

Tourism Demand towards Islamic Calligraphy Art (Case Study: Isfahan City)

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Abstract | Cultural landscapes are important key components in attracting tourists. In many destinations such as the city of Isfahan, calligraphic art creates a cultural landscape. This study is an initial attempt to investigate promoting tourism in Isfahan by offering a new travel package with an emphasis on calligraphy. Regarding this, four objectives were pursued: 1) to explore strategies which can promote tourism with an emphasis on calligraphy, 2) to evaluate tourists' interest towards learning and gaining experience in calligraphy; 3) to investigate the attitude of tourists towards calligraphy tours; and 4) to measure tourists' awareness of calligraphic art. A qualitative-quantitative method was used in this study. The results demonstrated that educational programmes, events, marketing and product development are strategies, which can boost art tourism in Isfahan. Moreover, the results of the quantitative method illustrated that the tourists have low awareness regarding Islamic calligraphic arts in Isfahan. However, they are interested in learning and gaining experience in calligraphy and they welcome calligraphy tours in Isfahan.

Keywords | Art Tourism, Calligraphy, Isfahan, Islamic Calligraphy Iran

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1. Introduction

Traditional calligraphic arts as part of the national identity can serve as cultural, historical and educational attractions by attracting domestic and foreign tourists for the benefit of the economic, social and cultural development of a region. This study is conducted in Isfahan, Iran, and has an emphasis on calligraphic art. Awareness of the glorious heritage of calligraphy in Isfahan can help to create a sense of loyalty for the tourist and a travel experience, and even create the image of the destination and the tourism brand for promoting art tourism.

Architectural structures are a tangible part of the culture of societies and demonstrate the complex relations between man and his environment (Srinivas, 2015). Calligraphy in Islam was always combined with other industries and arts such as architecture design. It is obvious that architectural symbols are usually shared between social groups and communities. Srinivas (2015) stated that symbols are words, gestures, pictures or objects, which illustrates the outermost layer of a culture that involve a particular meaning and only recognized by those who have a same culture. Despite the tangible, religious and cultural heritage and sometimes intangible features affecting the legacy of Isfahan calligraphy, there are many similarities about the perception of calligraphy, including vision, unity, function, maintenance and space among Iranian and non-Iranian tourists.

The idea of heritage can be combined with urban design and street furniture. One of the most prominent types of these in Islamic architecture is calligraphic decoration practices especially in Isfahan, Iran. Each era of Iran's history is best known and introduced by its architectural style and school. Environmental differences in combination with cultural beliefs and hundreds of years of cultural history in Iran have created a wide variety of calligraphy decorations in Isfahan's architecture. The decoration of historic buildings

of Isfahan demonstrates Islamic features, landscapes, handicrafts, human curiosity, local beliefs, lifestyle and traditions and their experiences. Inscriptions on Islamic buildings and monuments represent the structures, religion and beliefs of the Muslims, their needs, and the existing political and economic effects. It is obvious that these places, if chosen as a tourism destination, affect the tourist's perception and behaviour. Calligraphy has an axial role in the process of understanding the destination and sense of a place.

It is noteworthy that calligraphy in Islam has become part of the national identity and heritage, and is widely distributed among different Islamic societies. Calligraphy as an element of culture, tradition and art could be a tourism attraction; it has the potential to attract tourists and makes it possible for tourists to have new experiences. Calligraphy, interpreted as a symbolic component within cultural landscapes, has a vital role in tourists sightseeing and experiences (Qi et al., 2013). Calligraphic art in the Islamic world was used in a wider and different range and more creatively than other societies, and went beyond pen and paper. Islamic calligraphy among other arts is one of the most important and sacred ones.

Islamic calligraphy has been used throughout history for many purposes, such as architecture, handicrafts, military instruments, musical instruments, painting, etc. So far, such a collection has not been investigated as an urban perspective and cultural attraction. As many experts such as Blair (2006) mentioned, among the provinces of Iran, it can be said that Isfahan, Tabriz, Tehran, Khorasan, Fars, Qazvin and Yazd are almost the most prominent in the field of calligraphic heritage. Among them, it can be said that the variety of works and methods, number of samples and in general the evolution of calligraphy in Isfahan is greater than in other places (Blair, 2006; Marchand, 2002). In Isfahan, city calligraphers have turned the walls into an exhibition of calligraphy.

