid Wyspowy) (Kopera, 2009), and the Świętokrzyskie Mountains (Biernat et al., 2009a;). Many analyses involved pilgrim mobility to more well-known sacred centres such as

Jasna Góra (Ptaszycka-Jackowska et al., 1998), Holy Cross (Biernat et al., 2009b; Lipiński, 2000), Święta Lipka (Paszenda, 1998), Licheń (Prusowski, 2006), Kraków (Mróz, 2006; Sołjan and Matlak, 2000), Ludźmierz (Dobrzyński, 2006; Hodorowicz and Mróz, 2008), Limanowa (Kopera, 2004), as well as less popular ones e.g. Pszów (Drażyk, 2000), Dębowiec (Barłowska-Łapka and Zając, 2009), Sianów (Rydz, 2007), Skrzatusz (Jażewicz, 2007), and Góra Chełmska (Rydz and Olejnik, 2004).

Multi-faceted research into religious activity of tourists representing different social groups is infrequent. There was a study involving students (Žižka-Salamon and Hodorowicz, 2009), and elderly people (Buczowska, 2012). The issue of religious tourism undertaken by elderly people in Poland was also presented in a work which included qualitative analysis (Grotowska, 2017). Therefore, more research into mobility in religious tourism is warranted, particularly so as the pre-pandemic estimate of people participating in this type of tourism exceeded 1 billion tourists (including local and regional travel) (Jackowski, 2009).

The objective of the present work was to fill in the research space exploring the existential issues of people participating in religious tourism. Faith-motivated trips differ substantially as to the time they take, modes of transport and accommodation used as well as the way they are organised, all of which being the primary characteristics of tourist trips.

The authors undertook to indicate places of accommodation and transport modes of choice for the purpose of domestic religious trips made by people living either in the town of Siedlce or in the surrounding area called Siedlce powiat (powiat being the second unit of the administrative division of Poland). The following determinants were used while establishing the aim of the study: gender, age and level of education.

2. Area description, methods and material studied

2.1. Study population

While calculating the size of the research sample, the confidence level was assumed at 0.95, the estimated size of fraction at 0.50 and the maximum

error at 0.05. The research sample was taken from the total number of residents of the town of Siedlce and Siedlce powiat which was 159,224

people (Statistics Poland, 2018), the number of women and men being 81,432 (51.2%) and 77,792 (48.8%), respectively. Proportionally, 197 women and 187 men were surveyed following the rule of availability. The criteria of division were as follows: gender, age and education level of the respondents (Table 1).

The study conforms to the code of ethics of the World Medical Association and the standards for research involving human subjects set out in the Declaration of Helsinki. The protocol was approved by the local university ethics committee.

Table 1. Characteristic of the respondents

Gender	Type of determinants		
	Women	Men	-
Number of respondents	197	187	-
% of the total	51.2	48.8	-
Age of respondents	18-35	36-55	56 and over
Number of respondents	77	134	173
% of the total	20.10	34.87	45.03
Level of education	Primary/vocational	Secondary	Tertiary
Number of respondents	101	182	101
% of the total	26.30	47.40	26.30

2.2. Data collection

The study reported here involved the method of diagnostic survey whose research tool was the authors' own questionnaire. The survey included 384 residents of Siedlce and Siedlce poviat. The questionnaire was completed by

adult residents who, in the years 2017-2019, made at least one domestic religious trip to a place of worship. The study was terminated after the required number of questionnaires had been completed.

2.3. Statistical analysis

Statistical calculations were performed using the program Statistica 13.1 PL, and they included the Pearson's chi-square test. It is a test of significance for qualitative variables which

allows determining if there is a significant association between two groups of variables. The relationships which were less than $p < 0.05$ were deemed statistically significant.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Selection of accommodation

Tourists are offered accommodation options with different standards, and can make their choice based on the price or lodging conditions. Religious tourism is a type of organised tourism that is cost-effective, which can, to a large extent, affect the choice of accommoda-

tion. However, in recent years, social behaviour has influenced the accommodation of choice. According to Soljan and Liro (2020, 2021), the requirements of people participating in religious tourism are increasing in terms of accommodation facilities and lodging standards.