Among these, master calligraphers from the

Safavid and the Qājār periods are distinguishable (Fazaeli, 2011; Ghodsi, 1999; Blair, 2006; Marchand, 2002). Islam, Iran, Isfahan and calligraphy are words that are seen in many parallel sources (Marchand, 2002). Although calligraphy is one of the specialties of Isfahan, Iran, it has not been exploited as a tourist attraction.

Studies demonstrated that Iran is recognized as a cultural and artistic tourism destination (DestinationIRAN, 2016; IRNA 2015). Furthermore, Iranian culture and art have a great appeal for Iranians and non-Iranians. Their interest and familiarization with Iran's culture and civilization, especially for non-Iranians, has been widely studied and, and the results are highly accessible (IRNA, 2015).

Countries such as China, Russia, the United Arab Emirates and Turkey have done special activities in the area of communication between calligraphy and tourism (Zhang et al., 2008; Calligraphy-expo, 2018; Worldbulletin, 2013; Theislamicmonthly, 2018; and Thenational, 2015). Isfahan also offers many opportunities and received the title of the cultural capital of the Islamic world in 2006, to introduce its attractions in the world of tourism (ISESCO, 2015). It is worth noting that studying places and audiences are two key elements in organizing niche tours in a tourism destination (Novelli, 2005). The question now is what strategies can promote Islamic calligraphy tours in Isfahan? And how much awareness and tendency do tourists have regarding learning and gaining experience in Isfahan calligraphy art, and also whether tourists welcome calligraphy tours? The authors believe that emerging calligraphic art tours in the city of Isfahan can create new tourism markets and a new experience for tourists. The emphasis of the present study is also on inscriptions on Islamic monuments in Isfahan.

2. Literature Review

2.1 History of Calligraphy in Iran and Isfahan

Calligraphy in Isfahan like other areas in the Islamic world is considerable from different aspects. However, Isfahan's calligraphy has particular features which make it distinctive in this regard. A large number of inscriptions from the 12th and 13th centuries to the contemporary period in Isfahan indicate the presence of calligraphers in various historical periods in this city. The existence of honoured calligraphers like Alī Rezā Abbāsī, Bāqir Banna, Mir 'Imād Qazvini, Mohammad Rezā Imāmī and Mohammad Sāleh Isfahani led to a glorious period in the 17th century in Isfahan. Kāvājā Tāj Salmānī Isfahani (15th century), Ahmad Naīrīzī (17th-18th century), Darvish Abd-al-Majīd Ṭālaqānī (18th century), Vāleh Isfahani (18th-19th century) and Zayn al-Abidin Isfahani (19th century) were also known as the greatest calligraphers in the history of art in Iran, and had artistic activity in Isfahan for a long time (Bayani, 1984; Qodsi, 1999).

In addition to calligraphy and manuscripts, Isfahan has a prominent significance in the Islamic world with regard to inscriptions on historical monuments. Isfahan's inscriptions are important in terms of the variety of calligraphic styles, themes and practices, as well as the high quality of calligraphic works from aesthetic viewpoints. Outstanding examples in this field are decorative kufic inscriptions on Masjed-e Jāme' (A.H. 515 and 768/A.D. 1121 and 1367) (Figure. 1), Uljeitu Mehrab (A.H. 710/A.D. 1310), inscription of Minār-e Ali (one of the first inscriptions on Islamic architecture, 5th century A.H./11th century A.D.) (Figure. 2), inscription of Tekye Mīr (the only inscription remaining from Mir Emad) (Figure 3), thuluth inscriptions of the interior space of Sheykh Lotfollah mosque by Alī Rezā Abbāsī and Bāqir Banna (11th century A.H./17th century A.D.), moarraḡ plaster inscription of Hārūn-i Velāyat (from the first and few moarraḡ plaster

inscriptions, early 10th century A.H./early 16th century A.D.) (Figure 4), wooden inscription of the vestibule of Madrasa-yi Chahār Bāgh written by Mohammad Sāleh Isfahani (A.H. 1119/ 1707 A.D.), gilded silver inscription of Masjed-e Shah (A.H. 1046/1636 A.D.), silver door of Madrasa-yi Chahār Bāgh (12th century A.H/early 18th century A.D.) (Figure 5) and nested geometric kufic inscription of Nimāvard School (12th century A.H./early 18th century A.D.) (Figure 6) (Honarfar: 1965 – Rafie Mehrabadi: 1973 – Salehi Kakhki: 2016).

2.2. Calligraphy and Tourism

Many researchers (Zhang et al., 2008; Blair, 2006; McWilliams and Roxburgh, 2007) have studied calligraphy focusing on various purposes, although in some domains such as tourism it is less considered. However, some activities related to calligraphy and tourism have been carried out in countries such as China, Russia, Turkey, Korea, United Arab Emirates, etc. (International Exhibition of Calligraphy, 2019). Among these, Chinese researchers have significant studies in the calligraphy and tourism field.

Yin et al., (2011) stated that calligraphy is not only a symbol of Chinese culture, but also a cultural landscape symbol in constructing national identity. They believed that due to its considerable aesthetic, historical and cultural value, calligraphy has an important role in modern tourism marketing and has a major impact on the perception and behaviour of audiences. The study of Yin et al., (2011) was conducted in Xi'an Beilin Museum and a combined method of factor analysis was used. The results illustrated that the calligraphic landscape has a positive role in the tourism image.

The study of Zhang et al., (2012) also emphasises on limitations that inhibit tourists' experience of Chinese calligraphic landscapes. The aims of this study was to distinguish three types of limitations

which exist in the context of a calligraphic landscape experience. Confirmatory factor analysis was applied in this investigation. The hierarchical model is developed to prove that some limitation dimensions do influence on tourists' preference, participation and satisfaction. Based on this research, intrapersonal limitations have a negative influence on preference, while neither the interpersonal nor the structural dimension influences tourists' participation or satisfaction. Furthermore, Zhang et al., (2008) discovered that Chinese calligraphy as a heritage has a long history and diverse types and it also has a close link to living culture, and thus becomes a tourist attraction and a component of the cultural landscape. Based on the characteristics of a culture chain that links calligraphy and the Chinese cultural system, they developed a model with calligraphy to promote tourism.

Qi et al., (2013) noted that in Eastern Asian countries, calligraphy has a vital role in tourists' sightseeing. Their study was conducted in Guilin, China and the main objective of this study was to investigate the structure of attitudes and experiences of tourists towards calligraphic landscapes. Structural equation model was used to explore the constructs of the attitudes and tourists experiences and their model demonstrated three important results. Firstly, the calligraphic cultural cognition and calligraphic landscape preference has impact on both travelling experience and place identification. Secondly, calligraphic aesthetic cognition only has impact on place identification, but not the travelling experience. Lastly, none of the three factors of attitudes on calligraphic landscapes has impact on involvement, and travelling experience was the only factor that influences involvement.

Zhou et al., (2013) attempted to explore how tourists' attitudes towards calligraphy impact perceptions of authenticity. They further developed Kolar and Zabkar's (2010) model, a consumer-based model in which authenticity is a key mediating construct between cultural motivation and loyalty, by adding an attitude variable. Using LIS-

REL 8.51, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling were performed. Based on their research, public ignorance of traditional culture affects perceptions of authenticity. This also leads tourists to believe in the importance of aesthetics and form of the objective material, rather than to focus on the inner experience of the traditional Chinese calligraphy.

Li et al., (2014) investigated Chinese tourists' perceived value of the Chinese calligraphic landscape in tourism settings. 422 valid questionnaires in a touristic site with a calligraphic landscape in China were filled in. Four dimensions of perceived value of calligraphic landscape were recommended and identified: functional tangible value, functional intangible value, social value, and emotional value. In addition, their study recommended that functional intangible and emotional values of a calligraphic landscape have significant roles in affecting tourist satisfaction and loyalty.

As mentioned before there are few studies on the area of tourism and calligraphy except studies from China. Calligraphy as a tourist-cultural resource is important in literature and, in its extension, it is important in the cultural landscape. The novelty and originality of this paper is to introduce calligraphy, especially Islamic calligraphy, as a tourism attraction. In addition, this paper is an initial attempt to recommend strategies for promoting calligraphy tours in Isfahan, Iran. The authors declare that the recommended strategies obtained from qualitative method cannot be generalized to other countries.