Of the accommodation options available to religious tourists, respondents most frequently pointed to pilgrim hostels as their accommodation of choice. Much less popular were guest houses whereas camping sites, private lodgings and hotels were the most infrequent choice. Pilgrim hostels seem to be a logical solution as they are usually situated in the immediate vicinity of the place of religious worship which attracts the tourists. Many researchers believe such infrastructure is necessary for tourists but it also assists in religious tourism promotion (Seetanah et al., 2020; Jovanović and Ilić, 2016). Also, the accommodation is inexpensive and its location is chosen so as to protect the cultural heritage against any harm due to developed tourism infrastructure (Khuong and Luan, 2015; Mistry, 2018) which, if excessive, may pose a threat to the cultural value of the area visited by tourists (Kumar and Asthana, 2020).

Respondents taking part in the survey mentioned the following religious places which they had visited: Częstochowa, Licheń, Kodeń, Pratulín, Święta Lipka, Wambierzyce, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, Sokółka and Kostomłoty. Over 60% of participants of the study pointed to religious motives (prayer intentions such as thanksgiving, supplication; the need of spiritual renewal) behind their participation in trips to these places. It should be pointed out

that at these places of religious worship (except Kostomłoty) tourists can choose to be accommodated in pilgrim hostels. Contrasting results were reported by Buczkowska (2012) who pointed to hotels and guest houses as the accommodation of choices (68%) whereas pilgrim hostels were selected by only 13% of religious tourists. The remaining motives for travelling mentioned by respondents were non-religious in character (interest in seeing a holy place, trip to a place of religious worship, easily accessible, well organised, because the tourist services the trip included were provided by the organiser, the price of the trip was appealing, a trip is a nice way of spending free time and sightseeing in unknown places).

The value of Pearson's chi-square test was 9.603 at $p=0.047$, indicating a relationship between gender of respondents and the selection of various accommodation options they made. Pilgrim hostels were by far (75%) the most sought accommodation, only slight differences being found between genders, in favour of females, which was due to the fact that the participation rate of both sexes was similar. Guest houses were chosen by 16.43% respondents, camping sites by 5.0%, private lodgings by 1.82% and hotels by only 1.75% pilgrims. Men potentially more frequently chose guest houses and camping sites compared with women (Table 2).

Table 2. Accommodation of choice by gender of tourists (based on Authors' own study)

% of the total	Type of accommodation	Gender of respondents		
		Women	Men	Sum
% of the total	Hotel	0.00	1.75	1.75
% of the total	Guest house	8.42	8.01	16.43
% of the total	Private lodging	1.82	0.00	1.82
% of the total	Pilgrim hostel	38.4	36.6	75.00
% of the total	Camping site	2.56	2.44	5.00
% of the total	Total	51.2	48.8	100.00
Pearson's chi-square value			9.603	0.047*

* – level of significance $p < 0.050$

While examining accommodation choices made by pilgrims depending on level of education, the calculated value of chi-square test was

11.116 at 0.019, which indicated a relationship between the level of education and accommodation options chosen by tourists during their

trips. There were found no potentially meaningful differences between average numbers of respondents with different levels of education opting for accommodation in a pilgrim hostel. Pilgrims with a degree were more likely to choose to stay in a guest house during the

trip compared with respondents who had a secondary or a primary/vocational level of education. Only respondents with a secondary level of education opted for a stay at a camping site during pilgrimages (Table 3).