According to Sarmiento et al., (2017) and Torabi Farsani (2017) the study of tourists' tendency and attitude are important factors in niche tourism demand. Thus, a part of this study concentrates on the investigation of tourists' attitude towards calligraphy. Figure 7 illustrates the framework of the present study.



Figure 1 | Floral Kufic inscription, 1367 A.D., Masjed-e Jāme'
Source: photo by authors



Figure 2 | Geometric Kufic inscription, 11th century A.D.,
Minār-e Ali
Source: photo by authors



Figure 3 | Nastaliq inscription by Mir 'Imād, 17th century A.D.,
Tekye Mīr
Source: photo by authors



Figure 4 | Thuluth inscription, 16th century A.D., Hārūn-i
Velāyat
Source: photo by authors



Figure 5 | Thuluth inscription, 18th century A.D., silver door of Madrasa-yi Chahār Bāgh
Source: photo by authors



Figure 6 | Nested Geometric Kufic Inscription, early 18th century A.D., Nimāvard School
Source: photo by authors

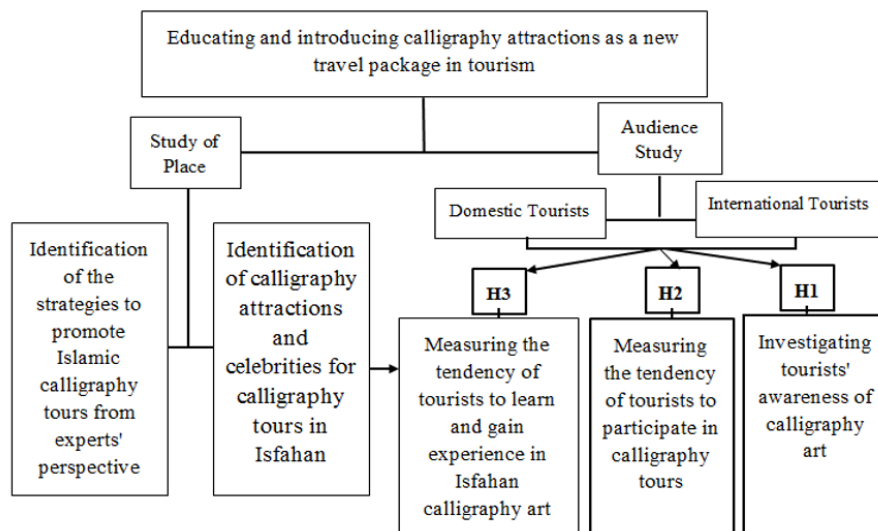


Figure 7 | The framework of the present study
Source: own construction

3. Methodology

Since this study is an initial attempt to identify the strategies which can promote art tourism with emphasis on calligraphy tours in Isfahan city, a qualitative method (content analysis) was used in the first step. Data was collected through an interview form and content validity ratio (CVR = 0.75) illustrated that the interview form had high

validity. A snowball sampling technique was used to collect data and the experts, elites and artists in the fields of art, calligraphy and tourism comprised the statistical population. Lastly, the data was analysed through open and axial coding method.

In the next phase, the authors strove to investigate the tendency of tourists (both international and domestic) towards learning and tourist experience-based activities regarding Isfahan's cal-

ligraphic art. In addition, the awareness of tourists towards the heritage of Isfahan calligraphy was measured. Regarding this, three hypotheses were developed:

H1: Awareness of tourists towards Isfahan calligraphic art is high

H2: Tourists welcome Isfahan calligraphy tours

H3: Tourist are interested in learning and gaining experience in Isfahan's calligraphic art.

A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was used to evaluate the tendency of tourists towards Isfahan calligraphy attractions and experience-based activities. The data collection took three months (from March to May 2019). The sample size (n) was determined through Cochran's sample size formula. Lastly, 385 questionnaires (300 domestic tourists/85 international tourists) were collected, which is adequate according to Cochran's formula.

4. Results

A content analysis (open and axial coding) method was used to identify strategies which can promote calligraphic art tours. According to results obtained from interview forms, it can be said that elites and experts believe that educational programmes such as training courses for reading calligraphy; organizing workshops for creating works of calligraphy; organizing workshops for familiarity of tourists with materials and tools (the calligrapher's implements) and construction methods of calligraphy; and holding workshops for familiarity of tourists with celebrities of calligraphy is the first strategy to boost calligraphy tours in Isfahan. Furthermore, the results reveal that organizing events (e.g. organizing events of production and sales of works of calligraphy; holding entrepre-

neurial events related to calligraphy and conducting competitions for photography, design, books and etc. with an emphasis on calligraphy) is the second strategy to promote art tourism with emphasis on Isfahan's calligraphy. In addition, product development is to further strategies for promoting art tourism with an emphasis on calligraphy tours. Designing creative products inspired by calligraphy (Figure 8) and using calligraphy in the decoration of new buildings and urban design (Figure 9) constitute good examples. The last but not the least strategies which were mentioned by experts were marketing, for instance, preparing shared tickets for buildings and monuments with calligraphy; designing a brand for works of calligraphy; making movies and documentaries regarding and introduction to and advertising calligraphy; and creating virtual content, design brochures and catalogues, design posters and a calligraphy tourism map for the city (Table 1).

In the next step, the authors attempted to test the hypotheses. Cronbach's alpha (0.788) presents a high reliability of questionnaire. Descriptive statistics demonstrated that among the tourists who filled in the form, 77.9% were domestic, and 22.1% were international tourists (Table 2 and Figure 10); among the international tourists, Germany has the highest frequency. 46.8% of the participants were between 20 and 35 years of age. Table 2 illustrated the demography of the statistical sample of the study.

In order to measure the level of tourists' awareness regarding Isfahan calligraphic art, two questions were designed (Q1 and Q2). The results of a one sample t-test ($\mu > 3$ and $\text{Sig} < 0.05$) illustrated that the first hypothesis (H1: Awareness of tourists towards Isfahan calligraphic art is high) is rejected and the tourists are not familiar with Isfahan calligraphic art and this result clearly reveals the needs for educational calligraphy tours. It is noteworthy that the experts placed emphasis on educational programmes as a key component in promoting art tourism with an emphasis on calli-

graphy. However, the output of SPSS demonstrated that the tourists are interested in being familiar with Islamic calligraphic art.

The results of measuring tourists' tendencies towards participating in calligraphy tours (Table 3; Q7) indicated that tourists welcome Isfahan calligraphy tours and the second hypothesis (H2: Tourists welcome Isfahan calligraphy tours) was accepted.

It is worth mentioning that eleven questions (Q3 to Q6 and Q8 to Q14) in the questionnaire

were designed to inquire into the tendency of tourists towards learning and gaining experience in Isfahan calligraphic art. According to the analysis of one sample t-test ($\mu > 3$ and Sig < 0.05), it can be concluded that the third hypothesis (H3: Tourist are interested in learning and gaining experience in Isfahan's calligraphic art) was also accepted and tourists have high tendency towards learning and gaining experience in Isfahan's calligraphic art tours (Table 3).

Table 1 | Strategies for promoting art tourism with an emphasis on calligraphy tours

Axial Coding	Open Coding
Educational Programmes	Training courses for reading calligraphy
	Organizing workshops for creating works of calligraphy
	Organizing workshops for familiarity of tourists with materials and tools (the calligrapher's implements) and construction methods of calligraphy
	Holding workshops for familiarizing tourists with celebrities of calligraphy
Events	Organizing events of production and sales of works of calligraphy
	Holding entrepreneurial events related to calligraphy
	Conducting competitions for photography, design, books and etc. with an emphasis on calligraphy
Product Development	Designing creative products inspired by calligraphy (Figure 10)
	Using calligraphy in the decoration of new buildings and urban design (Figure 11)
Marketing	Preparing shared tickets for buildings and monuments with calligraphy
	Designing a brand for works of calligraphy
	Making movies and documentaries regarding an introduction to and advertising calligraphy
	Creating virtual content, design brochures and catalogues, design posters and a calligraphy tourism map for the city



Figure 8 | Using calligraphy in the urban design of Isfahan
Source: photo by authors



Figure 9 | : Souvenirs inspired by calligraphy in Isfahan city which are currently on offer to tourists
Source: photo by authors