Table 3. Accommodation of choice by the tourists' level of education (based on Authors' own study)

% of the total	Type of accommodation	Education level of respondents			
		Primary/vocational	Secondary	Tertiary	Total
% of the total	Hotel	0.00	1.02	0.67	1.69
% of the total	Guest house	4.27	5.74	6.42	16.43
% of the total	Private lodging	0.71	1.17	0.00	1.88
% of the total	Pilgrim hostel	21.32	34.47	19.21	75.00
% of the total	Camping site	0.00	5.00	0.00	5.00
% of the total	Total	26.30	47.40	26.30	100
Pearson's chi-square value			11.116	0.019*	

* – level of significance $p < 0.050$

There was also confirmed an association between the age of respondents and accommodation of choice while going on a pilgrimage as the chi-square value was 21.846 at $p = 0.005$. Pilgrim hostels were an equally popular choice for respondents from each of the three age groups. Pilgrims from the youngest group were

potentially the most eager to make use of camping sites compared with the remaining two age groups. By contrast, respondents who were between 36 and 55, or at least 56 years of age more frequently pointed to guest houses as their accommodation of choice during pilgrimages compared with the youngest group (Table 4).

Table 4. Accommodation of choice by age of tourists (based on Authors' own study)

% of the total	Type of accommodation	Age of respondents (years)			Total
		18-35	36-55	56 and over	
% of the total	Hotel	0.00	1.69	0.00	1.69
% of the total	Guest house	2.16	5.64	8.63	16.43
% of the total	Private lodging	0.00	0.00	1.88	1.88
% of the total	Pilgrim hostel	14.38	26.10	34.52	75.00
% of the total	Camping site	3.56	1.44	0.00	5.00
% of the total	Total	20.10	34.87	45.03	100
Pearson's chi-square value			21.846	0.005*	

* – level of significance $p < 0.050$

3.2. Use of modes of transport

Travellers can make use of various modes of transport, the choice depending, among others, on the destination and type of trip, quality of modes of transport and the distance do the destination and journey costs (Kruczek, 2014). Siedlce powiat is located conveniently in terms of access to national and international routes, which undoubtedly speaks in favour of travelling by car or coach. Also, the powiat's location is relatively convenient when one considers travelling by plane.

Modes of transport used by religious tourists from Siedlce powiat, split into males and females, is presented in table 5. The value of chi-square test was 5.678, which, at $p=0.048$, indicated a relationship between gender and modes of transport used. It was found that every second pilgrim preferred walking as the mode of transport during a religious journey. Women were potentially more likely to choose this option than men.

The most popular mode of transport employed in religious tourism is the coach (Rosa, 2011). This choice is undoubtedly due to relatively low costs and an easy access to a variety of other places which can be visited during one

journey. Moreover, as claimed by Omieciuch and Ciepela (2018), the coach is believed to be one of the most comfortable modes of transport for short-distance travelling. In the present study, over 27% participants of religious tourism travelled by coach. Women were potentially more likely to choose coach pilgrimages compared with men. Participation in religious tourism of people travelling by coach or car was similar and amounted to 27.14 and 21.43%, respectively, the finding confirmed by Grondys et al. (2014) who demonstrated that coach pilgrimages account for approximately 30% of all the pilgrimages made. However, these same authors mentioned that cars, which afford independent travelling to the place of worship, were chosen by only 7% of religious tourists.

Religious and pilgrimage tourism predominantly consists of low-cost organised trips, which may be a direct reason why the respondents of the study reported here did not use air transport at all. It has been confirmed in the work by Cisowski (2019) who claims that air transport accounts for barely 5% of the mobility for religious and pilgrimage purposes, it being associated with travelling abroad only.

Table 5. Modes of transport according to gender of tourists (based on Authors' own study)

% of the total	Modes of transport	Gender of respondents		
		Women	Men	Sum
% of the total	Plane	0.00	0.00	0.00
% of the total	Coach	13.90	13.24	27.14
% of the total	Car	10.98	10.45	21.43
% of the total	Walking	26.32	25.11	51.43
% of the total	Total	51.2	48.8	100.00
Pearson's chi-square value			5.678	0.048*

* – level of significance $p < 0.050$

There was found a significant relationship between the respondents' level of education and modes of transport they used during pilgrimages. The value of chi-square test was 10.247 at $p=0.036$. Of the pilgrims, the largest group (almost a half) consisted of respondents who had a secondary level of education, they being followed by tourists with a primary/

vocational level of education. In contrast, the least numerous group consisted of pilgrims with a degree. Respondents with a secondary level of education were the most likely to travel on foot whereas representatives of the remaining two groups were more reluctant to travel in this way. Respondents with a tertiary level of education the most frequently pointed

Table 6. Modes of transport used by tourists according to their level of education (based on Authors' own study)

% of the total	Modes of transport	Education level of respondents			
		Primary/vocational	Secondary	Tertiary	Total
% of the total	Plane	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
% of the total	Coach	10.02	11.16	5.96	27.14
% of the total	Car	5.63	6.65	9.15	21.43
% of the total	Walking	10.65	29.59	11.19	51.43
% of the total	Total	26.30	47.40	26.30	100.00
Pearson's chi-square value			10.247	0.036*	

* – level of significance $p < 0.050$

to the car as their preferred mode of transport for making pilgrimages whereas the remaining groups opted for the coach (Table 6).

The value of chi-square test of 7.953 at $p=0.043$ indicated that there was a relationship between age of respondents and modes of transport they chose to make a pilgrimage. Travelling on foot was potentially the most favourite option chosen by the youngest pilgrims compared with the oldest respondents. It was confirmed in the

work by Žizka-Salamon, Hodorowicz (2009) who reported that almost one third of students participating in religious tourism chose walking pilgrimages. The car was potentially more popular with tourists aged between 36 and 55 years and the elderly pilgrims. The latter group definitely preferred travelling by coach compared with the remaining two groups of younger respondents (Table 7).

Table 7. Modes of transport used by tourists according their age (based on Authors' own study)

% of the total	Modes of transport	Age of respondents (years)			
		18-35	36-55	56 and over	Total
% of the total	Plane	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
% of the total	Coach	4.19	6.84	16.11	27.14
% of the total	Car	3.35	9.57	8.51	21.43
% of the total	Walking	12.56	18.46	20.41	51.43
% of the total	Total	20.10	34.87	45.03	100.00
Pearson's chi-square value			7.953	0.043*	

* – level of significance $p < 0.050$

4. Conclusions

The most popular options of accommodation chosen by respondents going on religious trips were pilgrim hostels and guest houses. The analysis conducted in the study reported here demonstrated significant relationships between accommodation of choice and gender, level

of education as well as age of the pilgrims. By far the greatest number of respondents used accommodation offered in pilgrim hostels, there being slight differences between males and females who were more likely to make such a choice. Guest houses and camping sites were

potentially more often selected for accommodation purposes by men than women. Respondents with a tertiary level of education more frequently chose guest houses while travelling compared with pilgrims with a primary/vocational or a secondary level of education. Only respondents with a secondary level of education were inclined to use camping sites. The youngest group of pilgrims was potentially the most willing to sleep in a tent compared with the remaining age groups. Moreover, respondents who were at least 36 of age more frequently chose accommodation offered by guest houses during religious trips.

The majority of subjects travelling for religious purposes in Poland participated in walking pilgrimages. Respondents making use of

mechanical transport options chose the coach followed by the car for mobility purposes. The selection of modes of transport depended on the gender, education level and age of respondents. It was women and not men who were potentially more likely to travel on foot or by coach during religious journeys. Respondents with a secondary level of education more often chose walking, those with a degree opted for the car and pilgrims with a primary/vocational level of education tended to use the coach for transportation purposes. Compared with the remaining age groups, the oldest tourists were the most happy to travel by coach. Despite a convenient location of Siedlce powiat with regard to airports, tourists from the study area did not choose this mode of transport at all.

Acknowledgments

The results of the study carried out under the research theme No. 155/23/B were financed

from the science grant awarded by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

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