Table 2 | Contributors' demographics

Gender	Number (%)	Age (years)	Number (%)	Education	Number (%)
Male	251 (65.2%)	< 20	9.1	High School	9.9
Female	134 (34.8%)	20-35	46.8	Diploma	18.3
Domestic Tourists	77.9	35-45	20.5	Bachelor	37.2
International Tourists	22.1	45-55	13	Master's and Higher	34.6
		55-65	5.2		
		> 65	3.6		
Missing			1.8		

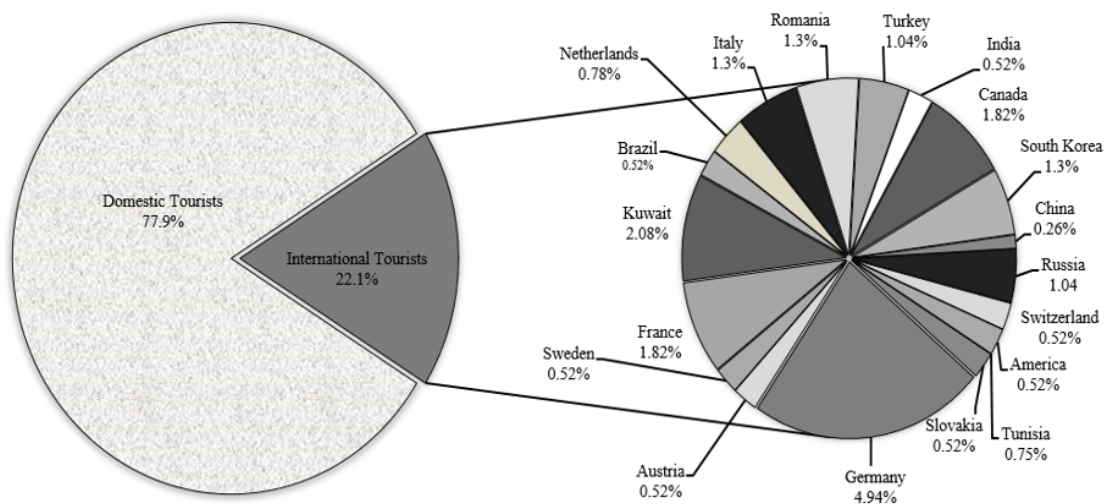


Figure 10 | The percentage of foreign tourists participating in filling questionnaires
Source: own construction

Table 3 | Evaluating tourists' awareness of and tendency towards art tourism with an emphasis on calligraphy

Variables	Frequency					Missing	SK	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.	Mean Difference	One-sample t-test test value = 3 95% confidence interval of the difference	
	very low	low	mediu m	high	very high							Lower	Upper
Q1: Are you familiar with Islamic calligraphic art?	86 22.3%	112 29.1%	112 28.8%	41 10.6%	14 3.6%	20 5.2%	.451	1.098	-10	0	-	-0.69	-0.5
Q2: Are you interested in being familiar with Islamic calligraphic art?	1 0.3	-	207 53.8%	113 29.4%	58 15.1%	7 1.8%	.654	0.751	16	0	0.601	0.52	0.68
Q3: Are you interested in learning about the biography of Islamic calligraphers of Isfahan?	6 1.6%	59 15.3%	166 43.1%	94 24.4%	55 14.3%	5 1.3%	.127	0.962	7.1	0	0.35	0.25	0.45
Q4: Are you interested in being familiar with Islamic calligraphic art of Isfahan by visiting examples?	7 1.8%	51 13.2%	133 34.5%	133 34.5%	58 15.1%	3 .8%	-.194	0.966	9.7	0	0.482	0.38	0.58
Q5: Are you interested in visiting magnificent attractions of Islamic calligraphic art in Isfahan (e.g. Ujeitu Mehrab)?	1 .3%	31 8.1%	106 27.5%	137 35.6%	109 28.3%	1 .3%	-.338	0.939	17	0	0.839	0.74	0.93
Q6: Are you interested in participating in calligraphy-related activities?	10 2.6%	58 15.1%	144 37.4%	96 24.9%	74 19.2%	3 .8%	-.060	1.047	8.1	0	0.435	0.33	0.54
Q7: Do you like to involve in calligraphic art related tours?	13 3.4%	34 8.8%	157 40.8%	103 26.8%	77 20.0%	1 .3%	-.200	1.017	9.9	0	0.513	0.41	0.62

Variables	Frequency					Missing	SK	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.	Mean Difference	One-sample t-test test value = 3 95% confidence interval of the difference	
	very low	low	mediu m	high	very high							Lower	Upper
Q8: Are you interested in live calligraphy-related activities and visiting contemporary artists doing calligraphy?	11 2.9%	48 12.5%	141 36.6%	113 29.4%	70 18.2%	2 .5%	-.185	1.02	9.2	0	0.478	0.38	0.58
Q9: Are you interested in participating in calligraphy material and tool production workshops?	10 2.6%	50 13.0%	140 36.4%	116 30.1%	61 15.8%	8 2.1%	-.163	0.999	8.7	0	0.446	0.34	0.55
Q10: Are you interested in participating in calligraphy-related events?	16 4.2%	70 18.2%	145 37.7%	91 23.6%	52 13.5%	11 2.9%	-.006	1.048	4.6	0	0.249	0.14	0.36
Q11: Are you interested in experiencing doing calligraphic art (e.g. writing your name)?	5 1.3%	24 6.2%	96 24.9%	143 37.1%	115 29.0%	2 .5%	-.571	0.953	18	0	0.885	0.79	0.98
Q12: Are you interested in buying calligraphy-related souvenirs (e.g. clothes)?	13 3.4%	38 9.9%	121 31.4%	124 32.2%	85 22.1%	4 1.0%	-.402	1.045	11	0	0.604	0.5	0.71
Q13: Are you interested in calligraphy businesses and/or participating in calligraphy-related entrepreneurship events?	25 6.5%	70 18.2%	130 33.8%	98 25.5%	49 12.7%	13 3.4%	-.118	1.099	3.6	0	0.204	0.09	0.32
Q14: Are you interested in participating in calligraphy replica workshops (e.g. making tiles and pottery)?	18 4.7%	37 9.6%	125 32.5%	113 29.4%	85 22.1%	7 1.8%	-.405	1.087	9.9	0	0.556	0.45	0.67
Q15: Are you interested in participating in Islamic calligraphy reading tours?	27 7.0%	48 12.5%	105 27.3%	113 29.4%	85 22.1%	7 1.8%	-.904	1.177	7.9	0	0.479	0.36	0.6

Source: own construction

5. Conclusions

According to some researchers (Zhang et al., 2008; Yin, et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2012 and Zhou et al., 2013) calligraphic cultural landscapes have become known as tourism attractions in recent decades. Unfortunately, in Iran, an academic

study has not been done in this regard and this problem engaged the authors to study tourism and calligraphy in the case study of Isfahan, Iran as a city which has school in calligraphy.

Obviously, a new, emerging package tour in a destination needs place and audience studies (Novelli, 2005) which the present study emphasis on

these axial components.

Based on the qualitative analysis, elites suggested product development, events, marketing and educational programmes as strategies which can boost art tourism with an emphasis on Islamic calligraphy in the city of Isfahan. It is noteworthy that the low awareness of tourists regarding Isfahan calligraphy confirms that guided tours or educational tours can be a step that not only increases the level of awareness of tourists, but also introduces calligraphy as a tourism attraction.

Moreover, the results obtained from statistical analysis (one-sample t-test; $M > 3$; $\text{sig} < 0.05$) indicated that tourists are interested in learning and gaining experience about calligraphy; hence our results provide some support for the study of Qi et al., (2013) and Zhou et al., (2013).

We believe that these results suggest that organizing educational calligraphy tours in Isfahan, Iran would be welcome.

Despite the fact that calligraphy is one of the most important cultural perspectives in Isfahan and Iran, there is little public awareness about it. If this process continues, calligraphy, although it has a strong presence in the cultural landscape of the city, will be forgotten. This is why tourism, and in particular tourism education tours, can be a step towards the preservation of this cultural heritage.

The authors' suggestions for future research are as follow:

To design a bilingual handwriting manual for understanding Persian calligraphy

To provide a tourism map for calligraphy of the city

To identify entrepreneurial opportunities for promoting art tourism with an emphasis on calligraphy

To investigate appropriate strategies for promoting tourism with an emphasis on calligraphy in other case studies such as Qazvin,

Shiraz, Mashhad etc.

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